

STANDING TOGETHER COMING OUT FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

**An Anti-Racist Organizational
Development Toolkit for
LGBT Equality Groups
and Activists**



Foreword

Change, the kind that is deep, enduring and contagious, happens best by building relationships—with people and groups who can help you figure out how to do your work better and who will challenge you to be the best ally you can be. Building relationships with people and groups who are willing to speak to their families, friends and co-workers about the injustices and indignities that you and your community experience.

This curriculum began with such a relationship and is built on a vast network of allies, colleagues, partners and friends. Western States Center and Basic Rights Education Fund have been social justice allies for more than a decade. We've worked together closely and collaborated on issues of discrimination, exclusion and oppression. Our understanding of racial and gender justice issues and the political context surrounding them have been informed by each other's work, and our strategies and campaigns to address injustice have been shaped by each other's experiences.

Throughout the more than thirty anti-gay ballot measure campaigns that Oregon has endured, Basic Rights Education Fund learned quickly to recognize the wedge strategies that extremist forces use to promote homophobia—in particular, the language of “special rights” and their use of conservative spokespeople of color to weaken solidarity among allied communities. Highly publicized, this targeted outreach to communities of color revealed divisions within a potentially powerful base of support for LGBT equality. On the other side of the story, gay rights advocates, whose most visible organizations and spokespeople have been predominantly white, have not done a thorough job of including and lifting up the voices of queer people of color, nor have they sided with people of color and immigrants and refugees in a consistent and public manner.

Clearly, if the progressive movement for social justice is to grow out of these silos and become the powerful force for social change that we seek and need it to be, then we need to emerge from this isolation, reveal ourselves to one another and begin to build trust and partnerships—ones that are courageous, challenging and committed. In our experience, it often begins with a conversation.

With this in mind, the Center and BREF staff put into writing the myriad of conversations we've been having, with partner groups, leaders, members and allies and identifying the steps we took to put momentum into these conversations and are proud to share *Uniting Communities: The Toolkit* and *Standing Together: Coming Out for Racial Justice*. Together, they are powerful tools for movement-building. These companion handbooks are a testament to the foresight, the faith, and the friendships of the leaders in our movements who have brought us to a place of shared understanding, alliance and collective action. Remembering that change is a road that emerges the more people walk on it, we invite you to walk alongside us on this path, and to contribute to the multitude of ways that change for racial and gender justice can happen.

We look forward to seeing you down the road!

In solidarity,



Jeana Frazzini
Executive Director
Basic Rights Education Fund and
Basic Rights Oregon



Dan Petegorsky
Executive Director
Western States Center

Acknowledgments

We have been supported by many individuals and organizations over the years as we have endeavored to transform our organization to become more inclusive of communities of color and to take on racial justice work within the LGBT community.

In particular, this work would not have been possible without the guidance of our partners at the Western States Center and their Dismantling Racism Project—the foundation of our racial justice work and the origin of many of the materials in *Standing Together*. Thank you to Kalpana Krishnamurthy, Aimee Santos-Lyons and Kelley Weigel. Thank you to the wonderful trainers who worked with our staff and board: Moira Bowman, David Rogers and Terrie Quinteros.

We want to acknowledge and appreciate our Board of Directors for their leadership and vision; and our thoughtful and dedicated staff, interns, fellows and activists who have approached this work with courage, humility and just the right dose of humor!

The materials in this handbook were written and adapted by current and former Basic Rights Education Fund staff and interns. Thank you to Jessica Lee for leading this project and to the team: Aubrey Harrison, Alejandro Juarez, Thomas Wheatley, Maceo Persson, Louis Ortega, and Lisa Frank.

Thank you to activist leader Jim Maguire, Teri Noble with PFLAG Oregon State Council, Dawn Holt with PFLAG Portland and our partners at CAUSA Oregon and Rural Organizing Project, for sharing their experiences engaging in racial justice and alliance building work.

A special thank you to Jim Radosta for sharing his exceptional editing skills with us, to Daniel Cheyne and Nike, whose generosity supported the printing of this handbook and LeAnn Locher for her wonderful design.

THANK YOU

Gill Foundation

for funding this project and for supporting the growth of a broad and inclusive movement for LGBT equality.

We are also grateful for the generous support we receive from a number of foundations that emphasize movement building and organizing across race:

Arcus Foundation

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

Equity Foundation

Liberty Hill Foundation Queer Youth Fund

Pride Foundation

Spirit Mountain Community Fund

Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock

Basic Rights Education Fund

PO Box 40625

Portland, OR 97240

503-222-6151

www.basicrights.org

facebook.com/basicrights

twitter.com/basicrights

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

Introduction to Standing Together: Coming Out for Racial Justice

- 5 Welcome
- 7 How to Use Standing Together
- 8 Creating Group Agreements
- 9 Building Workshops and Closing Each Workshop
- 10 Sample Workshop Evaluation

12 Starting the Conversation: Developing a Shared Language and Analysis

- 13 Our Approach to Racial Justice
- 18 Shared Assumptions
- 20 Defining Racism
- 35 Ally 101: Why and How to Be a White Ally
- 42 *Case Study: Jim Maguire, Activist*
- 44 From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment: LGBT People of Color
- 50 Challenging Oppressive Moments

58 Linking the Issues: Making the Connection Between LGBT and Racial Justice

- 59 The Common Elements of Oppression
- 74 The Strategy of “Special Rights”
- 80 Civil Rights and LGBT Equality: Comparing Two Movements
- 82 Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality: A Shared Timeline
- 135 Crossing the Border: REAL ID, Transpeople and Immigration

140 Moving to Action: Organizational Transformation

- 141 Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready?
- 146 Assessing Organizational Racism
- 160 *Case Study: PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)*
- 163 Putting Racial Justice into Workplans
- 171 Naming and Framing Racism
- 182 Building Alliances Across Race, Gender and Sexuality
- 185 *Case Study: An Unlikely Collaboration: Latino, Rural, and LGBT Rights Activists Unite to Challenge Anti-Immigrant Measures in Rural Oregon*

188 Resource List

**Free electronic copies of Standing Together are available online at:
<http://www.basicrights.org/StandingTogether.pdf>**

Welcome to *Standing Together* *Coming Out for Racial Justice*

We at Basic Rights Education Fund have created this workbook to share our experience as a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) advocacy organization committed to racial justice.

We believe that an important part of being an effective ally to communities of color is to encourage our partners in the LGBT movement to develop an integrated analysis with a commitment to understanding the relationship of LGBT justice to racial and social justice. And we know that many LGBT organizations continue to struggle with meaningfully, effectively addressing race and racism in their work. Our hope is that, by sharing our experience, the tools we have developed and the challenges we continue to struggle with, we can contribute to this emerging dialogue in a positive way.

As with most organizations in the LGBT movement, we have struggled to address race and racism truly. We were getting nowhere with a “diversity” approach that prioritized simply getting people of color in the room—which often felt like a challenge as a predominantly white organization in a predominantly white region. We were ill-equipped to effectively engage and address the pressing issues for LGBT people of color. Our lack of an approach to racial justice even impacted our strategy and effectiveness, as we were unable to respond to our opposition’s strategic efforts to divide LGBT and communities of color, and to develop meaningful reciprocal alliances with communities of color.

Much like the backlash to California’s Proposition 8 in 2008, we experienced our own flashpoint in Oregon in 2004, when the far right used an anti-marriage campaign to aggressively and effectively drive a wedge between straight communities of color and primarily white LGBT communities. Ultimately, our campaign waited until the last minute to reach out to communities of color—and we did so without

building meaningful relationships or sharing power.

Today, just five years later, we are a very different organization. We’ve undertaken internal work to develop an analysis of the impact of racism in our organization and community. Our commitment to racial justice shows in our strategic plan and work plans, in ongoing political education for our base, and in explicit statements addressing how our work impacts LGBT people of color. Today, we have increasingly multi-racial leadership in our organization, a track record on racial justice and a reputation for being a dependable ally. We do this work because it is the right thing to do and because it is strategic.

Of course, the work is not without challenges. We feared that we would lose donors, that volunteers wouldn’t understand the changes under way and that we’d lose focus and become less effective. In our experience, as we have faced each of these fears and more, what we have gained is far greater than any cost.

Instead of losing donors, we have had deeper engagement, and attracted new donors and funders. Instead of alienating volunteers, we have seen renewed commitment, new energy and the emergence of strong leadership of color in the organization. Instead of losing focus, we have developed richer campaigns that engage broad coalitions and speak to the complex reality of our lives.

In these pages you will find trainings, materials and resources for transforming your organization. These are critical tools that we hope you will find useful. But the most important thing you need to change your organization into a powerhouse for racial justice and LGBT equality cannot be found in any book. You need a vision for what is possible....

Introduction

Imagine a ballot measure campaign where the media and opposition can't pit the LGBT community against communities of color.

Imagine the power of a movement for justice that is united across identity. Where advocates for LGBT justice work side by side in the struggle for immigrant rights and for economic justice.

Imagine a movement where people are able to bring their full selves and find community—where we can break down the dynamic where LGBT people encounter homophobia and transphobia in situations that are supposed to be safe for people of color, and racism in places that are supposed to be safe for LGBT people.

Imagine the experience of a young LGBT person of color getting involved in your organization and finding that your work directly connects to their experience.

At Basic Rights Education Fund, this is the world we want to create. This workbook documents our process and ongoing work to create this vision.

Join us on the journey.

About Basic Rights Education Fund

Basic Rights Education Fund is affiliated with Basic Rights Oregon (BRO), a 501(c)4 organization, that grew out of the community response to anti-gay attacks that began in Oregon in the late 1980s. BRO was formed in 1996 to sustain and strengthen Oregon's LGBT rights movement between and beyond measure campaigns. In 1999, Basic Rights Education Fund (BREF), a 501(c)3 organization, was established to supplement BRO's electoral and legislative work through education and advocacy. Together, BRO & BREF form a statewide organization committed to ensuring that all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Oregonians experience equality by building a broad and inclusive politically powerful movement, shifting public opinion and achieving policy victories.

How to use *Standing Together*

This handbook was created based on the experience of our work as a primarily white LGBT organization working in a primarily white state and region. In a state considered to be “liberal” and where people of color make up just over fifteen percent of the population, we assumed that racism was not a major issue that needed to be addressed and didn’t impact our base in a significant way. We now recognize that race and racial justice is an urgent, broad and complex issue that cannot be ignored and impacts the LGBT community in deep and far reaching ways.

However, there is no cookie-cutter approach to making our organizations more racially just. Rather, our aim is to share best practices, identify potential challenges and provide tools and resources in the hopes to support others on this journey.

Standing Together is a series of workshops, exercises and readings that we have used in our journey. It contains three sections that each focus on a specific area of racial justice and organizational work:

Starting the Conversation begins to build a shared language and analysis on race and racial justice issues—building the foundation of a meaningful dialogue that will ground and guide the work.

Linking the Issues bridges the struggles for LGBT equality with those of racial justice—using the struggle of immigrant rights as a particular area of focus. This section stresses the importance of what makes our issues and movements similar, as well as distinct.

Moving to Action provides steps and tools for LGBT organizations to undergo self-assessment and move forward with staff, board and key leaders in a shared commitment to anti-racist work. This

section also shares tools to move our base to take action and become public allies to racial justice.

Within each section you will find information and exercises meant to be used in a variety of combinations to build workshops that fit various organizational needs. Each workshop tool includes:

- A summary of the workshop tool.
- Overview of goals for the workshop tool.
- A snapshot of the core activities/elements, as well as the delivery method and the time needed.
- List of materials needed.
- Instructions, tips and notes for trainers and facilitators.
- Credit for source materials used or curriculum that was adapted to create the workshop tool.

Throughout *Standing Together* are case studies based on the work and experience of people and organizations coming out for racial justice in Oregon. These stories can be used as handouts for participants; shared with staff, board members and key leaders; or used in workshops to stimulate conversation.

There are a few common elements that aren’t included in any specific exercise, but are critical to the success of all of our workshops on racial justice. Creating group agreements (sometimes called ground rules) at the outset of a workshop is an important step to set an appropriate tone for the coming activities, and to set clear boundaries and expectations for each participant. And taking a minute to close the workshop in an interactive, intentional way can make sure that, as participants continue to mull over what they’ve learned, they do so in a productive and forward-looking way.

Creating Group Agreements

Before starting any workshop using the tools in this curriculum, it is critically important to establish ground rules or group agreements. Strong group agreements help to establish a respectful dialogue, an open space for questions and the space for individuals to have mutual accountability and trust. It is especially important to create group agreements during the first few workshops, during workshops where you may be expecting pushback or when new participants join the group.

Here are some of the group agreements that we have used:

Step Up, Step Back: If you are someone who has a lot to say, try to “step back” to let others have a chance to participate. If you are usually quiet in workshops, try to “step up” and let folks hear your thoughts.

Don’t Assume/Ask Questions: We may not all know what each other is thinking or feeling, nor do we know the different experiences that many folks bring into the room. Ask questions or ask someone to give a longer explanation to make sure you understand their point or perspective.

Think Well of Each Other: Conversations about oppression and privilege can be difficult to navigate and sometimes result in dialogue that may feel uncomfortable or even hurtful for participants. But it’s important to recognize and value that we each enter this experience with the intention of building a shared understanding and goal of moving forward racial justice.

Use the “Ouch”: If you do hear a comment that feels oppressive or hurtful, say “ouch.” Using the ouch can be easier than saying “that was racist” or “that comment was sexist.” Talk about why the comment was hurtful or built on a stereotype. Trainers should also step in to help with a learning moment and ensure that participants can move ahead together.

Language Is Powerful: Because conversations around race and racial justice come up rarely in many LGBT organizations, participants may rely on or use language that is rooted in racism. Terms like “illegal/s,” “coloreds” or other words that have been used to denigrate and hurt people of color should not be tolerated in trainings, and need to be interrupted immediately. Some helpful phrases to use include:

“That language is racist and is hurtful. Please use the term _____ instead.”

“We are trying to create a space that is safe for everyone in our community, and that kind of language is hurtful. Please don’t use that term again.”

“Just as we don’t allow hurtful terms like _____ (fill in a derogatory name used about the LGBT community) to be used in our organization, we don’t want to use that term to refer to people of color either.”

Expect Unfinished Business: It is impossible to fully address the complexities of race and racism in any one workshop, nor will we ever “solve” racism. You may even leave here today with more questions than when you arrived. Working toward racial justice means a lifelong commitment to learning, growing, being challenged and challenging others. These are good things!

Building Workshops

Trainers and facilitators will notice that each workshop tool in *Standing Together* ranges in length, style and purpose. Our goal is to provide several tools and materials for organizations to build individualized trainings that may vary from short sessions to be used in staff meetings, to intensive day long retreats. This is because we know that organizations will combine the resources, use different activities to create different workshops and otherwise create the resources you need. However, workshop tools are generally ordered throughout *Standing Together* in the fashion we have found most useful in our ongoing racial justice trainings.

Closing Each Workshop

Most workshop tools in *Standing Together* do not have a specific closing activity incorporated in the notes because the tools are meant to be creatively combined for your organizational needs. However, the following suggestions may help you close each session with intention:

At the end of the session, remind participants of the workshop's overall goals.

Close with one or two of the following activities:

- *A quick verbal evaluation of one thing each participant liked, and one thing they would change or focus on for the next time.*

- *Heart, Hands, Feet: Ask people to identify one thing they learned (head), one thing that touched them (heart), and one action step (feet) they will take in the next week.*
- *An appreciation for someone else in the workshop from whom you learned something.*
- *An anonymous opportunity to write a question down that participants are still struggling with and would like to address in future sessions.*
- *A call to action for racial justice: Sign participants up to volunteer and/or donate to a racial justice campaign in your area.*

Evaluations:

We find it immensely useful to have participants fill out short evaluations after each workshop or training we facilitate. This allows us to gauge how participants experienced the curriculum, if any follow-up is needed with individuals, how we can improve our methods in future trainings and next steps for our work.

A sample of a short evaluation is on the following page.

SAMPLE WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Workshop Structure

What were your expectations for the workshop?

What was most useful about the workshop?

Were there aspects of the workshop that were unclear? If so, what were they?

What questions are you left with?

Your Participation

Did you feel invited to participate in today's activities?

Did you learn from others participating in the activities?

Any other comments?

Starting the Conversation

The first step of coming out for racial justice is often one of the most difficult for LGBT organizations—merely starting the conversation.

Talking about race and racism can feel overwhelming, and can also be triggering if we, or our organizations, have had thorny experiences in the past. Navigating a meaningful dialogue on what is meant by racism can be difficult with mainstream culture preferring to sweep racial injustice under the rug using deceptive “colorblind” theories and claims that we now live in a “post-racial America.”

To begin addressing and dismantling racism,

we must first be able to clearly articulate what it is and how it operates in every aspect of our culture, systems, institutions and work for LGBT equality.

This section of *Standing Together* is designed to provide terminology and tools to help LGBT groups and their members begin the important discussion of their anti-racist organizational transformation. If we build a shared and strong analysis of race and racism within our organizations, we will be able to select the tools and processes to achieve anti-racist transformation most appropriate to our groups and our movement.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS SECTION:

WORKSHOP TOOL	FORMAT	TIME	PAGE
Our Approach to Racial Justice	Lecture, group discussion	20 minutes	13
Shared Assumptions	Lecture, group discussion	30 minutes	18
Defining Racism	Lecture, large and small group discussion, small and large group activity	90 minutes	20
Ally 101: Why and How to Be a White Ally	Large group discussion, lecture	50 minutes	35
Case Study: Jim Maguire, Activist	Case Study	N/A	42
From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment: LGBT People of Color	Large group discussion, pair and share, lecture	80 minutes	44
Challenging Oppressive Moments	Lecture, large group discussion, small group activity, roleplays	90 minutes	50

Our Approach to Racial Justice



20 minutes

SUMMARY

This is a brief introduction to showcase our organizational approach to engaging in meaningful racial justice work. At the start, we will clarify the difference between a “diversity/sensitivity” approach, often adopted by corporations and other institutions, and a model based on principles of anti-oppression and social justice.

GOALS

- To clarify our anti-oppression approach to racial justice work.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Diversity vs. anti-oppression	Lecture	10 minutes
Questions and handouts	Large group discussion	10 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Handout:
 - Diversity Training: Good for Business But Insufficient for Social Change

► Diversity vs. anti-oppression

Trainer says:

Welcome. We want to start out by letting folks know this is a 101 level training where we will talk about the need for racial justice in the LGBT movement and beyond. This is not a sensitivity or diversity training. We take this approach because we believe what gets lost in the muddy waters of sensitivity training is any analysis of power, which is essential in understanding the complexity of race within a workplace, organization or social structure. Sensitivity trainings often focus on individuals and their own understanding of race and racism without discussing the power structure within organizations that support racism.

Sensitivity/diversity trainings often assume a level playing field, despite real power imbalances between white people and people of color. The goal of *Standing Together* is to build a shared analysis of how racism is perpetuated by organizational structures, processes, norms and expectations.

However, the end goal of diversity/sensitivity training is the peaceful integration of people of color through “tolerance” rather than a strong analysis of racism and anti-oppression practices. This often leads to tokenism and does not stress the importance of paying as much attention to who is not in the room as who is, and the root causes of an organization’s racialized environment or racial makeup.

We need to not only understand racism in its complexities, but to work actively against it. Skillful racial justice work also creates a basis for understanding systemic inequality and oppression based on other identities. This is essential for building bridges.

Written on a flip chart:

Diversity/Sensitivity/Tolerance Training

- Lacks an analysis of power and privilege.
- Assumes a level playing field.
- Often leads to tokenization.

Our Approach to Racial Justice *(continued)*

Anti-Oppression, Racial Justice Focus

- Does not seek to simply integrate people of color, but rather build an analysis of racism and anti-oppression practices.
- Creates a basis for understanding systemic inequality that is essential for building bridges.

Trainer notes:

- Reassure participants that this process is long-term and that you will endeavor to create a safe and welcoming space for everyone to come into the discussion with their whole and best selves—including their questions, concerns as well as their hopes and aspirations.
- Explain that with this in mind, you will begin the process by being mindful of the fact that people come from different starting places with this topic, and that it's critical to begin the conversation with recognition of that diversity and complexity.

► **Questions and handouts**

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Diversity Training: Good for Business but Insufficient for Social Change*

Trainer addresses any questions and comments that arise.

Diversity Training: Good for Business but Insufficient for Social Change

By David Rogers

Former Trainer/Organizer, Western States Center

In the past ten to fifteen years, diversity training has become a boom industry, as government agencies, corporations and nonprofits attempt to manage race and racial attitudes in the workplace. Organizations employ diversity training for reasons ranging from protection against liability to a more liberal notion that “in diversity there is strength.” The belief that workplace diversity can bring increased productivity, new ideas, and therefore higher profits, appeals particularly to corporations. Although diversity training may make good business sense, the model falls terribly short of the comprehensive racial justice approach required for progressive social change.

Diversity vs. Racial Justice

The difference between diversity training and the racial justice approach embedded in Western States Center’s Dismantling Racism (DR) Project begins with the definition of racism. Diversity training sees racism primarily as the result of individual action: personal prejudice or stereotyping, and intentional acts of discrimination by individuals. A racial justice definition includes these beliefs and acts, but considers individual acts of prejudice only one dimension of racism. More importantly, racism is defined as a set of societal, cultural and institutional beliefs and practices—regardless of intention—that subordinate and oppress one race for the benefit of another.

The case of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed Black man shot 41 times by four White New York City police officers (all of whom were acquitted), illustrates the difference between these two views. While a diversity approach might pursue sensitivity training for the officers, a racial justice perspective would hold the entire criminal justice system accountable and demand systemic change.

Multi-Culturalism

In diversity trainings prejudice reduction model, individual attitudes and beliefs are the focus of change. With the goal of harmony and efficiency in the multi-racial workplace, diversity training emphasizes awareness and appreciation of the contributions of different cultures.

What too often gets lost in the muddy waters of multi-cultural awareness is any analysis of power and the ways racist attitudes and organizational culture operate. How do White people gain advantages from racism? What is the daily impact of racist oppression on people of color? Why do White people regularly dominate meetings? Is the White way of doing things still assumed to be the preferred mode of operations?

While White staff may develop a greater appreciation for people of color through diversity training, it can avoid these questions and leave the dominant organizational culture intact.

HANDOUT

Multi-cultural awareness often assumes a level playing field—despite real power imbalances between White people and people of color.

Who's Got the Power?

In contrast, the racial justice approach of the DR Project analyzes race in an institutional and cultural context, not as a problem to be solved by individual enlightenment. It develops an understanding of power, who has it and how it gets used. As practiced with progressive groups around the region, the goal of the DR Project is to build a shared analysis of how racism is perpetuated by organizational structures, processes, norms and expectations (in addition to individual behavior and attitudes).

Jean Hardisty, in *Mobilizing Resentment*, calls for programs like the DR Project to “move White people beyond tolerance and inclusion, to envision actual power-sharing and learning to take leadership from people of color.”

The DR Project assumes that White people and people of color have different work to do. White people need to understand how their privilege operates, how they perpetuate racism and how they can become allies to people of color. For people of color, the process of empowerment involves struggling with the impact of internalized racist oppression. The Project attempts to develop models that value and build leadership in people of color while holding White people accountable for their racism. Diversity training can ask White people to change their consciousness while leaving their dominance intact; a racial justice approach requires an organizational transformation of power relations.

Who's at the Table?

The organizational change sought through diversity training assumes that appreciating and increasing human variety is important and necessary. The end goal is peaceful integration of people of color, rather than a strong shared analysis of racism and anti-oppression practices. This approach often leads to tokenization. People of color are like the raisins in my oatmeal; it just takes a few to make the dish more rich.

The diversity models focus on who is sitting around the table can unreasonably assume individuals are speaking “for their people.” Paul Kivel, in *Uprooting Racism*, warns of the dangers of tokenization: “We don’t want to become complacent and believe that we understand the need of a community through hearing from a few ‘representatives.’”

A racial justice analysis does not ask individuals to speak for the interests of an entire constituency. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of paying as much attention to who is not in the room as who is. In working with predominantly White organizations, the DR Project helps them struggle with how to address the interests of those not directly included.

Diversification or integration is not always the best thing for an organization. Take an all-White organization, for example. A diversity approach would combine prejudice reduction with some organizational development, perhaps resulting in revisions of the personnel policies, job descriptions and hiring practices. Yet, very little else about the organization would have changed. Even if the organization is successful in bringing people of color on board, it would be a shallow victory. Take a snapshot of the organization from year to year; you’ll see a few people of color

in each photo, but the faces will be different each year. People of color might get hired, but they won't stay very long because they are being asked to fit into the existing dominant culture.

A DR approach with such an organization won't start with the premise or suggestion that the organization must recruit people of color. Certain groundwork needs to be done before that is a viable or advisable goal. The organization might begin with a "White privilege training" rather than a diversity training. The goal is to create an organizational culture with a deep and shared understanding of racism where White people are committed to holding themselves accountable, and where naming racism and other oppression when it occurs is encouraged and not avoided. Without these qualities in place, people of color may find a harsh reality beneath the welcoming organizational veneer.

Taking Action

Working for social change, it is not enough to develop a diverse, culturally competent staff, board and membership. In the context of the horrid history and current institutional and societal practice of racism and injustice, a friendly workplace is not enough. DR education and practices are designed not only to understand racism in its complexities, but to work actively against it.

Skillful racial justice work also creates a basis for understanding systemic inequality and oppression based on other identities such as classism, sexism, heterosexism and ableism. This approach is essential for building bridges between those who are marginalized. Nothing less is required if we want a broad, strong and cohesive movement for progressive social change.

From Western States Center's Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 6-8). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

Shared Assumptions



30 minutes

SUMMARY

This discussion requires participants to commit to a set of shared beliefs, or assumptions, in order to inform our work moving forward. Without these shared assumptions, a meaningful dialogue will be difficult to achieve.

MATERIALS

- Handout:
Shared Assumptions

GOALS

- Overview assumptions we must take on in order to do this work.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	5 minutes
Assumptions handout	Group discussion as needed	25 minutes

► Introduction

Trainer says:

There are a few fundamental assumptions that we ask participants to collectively take on in order to create a shared conversation and understanding of racial justice. These assumptions begin to build the foundation of analysis needed to move this dialogue and our work forward.

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Shared Assumptions*

► Assumptions handout

Trainer instructs:

- Ask a participant to read the first assumption on the handout.
- Ask a different participant to read the second assumption, and so forth.

Trainer Tip:

Depending on the size of your group and amount of time you have, you may choose to have a brief discussion after each assumption is read.

Probing questions:

- Why is this assumption important to take on?
- What are some examples in reference to this assumption?
- How does this affect your expectations around anti-racist work?

If time does not allow this, go through all the assumptions and ask participants to hold questions and comments until the end.

Shared Assumptions

- Growing up in the United States, we have absorbed considerable misinformation, specifically negative information, about people who are “different” from us and our families. Because racism, sexism, classism, anti-Semitism and homophobia (as well as other forms of oppression) are so widespread, we have been imprinted with negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes about groups of people we barely know. This began to happen when we were young, when we couldn’t distinguish truth from stereotype, before we could recognize misinformation or object. Now that we are older, we all have responsibility for looking at what we have learned and making a commitment to dismantle oppression in our lives.
- Dismantling racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia and unlearning the oppressive attitudes we have learned is a lifelong journey. Most of us have been struggling with these issues, some for years and years already. None of us are beginners, and none of us have perfect clarity. This work is a journey; there is no endpoint. The greatest commitment we can make is to keep paying attention to how these issues affect us and those around us.
- Individuals and organizations can and do grow and change. But significant change comes slowly and requires work. The changes that happen quickly are usually cosmetic and temporary. Change on issues of justice, equity and fairness come after resistance, denial and pain have all been worked through. Progress on oppression and equity issues never happens when we’re looking the other way; it takes our focused attention and commitment.
- We cannot dismantle racism in a society that exploits people for private profit. If we want to dismantle racism, then we must be about building a movement for social and economic justice and change.
- While single individuals can inspire change, individuals working together as an organized whole, in groups, communities and organizations make change happen.

“Assumptions” Original content created by changework, 1705 Wallace Street, Durham, NC 27707, 919-490-4448

Defining Racism



90 minutes

SUMMARY

This training tool sets the foundation for how we talk about race and racism, and begins to build a stronger analysis that reflects the many layers and complexities of racism in our personal, cultural and institutional structures.

GOALS

- To build a shared language around the basic framework of race and racism.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction to terms	Lecture	15 minutes
Personal racism	Lecture and group discussion	5 minutes
Cultural racism	Lecture and group discussion	10 minutes
White privilege	Large group activity	15 minutes
Institutional racism	Small and large group activity	30 minutes
Structural racism	Lecture and group discussion	15 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Tape
- Bag (backpack, book bag or some other carrying bag) ideally white in color
- White privilege examples
- Handouts:
The Knapsack of White Privilege
Definitions of Racism

► **Introduction to terms**

Trainer says:

Part of our work in the area of racial and social justice is to bring communities together through open dialogue and honest reflection around what is meant by “racism.” This is important so we can explicitly and publicly use language and analysis that describes an issue as a matter of racial justice. Let’s begin with a few general terms and what we mean when we use them:

Trainer reads out loud (written on flip chart):

Race refers to socially constructed categories and hierarchies mostly based on physical bodily features.

- No scientific/biological basis.
- Takes on significant cultural meanings and social realities.

Trainer says:

Race splits people into groups having to do with historical patterns of oppression and rationalization of that oppression. It is not based on any medical science or biology.

However, due to the historical and current significance of these racial realities, racial categories cannot be easily dismissed, discounted or simply wished away—such as with “colorblind theories.”

Definitions created by **changework** - 1705 Wallace Street, Durham, NC 27707, 919-490-4448 and adapted from Western States Center’s Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 13 and 38). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

Defining Racism *(continued)*

Trainer reads out loud (written on flip chart):

People of Color (POC):

- Not based in any biological/scientific fact.
- People of color in the United States share the common experience of being targeted and oppressed by racism.
- The term “people of color” pushes us to think more broadly—it has movement building potential.

Trainer reads out loud (written on flip chart):

Racism is defined as a set of societal, cultural and institutional beliefs and practices (regardless of intention) that oppress one race for the benefit of another.

Trainer says:

The key indicators of racism are inequities in power and opportunities, unfair treatment and the disparate impacts of policies and decisions. Racism condemns millions to poverty, inadequate health care, substandard jobs, violence and other conditions of oppression. In short, racism is a system that routinely advantages whites and disadvantages people of color. Where there are racial inequities, there is racism. In fact, there are many forms of racism that we’ll discuss and break down.

► Personal racism

Written on flip chart:

Personal Racism

Trainer asks:

What do you think we mean when we say “personal racism”? What are some examples of personal racism?

Trainer reveals the definition (written on flip chart), then reads it aloud:

Personal racism is the way in which we perpetuate racism on an individual basis.

Examples:

- Using racial slurs.
- Considering men of color to be “scarier” or “less trustworthy” than white men.
- Sexualizing people of color.

This is often where many people’s thinking of racism begins—and ends. This is the kind of racism we can easily identify, and we can all repudiate together. But this is just one expression of racism—and a very simplified one. In order to build our understanding of race and racism, and in order to truly work on racial justice, we must go deeper.

Defining Racism *(continued)*

► Cultural racism

Written on flip chart:

Cultural Racism

Trainer asks:

What do you think we mean when we say “cultural racism”? What are some examples?

Trainer says:

Cultural Racism refers to the norms, values or standards assumed by the dominant society that perpetuate racism.

Examples:

- Defining white skin tones as nude or flesh-colored (such as Band-Aids, nylons or makeup).
- Jesus depicted as having a white/Anglo appearance even though he originates from a part of the world where people are brown.
- Defining one form of English as standard, disregarding the terminology and language patterns developed by English-speaking communities of color.
- Identifying only whites as great writers or composers and leaders in history. This can be found in most standard history books used in U.S. schools.
- The “melting pot” theory asks people of color to assimilate into the dominant white culture and accepting it as the norm.

Trainer points for cultural racism:

- Cultural racism is made up of those aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and whiteness and that devalue, stereotype and label people of color as “other,” different or less than or render them invisible.
- Our society suppresses the cultures of people of color by concentrating cultural resources in the hands of white-controlled institutions (such as the media) by subjecting cultural production and distribution to a market logic, and then by using this relative cultural monopoly to spread myths about the races, their abilities and their roles, thereby providing the basis for racist belief and action in the other social institutions.

► White privilege

“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”

Trainer walks around the room with a bag containing examples of white privilege.

Participants each select an example out of the bag and read it out loud to the full group.

Examples include:

- A white person can...
- Find images of themselves throughout powerful institutions.
- Speak without being seen as speaking “for the white community.”
- Act, dress and speak as they see fit (without having appearance, interests or habits attrib-

Defining Racism *(continued)*

- uted to the illiteracy, poverty or poor moral fiber of their race).
- Do well in challenging situations without being considered “a credit to their race.”
- Go to a shopping mall without being followed by staff or security.
- Criticize the government and express fear of its policies without being seen as a cultural outsider.
- Go to the grocery store and find foods that reflect their cultural tradition.
- Find “flesh tones” (Band-Aids, concealer, underwear) in their flesh tone.
- Take a job with an affirmative action employer without having coworkers suspect that they got the job because of their race.
- Get pulled over for traffic violations, not for “driving while Black/brown.”

Trainer asks:

What are these examples of?

Trainer says:

These are examples of white privilege. These are just a few of the ways white people experience privilege every day due to power imbalances based on race. Yet, white privilege often goes unrecognized because these circumstances are so ingrained in our culture—in cultural racism—and are not as overt as personal forms of racism.

Written on flip chart:

White privilege: the rights, advantages and immunities enjoyed by white people in a culture that values whiteness as the norm.

“An invisible package of unearned assets which I [as a white person] can count on cashing in on each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious.” –Peggy McIntosh

Trainer says:

In 1988 Peggy McIntosh wrote an essay titled *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*—a powerful examination of white privilege and its impacts. At the time, she was a women’s studies professor, and her campus was engaged in a debate about whether or not a man could meaningfully teach women’s studies. Moved by the discussion of her male colleagues’ privilege, she decided to take a closer look at her own privilege as a white woman.

Trainer distributes:

Handout: Peggy McIntosh’s *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*.

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

By Peggy McIntosh

Through work to bring materials from women's studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are over-privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say they will work to improve women's status, in the society, the university or the curriculum, but they can't or won't support the idea of lessening men's. Denials that amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages that men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened or ended.

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that, since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there is most likely a phenomenon of white privilege that was similarly denied and protected. As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.

I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege. So I have begun in an untutored way to ask what it is like to have white privilege. I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.

Describing white privilege makes one newly accountable. As we in women's studies work to reveal male privilege and ask men to give up some of their power, so one who writes about having white privilege must ask, "Having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?"

After I realized the extent to which men work from a base of unacknowledged privilege, I understood that much of their oppressiveness was unconscious. Then I remembered the frequent charges from women of color that white women whom they encounter are oppressive. I began to understand why we are justly seen as oppressive, even when we don't see ourselves that way. I began to count the ways in which I enjoy unearned skin privilege and have been conditioned into oblivion about its existence.

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us."

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions which I think in my case attach somewhat more to skin color privilege than to class, religion, ethnic status or geographical location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can see, my African American coworkers, friends and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place and line of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

I usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned or conferred by birth or luck. Yet some of the conditions I have described here work to systematically over-empower certain groups. Such privilege simply confers dominance because of one's race or sex.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
6. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
8. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
9. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hair-dresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
10. Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
11. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
12. I can swear, or dress in secondhand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.
13. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
14. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
15. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
16. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
17. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.
18. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.
19. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
20. I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

HANDOUT

21. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance or feared.
22. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having coworkers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.
23. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
24. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.
25. If my day, week or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.
26. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in flesh color and have them more or less match my skin.

I repeatedly forgot each of the realizations on this list until I wrote it down. For me white privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own.

In unpacking this invisible knapsack of white privilege, I have listed conditions of daily experience which I once took for granted. Nor did I think of any of these prerequisites as bad for the holder. I now think that we need a more finely differentiated taxonomy of privilege, for some of these varieties are only what one would want for everyone in a just society, and others give license to be ignorant.

I see a pattern running through the matrix of white privilege, a pattern of assumptions which were passed on to me as a white person. There was one main piece of cultural turf; it was my own turf, and I was among those who could control the turf. My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make. I could think of myself as belonging in major ways, and of making social systems work for me. I could freely disparage, fear, neglect or be oblivious to anything outside of the dominant cultural forms. Being of the main culture, I could also criticize it fairly freely.

In proportion as my racial group was being made confident, comfortable and oblivious, other groups were likely being made unconfident, uncomfortable and alienated. Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit in turn upon people of color. For this reason, the word "privilege" now seems to me misleading. We want, then, to distinguish between earned strength and unearned power conferred systematically. Power from unearned privilege can look like strength when it is in fact permission to escape or to dominate. But not all of the privileges on my list are inevitably damaging. Some, like the expectation that neighbors will be decent to you, or that your race will not count against you in court, should be the norm in a just society. Others, like the privilege to ignore less powerful people, distort the humanity of the holders as well as the ignored groups.

We might at least start by distinguishing between positive advantages which we can work to spread, and negative types of advantages which unless rejected will always reinforce our present hierarchies. For example, the feeling that one belongs within the human circle, as Native Americans say, should not be seen as privilege for a few. Ideally it is an unearned entitlement. At

present, since only a few have it, it is an unearned advantage for them. This paper results from a process of coming to see that some of the power which I originally saw as attendant on being a human being in the U.S. consisted in unearned advantage and conferred dominance.

I have met very few men who are truly distressed about systemic, unearned male advantage and conferred dominance. And so one question for me and others like me is whether we will be like them, or whether we will get truly distressed, even outraged, about unearned race advantage and conferred dominance and if so, what we will do to lessen them. In any case, we need to do more work in identifying how they actually affect our daily lives. Many, perhaps most, of our white students in the U.S. think that racism doesn't affect them because they are not people of color; they do not see "whiteness" as a racial identity. In addition, since race and sex are not the only advantaging systems at work, we need similarly to examine the daily experience of having age advantage, or ethnic advantage, or physical ability, or advantage related to nationality, religion or sexual orientation.

Difficulties and dangers surrounding the task of finding parallels are many. Since racism, sexism and heterosexism are not the same, the advantaging associated with them should not be seen as the same. In addition, it is hard to disentangle aspects of unearned advantage which rest more on social class, economic class, race, religion, sex and ethnic identity than on other factors. Still, all of the oppressions are interlocking, as the Combahee River Collective Statement of 1977 continues to remind us eloquently. One factor seems clear about all of the interlocking oppressions. They take both active forms which we can see and embedded forms which as a member of the dominant group one is taught not to see. In my class and place, I did not see myself as a racist because I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group, never in invisible systems conferring unsought racial dominance on my group from birth.

Disapproving of the systems won't be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes. But a white skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end, these problems.

To redesign social systems we need first to acknowledge their colossal unseen dimensions. The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects. Most talk by whites about equal opportunity seems to me now to be about equal opportunity to try to get into a position of dominance while denying that systems of dominance exist.

It seems to me that obliviousness about white advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly inculturated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all. Keeping most people unaware that freedom of confident action is there for just a small number of people props up those in power, and serves to keep power in the hands of the same groups that have most of it already.

Though systemic change takes many decades, there are pressing questions for me and I imagine for some others like me if we raise our daily consciousness on the perquisites of being light-skinned. What will we do with such knowledge? As we know from watching men, it is an open question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage to weaken hidden systems of advantage, and whether we will use any of our arbitrarily awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems on a broader base.

HANDOUT

Peggy McIntosh is Associate Director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. This essay is excerpted from Working Paper 189. “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies” (1988), by Peggy McIntosh; available for \$4 from the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181. The working paper contains a longer list of privileges.

Defining Racism *(continued)*

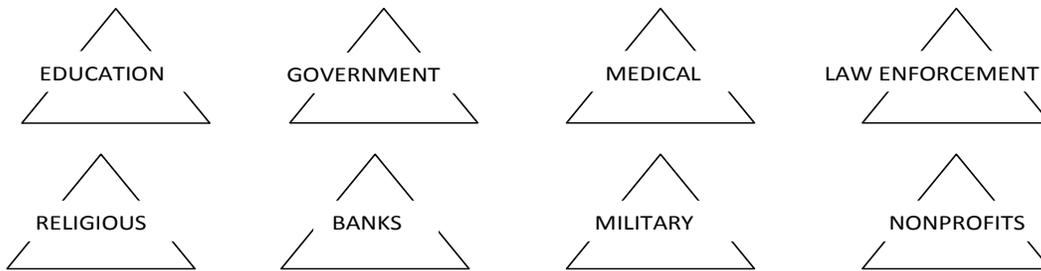
► Institutional racism

Break people into small groups (of 4-6 depending on number of participants).

Trainer instructs:

In your small groups, you'll receive a flip chart sheet with two triangles on it. Each triangle represents an institution—because institutions employ and engage many, many people (represented by the wide base of the triangle) but power is concentrated in the hands of very few (the narrow top of the triangle). Often, institutions will employ or engage people of color, but it's rare that people of color will be the decision-makers at the top. As such, the policies of those institutions will often reflect the values and experiences of those decision-makers at the top of the triangle. Even when they don't intend to, all of these institutions exclude, underserve and oppress communities of color.

Examples of institutions—make sure to include NONPROFITS so participants recognize our organizations as institutions as well:



In your group, list out ways your institutions EXCLUDE, UNDERSERVE and OPPRESS communities of color. For example, we know that education institutions have vastly underserved students of color through policies like No Child Left Behind and the inaccessible cost of post-secondary education. Your group will have 10 minutes to do this. When you are finished, bring your sheet up to be hung up on the wall. Also, choose one person from your group to report back (in five minutes or less) to the full group.

Trainer should tour the room and assist any groups that are having difficulty. (See Institutional Cheat Sheet for Trainers on the following page for examples.)

When each group is finished, hang their completed sheet on the wall with tape. Place each sheet side-by-side directly next to each other (so the edges of each sheet are touching).

Defining Racism *(continued)*

Institutional Cheat Sheet for Trainers

Government/legislative

- White lawmakers creating policies that impact people of color (majority of politicians and people in power are white)
- Racist legislation (sunset laws, anti-Affirmative Action, English-only policies)
- Systems for public funding

Military

- “War on terror”
- Recruiting low income/people of color

Education

- Inaccurate history/curriculum that upholds white supremacy
- Lack of resources to public education
- Lack of recruitment and retainment of students of color
- No Child Left Behind
- Affirmative Action cuts in colleges

Law Enforcement

- Racial profiling
- White collar crimes = less punishment
- Immigration laws/ICE Enforcement
- Disproportionate numbers of people of color in the prison system
- Lack of legal representation

Medical

- Eugenics & reproductive healthcare
- Using people of color for testing
- Corporatized healthcare
- Lack of culturally appropriate healthcare
- Racist science (ie: phrenology)

Religious

- Faith-based eugenics
- Manifest destiny
- “Whitening” of Christ

Banks

- Redlining
- Payday loans & credit cards

Family

- Interracial marriage
- Representation of nuclear family (is white, middle class, lacks extended family)
- Values rewarded/sanctioned

NON PROFITS

- Donor policies
- Not naming and framing racism
- Shying away from racial justice due to pushback/controversy
- Believes in majority rule

Also, ALL lack leadership of color and racial justice work!

Defining Racism *(continued)*

Report back and debrief:

Have a member from each group quickly present their sheet in five minutes or less. Listen closely for areas of overlap and intersections between institutions.

As these intersections begin to surface, draw connecting lines across the sheets to visually show how racism plays out within and among institutions. (For example, if you're redlined to prevent you from moving into a higher-income neighborhood, your neighborhood school will be underfunded—draw a line between banks and schools. It's also more likely that military recruitment will take place at your school—draw a line between schools and military.) It will not be long before the lines create a tangled web of connections—showcasing how deeply ingrained racism is at an institutional level.

Trainer says:

It's clear that there are countless ways institutions exclude, underserve and oppress communities of color—and this happens both within and between institutions. We call this:

Written on flip chart:

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism is discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and inequitable opportunities and impacts, based on race, produced and perpetuated by institutions.

Trainer points for institutional racism:

- There is an institutional arrangement and distribution of resources that serve to reinforce advantages of the white majority.
- Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they act in ways that advantage and disadvantage people, based on race. Institutional racism is not based on intent!
- IT'S THE IMPACTS WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT. THEY INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER AND IMPACT EACH OTHER.
- There is increasing denial of the existence of racism or at least institutional racism. White people increasingly believe that personal acts of meanness based on prejudice persist, yet racism as a system that oppresses all people of color is a problem of the past. Racist institutions perpetuate this myth that racism is no longer relevant—undermining our ability to dismantle it.
- “Renaming and reframing our reality.” We aren't going to end racism by tricking racists and racist institutions. How do you show racism has won a major victory, when the fight was never framed around racism? This is a critical element toward change.
- WE MUST ADDRESS INSTITUTIONS OF RACISM AND NOT MERELY INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF RACISM.

Defining Racism *(continued)*

► Structural racism

Trainer says:

It's crystal clear that every one of these institutions—each of these triangles—perpetuates racism. But when we look at the connections between these institutions, we see that racism is bigger than individual institutions. When we talk about individual institutions, we're talking about institutional racism. But when we talk about the connections between those institutions, we're talking about something called structural racism.

Trainer explains (written on flip chart):

Definition: "The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics . . . that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color."
—Applied Research Center

Key Points:

- Structural racism operates through every institution.
- Structural racism operates upon generation after generation of communities.
- Is at work in all parts of U.S. society:
 - History
 - Culture
 - Politics
 - Social fabric

Trainer points for structural racism:

- In considering structural racism, we come to the fundamental differences between how oppression works when it's based on race vs. when it's based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Racism operates through every institution in this country upon generation after generation of families and communities. The intersection of this history of institutional violence and deprecation creates a situation where racism and economic disparity are often intertwined.
- This just doesn't take place in the same way in LGBT communities—very few of us grow up in families in a queer part of town, or have parents who teach us to contend with homophobia and transphobia. And we don't see the impacts of homophobia and transphobia compounded in the lived experience of all the members of our extended families.
- Oppression based on sexual orientation and gender identity are also historically embedded in institutions, but the nature of that oppression does not result in the same cyclical institutional oppression that's visited upon generation after generation of communities of color. That's part of the reason why applying the civil rights movement to the LGBT movement is so problematic. **TRAINER NOTE: See "Civil Rights & LGBT Equality: Comparing Two Movements" on page 80 for full talking points on this topic.**

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Defining Racism*

DEFINING RACISM

Race

Race refers to socially constructed categories and hierarchies that are mostly based on bodily features. Race has no scientific or biological basis, but it does create significant cultural meanings & social realities. Race splits people into groups having to do with historical patterns of oppression and rationalization of that oppression. Due to the historical and current significance of these racial realities, racial categories cannot be easily dismissed, discounted or simply wished away (as theories of “melting pots” and “color blindness” try to do).

People of Color

The term people of color, like race, is not based in any biological or scientific fact. Rather, people of color is used in the U.S. to describe people who share the common experience of being targeted and oppressed by racism. This term pushes people to think more broadly about racism, and it has movement building potential.

Racism

Racism is defined as a set of societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices (regardless of intention) that oppress one race for the benefit of another. Key indicators of racism are inequities in power and opportunities, unfair treatment, and the disparate impacts of policies and decisions. Racism condemns millions to poverty, inadequate health care, substandard jobs, violence and other conditions of oppression. In short, racism is a system that routinely advantages white people while disadvantaging people of color. Where there are racial inequities, there is racism.

TYPES OF RACISM

Part of what makes racism so powerful in the U.S. is the many modes in which it operates. Many dominant discussions of racism begin and end with personal racism—individual, person-to-person acts of racism. But, as we’ll see through the following definitions, racism is much more complex than that, and often much more difficult to identify.

Personal Racism

Personal racism is the way in which we perpetuate racism on an individual basis. Personal racism encompasses acts (like using racist slurs), characterizations (like sexualizing people of color), and assumptions (like the idea that men of color are “scarier” or “less trustworthy” than white men). While personal racism is real and destructive, it is not the end of the discussion on racism.

Cultural Racism

Cultural racism includes the norms, values and standards assumed by the dominant culture which perpetuate racism. Some examples of cultural racism include:

- Defining white skin tones as “nude” or “flesh colored”
- Identifying only white people as great writers, composers, or historical leaders—and only acknowledging people of color as side notes, if at all.
- “Melting pot” theories, which require people of color to assimilate into dominant white culture and accept it as the norm.

HANDOUT

Those aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and whiteness, and devalue, stereotype, and label people of color as ‘other,’ different, less than, or render them invisible. Our society suppresses the cultures of people of color by concentrating cultural resources in the hands of white-controlled institutions, by subjecting cultural production and distribution to a market logic, and then by using this relative cultural monopoly to spread myths about the races, their abilities, and their roles, which provide the basis for racist belief and action in the other social institutions.

White privilege

White privilege refers to the rights, advantages & immunities enjoyed by white people in a culture that values whiteness as the norm. In her seminal essay, “Unpacking the Knapsack of White Privilege,” Peggy MacIntosh defined white privilege as “an invisible package of unearned assets which I [as a white person] can count on cashing in on each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious.”

Institutional racism

Institutional racism encompasses discriminatory treatment, unfair policies, and inequitable opportunities and impacts that are based on race, and that are produced and perpetuated by institutions. Institutional racism occurs within and between institutions, distributing resources in such a way as to reinforce the advantages of the white majority. Institutional racism is not based on intent, but it still has a severe impact.

Institutional racism is one of the forms of racism that is largely overshadowed by discussions of personal racism. When we focus on individual acts as the be-all and end-all of racism in the U.S., we lose sight of the institutional structures that perpetuate racism in some of the most insidious ways.

Racist institutions perpetuate the myth that racism is no longer relevant, which undermines our ability to dismantle it. In order to address racism in a meaningful way, we must rename and reframe our reality. We won’t end racism by tricking racist institutions. An institution can never be meaningfully and fully restructured to address racial inequities if the discussion is not framed around racism.

Structural Racism

Structural racism is defined by the Applied Research Center as “the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics [...] that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color.”

The intersection of structural racism, institutional violence, and historic deprivations creates a society in which racism and economic disparity are often intertwined. Structural racism:

- Operates through every institution (including non-profits!)
- Operates upon generation after generation of communities of color (as opposed to homophobia and transphobia, which, while they do have severe impacts, do not operate reliably & cyclically on generation after generation of a family or a community)
- Is at work in all parts of US society, including its history, culture, politics, and its very social fabric.

This analysis of structural racism informs a way to talk about racism, that is unique from the way we talk about homophobia and transphobia.

Ally 101: Why & How to Be a White Ally



50 minutes

SUMMARY

Developing a strong identity as an ally to communities of color and racial justice work can be challenging—and uniquely challenging in predominantly white LGBT communities, where we likely expect to have allies, rather than be allies. This discussion is designed to build investment in and understanding of what it means to be an ally.

GOALS

- To identify some ways that racism operates within the LGBT community, and what allows that racism to go unchecked.
- To identify participants' comfort and competency in discussing race and racial justice as allies.

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Handouts:
 - Tactics of Resistance
 - Moving from Concern to Action
 - Distancing Behaviors

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Why be an ally?	Large group discussion	10 minutes
Racism within the LGBT community	Large group discussion	20 minutes
Resistance to being effective allies	Lecture	15 minutes
Closing	Lecture	5 minutes

NOTE ON CURRICULUM:

This training is intended for a predominantly, if not entirely, white audience. That's because white folks often have a specific set of barriers to work through that can hold them back from being effective, dedicated allies and engaging meaningfully in racial justice work.

NOTE ON TRAINER:

In order to model being a good ally, this training should be facilitated by someone who identifies as white. The trainer should be very aware of the dynamics of race, power and privilege at play in the room, and should feel very comfortable acting as a model ally throughout. The trainer should also strive to invite participants into the conversation in a friendly way, so as to minimize participants' resistance to thinking critically about their own privilege, and about how racism plays out in LGBT communities.

► Why be an ally?

Trainer says:

In the LGBT rights movement, and for those of us who identify as LGBT, we spend a lot of time thinking about who our allies are—straight folks, non-trans folks and so forth. But we don't often think about being allies to other communities. That often comes to a head when we see race brought into the LGBT rights conversation, particularly around marriage—as we saw after Prop 8. So today we'll talk a little bit about being an LGBT ally to racial justice.

Ally 101: Why & How to Be a White Ally *(continued)*

Trainer asks:

Why should we be allies to racial justice in the LGBT rights movement?

Trainer writes responses on a flip chart:

Encourage both ideological answers (“it’s the right thing to do”) and strategic answers (“we can recruit more volunteers and broaden our base”). If conversation slows, or these points don’t come up, the trainer can introduce these answers:

- We can build coalitions that can win campaigns.
- We can counteract wedge issues (such as the “race wedge” during Prop 8 in California)
See page 76 for the definition of “wedge issues.”
- We can minimize negative media coverage.
- We build a movement that’s meaningful to more members of our communities. (Too often, LGBT people of color are silenced or just ignored. In one survey, LGBT students of color said they’d rather spend time in a people of color space that might not be LGBT-friendly than spend time in a racist LGBT space.)
- It makes our work easier! It’s easier to recruit more people to join a movement where more people are welcome.
- We can give to get back. (If you’re an ally to someone else, they’re more likely to be an ally to you—and too often, white LGBT people sit around waiting for people of color to spontaneously “show up” for LGBT rights. If we don’t show up for anybody else, why should anybody else show up for us?)

► Racism within the LGBT community

Trainer says:

There are a whole lot of reasons to build alliances with communities of color, right? But we can’t effectively or meaningfully do that unless and until we address race dynamics that exist within our communities and our movement.

Trainer asks:

What are some forms of racism that exist within LGBT communities and our movement?

Trainer writes responses on a flip chart, and should encourage both answers that reflect individual racism as well as broader, more structural examples. If conversation slows, the trainer can introduce these answers:

- LGBT people of color are often exotified—it’s not uncommon in LGBT communities to hear someone described as a “rice queen”—a person who only dates Asian Pacific Islanders—or to hear someone say “I don’t date Latinos,” etc.
- Gay people—and particularly white gay people—frequently compare the LGBT rights movement to the civil rights movement (“We’re not going to sit at the back of the bus anymore!” or “Gay is the new Black!”).
- We often fail to recognize our own history (for example, the fact that Sylvia Rivera, a trans-woman of color, was a key player in Stonewall).

Ally 101: Why & How to Be a White Ally *(continued)*

- We succumb to wedge campaigns around race, often playing the racist blame game (for example, popular media blaming the passage of Prop 8 on communities of color really took hold in LGBT communities).
- LGBT communities do a whole lot of cultural appropriation (example: appropriating voguing from LGBT communities of color, or white gay men enacting Black femininity by calling one another “girlfriend” or using the three snaps). While breaking gender boundaries can be really liberating for some, and can be an act of reclamation, the kind of femininity that’s used in that reclamation is often racially coded. The race element is often overlooked, and it can be really alienating to people of color.
- We fail to counter mainstream ideas of (usually white) LGBT people as saviors—often in direct contrast to people of color. (For example, we’ll often hear that families of color “can’t take care of their children,” so loving, often white, gay couples adopt foster children. Or, for another example, white gay folks are wealthy people who recycle, keep tidy homes and long for children, but can’t have them—while racially loaded “welfare queen” stereotypes can.)
- Overt racism can even thrive within white LGBT communities. (Shirley Q. Liquor is an immensely popular drag queen, played by a white performer in blackface and her performances consistently sell out.)
- We often assume that homophobia and transphobia operate in the same way as racism and other types of oppression—and they don’t!
- We expect that, without reciprocity, communities of color should support LGBT rights—despite all the racism that exists within our communities.
- In anti-oppressive spaces, we can tend to take up a whole lot of space and time. Anti-oppressive spaces ask that those who benefit from privilege step back so that others can lead the way and take ownership, because we understand that the best way to create lasting change in our communities is to share power and share space. And we recognize that the goals most worth achieving are the ones pursued by those impacted.
- Although we all experience homophobia and/or transphobia, many of us still benefit from other forms of privilege, because of our race, class, gender, ability, nationality and much more. But because we focus primarily on the oppression we experience, we often fail to see our privilege.

► Resistance to being effective allies

Trainer says:

For the past several decades, the LGBT rights movement hasn’t had the best track record around building meaningful coalitions, countering the privilege and oppression that exists within our community, and recognizing all members of the community. So when we talk about things like racism, white privilege and so forth, there can be a whole lot of resistance to owning

Ally 101: Why & How to Be a White Ally *(continued)*

up to where we're at in this conversation. Some of it is overt—some of it flies under the radar. So let's talk through some of the ways that that resistance shows up.

Trainer talking points:

As the trainer introduces each of these types of resistance, the trainer should ask if anyone has heard something like this, and encourage participants to share examples and ask questions.

- Claiming colorblindness (“I don’t see color..”)
- Blaming the victim (“they don’t have to bring it up that way..” “they’re so angry..”)
- Claiming the damage is unintentional (“I didn’t mean it like that..” “It was only a joke..”)
- Demanding that people of color be present for white people to understand racism (e.g., challenging closed spaces, or asking one person of color to speak for the entire community)
- Playing “the distinguished lecturer” (talking a lot of theory without taking action, or thinking hard about one’s own practices)
- Claiming to be exempt from racism (“the real problem is in the South..” “I had friends of color growing up..”)

Trainer distributes:

Handouts: *Tactics of Resistance, Distancing Behaviors* and *Moving from Concern to Action*

► Closing

Trainer talking points:

- In order to build a lasting movement for LGBT rights and social justice, and in order to build a movement that reflects our whole community, each of us needs to be fully aware of all of this. We need to recognize racism as it exists within queer and trans communities. We need to know where our privilege lies. And we need to notice when that internalized privilege sneaks up on us, and shows up in the form of any of these distancing tactics.
- Certainly, we’ve got to be able to see when all of this is at work in those around us and be willing to have conversations with those who share whatever privileges we may hold. But we’ve also got to be willing to challenge ourselves, to think hard about the ways that we interact with one another and to get used to being uncertain or uncomfortable.
- And ultimately, we need to remember that this is the right thing to do, and it’s also strategically smart. Without tackling racism within and around our communities, we put a Band-Aid on a much bigger wound. Plus, if we don’t step up as allies, we’ll struggle much harder than we need to every time we head to the ballot, or the legislature, or even just talk to our friends and neighbors about the importance of LGBT rights.

Tactics of Resistance

Tactic	What it is	What it sounds like
Denial	Denial of existence of oppression; denial of responsibility for it.	Discrimination is a thing of the past. It's a level playing field. It's not my fault; I'm not responsible.
Minimization	Playing down the damage.	Racism isn't a big problem anymore. It's not that bad.
Blame	Justifying the oppression, blaming the victims of oppression for it.	If they weren't so angry... Women are too emotional.
Lack of intent	Claims the damage is unintentional.	Nobody meant for that to happen. It was only a joke.
It's over now	The oppression happened in the past and is no longer an issue.	We live in a post-racial society! Slavery was over a long time ago. Feminism was a good idea, but it has gone too far.
Competing victimization	Claiming that targets of oppression have so much power that society is threatened.	Women really have all the power. We just want our rights, too.

Adapted from Paul Kivel's *Uprooting Racism*, 1996, pp. 40-46.

HANDOUT

Distancing Behaviors

The behavior	What it is
Definitions	Requiring clear definitions of racism (or sexism, etc.) before committing to analysis or action (when clear definitions of religion, politics, morals, etc. are not required in similar situations)
Where are the others?	A demand that people of color be present for white people to understand themselves or commit to analysis or action (when we don't demand the presence of poor people or politicians to analyze or act on poverty or politics)
This "ism" isn't the only problem	The suggestion that there is little reason to concentrate on a particular "ism" when there are others just as serious
The distinguished lecturer	A tendency to talk about the problem without taking any action; a competition over who has the best analysis
The instant solution	The proposal that "love" is the solution, or "changing the schools" is the solution, or a focus on one strategy that makes good sense but remains centered in how things should be rather than how they are
Find the racist	When one or a few white people target another white person for inappropriate comments or ideas, leaving those doing the "accusing" feeling righteous but actually closing down any opportunity for meaningful discussion
Target the expert	Asking people of color to answer questions and represent all people of color with their answers
Geography	Claiming the real problems are "in the South," or somewhere else; or claiming, for example, that racism isn't a problem for you because there were not people of color in your community growing up

Adapted from Jim Edler's paper *Distancing Behaviors Among White Group Dealing with Racism*

Moving from Concern to Action

- Have I intentionally and aggressively sought to educate myself further on issues of racism by talking with others, viewing films/videos, finding reading material, attending lectures, joining a study group or other activities?
- Have I spent some time reflecting on my own childhood and upbringing and analyzing where, how and when I was receiving racist messages?
- Have I spent some time recently looking at my own attitudes and behaviors as an adult to determine how I am contributing to or combating racism?
- Have I eliminated my use of language, light and dark imagery and other terms or phrases that might be degrading or hurtful to others?
- Have I openly disagreed with a racist comment, joke, reference or action among those around me?
- Have I made a clear promise to myself that I will interrupt racist comments, actions, etc. that occur around me—even when this involves some personal risk?
- Have I grown in my awareness of racism in TV programs, advertising and news coverage?
- Have I objected to those in charge about racism in TV programs, advertising and news coverage?
- Have I taken steps to organize discussion groups or a workshop aimed at unlearning racism with friends, family members, colleagues or members of my house of worship?
- Have I organized to support political candidates committed to racial justice and to oppose political candidates who are not?
- Have I contributed financially to an organization, fund or project that actively confronts the problems of racism?
- Do my personal buying habits support stores and companies that demonstrate a commitment to racial justice both in the United States and in other countries?
- Have I organized to support multi-cultural anti-racist curriculum in local schools?
- Do I see myself as a resource person for referrals—directing white people to individuals, organizations and resources who assist others in dismantling racism?
- Have I made a contract with myself to keep paying attention to the issue of racism over weeks, months and years?

Adapted from *White Awareness: A Handbook for Anti-Racist Training*

Case Study: Jim Maguire, Activist

Lessons Learned

Jim's experience with Basic Rights Oregon demonstrates that people learn in different ways -and that primarily white organizations committed to building a racial justice agenda need to be in it for the long haul and commit to regular, repeated political education for volunteer leaders.

Jim is a white gay man and a consistent volunteer and leader with Basic Rights Oregon. A graduate of the Naval Academy, Jim works as a professional in the high-tech sector and lives in a suburban neighborhood just outside Portland, Oregon.

"I think of myself as fiscally conservative and socially liberal. I got involved in Basic Rights Oregon to help pass a nondiscrimination law and win domestic partnership rights. I served on the Human Rights Commission in my community, have testified at the legislature and was a member of the Basic Rights Oregon volunteer team in my county."



Over the past three years, Jim has attended a number of Basic Rights Oregon trainings. Twice he attended the organization's Leadership Summit—a daylong gathering for volunteer leaders, complete with planning, networking and training sessions.

At these Summits, the Basic Rights Oregon team worked to introduce a new approach to its work, designed to build an LGBT movement that addresses the interests and needs of LGBT people of color and immigrants at the same time as fighting for basic nondiscrimination protections and relationship recognition.

At the 2005 Summit, leaders of CAUSA, Oregon's statewide immigrant rights coalition, led a session on the connections between immigrant rights and LGBT equality.

"I remember going to the break-out session about how to connect with the immigration rights groups. I didn't get it. The leadership of Basic Rights Oregon was telling us that we needed to work with these groups. But I kept thinking that we should be focusing on building alliances with communities that are more likely to support LGBT equality."

At a plenary session during the Summit, Jim stood up and asked why the organization was so focused on immigration issues. He didn't feel like there was a chance to discuss this question fully.

Even though he had misgivings about certain aspects of the organization's strategy, Jim stayed involved, focusing on the legislative and political campaigns. He also joined the Board of Basic Rights Oregon's Political Action Committee.

In 2008, Jim attended another Summit. In that year, opponents of LGBT equality were trying to force a public vote to repeal Oregon's landmark domestic partnerships law. At the same time, right-wing activists were gathering signatures for ballot measures targeting immigrants, union members and increasing mandatory prison sentences.

The 2008 Summit opened with a PowerPoint presentation from organizer and Professor Daniel HoSang describing the links among anti-LGBT, anti-immigrant, anti-union and racist campaign leaders.

"That presentation brought it all together and helped it make sense. The same groups funding attacks on the LGBT community are funding the anti-immigration movement and trying to increase prison sentences.

"I had a moment of clarity: The right wing is trying to divide us. Gay people, immigrants, minority groups—we should be standing together. And if we don't stand up for immigration reform—for those groups who aren't exactly our own group—how can we turn around and ask them for help when we're under attack?"

Looking back, Jim makes it clear that it took him time to decide that his struggle for justice was intertwined with other struggles.

"I just needed time to digest it, to be able to put it into a knowledge base and historical context. Frankly, I'm a 6-foot-3 white guy who doesn't face much trouble anywhere until people find out I'm gay. And even then they don't want to mess with me. But at the trainings and Summits I've realized that other folks come to this work from different angles. It's reminded me that not everyone has the same experience of being LGBT. We all need to work together."

From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment



80 minutes

SUMMARY

THIS EXERCISE IS MEANT TO BE DONE IN A CLOSED/SAFE SPACE FOR SELF-IDENTIFIED LGBT PEOPLE OF COLOR. This exercise will examine the impact that racism, homophobia and transphobia have on people who identify as LGBT people of color. By understanding the process of oppression participants will gain an understanding of the internalized effects it has on our communities. The exercise concludes with a participatory description and discussion of the “Ladder of Empowerment.” This describes the process our identities go through in order to strive for empowerment.

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Handout:
The Ladder of Empowerment

GOALS

- To discuss the process and impact of internalized oppression while introducing an approach to empowerment.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	15 minutes
Storytelling - Oppression	Pair and share	10 minutes
The Ladder of Empowerment	Lecture, large group discussion	45 minutes
Storytelling - Empowerment	Pair and Share	10 minutes

NOTE ON TRAINER:

This training should only be facilitated by individuals who identify as LGBT people of color. The trainer should be comfortable articulating the complexities and unique experience of having multiple marginalized identities—both the barriers and opportunities these bring. The trainer should also be prepared to facilitate very honest, personal and potentially emotional conversations.

► **Introduction**

Trainer says:

This is a time for us as LGBT people of color to come together and have a discussion about our identities and the experiences unique to us.

Internalized racism, homophobic and transphobic oppression are the internalization by LGBT people of color of the images, stereotypes, prejudices and myths promoted by the racist and anti-LGBT system about our identities and communities in this country—+even though LGBT people of color are rarely recognized by mainstream culture or politics. Our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, people of color and/or other LGBT people are based on the oppressive messages we receive from the broader systems of culture. For many LGBT people of color in our communities, this manifests itself as:

From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment (*continued*)

Written on flip chart:

The Impact of Internalized Oppression on our Community

- Self-doubt
- Inferiority complex
- Self-hate
- Powerlessness
- Hopelessness
- Apathy
- Addictive behavior
- Abusive and violent relationships
- Conflict between and within communities of color and LGBT communities

Trainer says:

When we look at the history of oppression of LGBT and people of color in this country, though there are many differences, there are also many similarities—and of course there is the combined and unique experiences we face as LGBT people of color. All of these methods are still being used in the continuing process of oppression.

► **Storytelling - Oppression**

Trainer instructs:

Find a partner for this next exercise. Now think of a time you experienced discrimination or felt the personal effects of oppression. Take two minutes to share the story with your partner and then switch and have the other person share their experience.

(Provide five minutes total to complete this task, with a verbal instruction to switch storytellers at the two-minute mark. Bring back attention from the whole group at five minutes.)

The reason we had you all share these stories was to highlight the fact that every single one of us has experienced oppression—most likely at many times and due to many factors—especially as LGBT people of color. This reality comes with many repercussions, but also gives us the tools to attain great strength and empowerment.

► **The Ladder of Empowerment**

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *The Ladder of Empowerment*

Trainer says:

The Ladder of Empowerment is designed to highlight the impact of internalized oppression on LGBT people of color while outlining an approach to empowerment.

Empowerment is not a state but a process. It is a journey that all LGBT people of color must take in order to heal and protect ourselves from the devastating impact of racism, homophobia and transphobia.

From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment (*continued*)

The Ladder of Empowerment takes us through various stages in both identity development and the process of empowerment. It is important to remember that all of these stages exist at the same time in all LGBT people of color. Critical questions for us to ask are which stage dominates our life and in what direction are we heading.

We also may be experiencing a stage as it relates to racism specifically, or homophobia or transphobia specifically, or several of these factors at once. The oppressive system is always pushing us to stay in the lower stages. Our job is to find ways to work with the people around us to help ourselves and others move through the process and become more empowered.

We are going to walk through the different Stages of Development:

Written on flip chart:

1. "I am" Not White/Not Straight/Not Gender Conforming

Trainer says:

The empowerment process begins when an LGBT person of color realizes that they are not white, not straight and/or not gender conforming. This can happen throughout a person's lifetime. We begin to understand that we are part of a group and not considered White, nor a group that is considered straight. It is in this stage that we realize that all of the racist and anti-LGBT stereotypes, images and prejudices that we are hearing and have heard are about us.

This realization can cause a psychological crisis in LGBT people of color. The crisis can take the following forms:

Bold text written on flip chart:

Potential Outcomes:

- **LGBT people of color decide to try to become white and/or straight/gender conforming.** Changing one's physical features, mannerisms and gender expression to look white and/or straight is a way to deny that they are not white/straight.
- **People try to be as good as white and/or straight people.** This person uses whites and/or straight people as a model of humanity. So whatever white and/or straight people have, they must have. Whatever they do, we must do.
- **This stage can cause depression and confusion.**
- **Some LGBT people of color get angry or mad at the realization of racist and anti-LGBT oppression and that they are not white and/or straight.** This anger can help catapult people to the next stage.

Written on flip chart:

2. Rage/Depression

Trainer says:

Rage is the stage where LGBT people of color are often consumed by anger at white and/or straight people for their racism, homophobia and transphobia. Rage is a reaction to the brutal oppression LGBT people of color have endured for hundreds of years based on several aspects

From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment (*continued*)

of our identity. Rage can take the form of LGBT people of color attacking white and/or straight people, or other antagonistic behavior. Some LGBT people of color actually think that rage is empowerment. But in reality, it is the opposite. Rage isn't empowerment because it usually is not driven by the desire to strategically and constructively dismantle systems of oppression. Rage is reactionary.

The other side of this stage can often be depression. LGBT people of color can react to the realization of the previous stage by being overwhelmed with the immensity of the oppression they will have to endure. Depression can also be the result of identity conflict.

Written on flip chart:

3. Exclusion and Immersion

Trainer says:

In this stage, LGBT people of color use our rage productively by directing it to temporarily exclude white and/or straight people from our social lives and immerse ourselves in our own culture. This is a necessary stage of development for LGBT people of color. Exclusion gives us time and space to deal with our issues. Immersion can be a healing time when we learn about the culture that was taken away from us. Some LGBT people of color mistake excluding white and/or straight people from our circle or immersing ourselves in our culture as empowerment. We think that by only having “us” around we have reached our ultimate goal. Some of these people remain in this stage for years. For other LGBT people of color, this exclusion and immersion can push them to the next stage. We want to learn more about ourselves, our people and our history.

Written on flip chart:

4. Self Awareness & Investigation

Trainer says:

In the previous stage, LGBT people of color begin to develop an awareness of ourselves, our culture and our history. In this stage awareness is not enough; we want a much deeper level of knowledge. We need to understand our place in history and in the world. It is particularly useful and important to investigate and study the history and culture of other LGBT people, other people of color and those in power. This gives us a better perspective about ourselves, and helps us prevent the wedges that racism, homophobia and transphobia so often constructs between groups in order to divide and conquer us.

Written on flip chart

5. Challenging

Trainer says:

With all the knowledge and awareness that we have gained through this process, now it is time for action. We need to work with other LGBT people of color and white and straight people, and learn how to challenge each other and to be challenged. One of the impacts of internalized oppression is that it makes challenging racism, homophobia and transphobia difficult. Part of

From Internalized Oppression to Empowerment (*continued*)

our empowerment is learning to resist and challenge despite the internal and external barriers. If we cannot do this, we could fall backward into one of the previous stages like rage or exclusion.

Written on flip chart:

6. Collective Action

Trainer says:

It is not enough to challenge oppressive moments individually, although that is incredibly important. Here we work together to build an organization or institution. The process of empowerment becomes a collective process. LGBT people of color must be working with other LGBT and white allies to stay truly empowered. The goal is to be a part of a community of resistance.

Written on flip chart:

7. Community of Resistance

A Community of Resistance is

- Organizing for collective power to work for social justice and transformation.
- Building a community that can heal the remnants of racism, homophobia and transphobia—and internalized oppression.
- Building a community or organization that can help members learn to think critically about the community, country and world.
- Developing a culture and specific projects that promote leadership development to help LGBT people of color live out their potential.
- LGBT people of color can never truly be empowered until we develop formal and informal systems of accountability with our community. We must be able to hold each other responsible for our actions lovingly and effectively.

► **Storytelling - Empowerment**

Trainer instructs:

Find a different partner for a second round of storytelling.

Now think of a time you experienced empowerment and broke out of the effects of oppression. Take two minutes to share the story with your partner and then switch and have the other person share their experience.

(Give participants 5 minutes total to complete this task, with a verbal instruction to switch storytellers at the two-minute mark. Bring back attention from the whole group at five minutes.)

The Ladder of Empowerment



This workshop tool was created by **changework** - 1705 Wallace Street, Durham, NC 27707, 919-490-4448 and adapted from Western States Center's Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 41-47). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

Challenging Oppressive Moments



90 minutes

SUMMARY

Participants will learn a simple tool for interrupting racist and oppressive moments, discuss the continuum of oppressive behavior and practice interrupting oppressive moments.

GOALS

- Give individuals tools for handling racist and oppressive moments.
- Clarify the roles of allies in interrupting racism.
- Understand the continuum and effects of oppressive behaviors.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture and large group discussion	15 minutes
Continuum of oppressive moments	Small group activity	20 minutes
Interrupting oppressive moments	Lecture and trainer roleplay	30 minutes
Roleplay and debrief	Roleplays	25 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Continuum, cut into pieces (enough for your group)
- Handout: Best Practices for Challenging Oppressive Moments

► Introduction

Trainer says:

Oppressive moments occur all the time. We as individuals can challenge these moments as we try to create justice in the world in which we live. When building progressive social change organizations, challenging oppressive moments is essential to both internal and external work and the success of the organization.

Trainer asks:

Why is it important to challenge racist moments when they happen in our organizations?

Write participant responses on a flip chart or white board.

Trainer says (written on flip chart):

Why challenging racism is important

- Creates a more supportive environment for targeted communities.
- Creates an anti-oppressive organizational culture.
- Is an opportunity for political education.
- Can hold people with institutional power accountable.
- Can create justice in the moment.
- Shows people of color they are welcome, expected and supported.

Challenging Oppressive Moments is a shared curriculum of Western States Center and Basic Rights Education Fund.

Challenging Oppressive Moments *(continued)*

Trainer asks:

What are your biggest fears in challenging racism?

Take responses from varied participants. Acknowledge the real fears, restate responses, and try to categorize fears that are connected or build on one another.

Trainer note:

People will likely give a few categories including: being perceived as overly politically correct/“PC” or sensitive, over-reacting, not being sure about the intent of the other person/ misinterpreting, saying the wrong thing, retribution or being punished within an institutional setting, using stereotypes to address a stereotype. Make sure to note that the reasons for fears or concerns about challenging oppressive moments can change based on if you are part of the group being targeted or are an ally.

► **Continuum of oppressive moments**

Break group into triads of three people. Each small group gets a set of seven different oppressive behaviors (the continuum handout should be cut up, mixed up and then handed to groups).

Trainer should draw a line on a flip chart with “least dangerous” on the left end and ‘most dangerous’ on the right end. Ask small groups to arrange the oppressive behaviors on the line from least dangerous to most dangerous.

Small groups should take five to seven minutes.

Trainer asks:

What behaviors did people have under the least dangerous? What about the most dangerous?

Share the following flip chart once a few pairs have talked about their own continuums:

Least Dangerous-----**Most Dangerous**
 Jokes Name Calling Stereotypes Discrimination Harassment Assault Murder

Trainer points:

- None of these are harmless. All of them perpetuate racism.
- The behaviors on the least dangerous end of the spectrum help normalize hateful and oppressive behavior on the most dangerous end of the spectrum.
- The constant presence of jokes, stereotypes and some forms of oppressive discrimination create an atmosphere of tolerance for more physically dangerous or lethal situations.
- Discrimination is in front of harassment because harassment moves the behavior up/escalates. Discriminating against someone because they belong to a particular group usually means that you are in the negative (not letting the individual join your group, not giving equal treatment or rights), whereas harassment is the positive/proactive attempt to minimize, hurt or degrade someone because of their identity.
- Most forms of oppression can be laid out on this kind of continuum. For the rest of the

Challenging Oppressive Moments *(continued)*

training, we are focusing on challenging racist moments that we do not think will escalate to physical confrontation or violence.

Trainer asks:

Does anyone have anything they want to add?

► **Interrupting racism**

Trainer says:

It's important to be clear about when you are a target of the oppression and when you are an ally to the group being oppressed.

Trainer asks:

Why do you think this can be an important differentiation?

Trainer points:

Your response as an ally should be different from the response that you may have when you are a part of the group being targeted.

- Find an example where the identity of the trainer is the target of an oppressive comment or remark. Possible script for a trainer who identifies as a woman is: When someone tells a sexist joke, as a woman, I may decide to leave the room, to laugh it off, to ignore it, to support other women in the room, or to talk to the person later. Or doing internal self-defense may be all I feel like doing and that's fine. I can also interrupt the moment, but these other options are important when you are being targeted.

But it changes when I'm an ally who hears an oppressive comment being made. Allies who choose not to challenge oppressive moments externally/using our words can be seen as being complicit and part of the oppression.

- Provide an example around a racist remark. Possible script for a person who identifies as white is: When someone makes a rude comment or stereotype about people of color being lazy, it's my job as a white person to interrupt it.

In other words, when allies choose not to act externally they are acting oppressively.

Trainer asks:

What are some examples of racist remarks you have heard within LGBT spaces or our LGBT equality work? Have there been moments you've had a hard time responding? Have there been moments you've had a hard time figuring out whether or not a remark was racist?

Trainer says:

These are great examples. Let's try a tool that will likely be a big help in these situations (and more!).

Challenging Oppressive Moments *(continued)*

The model that we are going to practice for interrupting racist moments has four simple steps.

Written on a flip chart:

Assertiveness model

1. Breathe
2. Name the behavior
3. Tell how it makes you feel or say why the behavior is wrong (optional)
4. Give a direction

Trainer explains:

Breathe. It is always helpful to ground oneself in an oppressive moment.

Name the behavior: In this model it is useful to focus on behavior instead of a person. Many of us have the hardest time naming behavior as racist, anti-Semitic or homophobic because it goes against all of our conditioning.

Note that we are not labeling the person, just naming the behavior.

Tell how it makes you feel or say what the impact of the behavior is: When we choose to tell someone how we feel it often helps keep the relationship strong during and after the interruption. For instance, when we care about someone and want to continue being in a relationship with them, then it can sometimes be helpful to share our feelings. In other situations it may be most helpful to talk with someone as to why the behavior is oppressive or why behaving in an oppressive way is wrong.

Give a direction: Giving a clear direction about what you expect the person to do such as “Don’t say that again” or “I want to ask you to do some thinking about why you think that way” can be very helpful in ending an oppressive moment. It can also help keep your challenge from turning in to a two-hour conversation.

Trainer says:

So let’s practice first by using this model on something that is not an oppressive moment.

Trainer note:

Make sure that people stick to giving 3-4 sentences only. Remind people to breathe prior to speaking. Model the first example and then ask others to respond to you as the person being given direction.

- Someone is standing too close in a grocery store: “You’re standing too close to me. I don’t like it. Take a step back.”
- Your best friend keeps forgetting to return your favorite CD: “You keep forgetting to bring back my CD, which is frustrating to me. Please put it in your bag as soon as you get home.”
- A co-worker keeps coming in to your office to chat, but you have a deadline to meet: “You’ve been in to chat several times today, but I’m feeling overwhelmed with this deadline. Let’s talk during lunch tomorrow instead.”

Challenging Oppressive Moments *(continued)*

Trainer asks:

What did you think? What worked well?

Review Do's and Don'ts:

Trainer says (written on flip chart):

Do

- Have good body language
- Maintain eye contact
- If the oppressive moment happens in a group, say something in the moment
- Ask the person to let you finish and to listen

Don't

- Name call: Call the person a racist
- Talk for too long: This isn't the time to have a significant conversation
- Stay in the moment: Use other examples, stick to the situation you are in
- Be a chatterbox: Gossip about the moment if you aren't willing to address it with the person

► Roleplays and debrief

Trainer note:

Make sure to select participants for the roleplays before the training starts. Ask them to read the scripts so that they are familiar with what happens.

The trainer may play the person interrupting the racism each time to ensure it is modeled well.

Transition to roleplaying specific racist comments. Use the attached scripts to roleplay in front of the larger group. Discuss what worked, what participants would find challenging and how they might use the tool.

Split group into pairs. One partner will play the person making an oppressive comment, the other person will interrupt it. People of color participants have the option to pass on this exercise, or can participate in ways that feel comfortable for them.

Roleplays should take 20 minutes. Be sure that folks switch roles and circulate the room to see how things are working.

Debrief pairs in the large group exercise—what worked well? What did you notice that your partner did well?

Many folks have a challenge with the last part of the assertiveness model, which is giving a direction. Close with a brainstorm about additional direction statements.

Write responses on a flip chart.

Challenging Oppressive Moments *(continued)*

Continuum Directions:

Cut this sheet so that each behavior is on a separate piece of paper and so that participants can create their own continuum.

Jokes

Name calling

Stereotypes

Discrimination

Harassment

Physical or Sexual Assault

Murder

Challenging Oppressive Moments *(continued)*

Script for Interrupting a Racist and Oppressive Moment

Trainers can use this script to practice interrupting racist moments.

Scenario 1: Two board members are talking to each other after a board meeting.

Jennifer: It's interesting that we keep having these conversations about immigrant rights, especially when they have more rights than us.

Carl: What do you mean?

Jennifer: I mean, you know, even all the Mexican immigrants who are here illegally can get married whereas law-abiding gay U.S. citizens don't even have that right, and we didn't do anything wrong.

Carl: (Takes a breath)

Carl: That comment feels anti-immigrant and racist.

All people, regardless of their origin or what kind of documentation they have, are deserving of all rights. That's why we do this work.

As board members, we need to model that our organization fights for everyone to have the same rights, and I want to ask you to think about what it means to be committed to justice for all.

Scenario 2: A volunteer is talking with a staff person about the organization's efforts to build relationships with African American faith leaders in the region.

Volunteer: Is it true that you've been meeting with the East Hills Ministry Alliance?

Staff: That's right. Developing relationships with faith communities and supporting their work is an important part of building a strong movement.

Volunteer: I agree that working with supportive churches is important, but I just don't get why you're dealing with *those* churches. Black pastors are so homophobic.

Staff: (Takes a breath)

Staff: You're making an assumption that all Black churches are homophobic and that simply isn't true. There are just as many white pastors and churches that don't support LGBT equality but people don't make generalizations about white folks as they do with people of color.

I feel really disappointed when I hear sweeping statements like this.

I want you to remember that these are assumptions based in racist stereotypes that only divide our communities and the organization is actively working to change that dynamic.

Linking the Issues

Illustrating clear links between LGBT rights and racial justice is where much of our work of *Standing Together* comes to life. It's where our supporters can see the real-life connections that bridge our communities and movements. And it's where we, as an organization, can reap the rewards of a broadening coalition, a deepening analysis and a re-energized and invested base.

The information and activities in this section are designed to help volunteers, donors and constituents understand—and feel—the urgency of working across identities, communities and movements. These exercises present a number

of opportunities in this work. They are opportunities to unmask the people and tactics that attack both LGBT communities and communities of color. They're an opportunity to talk about the similarities and differences between LGBT communities and communities of color. And they're an opportunity to counteract the frequent lack of visibility of LGBT people of color, immigrants and refugees.

The workshop tools in this section are some of our most tried and true curriculum pieces. When we work to link the issues, we see our base step up, get invested and get engaged in work across lines of identity and community.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS SECTION:

WORKSHOP TOOL	FORMAT	TIME	PAGE
The Common Elements of Oppression	Large group activity and discussion	50 minutes	59
The Strategy of “Special Rights”	Lecture and large group discussion	35 minutes	74
Civil Rights and LGBT Equality: Comparing Two Movements	Lecture and large group discussion	15 minutes	80
Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality: A Shared Timeline	Lecture, small group activity, individual activity and large group discussion	65 minutes	82
Crossing the Border: REAL ID, Transpeople and Immigrants	Lecture and large group discussion	50 minutes	135

The Common Elements of Oppression



50 minutes

SUMMARY

In order to understand how forms of oppression, including racism, function, we break them down into basic elements. In 1988, Suzanne Pharr wrote an essay that spoke about those basic elements and how disregarding the differences between racism and homophobia and transphobia is as dangerous as not seeing the similarities. Pharr’s essay addresses both of these dynamics.

GOALS

- To gain a shared understanding of how different types of oppression operate similarly and distinctly in different communities and at different times.
- To build a shared language around oppression.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Large group discussion	10 minutes
Guess the term	Large group activity	15 minutes
Report back and debrief	Individuals share with the larger group	25 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Name tag stickers or half sheets of paper with terms written on them
- Handout: The Common Elements of Oppression

► **Introduction**

Trainer says:

In order to understand how forms of racism function, we have to break them down into more basic elements. In 1988, a gender studies professor named Suzanne Pharr wrote an essay that aimed to talk about those basic elements as they worked in many forms of oppression, including racism. In the intro to that essay, she wrote:

Written on flip chart:

“There is no hierarchy of oppressions. Each is terrible and destructive. To eliminate one oppression successfully, a movement has to include work to eliminate them all or else success will always be limited and incomplete.”

Trainer says:

This is a huge part of the reason that we’re all here today—to make anti-oppression work the most effective it can be. So let’s explore some of those common elements of oppression that Suzanne Pharr defined.

Trainer distributes:

Each individual gets a sticker or half sheet of paper with one of Suzanne Pharr’s 16 terms from *The Common Elements of Oppression* on it. Place a term on the back of each participant, and

This workshop tool was adapted from Western States Center’s Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 26-36). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

The Common Elements of Oppression *(continued)*

make sure they do not see or know what their term is. If there are more than 16 participants, double up on terms- it is ok if more than one person has the same term.

► Guess the term

Trainer instructs:

Participants have 10 minutes to talk to other people in the room who can offer examples or definitions of their term, but they may NOT use the term in its own definition. Participants can neither confirm nor deny whether someone else has guessed correctly. Each individual person must talk to at least 3 others to get examples and definitions of their word. Remember:

Written on flip chart:

- DON'T look at your term!
- DON'T use the term in its own definition!
- DO give others an example of their term.
- DON'T confirm or deny correct guesses.
- DO talk to three people!

► Report back and debrief

Call the full group back together.

Trainer asks/instructs:

- “Who is absolutely sure they know what their term is?”
- “What clues were you given?”
- “What do you think your term is?”
- Ask participant to reveal term.
- Ask group: “Does anybody feel like they have a really good definition of this term?”
- Read Pharr’s definition. (Definitions and examples can be found at the end of *The Common Elements of Oppression* handout.)

After participants have guessed and revealed their terms, move on to those who have no idea, then (if you have time) those who are moderately sure.

Trainer points for closing:

- These are facts of life for members of oppressed groups, but they are also tactics put forth to maintain the status quo. And these tactics are set in motion not by members of the oppressed group, but largely by members of the empowered majority—who are often straight, often white, often male, often non-transgender and often documented U.S. citizens.
- Although different types of oppression are interlocking and at times operate similarly, each type of oppression is distinct in how it is enacted and how it is experienced.
- In order to fight homophobia, we can’t just aim to gain rights for the LGBT community, we must also work for broader social justice, and think and talk critically about oppression and the ways in which it is enacted.

The Common Elements of Oppression *(continued)*

THE COMMON ELEMENTS OF OPPRESSION 16 TERMS:

Defined Norm
Institutional power
Economic power
Myth of scarcity
Violence
The Other
Internalized oppression
Invisibility
Horizontal hostility
Distortion
Stereotyping
Blaming the victim
Tokenism
Isolation
Individual solutions
Assimilation

THE COMMON ELEMENTS OF OPPRESSION

By Suzanne Pharr

Text from Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism Chardon Press, 1988

It is virtually impossible to view one oppression, such as sexism or homophobia, in isolation because they are all connected: sexism, racism, homophobia, classism, ableism, anti-Semitism, ageism. They are linked by a common origin—economic power and control—and by common methods of limiting, controlling and destroying lives. There is no hierarchy of oppressions. Each is terrible and destructive. To eliminate one oppression successfully, a movement has to include work to eliminate them all or else success will always be limited and incomplete.

To understand the connection among the oppressions, we must examine their common elements. The first is a defined norm, a standard of rightness and often righteousness wherein all others are judged in relation to it. This norm must be backed up with institutional power, economic power, and both institutional and individual violence. It is the combination of these three elements that makes complete power and control possible. In the United States, that norm is male, white, heterosexual, Christian, temporarily able-bodied, youthful, and has access to wealth and resources. It is important to remember that an established norm does not necessarily represent a majority in terms of number; it represents those who have ability to exert power and control over others.

It is also important to remember that this group has to have institutional power. For instance, I often hear people say that they know people of color simply do not have institutional power to back up their hatred or bigotry or prejudice and therefore cannot be deemed racist. In the same way, women do not have the power to institutionalize their prejudice against men, so there is no such thing as “reverse sexism.” How do we know this? We simply have to take a look at the representation of women and people of color in our institutions. Take, for example, the U.S. Congress. What percentage of its members are people of color or women? Or look at the criminal justice system which carries out the laws the white males who predominate in Congress create: how many in that system are people of color? And then when we look at the percentage of each race that is incarcerated, that is affected by these laws, we see that a disproportionate number are people of color. We see the same lack of representation in financial institutions, in the leadership of churches and synagogues, in the military.

In our schools, the primary literature and history taught are about the exploits of white men, shown through the white man’s eyes. Black history, for instance, is still relegated to one month, whereas “American history” is taught all year around. Another major institution, the media, remains controlled and dominated by white men and their images of themselves.

In order for these institutions to be controlled by a single group of people, there must be economic power. Earlier I discussed the necessity to maintain racism and sexism so that people of color and women will continue to provide a large pool of unpaid or low-paid labor. Once economic control is in the hands of the few, all others can be controlled through perpetuation of the myth of scarcity which suggests that our resources are limited and blames the poor for

using up too much of what little there is to go around. It is this myth that is called forth, for instance, when those in power talk about immigration through our southern borders (immigrants who also happen to be people of color). The warning is clear: if you let those people in, they will take your jobs, ruin your schools which are already in economic struggle, destroy the few neighborhoods that are good for people to live in. People are pitted against one another along race and class lines. Meanwhile, those who have economic power continue to make obscenely excessive profits, often by taking their companies out of the country into economically depressed countries occupied by people of color where work can be bought for minuscule wages and profits are enormous. It is not the poor or working class population that is consuming and/or destroying the world's resources; it is those who make enormous profits from the exploitation of those resources, the top 10 percent of the population.

That economic power ensures control of institutions. Let's go back to the example of the Congress. How much does it cost to run a campaign to be elected to the House or Senate? One does not find poor people there, for in order to spend the hundreds of thousands of dollars that campaigns cost, one has to be either personally rich or well connected to those who are rich. And the latter means being in debt, one way or another, to the rich. Hence, when a congressperson speaks or votes, who does he (or occasionally she) speak for? Those without access to wealth and resources or those who pay the campaign bills? Or look at the criminal justice system. It is not by chance that crimes against property are dealt with more seriously than crimes against persons. Or that police response to calls from well-to-do neighborhoods is more efficient than to poor neighborhoods. Schools in poor neighborhoods in most instances lack good facilities and resources; and a media that is controlled by advertising does not present an impartial, truth-seeking vision of the world. Both schools and the media present what is in the best interest of the prevailing norm.

The maintenance of societal and individual power and control requires the use of violence and the threat of violence. Institutional violence is sanctioned through the criminal justice system and the threat of the military—for quelling individual or group uprisings. One of the places we can most readily see the interplay of institutional and individual violence is in the white man's dealings with the Native American population. Since the white man first "discovered" this country, which was occupied by large societies of Indians who maintained their own culture, religion, politics, education, economy and justice, the prevailing norm has been to lay claim to land resources for those who have the power to establish control by might and thus ensure their superior economic position. This "might" brings with it a sense of superiority and often of divine right. The Native Americans were driven from their land and eventually placed (some would say incarcerated) on reservations. By defending their lands and their lives, they became the "enemy". Consequently, we now have a popular culture whose teaching of history represents the Native American as a cruel savage and through hundreds of films shows the white man as civilized and good in pursuing his destiny and the Native American as bad in protecting his life and culture. Institutional racism is so complete that now great numbers of Native Americans, having lost their land and having had their culture assaulted, live in poverty and in isolation from the benefits of mainstream culture. And on the personal level, racism is so overt that television stations still run cowboy-and-Indian movies, and parents buy their children cowboy-and-Indian outfits so that they can act out genocide in their play.

For gay men and lesbians this interplay of institutional and personal violence comes through both written and unwritten laws. In the 25 states that still have sodomy laws, there is an increase in tolerance for violence against lesbians and gay men, whether it is police harassment or the lack of police protection when gay and lesbian people are assaulted. The fact that courts in many states deny custody to gay and lesbian parents and that schools, either through written or unwritten policy, do not hire openly gay and lesbian teachers creates a climate in which it is permissible to act out physical violence toward lesbian and gay people.

And as I discussed in an earlier chapter, for all groups it is not just the physical violence that controls us but the ever constant threat of violence. For women, it is not just the rape and battering or the threat of these abuses but also that one's life is limited by the knowledge that one quite likely will not be honored in court. The violence is constantly nurtured by institutions that do not respect those different from the norm. Thus, the threat of violence exists at every level.

There are other ways the defined norm manages to maintain its power and control other than through institutional power, economic power and violence. One way the defined norm is kept an essentially closed group is by a particular system known as lack of prior claim. At its simplest, this means that if you weren't there when the original document (the Constitution, for instance) was written or when the organization was first created, then you have no right to inclusion. Since those who wrote the Constitution were white male property owners who did not believe in the complete humanity of either women or blacks, then these two groups have had to battle for inclusion. If women and people of color were not in business (because of the social and cultural restrictions on them) when the first male business organizations were formed, then they now have to fight for inclusion. The curious thing about lack of prior claim is that it was simply the circumstances of the moment that put the original people there in every case, yet when those who were initially excluded begin asking for or demanding inclusion, they are seen as disruptive people, as trouble-makers, as women who participated in the suffrage movement and the black men and women who formed the civil rights movement. For simply asking for one's due, one was vilified and abused. This is an effective technique, making those struggling for their rights the ones in the wrong. Popular movements are invalidated and minimized, their participants cast as enemies of the people, and social change is obstructed by those holding power who cast themselves as defenders of tradition and order.

Those who seek their rights, who seek inclusion, who seek to control their own lives instead of having their lives controlled, are the people who fall outside the norm. They are defined in relation to the norm and are found lacking. They are the Other. If they are not part of the norm, they are seen as abnormal, deviant, inferior, marginalized, not "right", even if they as a group (such as women) are a majority of the population. They are not considered fully human. By those identified as the Norm, the Other is unknown, difficult to comprehend, whereas the Other always knows and understands those who hold power; one has to in order to survive. As in the television series "Upstairs, Downstairs," the servants always knew the inner workings of the ruling families' lives while the upstairs residents who had economic control knew little of the downstairs workers' lives. In slavery, the slave had to know the complexity, the inner workings of the slave owners' lives in order to protect him/herself from them.

The Other's existence, everyday life, and achievements are kept unknown through invisibility. When we do not see the differently abled, the aged, gay men and lesbians, and people of color on televisions, in movies, in educational books, etc., there is reinforcement of the idea that the Norm is the majority and others either do not exist or do not count. Or when there is false information and distortion of events through selective presentation or the re-writing of history, we see only the negative aspects or failures of a particular group. For instance, it has been a major task of the civil rights movement and the women's movement to write blacks and women back into history and to correct the distorted versions of their history that have been presented over centuries.

This distortion and lack of knowledge of the Other expresses itself in stereotyping, that subtle and effective way of limiting lives. It is through stereotyping that people are denied their individual characteristics and behavior and are dehumanized. The dehumanizing process is necessary to feed the oppressor's sense of being justified and to alleviate the feeling of guilt. If one stereotypes all gay men as child molesters and gives them the daily humiliations of pejorative names, such as "faggot" or "cocksucker", then a school administration can feel justified, even righteous, in not hiring them, and young heterosexual males can feel self righteous when physically attacking them on the streets. In stereotyping, the actions of the few dictate the classification of the entire group while the norm is rarely stereotyped. Because of the belief that groups outside the norm think and behave in unified stereotypical ways, people who hold power will often ask a person of color, "What do your people think about this idea (or thing)?" When do we ever ask a white man, "What do the white men in his country (or organization) think about this?" They are expected to have and to express individual judgements and opinions.

Stereotyping contributes to another common element of oppressions: blaming the victim for the oppression. In order for oppression to be thoroughly successful, it is necessary to involve the victim in it. The victim lives in an environment of negative images (stereotypes) and messages, backed up by violence, victim-hating and blaming, all of which leads to low self-esteem and self blame in the victim. The oppression thus becomes internalized. The goal of this environment is to lead the victim to be complicit with her/his victimization: to think that it is deserved and should not be resisted.

Some of the best work feminists have done is to change attitudes from blaming the victim to blaming the abuser—a very slow change that is still incomplete. It is no longer automatically the norm to blame victims of battering, rape and incest for having somehow been responsible for the harm done them; instead, people are more inclined to stop supporting male dominance by protecting the abuser. However, we have yet to examine thoroughly the blame we put on victims of racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism. People are condemned for being who they are, for their essence as humans. When we are clear of those oppressions, we will understand that the issue is not one's racial, ethnic, religious or sexual identity—one should have the inalienable right to be who one is—but the problem is racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia and the power they support and protect.

Blaming the victim for their oppression diverts attention from the true abuser or the cause of the victimization. For example, a commonly held belief is that people are poor because they are unwilling to work. The belief is supported by the stereotypes that poor people are lazy, abuse

HANDOUT

welfare, etc. What goes unnoted is the necessity for poverty in an economic system in which wealth is held and controlled by the few. If the poor are in poverty because they deserve it, then the rich need not feel any guilt or compunction about their concentrated wealth. In fact, they can feel deserving and superior.

Blaming the victim leads to the victim feeling complicit with the oppression, of deserving it. As one takes in the negative messages and stereotypes, there is a weakening of self-esteem, self-pride and group pride. When the victim of the oppression is led to believe the negative views of the oppressor, this phenomenon is called internalized oppression. It takes the form of self-hatred, which can express itself in depression, despair, and self-abuse. It is no surprise, therefore, that the incidence of suicide is high among gay men and lesbians, for they live in a world in which messages of hatred and disgust are unrelenting. Nor is it surprising that the differently abled come to think there is no hope for their independence or for them to receive basic human services, for they are taught that the problem is with them, not society. Any difference from the norm is seen as a deficiency, as bad.

Sometimes the internalized oppression is acted out as horizontal hostility. If one has learned self-hatred because of one's membership in a "minority" group, then that disrespect and hatred can easily be extended to the entire group so that one does not see hope or promise for the whole. It is safer to express hostility toward other oppressed peoples than toward the oppressor. Hence, we see people destroying their own neighborhoods, displaying violence and crime toward their own people, or in groups showing distrust of their own kind while respecting the power of those who make up the norm. Sometimes the internalized oppression leads people to be reluctant to associate with others in their group. Instead, their identity is with those in power. Hence, a major part of every social change movement has been an effort to increase the pride and self-esteem of the oppressed group, to bond people together for the common good.

A major component of every oppression is isolation. Victims of oppressions are either isolated as individuals or as a "minority" group. Take, for example, those who experience rape or incest or battering. Prior to the women's movement and the speak-outs that broke the silence on these issues, women who had experienced abuse were isolated from one another, thought they were alone in experiencing it, and thought, as society dictated, that they were to blame for the abuse.

It was through women coming together in the anti-violence movement that we learned that indeed there was something larger going on, that violence was happening to millions of women; out of that coming together grew an analysis of male power and control that led to a movement to end violence against women. Another example: before the civil rights movement, there were black citizens in the South who were isolated because of their lack of access to resources, in this case, to education and literacy. Because they could not read, they could not pass the tests that allowed them to vote. The Citizenship Schools that began on St. Johns Island, South Carolina, taught blacks to read the Constitution so that they could pass the test; in reading the Constitution, they learned that they too had rights. These schools spread across the South; people came together out of their isolation, and a civil rights movement was born.

In order to break down the power and control exercised by the few, it is clear that people of all oppressed groups must come together to form a movement that speaks for everyone's rights.

People will gain their human rights, justice, and inclusion through group effort, not through isolated individual work. However, those who hold power oppose group organizing efforts and use many strategies to destroy such efforts: invalidation, minimization, intimidation, infiltration, etc.

Two of the more subtle ways that society blocks solidarity within groups from ever occurring are the tactics of assimilation and tokenism. There are extraordinary pressures for members of any “minority” group to assimilate, to drop one’s own culture and differences and become a mirror of the dominant culture. This process requires turning one’s back on one’s past and one’s people.

Assimilation supports the myth of the melting pot in which all immigrants were poured in, mixed a bit, and then emerged as part of the dominant culture: white, heterosexual, and Christian.

Assimilation is a first requirement of those who are chosen as tokens in the workplace of the dominant culture. “She’s a Jew but she doesn’t act like a Jew.” “He’s black but he’s just like us.” Tokenism is the method of limited access that gives false hope to those left behind and blames them for “not making it.” “If these two or three black women or disabled people can make it, then what is wrong with you that you can’t?” Tokenism is a form of co-optation. It takes the brightest and best of the most assimilated, rewards them with position and money (though rarely genuine leadership and power), and then uses them as a model of what is necessary to succeed, even though there are often no more openings for others who may follow their model.

The tokenized person receives pressure from both sides. From those in power there is the pressure to be separate from one’s group (race, for instance) while also acting as a representative of the entire group. “We tried hiring a person color but it just didn’t work out.” (Therefore people of color can’t succeed here.) The tokenized person is expected to become a team player, which means that identifying racist activity within the organization or working on behalf of one’s community is seen as disloyalty. The pressure from one’s community, on the other hand, is to fight for that community’s concerns, in other words, to help from the inside. Of course, it is virtually impossible to work from the inside because the tokenized person is isolated and lacks support. It is a “no win” situation, filled with frustration and alienation.

At the heart of this strategy, which gets played out at every level of society, is an individualized approach to success. The example of Horatio Alger and the notion of “pulling oneself up by the bootstraps” still lives. Daily news reports do not show successful organizing efforts; in fact, the media minimize even undeniably successful ones as was the case with the reporting of the 1989 Gay and Lesbian March on Washington. The media reported the march to have 200,000 in attendance when it was announced by Jesse Jackson from the stage that police and march organizers were reporting over 500,000 there. Instead of reporting group efforts, the media concentrated on “human interest” stories, following the lead of people such as Ronald Reagan who give accounts of individuals who beat the odds and succeed. They become “models” for others in their circumstances to follow. But what good are models when closed systems do not permit general success?

Group organizing, even among progressive people, often gets replaced by an emphasis on individual solutions. Hence, instead of seeking ways to develop an economic system that emphasizes cooperation and shared wealth, people encourage entrepreneurship and small business enterprises. Union organizing is under siege in an effort to keep labor costs low and profits high. In the women's movement, more women choose individual therapy rather than starting or joining consciousness raising groups. In the area of health, communities do major organizing, for example, to raise enormous funds to provide a liver transplant for an individual child but do not work together to change the medical system so that all who need them can get organ transplants. The emphasis upon individual solutions is counter to movement making, to broad social change. The emphasis upon individual achievement feeds right into blaming those who don't succeed for their failure. It separates people rather than bringing them together to make change.

We must find ways to build coalition, to make broad social changes for all of us. There are many more people who are considered the Other (though called, ironically, the minority) than those who are defined as the Norm. We must become allies in a movement that works against power and control by the few and for shared power and resources for the many. To do this work, we will have to build a program that provides an analysis of the oppressions, their connections, and together we must seek ways to change those systems that limit our lives.

The Common Elements of Oppression: DEFINITIONS

DEFINED NORM

A standard of being or behavior which is backed up with institutional and economic power as well as institutional and individual violence. For example, in the United States there exists a defined norm which takes its form as the white, heterosexual male, of the middle or upper classes, temporarily able-bodied, and of a Christian (usually Protestant) background.

Example: Heterosexuality is a defined norm. Those who do not fit into this norm are denied basic rights such as fair employment and housing and the economic benefits of marriage. Bisexual, lesbian, and gay people suffer a high rate of hate crimes against them.

Example: Whiteness is a defined norm. Those who are not white face greater challenges than those who are. Most of the “standard” examples given of people in our society are overwhelmingly white.

INSTITUTIONAL POWER

Majority status at the upper levels of the major institutions that comprise a society.

Example: In the U.S. white men (presumably non-LGBT) hold the majority of top positions in federal and state governments, financial institutions, the legal system, military, etc. A quick look at the history of the presidency reveals who holds the greatest institutional power in this society.

Example: Most sports teams are owned by white men, even when the majority of the players are not white. This includes holding entire cities economically hostage for new stadiums and arenas.

ECONOMIC POWER

The control of economic resources through laws and policies that reinforce the status quo.

Example: Recent prohibitions of new Native American owned and run gambling casinos by state and federal government after the first casinos showed themselves to be quite profitable.

Example: Redlining—lines are drawn which divide neighborhoods by race and class with the result that insurance and mortgage rates are highest in neighborhoods in which people have the least economic resources.

MYTH OF SCARCITY

The idea that resources are limited in such a way that those not in power are to blame for economic problems.

Example: Targeting of immigrants from Mexico as the cause of the decline of the middle class in

HANDOUT

CA, despite the fact that the cheap labor performed by immigrants is essential to the economy of the state and that tax laws have increasingly favored the wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

Example: The threat of cutting social security with the promise of lowering taxes. By many people's standards, this is unethical. It also is based on a myth of scarcity. The wealthiest people receive the highest tax breaks, but some members of congress prefer to blame the elderly and disabled for the high tax rates of middle income Americans.

VIOLENCE/THREAT OF VIOLENCE

The sanctioning of violence either through direct threat or through lack of protection.

Example: As Asian American communities started to profit in California in the nineteenth century, their farms and businesses were burned down, and they were physically assaulted with little recourse to justice.

Example: Recent statistics indicate that one in three women are targets of sexualized violence in their lifetime. Most women live with the understanding and fear that they may be targets of rape.

THE OTHER

Those who are not part of the defined norm.

Example: Aristotle believed that women were simply a weaker version of men, and Freud defined women in terms of lack (lacking the phallus). Although women are not a minority, this culture sees them as the Other in relation to a male norm. Cast from the norm, women in western society have often been viewed as mysterious and as something to be discovered.

Example: The historical development of views toward people of color offer evidence that the Other is not simply a chance of relations between different groups of people, but rather a carefully and consciously constructed set of power relations based on discernible differences.

INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION

The devaluing of one's own identity and culture according to societal norms.

Example: Rates of suicide are high among LGBT youth in part because they have grown up in a culture that has taught them that their identity is not valued.

Example: Women often do not pursue full medical care because they feel they do not deserve good medical care.

INVISIBILITY

Ignoring or denying the existence, histories and achievements of certain groups of people.

Example: Most Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity, are taught history in such a way that they do not know what various communities of color and what white women were doing over the course of US history. The absence of visibility gives the impression that aside from a few exceptional people, they were not “doing” anything worth discussing.

Example: Many people believe they do not know anyone who is gay. Yet many LGBT people do not reveal their identities to family and friends and co-workers out of fear of rejection or discrimination.

HORIZONTAL HOSTILITY

Acting out toward other members of the target group; safer than confronting oppressive forces.

Example: Gang violence within communities of color.

Example: Discouraging people of one’s cultural group from succeeding in the larger society with the accusation of selling out.

DISTORTION

The selective presentation and false representation of the lives and histories of particular groups of people.

Example: The continued dissemination of information regarding sexual abuse of children that tells us that gay men sexually assault boys. Statistically speaking, crimes against children are perpetrated by heterosexual men.

Example: After the Civil War, many racist portrayals of black people were created by white people who feared black equality. Among them was the new myth of the black male rapist of white women, which was used to justify hundreds of lynchings. Ironically, white men had systematically raped black women in slavery, often as a means of reproduction of laborers.

STEREOTYPING

Defining people through beliefs about a group of which they are a part; usually a product of ignorance about the diversity among individuals within any given group.

Example: The stereotype that bisexual people are promiscuous. This stereotype erases the humanity and diversity of bisexual people and disregards the processes by which individuals of all sexual orientations go about choosing a way of life appropriate to their values.

Example: Stereotyping Jewish people as stingy. Both selfish and giving people can be found among every group. In many Jewish communities today, the obligation to “tikkunolam”, to heal and transform the world, guides individual and community involvement.

BLAMING THE VICTIM

Assigning blame to the targets of oppression for the oppression itself and for its manifestations.

Example: A rapist saying that a woman “asked for it”. Historically, women of color have been especially vulnerable to these accusations because part of racist devaluation has been to sexualize women of color in order to inflate the purity of white women.

Example: In situations of violence against people who are LGBT, the charge is often made by attackers that the targets of violence were flaunting their sexuality or not acting the way their gender should. Consider that few, if any, heterosexual couples are attacked for holding hands in public (unless they are interracial).

TOKENISM

A limited number of people (pick one and only one) from non-dominant groups are chosen for prestigious positions in order to deflect criticism of oppression.

Example: Recruiting a person of color with no intention of actually serving the needs of people of color.

Example: Appointing a woman to a high faculty position at a university with the intention of preventing the need to hire other women faculty.

ISOLATION

A necessary component of oppression that frames injustice in terms of individuals rather than recognizing commonalities between members of a group or between groups.

Example: People with disabilities at community, state, and national levels are organizing to break isolation. This movement gained momentum in the early 1980’s and got the American Disabilities Act passed in 1990.

Example: LGBT youth have often been isolated because adult LGBT organizations fear being accused of “converting” youths. However, LGBT youth organizations are on the rise, often with the leadership of young people themselves.

INDIVIDUAL SOLUTIONS

Seeking to create change at an individual level rather than at the level of social change.

Example: Welcoming individual LGBT people into congregational life without examining how heterosexism operates within one’s denomination and society.

Example: Giving spare change to homeless people without organizing as a community to address poverty at local, national and global levels.

ASSIMILATION

Taking on the appearance and values of the dominant culture. It is important to recognize that assimilation occurs under varying conditions: sometimes it is forced, other times it is desired, and its success is usually mitigated by recognizable difference such as skin color.

Example: Native American people have experienced forced assimilation through the taking of their children to white run schools to unlearn their culture—this is considered cultural genocide.

Example: In the nineteenth century many African American people desired to assimilate (while others did not), but were only allowed a limited assimilation due to the racism of the dominant culture.

Defined terms are taken from Suzanne Pharr’s “The Common Elements of Oppression” in The Welcoming Congregation, 1995 ed.

The Strategy of “Special Rights”



35 minutes

SUMMARY

This exercise showcases the tool that the far conservative right has developed and used to target several communities at once—including LGBT communities and communities of color. Participants will discuss and become familiar with these tactics that serve to divide and conquer, keeping us from building a powerful and progressive movement.

GOALS

- Identify common language and tactics used by the far right to attack LGBT communities and communities of color.
- Dispel myths that serve to divide LGBT communities and communities of color.

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Tape
- Handout: Special Examples of Special Rights!

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
The strategy of Special Rights	Large group discussion	15 minutes
Wedge issues & myths	Lecture	20 minutes

► **The strategy of “Special Rights”**

Trainer asks:

Who has heard of the term “special rights”?

Trainer calls on participants with raised hands and asks:

In what context was this term used? To whom or what did it refer to?

Write responses on flip chart. Have participants describe how “special rights” was framed with each example. Some examples include:

- LGBT: marriage equality, nondiscrimination protections, domestic partnerships
- People of color and immigrants: affirmative action, English-only policies
- Women: voting rights, welfare

Draw an umbrella at the top of the flip chart page above the examples listed.

Trainer says (bold text written on flip chart):

The reason we draw this umbrella is to highlight how “special rights” is used as an umbrella term to attack many different communities at once, even though all rights are inherently deserved by everyone—none being “special” for any specific group of people. But those who push this framework do so strategically and successfully...

During the 1990s, the far right finely tuned this framework of “special rights” and tied it to key issue areas including:

- 1) **LGBT equality:** Throughout the United States, LGBT equality is challenged at the ballot, in

The Strategy of “Special Rights” *(continued)*

the courts and by our legislatures. In these campaigns “Special Rights” have been used against nondiscrimination policies, marriage equality and many other aspects that afford LGBT people basic rights. This tactic is in full use today, and we can expect to see more of this as marriage equality fights are gaining attention nationwide.

2) Affirmative Action: In 1996 California’s Proposition 209 wiped away the state’s Affirmative Action programs, using the basis that Affirmative Action created “special rights” and was “reverse discrimination.” In 1998 Washington state modeled California—and received money from California backers—to create I-200 which successfully ended Affirmative Action programs there. Both state campaigns to end Affirmative Action were led by white males, but hired people of color and women to be the spokespersons.

3) English-only: There have been countless bills and initiatives to push English as the official language of U.S. states and institute English-only policies. Common English-only arguments are that tax dollar funded materials and resources, such as bilingual services and education, is a “special right” and anyone in the United States should be forced to “speak English.” Most people who do not use English as their primary language are actively seeking to learn the language in order to better interact and contribute to an English-speaking community. However, English is a complex language that takes time and resources to learn, which is difficult under the constraints of low-wage labor. Without the ability to easily communicate, particularly around medical, legal and other basic needs, many immigrants have no access to essential means in order to further themselves, or sometimes even survive.

The far right has also been very successful at scapegoating marginalized communities...

The LGBT community has consistently been used as a scapegoat, distracting people from the larger problems facing government. Same-sex marriage is consistently used to galvanize votes, and “gay-baiting” occurs across the nation to defeat supportive lawmakers simply on their pro-LGBT stance. The LGBT community is also charged for being at fault for the moral deconstruction of the “all-American” nuclear family structure, under the banner of “family values.”

Immigrant communities have also long been targeted as scapegoats, blamed for economic problems, such as unemployment rates, and threats to “homeland security.” This does not account for the fact that U.S. policies have devastated the economies of other countries, forcing workers to migrate to the United States, often separated from their families for years, just to be able to support them. Meanwhile, corporations continue moving millions of jobs out of the United States in search of cheap labor.

Consolidation of power by the far right

By using the umbrella of “special rights” and scapegoating marginalized communities, the far right was very successful at moving a multi-issue agenda that does violence to many groups of people. Issue arenas include:

The Strategy of “Special Rights” *(continued)*

- Anti-Immigrant
- Criminal Justice
- Welfare Policy
- Anti-LGBT

Thus, “special rights” is an incredibly effective tool that has resulted in several policy wins against Affirmative Action, for English Only and statewide bans on same-sex marriage. By also using the myth of scarcity and the vehicle of immigration to talk about race without having to say the word, the right successfully divided marginalized communities against each other. We call these wedge issues and myths.

► Wedge issues & myths

Trainer asks:

Who can describe what a “wedge issue” is?

Trainer says:

Our definition is:

A wedge issue is not just a controversial issue. Rather, it is an issue that is carefully framed to get a group of people to prioritize one part of their identity over another part of their identity.

Race is one of the most common wedge issues we see used by anti-LGBT groups. This has caused many myths and stereotypes within the LGBT community about people of color communities.

Trainer asks:

What are some common myths you hear perpetuated about people/communities of color by LGBT communities?

Here are some **MYTHS**, often in the form of assumptions, we hear regularly in our LGBT organizing:

1) People of color communities are more homophobic than white communities.

Homophobia cannot be broken down by party lines, gender, religious affiliation or race. Unfortunately, it is pervasive in every community and reinforced by oppressive policies and institutions governed by those in power—white heterosexual male leadership. And the vast, vast majority of anti-LGBT campaigns in the United States have been developed and executed by straight, white, non-trans men. However, the right uses this myth to strategically pit LGBT and communities of color against each other.

2) LGBT people are white, while people of color are straight.

This isn’t always a myth that we hear explicitly stated. More often, it is implied. People of color are just as likely to identify as LGBT as anyone. This myth ignores the intersectional identities of LGBT people of color and the complex relationship we/they share with both communities. It pushes LGBT people of color even further to the margins and creates barriers to reaching out

The Strategy of “Special Rights” *(continued)*

and building relationships in immigrant and communities of color. It also discounts the added struggle for LGBT immigrants to be able to support, be with and have their families recognized under current policies that discriminate against several aspects of our/their identity.

3) If we could just show communities of color that we were oppressed like them, they would support us.

There is a real discomfort and even anger around the appropriation of the civil rights movement by primarily white LGBT people. Another way this is perpetuated is when LGBT activists claim that “Now it’s our turn...” again giving the impression (intentionally or unintentionally) that racism is now non-existent or not a priority. Disregarding the differences between racism and homophobia and transphobia is as dangerous as not seeing the similarities.

If the LGBT community lacks an analysis of power and privilege around all oppressions (including those that exist within LGBT spaces) then we cannot call ourselves a movement for social justice. This cuts us off from opportunities to build coalitions and gain progressive power.

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Special Examples of Special Rights!*

SPECIAL EXAMPLES OF SPECIAL RIGHTS!

In order to build a progressive and politically powerful movement toward equality, we must address and work on the issues that have been set up to divide LGBT and communities of color as well as recognizing how they can bring us together.

1. LGBT and communities of color are historically excluded, underserved, exploited and oppressed by institutions in this country.
2. The far conservative right systematically launches attacks on these communities in order to build power for their base.
3. Many tactics are used by the far right to discriminate against these communities, including: stereotypes, the use of violence, and the threat of violence.

During the 1990s, the right specifically developed the framework of “special rights” and tied it to key issue areas including:

1) LGBT equality: Throughout the United States, LGBT equality is challenged at the ballot, in the courts and by our legislatures. In these campaigns “special rights” have been used against nondiscrimination policies, marriage equality and many other aspects that afford LGBT people basic rights. This tactic is in full use today, and we can expect to see more of this as marriage equality fights are gaining attention nationwide.

2) Affirmative Action: In 1996 California’s Proposition 209 wiped away the state’s Affirmative Action programs, using the basis that Affirmative Action created “special rights” and was “reverse discrimination.” In 1998 Washington state modeled California—and received money from California backers—to create I-200, which successfully ended Affirmative Action programs there. Both state campaigns to end Affirmative Action were led by white males, but hired people of color and women to be the spokespersons.

3) English-only: There have been countless bills and initiatives to push English as the official language of U.S. states and institute English-only policies. Common English-only arguments are that tax dollar funded materials and resources, such as bilingual services and education, is a “special right” and anyone in the United States should be forced to “speak English.” Most people who do not use English as their primary language are actively seeking to learn the language in order to better interact and contribute to an English-speaking community. However, English is a complex language that takes time and resources to learn, which is difficult under the constraints of low-wage labor. Without the ability to easily communicate, particularly around medical, legal and other basic needs, many immigrants have no access to essential means in order to further themselves, or sometimes even survive.

The far right has also been very successful at scapegoating marginalized communities...

The LGBT community has consistently been used as a scapegoat, distracting people from the larger problems facing government. Same-sex marriage is consistently used to galvanize votes, and “gay-baiting” occurs across the nation to defeat supportive lawmakers simply on their pro-LGBT stance. The LGBT community is also charged for being at fault for the moral deconstruction of the “all-American” nuclear family structure, under the banner of “family values.”

Immigrant communities have also long been targeted as scapegoats, blamed for economic problems, such as unemployment rates, and threats to “homeland security.” This does not account that U.S. policies have devastated the economies of other countries forcing workers to migrate to the United States, often separated from their families for years, just to be able to support them. Meanwhile, corporations continue moving millions of jobs out of the United States in search of cheap labor.

Consolidation of power by the far right

By using the umbrella of “special rights” and scapegoating marginalized communities, the far right was very successful at moving a multi-issue agenda that does violence to many groups of people. Issue arenas include: immigrant rights, criminal justice, welfare policy, LGBT rights and more.

Thus, “special rights” was an incredibly effective tool that resulted in statewide policy wins on Affirmative Action, English-only and constitutional bans on same-sex marriage.

Wedge Issues

A wedge issue is not just a controversial issue. Rather, an issue that is carefully framed to get the potential base to prioritize one part of their identity over another part of their identity.

Some common myths overheard in LGBT organizing and our response:

“People of color communities are more homophobic than white communities.”

Homophobia cannot be broken down by party lines, gender, religious affiliation or race. Unfortunately, it is pervasive in every community and reinforced by oppressive policies and institutions governed by those in power—white heterosexual male leadership. However, the right uses this myth to strategically pit LGBT and communities of color against each other.

“LGBT people are white, while people of color are straight.”

People of color are just as likely to identify as LGBT as anyone. This myth ignores the intersectional identities of LGBT people of color and the complex relationship we/they share with both communities. It pushes LGBT people of color even further to the margins and creates barriers to reaching out and building relationships in immigrant and communities of color. It also discounts the added struggle for LGBT immigrants to be able to support, be with and have their families recognized under current policies that discriminate against several aspects of our/their identity.

“If we could just show communities of color that we were oppressed like them, they would support us.”

As we talked about previously, there is a real discomfort and even anger around the appropriation of the civil rights movement by primarily white LGBT people. Another way this is perpetuated is when LGBT activists claim that “Now it’s our turn...” again giving the impression (intentionally or unintentionally) that racism is now non-existent or not a priority. Disregarding the differences between racism and homophobia and transphobia is as dangerous as not seeing the similarities.

If the LGBT community lacks an analysis of power and privilege around all oppressions (including those that exist within queer spaces) then we can not call ourselves a movement for social justice. This cuts us off opportunities to build coalitions and gain progressive power.

We want to recognize the history and pitfalls of the LGBT movement and work proactively for racial justice not only because it is strategically valuable, but because it is the right thing to do.

Civil Rights & LGBT Equality: Comparing Two Movements



15 minutes

SUMMARY

Particularly when it comes to the fight for marriage equality, LGBT activists and our allies are quick to compare the LGBT rights movement to the Civil Rights Movement. But for communities of color, that comparison can be alienating and even insulting. This lecture explains why we avoid those comparisons.

MATERIALS

- Flip chart

GOALS

- To illustrate why we, as an LGBT rights organization working to support racial justice, don't compare LGBT and Civil Rights Movements to one another.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	2 minutes
What comparisons have you heard?	Large group discussion	5 minutes
Conclusion	Lecture	8 minutes

► **Introduction**

Trainer says:

Frequently, when we're thinking about LGBT rights and building a movement—particularly for marriage equality—we want to make comparisons that will root our movement in a grand tradition of social change or that will help the people we're trying to persuade understand that they are, as we often see it, on the wrong side of history.

Written on flip chart:

- Often, that means comparing the movement for LGBT rights to the Civil Rights Movement. Many of us think of it as an homage—paying tribute to one of the largest-scale social justice movements in our nation's recent history, and hoping to follow in its footsteps.
- What we may not consider are the other implications of these comparisons.

► **What comparisons have you heard?**

Trainer asks:

What are some of the comparisons you've heard between the LGBT rights movement and the Civil Rights Movement?

The following answers are likely to come up:

- “We’re not going to sit at the back of the bus anymore!”
- “Gay is the new Black”
- “This is the Civil Rights Movement of our day.”
- Comparing civil unions/domestic partnerships and marriage to separate drinking fountains.

Civil Rights & LGBT Equality *(continued)*

- Comparing bans on marriage equality to anti-miscegenation laws that banned interracial marriage.

► Conclusion

Trainer points:

- Like racism, sexism, ableism and a whole lot of other kinds of oppression, homophobia and transphobia are embedded in institutions. We're excluded from the institution of marriage. The institution of government doesn't protect us from employment discrimination. The institution of the military won't allow us to serve openly.
- But unlike racism, homophobia and transphobia don't result in the same kind of cyclical, generational oppression that takes place in generation after generation of communities of color. That's part of the reason why comparing these two movements is so thorny. Here are a few more.

Trainer points (bold text written on flip chart):

Comparing the LGBT rights movement to the Civil Rights Movement...

- **It appropriates someone else's work.** The larger LGBT movement in the United States is a predominantly white movement, so when we say things like "the LGBT rights movement is the Civil Rights Movement of our day," we don't sound like a very good ally to racial justice work, in part because it appropriates the accomplishments, icons and sea changes that African American communities have worked so hard to build. And since most of us here today weren't part of the work of the Civil Rights Movement, it's not ours to claim.
- **It addresses a fundamentally different kind of oppression.** As we've discussed, racism operates really differently from homophobia and transphobia. But when we say things like "We're not going to sit at the back of the bus anymore," it makes it sound like we don't have an in-depth understanding of the commonalities and differences between these two forms of oppression. And for folks who literally did have to sit at the back of the bus, or who've experienced other forms of personal, cultural, institutional or structural racism, white LGBT activists making that comparison can be really alienating and hurtful—as it should be.
- **It frames the Civil Rights Movement as something that's "completed," implying that racism is "over."** Any time someone says "Gay is the new Black" or "the LGBT rights movement is the Civil Rights Movement of our day," it sounds like racism is over and there's no longer a need for racial justice work. But as we've seen in this discussion, racism is far from over! So we've got to be careful about the comparisons we draw.

And again, that really highlights how important it is that we do racial justice work. The more we engage in racial justice work, the more we create an environment where those sorts of allusions are likely to be challenged.

Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality



65 minutes

SUMMARY

There have been many allegiances between immigrant rights and LGBT rights—but LGBT rights activists don't always see that connection, or feel the urgency or importance of working as allies to immigrant communities. This workshop uses an interactive timeline to draw connections between two movements that don't always seem similar.

GOALS

- Examine our own families' immigration histories.
- Tie our personal histories to a larger context of immigrant rights and racial justice histories.

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Tape
- Blank pieces of letter-size paper
- Immigration history timeline, pages 86-134 (taped up on the wall).

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	10 minutes
Sharing our stories	Small group activity	15 minutes
Touring the timeline	Individual activity	15 minutes
Debriefing the timeline	Large group discussion	15 minutes
Closing	Lecture	10 minutes

► Introduction

Trainer says:

Thank you all for joining us! All of us have our reasons for being here, but we wanted to share with you why our organization has taken on this conversation today.

- The topic of immigrant rights and immigration reform are in the headlines every day.
- The media makes it look like all immigrants are straight and all LGBT people are white U.S. citizens.
- Many LGBT immigrants are members and supporters of our work. They have asked us to represent the interests of the WHOLE community. And we believe immigrant rights are basic rights.
- Over the years, the LGBT movement has received substantial support from immigrant rights organizations. (*For example: the immigrant rights coalition, CAUSA, and the farm-worker's union, PCUN, in Oregon. Research any collaborations in your region.*)
- To create a basic framework for understanding the connections between LGBT rights and immigrant rights, and to start the conversation!

Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality: A Shared Timeline is a joint curriculum of Basic Rights Education Fund and Western States Center. It is based on the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights timeline in the BRIDGE curriculum.

Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality *(continued)*

► Sharing our stories

Trainer distributes:

One piece of blank paper and 1-2 markers to each participant.

Trainer instructs:

Participants should write the answers to the following questions on their paper, and draw a picture to illustrate their family's experience.

1. When did you/your family come to the United States, (*your region*) or (*your state*)?
2. Where did you/your family come from?
3. Why did you/your family move?

Participants should take 5 minutes to draw their family's story.

Trainer instructs:

Participants should group in small groups of 3-4, and share as much of their immigration histories as they're comfortable sharing.

Participants should take 10 minutes to share their stories with one another.

► Touring the timeline

Trainer instructs:

Participants should "tour" the timeline, reading about the events in these shared histories of immigrant rights and LGBT rights. Distribute pieces of tape so that participants can hang their personal history on the timeline as they walk through, locating their family's story in a broader historical context. Have extra sheets of paper on hand so that participants can add any key dates that are not on the timeline. As they tour the timeline, participants should consider the following questions:

Written on flip chart:

- What groups have immigrated to the United States throughout history? How were they treated by people already here?
- What was happening with the LGBT movement during different waves of immigration?
- How have immigration laws prevented certain groups of people from coming to the United States? Whom did these laws exclude? Whom did these laws allow to enter? Who influenced these laws, and why?
- How are LGBT immigrants singled out and treated differently? What experiences do they share with non-LGBT immigrants?

Participants should take 15 minutes to tour the timeline and read through the histories posted there. At the end of the 15 minutes, call the group back together for a large group discussion.

Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality *(continued)*

► Debriefing the timeline

Trainer asks and facilitates conversation:

- What didn't you know that was on the timeline? What surprised you about the timeline?
- Why do people tend to migrate?
- Who do these policies target? What reasons are given for targeting them?
- What were similar ideas about LGBT people and immigrants present in popular culture during specific moments of the timeline?
- What have been similar strategies that the U.S. government has used to control and contain LGBT communities and communities of color?
- What did you learn from the timeline about what is believed to be an American family, a law-abiding citizen and a threat to the nation?

► Closing

Trainer points:

Immigration policy ALWAYS impacts the LGBT community because we exist in all immigrant and refugee communities in some way.

- Everyone who is not Native American in the United States has a history of migration—whether because of forced displacement, economic reasons or something else entirely.
- Immigration policy continues to control who is included or excluded from the United States on the basis of race, national origin, class, gender and sexual orientation.

U.S. foreign policy has caused displacement of indigenous people and has been closely linked to corporate interests.

- Example: 1954's "Operation Wetback," which deported more than 3.8 million Mexican workers who were initially welcomed to the United States for contribution to the workforce.

LGBT people and immigrants have been scapegoated for social and economic problems throughout U.S. history.

- Looking at immigration history can help point out who is singled out in U.S. society, who is blamed for its problems and, conversely, who is the ideal American citizen.
- LGBT people have been blamed for the "downfall of morality," for wanting to destroy "the cornerstone of Western society" (marriage) and for "corrupting our children."
- Similarly, immigrants have been blamed for unemployment ("taking our jobs"), crime ("il-legals"), ineffective public benefits programs ("they're not taxpayers"), etc.

Immigration policy has always defined what a family can (and can't) be.

- And that ALWAYS impacts LGBT families.
- Example: The Page Act, passed in 1875, which effectively ends the entry of unmarried Asian women into the country as a way of limiting family development.

As you can see, LGBT communities absolutely share much common ground with immigrant communities.

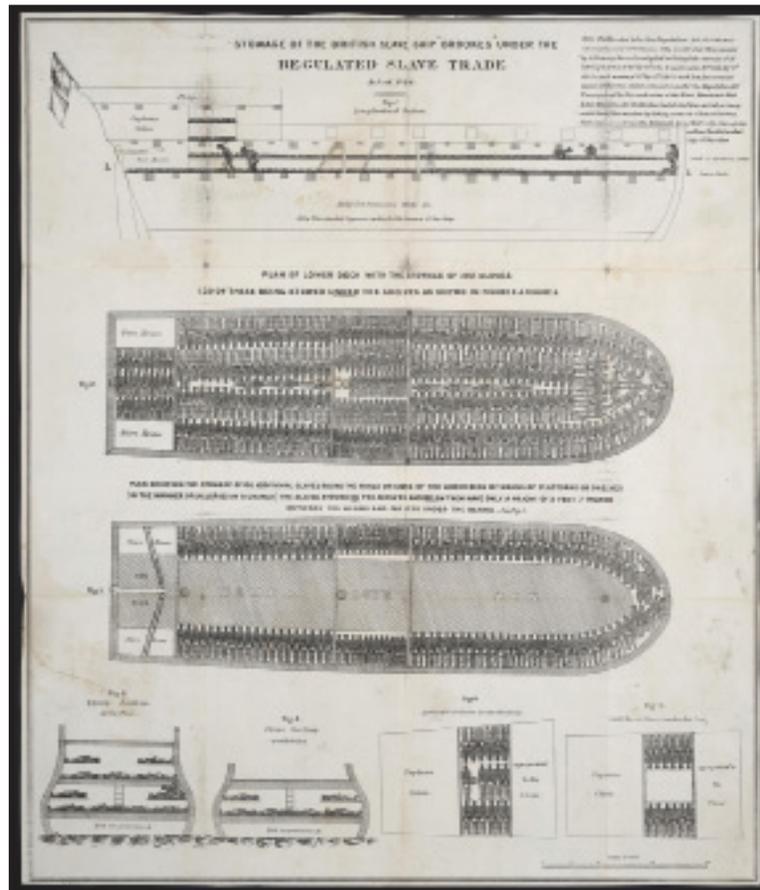
Immigrant Rights, Racial Justice and LGBT Equality *(continued)*

Written on flip chart:

We all know what it feels like to:

- Live under laws that say we are less human.
- Be a scapegoat for society's problems.
- Be afraid for the security of our families.
- Feel vulnerable and unsafe because of policies, institutions and attitudes that keep us on the margins.

1619



A detailed drawing of the slave ship Brookes, showing how 482 people were to be packed onto the decks.¹

Slavery begins. First shipload of enslaved Africans to the American colonies arrives in Jamestown, Virginia.

¹ Library of Congress, (<http://memory.loc.gov/rbc/rbpe/rbpe28/rbpe282/28204300/001dr.jpg>)

1848



Map of area negotiated about during Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ²

The United States invades Mexico for control of land and resources.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is signed in 1848, transferring over 55 percent of Mexican land to the United States.

Mexican citizens living in the territory have the choice to get U.S. citizenship within one year, although most forcibly lose their land.

² The National Archives; www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2005/summer/images/mexico-disturnell-l.jpg

1857



Detroit, MI - February 1942. ³

Many states place residency restrictions on African Americans and other non-white immigrants, preventing them from living or owning property in the state.

For example, the Oregon State Constitution banned any “free negro, or mulatto, not residing in this State at the time” from living, holding real estate and making any contracts within the state. This allowed Blacks to travel through the state, but banned them from living within it. The punishment was public whipping.

It was removed from the Constitution by the voters in 2001.

³ Siegal, Arthur S, 1942. Library of Congress Repository. <http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/fsa/8d13000/8d13500/8d13572r.jpg>
Long, Bill. 8/21/05 <http://www.drbilllong.com/LegalEssays/OregonBlacks.html>

1875



“A Chinese Invasion” by illustrated by J. Keppler in 1880 depicts the sentiment towards Chinese Immigrants at the time.⁴

Congress passes the Page Act, which effectively ends the entry of unmarried Asian women into the country as a way of limiting family development.

⁴ Keppler, Joseph. “A Chinese Invasion,” 1880. The National Archives (<http://memory.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3c00000/3c03000/3c03100/3c03143r.jpg>)

1915-1930



A migrating African-American family.⁵

The Great Migration was the movement of 1.3 million African-Americans out of the Southern United States to the North, Midwest and West from 1915 to 1930.

African-Americans migrated to escape racism, seek employment opportunities in industrial cities and get better education for their children, all of which were widely seen to lead to a better life.

⁵ www.discoverblackheritage.com

1882-1968



George Meadows was lynched at Pratt Mines, Alabama, in 1889 ⁶

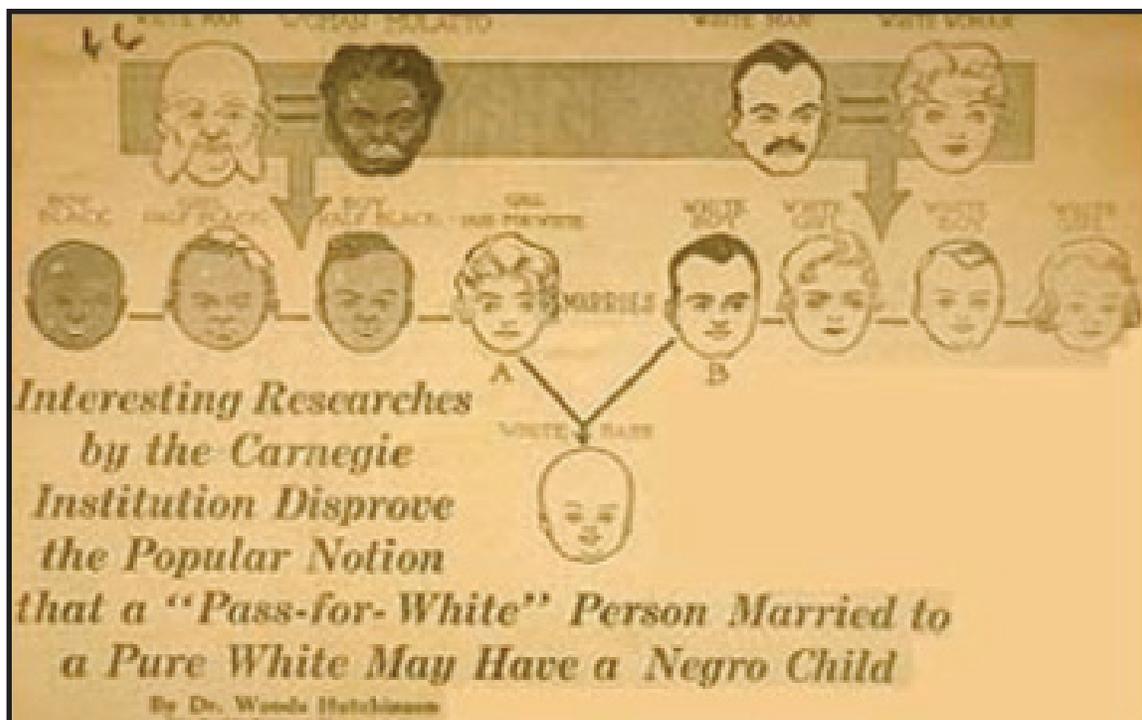
Between 1882 and 1968 the Tuskegee Institute recorded 3,437 lynchings of African-Americans.

In the south, lynching was one of the terrorist tactics used to control and threaten the African American population.

According to the mythology popular at the time, black men were lynched because they had raped white women, yet historians find that in 80 percent of the cases there were no sexual charges alleged, let alone proved.

⁶ Photograph by L. Horgan, Jr. (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aapmob.html>)

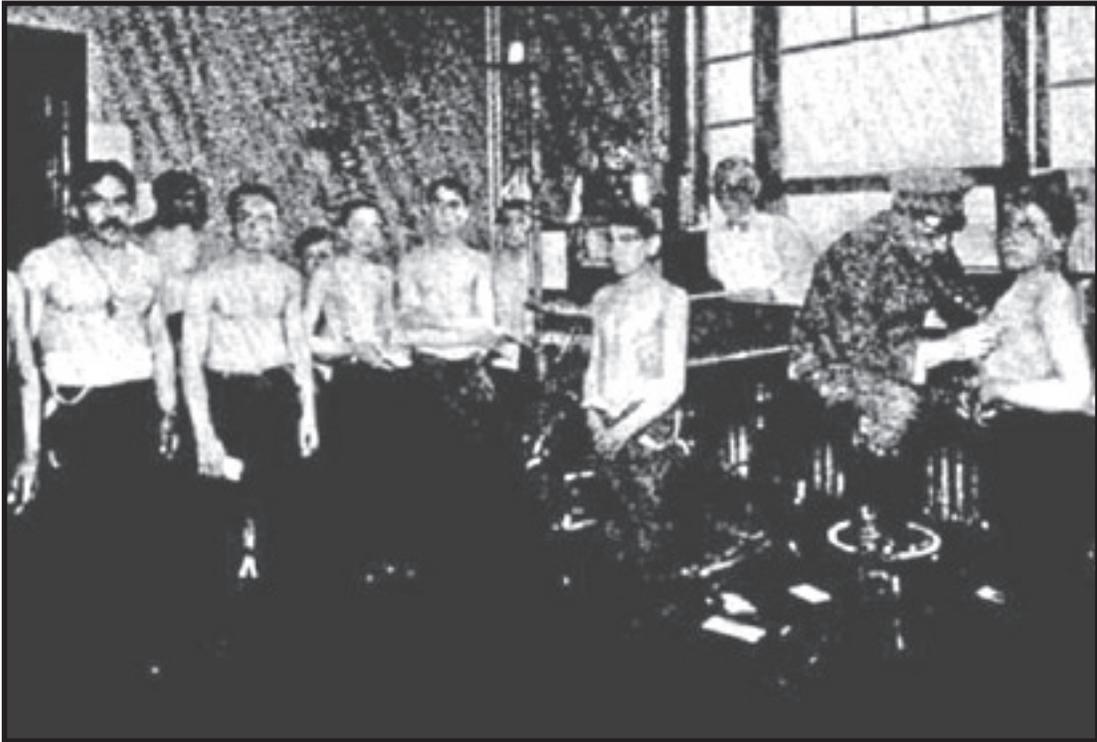
1913-1948



In the United States, various state laws prohibit the marriage of Whites and Blacks, and in many states also Asians. In the United States, such laws were called anti-miscegenation laws.

From 1913 until 1948, 30 out of the then 48 states enforced such laws.

1917



7

Individuals considered to be “psychopathically inferior,” including LGBT people, are banned from entering the United States.

⁷ US Public Health Service. www.gutenberg.org/files/19560/19560-h/19560-h.htm

1920



Immigrant women arriving at Ellis Island. ⁸

“Ladies Agreement” ends the arrival of Japanese and Korean picture brides. European women are also affected—they were banned from entry if they could not show that either a man or a job was available.

⁸ The US National Archives and Records Administration, reprinted in Prologue Magazine. <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1998/summer/women-and-naturalization-1.html>

1921



Editorial cartoon showing a military officer who has retreated to a trench in the background after losing two trenches, “Not Negroes!” and “Not women!” He peers over the third trench waving a flag, “Not gays!”⁹

The U.S. Navy reports on entrapment of “perverts” within its ranks.

In 1943, the U.S. military officially bans gays and lesbians from serving in the Armed Forces.

⁹ The US National Archives and Records Administration. <http://www.archives.gov/research/ww2/photos/images/thumbnails/>.

1935



10

“Successful” electric shock therapy treatment of homosexuality is reported at American Psychological Association meeting.

¹⁰ Bjorgen, George. The Minneapolis Star. <http://www.mindfully.org/Health/2003/Mad-In-AmericaJun03.htm>.

1939-1945



Statue of Liberty.¹¹

During World War II, many of those threatened by Nazi Germany wanted to immigrate to the United States. The 1938 Evian Conference and the 1943 Bermuda Conference met to discuss responsive immigration policy, and due to nationalist and anti-Semitic sentiments at the time, very few refugees were allowed to immigrate.

Following the deaths of millions of Jews and other religious, political, “racial” and sexual minorities, the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 allows refugees to enter the United States outside the quota system in place.

¹¹ http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_of_Liberty.jpg

1944



12

Servicemen's Readjustment Act, better known as the G.I. Bill, establishes payment for college or vocational education and one year of unemployment compensation for World War II veterans. It also provides loans for returning veterans to buy homes and start businesses.

However, this remained largely beneficial for White men because the military (until 1948) and schools (until 1954) were racially segregated, and many suburban neighborhoods prevented Blacks from owning homes.

¹² National Archives. <http://www.english.ucla.edu/ucla1960s/6061/giandbill.gif>

1954



A group of Mexican workers from northern Indiana and Illinois walk to board a train in Chicago, Illinois, to be deported to Mexico.¹³

“Operation Wetback” targets Mexican American communities for “illegal immigrants” and deports more than 3.8 million people to Mexico.

¹³ Photo from www.latinamericanstudies.org

1955-1968

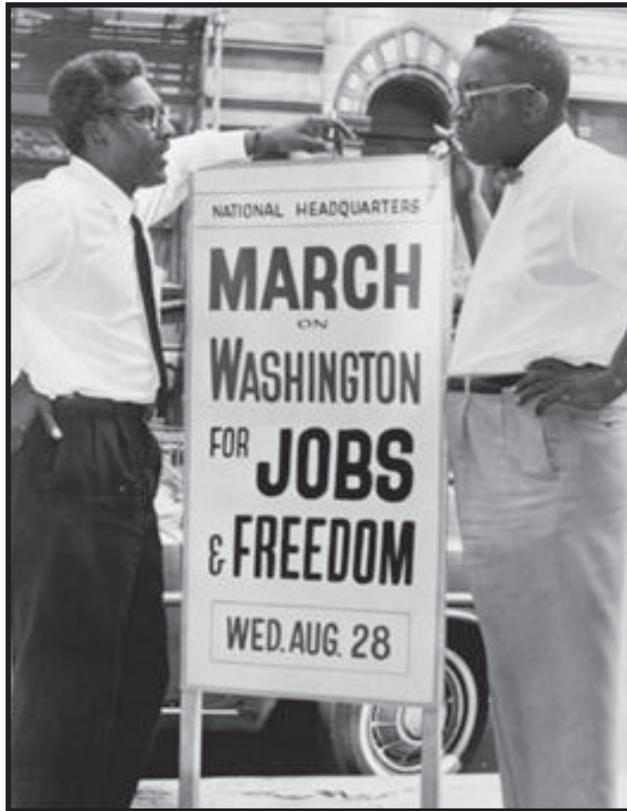


Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X waiting for a press conference in 1964.¹⁴

- 1955:** The brutal murder of Emmett Till. Rosa Parks begins the Montgomery Bus Boycott to protest segregation.
- 1961:** Freedom Rides.
- 1963:** March on Washington.
- 1964:** Height of Civil Rights Movement; Civil Rights Act outlaws discrimination in public accommodations and by employers.
- 1965:** Voting Rights Act; Malcolm X is assassinated.
- 1968:** Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated.

¹⁴ Library of Congress. <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MartinLutherKingMalcolmX.jpg>.

1963



Bayard Rustin (left) and Cleveland Robinson in front of March on Washington headquarters.¹⁵

Gay man, African American civil rights and nonviolent movement leader Bayard Rustin is the chief organizer of the March on Washington.

Rustin is required to play a behind-the-scenes role because he was gay and was eventually pushed out of visible leadership in the civil rights movement.

¹⁵ Photo by O. Hernandez, World Telegram and Sun http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a4/Bayard_Rustin_NYWTS_3.jpg

1965



16

Dewey's Lunch Counter was a popular downtown hangout spot for African American LGBT people in Philadelphia. Citing the claim that gay customers were driving away other business, Dewey's began refusing to serve young patrons dressed in "nonconformist clothing."

On April 25, more than 150 youth dressed in "nonconformist clothing" protest at Dewey's and are turned away by personnel. During the next week, members of the Philadelphia African American LGBT community and Dewey's patrons set up an informational picket line outside the establishment, decrying the treatment of the transgender youth.

On May 2 another sit-in is staged. Dewey's management backs down and promises "an immediate cessation of all indiscriminate denials of service."

¹⁶ www.onward.justia.com/seo-images/1005_libertybell.jpg

1965



17

Immigration and Nationality Act repeals the national origins quota system that favors European migration.

This significantly alters eligibility to enter the United States. The Act stresses family reunification and awards most immigration slots to relatives.

“Family” is based on strictly heterosexual and nuclear ties. This law explicitly bans lesbians and gays as “sexual deviants.”

¹⁷ <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Man-and-woman-icon.svg>.

1969



Sylvia Rivera (1951-2002) speaking in front of the Stonewall Bar in 2002.¹⁸

The Stonewall Riots occurred in New York City. Sparked by Sylvia Rivera, a Puerto Rican drag queen and transgender activist, queer and transgender people fought against the police during a raid on the Stonewall bar. This marked a new phase in the LGBT liberation movement.

¹⁸ Sylvia Rivera Law Project. <http://www.srlp.org/index.php?sec=10&page=riverabio>.

1969



Stonewall Inn ¹⁹

One of the customers at Stonewall Inn on the night of the raid was an immigrant man who committed suicide rather than be deported for being gay.

¹⁹ Davies, Diana. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stonewall_Inn_1969.jpg

1971



The State Capitol Building in Salem, OR. ²⁰

Between 1970 and 1989,
more than twenty states repeal their anti-sodomy laws.

²⁰ http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Oregon_State_Capitol.jpg

1972



21

Barbara Jordan becomes the South's first Black Congresswoman, representing Texas. In 1976 she gives the keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention.

She is a closeted lesbian who does not publicly support gay rights.

²¹ University of Texas. www.utexas.edu/features/archive/2003/jordan.html.

1973



22

The American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses.

The same year, “ego-dystonic homosexuality,” which many considered to be simply a new name to house the same prejudice, is added to the list. Finally in 1986, the diagnosis is removed entirely.

In 1980, “Gender Identity Disorder” is added to the list of mental illnesses.

²² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Psi_and_Caduceus.svg.

1974

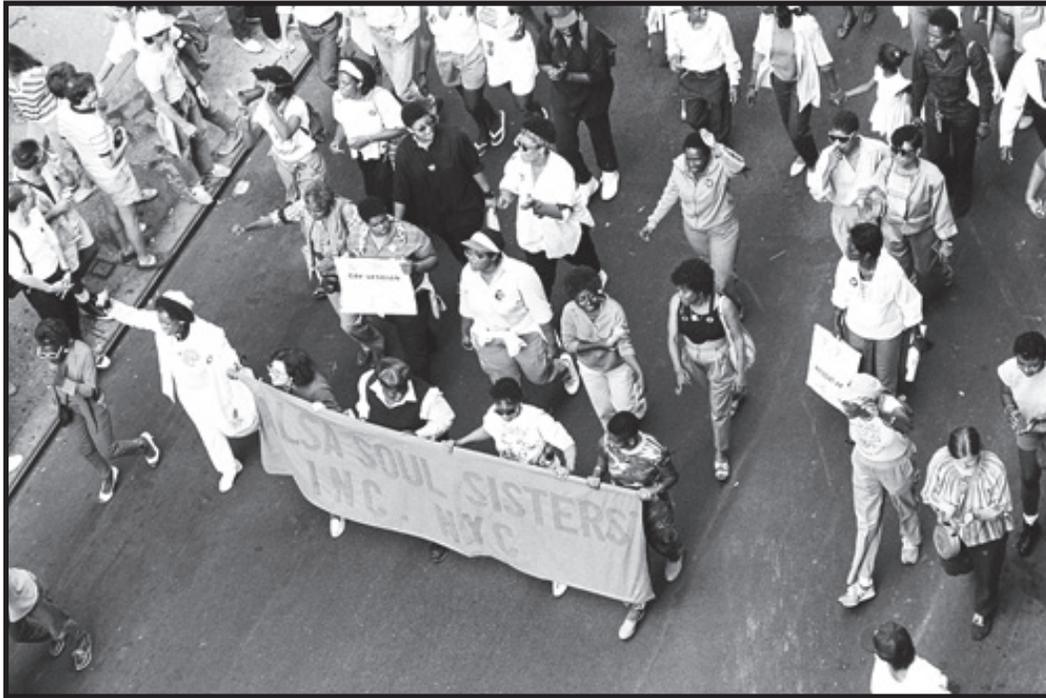


23

Elaine Noble becomes the first openly gay person elected to state office in the United States, when she wins a seat in the Massachusetts state legislature.

²³ Metro Weekly. www.metroweekly.com/feature/?ak=3032.

1974



Salsa Soul Sisters at an LGBT march in NYC, 1985. ²⁴

The Rev. Delores Jackson co-founds Salsa Soul Sisters in New York City. It is the first organization for out women of color in New York City.

Salsa Soul Sisters is later renamed African Ancestral Lesbians United for Societal Change.

²⁴ www.outhistory.org/wiki/Suzanne_Poli_Photos:_1981-85

1978



25

Gay activist Harvey Milk is elected to the San Francisco City Council. Twenty days later, he and Mayor George Moscone are murdered in City Hall.

²⁵ Nicoletta, Daniel. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Harvey_Milk_in_1978_at_Mayor_Moscone%27s_Desk.jpg.

1979



26

The National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights takes place in Washington, D.C., on October 14, 1979. The first large political rally of its kind, it drew 100,000 gay men and lesbians to demand equal rights.

²⁶ Ramdriver on Flickr- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/27245393@N08/2536685363/>.

1979



27

The Lesbian and Gay Asian Alliance is founded in part to address the impact of racism on gay and lesbian Asian Pacific American communities.

²⁷ Wagner, Eric. www.indybay.org/newsitems/2004/08/08/16913901.php.

1980



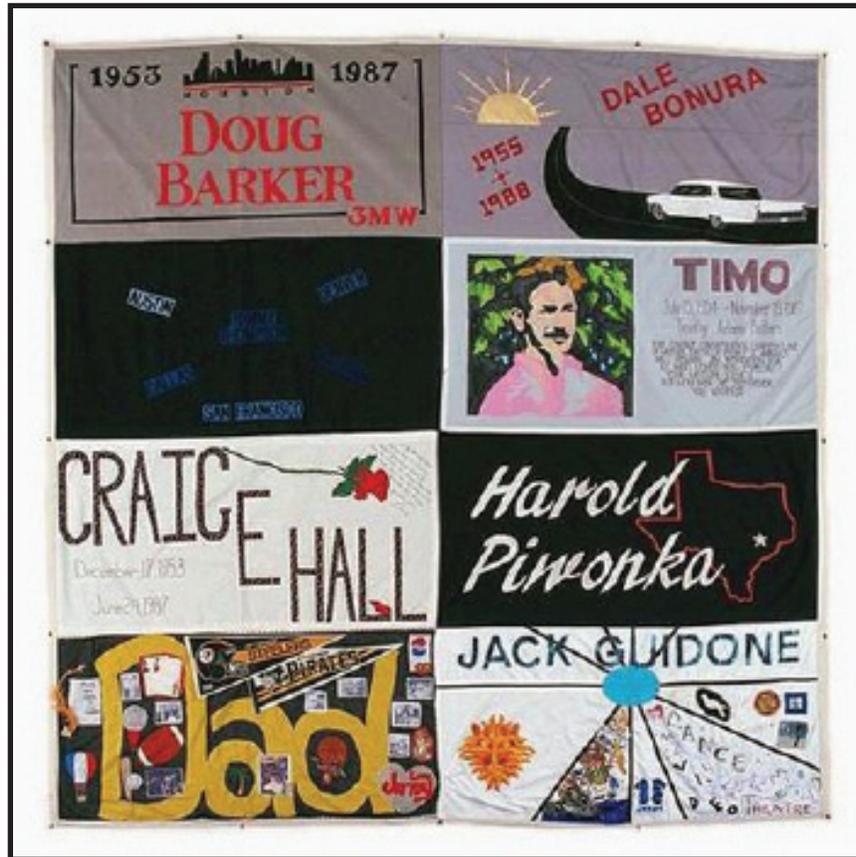
28

INS announces new policy on homosexuality.
If immigrants admit that they are homosexual to an
INS inspector they are excluded from entering the United States.

If homosexual people deny that they are homosexual, but are later
found out, they could be deported for perjury (lying under oath).

²⁸ Knott, Theresa. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barred_ring.svg.

1983



A portion of the AIDS Quilt, commemorating those who died from AIDS and/or AIDS complications.²⁹

Researchers discover the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that causes AIDS.

²⁹ AIDS services of Austin- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/asaustin/3830747634/in/photostream/>.

1987



30

National Latino(a) Lesbian and Gay Activists is created, later renamed Latino(a) Lesbian and Gay Organization (LLEGO).

³⁰ Mabel, Joe. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seattle_Pride_1995_-_Latino_contingent_01.jpg.

1988



31

The Minneapolis Native American community hosts the first Two Spirit Gathering in 1988.

Since then, some 3,200 people have attended the gathering in locales including Montreal, Vancouver, Kansas City, Eugene, Tucson, San Jose and Butte.

³¹ Photo by Caitlin Childs, 2008 (http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3182/2627270946_317dd731f4.jpg6)

1990

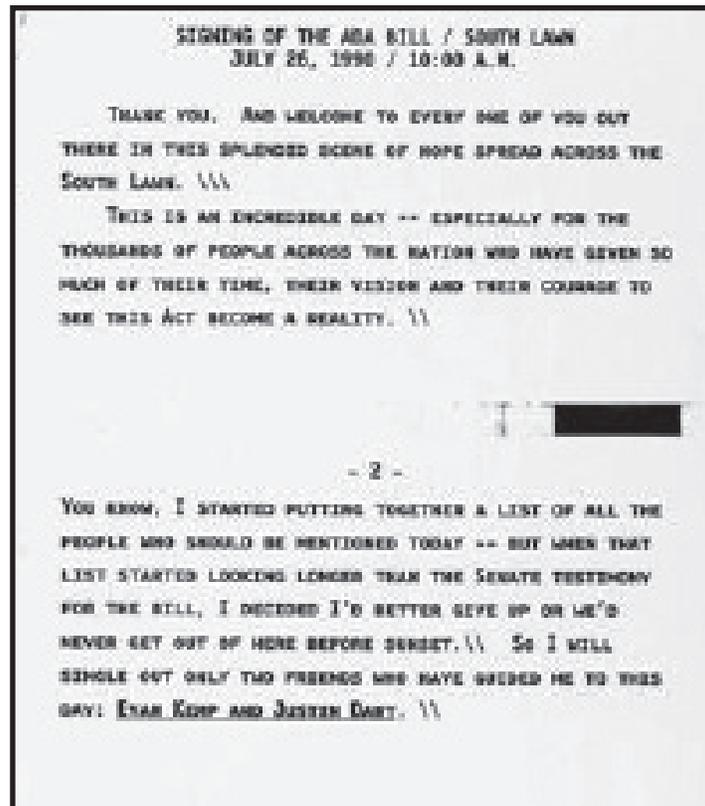


32

Policies restricting immigration of lesbian and gay individuals to the United States are rescinded.

³² Shaw, Donny. <http://www.opencongress.org/articles/view/1012>.

1990



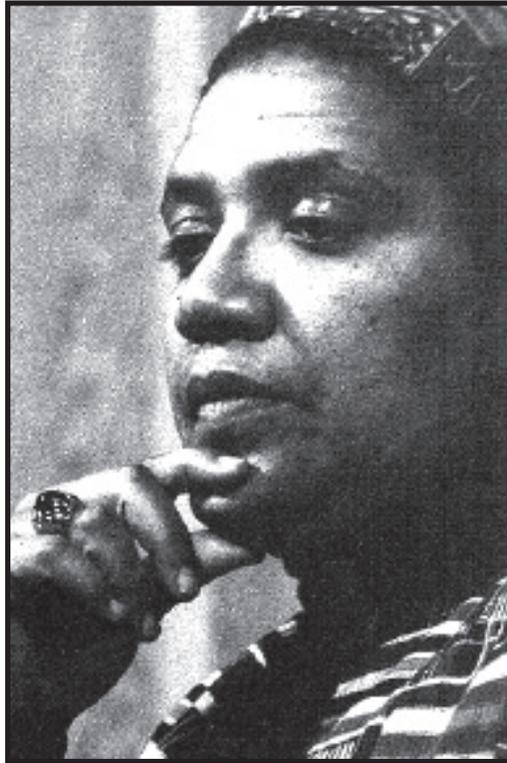
Remarks by President George H.W. Bush on signing the ADA, 1990. ³³

The Americans with Disabilities Act passes banning discrimination based on dis/ability. After a long history of discrimination and exclusion under broader immigration policies, this established equal opportunity for employment, transportation, telecommunications, public accommodations, and the state and federal government's services.

Transgender individuals
are excluded from in the nondiscrimination policy.

³³ National Archives and Records Administration. [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_George_H._W._Bush_Signing_of_the_ADA_\(Americans_with_Disabilities_Act\)_Bill_1990.gif](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_George_H._W._Bush_Signing_of_the_ADA_(Americans_with_Disabilities_Act)_Bill_1990.gif).

1992



34

Black lesbian poet Audre Lorde dies of breast cancer.
At the time of her death, she is the poet laureate of New York state.

³⁴ K. Kendell, 1980 in Austin, TX. (http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3036/2733757260_88a4140fc6.jpg)

1992



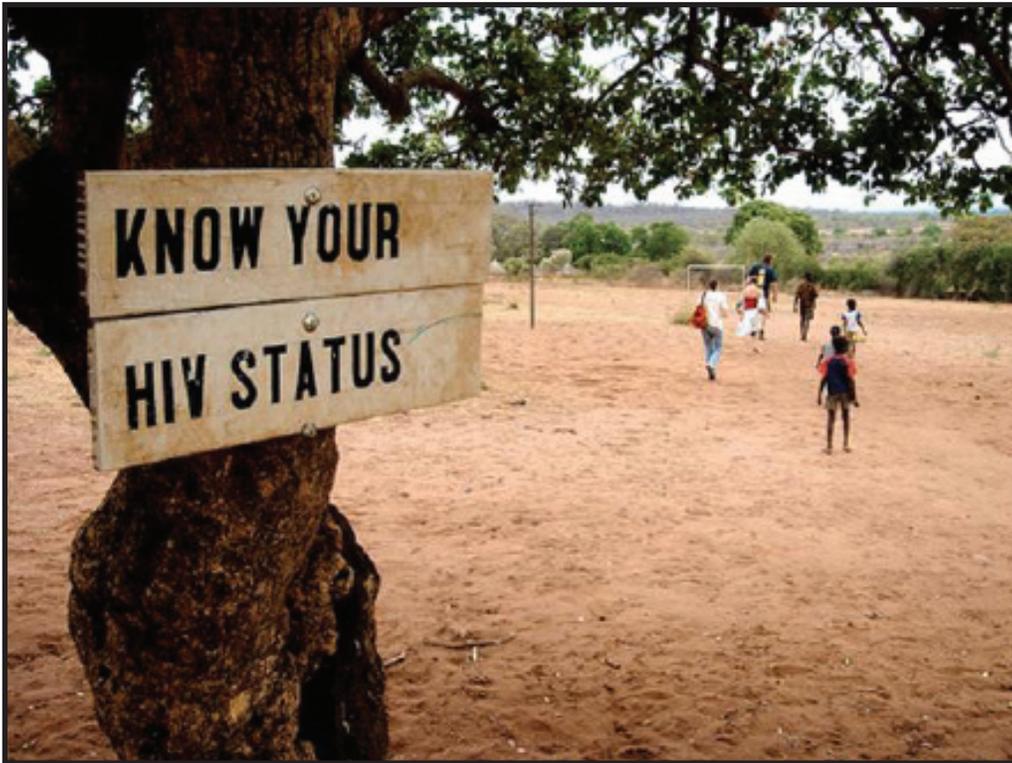
35

Oregon faces Ballot Measure 9, an amendment to the Oregon State Constitution that states: “All governments in Oregon may not use their monies or properties to promote, encourage or facilitate homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism or masochism.”

Between 1992 and 2008, Oregon faces more than 25 local and statewide anti-gay ballot measures. The trend in Oregon is picked up nationally, and states from Arkansas to Idaho have faced anti-gay ballot measures on a range of issues from rolling back anti-discrimination legislation, to same-sex marriage bans to adoption restrictions.

³⁵ <http://216.168.37.61/posteritati/jpg/B3/BALLOT%20MEASURE%209%201SH%20DIFF.jpg>

1993



Taken in Simonga Village, Zambia ³⁶

Congress bans people who are HIV-positive from entering the United States as immigrants.

The policy was finally changed in 2009.

³⁶ Jon Rawlinson on Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/london/75148497/>

1994



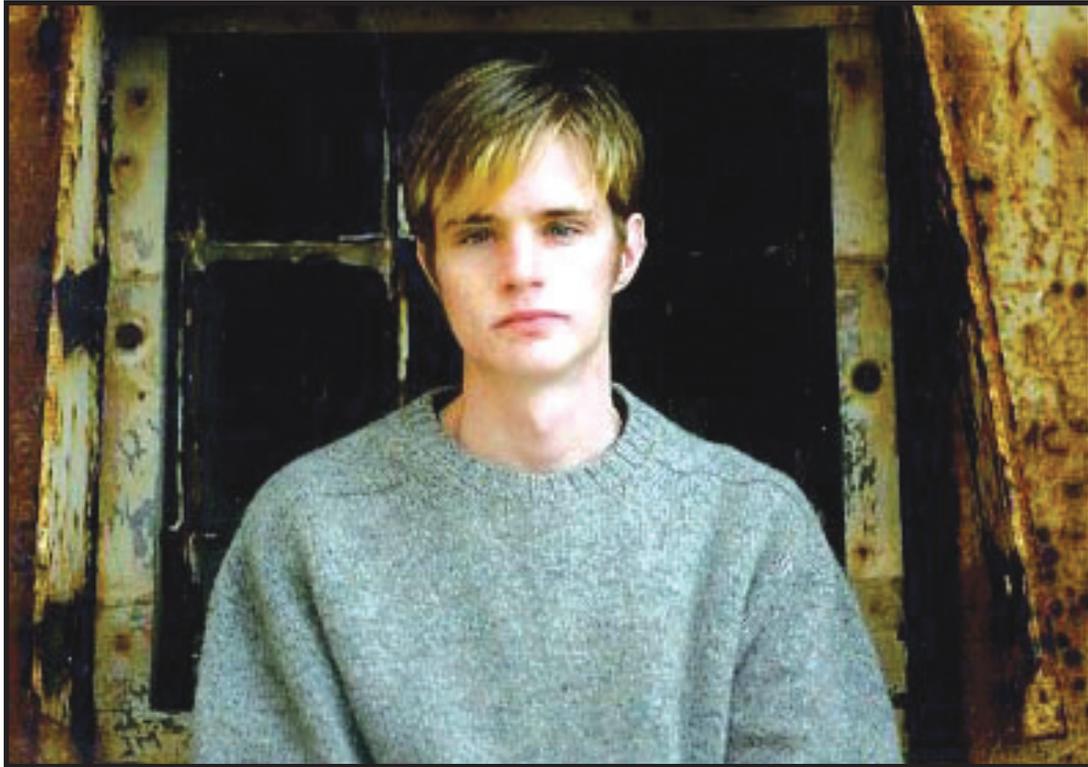
Castro Street, San Francisco.³⁷

For the first time, gays and lesbians are able to apply for asylum in the United States. Asylum applicants must establish a history of past persecution or a well-founded fear of future persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

Despite the changes in 1994, LGBT asylum seekers still face serious barriers. Asylum cases are often decided based on “evidence” of harassment, or corroborating statements from witnesses. By its very nature, persecution of individuals based on their sexual orientation is subjective, culturally specific and often hidden.

³⁷ http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0e/Castro_Street_Pink_Saturday_2008_June_29.jpg

1998



38

Matthew Shepard is brutally murdered—beaten and left tied to a fence for 18 hours—outside of Laramie, Wyoming. Nationwide vigils and demonstrations ensue.

³⁸ Lederer, Adam. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Matthew_Shepard.jpg.

2003



Tyron Garner and John Geddes Lawrence, the petitioners in *Lawrence v. Texas*.³⁹

Lawrence vs. Texas: The U.S. Supreme Court strikes down the Texas anti-sodomy law, invalidating sodomy laws in the remaining thirteen states,

the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Tyron Garner and John Geddes Lawrence were having consensual sex in Lawrence's apartment in Houston, Texas, when the police raided their home based on a false report and arrested them for violating the anti-sodomy law.

³⁹ Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:John_Geddes_Lawrence_and_Tyron_Garner_2.jpg

2004



40

Conservatives use same-sex marriage ballot measures to galvanize their conservative base and get them to the polls for the November 2004 election.

Same-sex marriage bans pass in all 11 states that voted on the measure: Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah. Louisiana and Missouri pass similar amendments earlier in the year

⁴⁰ Belmonte, Jeff. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wedding_rings.jpg.

2005



41

Congress passes the REAL ID Act, a federal law intended to standardize identification information. This means if someone is living/working in the United States, they will need their identification to meet REAL ID standards in order to travel by airplane, open a bank account, collect Social Security payments and/or utilize all government services.

People must provide legal residency documents in order to obtain a REAL ID, cutting off nearly all recourse and opportunities for undocumented citizens. All states are required to comply with the REAL ID Act by May 2008.

⁴¹ <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Deltalax.jpg>.

2005



42

A Florida custody battle between Linda Kantaras and her transgender husband, Michael, results in a decision granting Michael custody. The case is likely to set a precedent for future cases that deal with defining marriages and the parental rights for transgender individuals.

⁴² O'Neill, John. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:High_court_of_Australia_-_court_2.jpg.

2007



43

Anti-immigrant bills are increasingly introduced in state legislatures across the country, including:

- Eliminates ability to get official government identification cards, such as a driver's license or occupational license, and prevents undocumented immigrants from obtaining public benefits or assistance other than what is required by federal law.
- Defines the official language of the state as English.
- Gives local police the authority of immigration enforcement agents.
- Mandates that the Department of Human Services checks for lawful presence in the United States for all public assistance applicants.
- Requires proof of citizenship in order to register to vote.

⁴³ Gibbs, Nathan. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/57954193@N00/126220665>.

2007



44

SB2: The Oregon Equality Act, passed in May, creates consistent statewide Oregon law prohibiting discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodation, public services and education on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

HB 2007: The Oregon Family Fairness Act, passed in May, creates legal recognition for same-sex couples and their families through domestic partnerships.

⁴⁴ Poster created by Jessica Lee. Picture by Thomas Wheatley.

2007



45

Many states deny immigrants the right to marry.

A federal law, created to facilitate collection of child support payments, is increasingly being used by states to deny marriage licenses to individuals without Social Security cards.

⁴⁵ Flickr; Xtopher1974, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/xtopher1974/4003420495/>

2007



46

Denise Simmons becomes the nation's first openly lesbian African American mayor when she is elected in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Simmons was elected to the Cambridge City Council in 2002.

⁴⁶ Cambridge Civic Journal website. <http://www.rwinters.com/vote/simmons.htm>

2008



Angie Zapata, photographed with her nephew ⁴⁷

Angie Zapata, a transwoman, is beaten to death in Greeley, Colorado. Allen Andrade was convicted of first-degree murder and committing a bias-motivated crime, because he killed her after he learned that she was transgender. The case was the first in the nation to get a conviction for a hate crime involving a transgender victim.

⁴⁷ Photo from the Zapata family, Denver Legal News Examiner, April 17, 2009

2009



President Obama at the hate crimes signing reception.⁴⁸

President Obama signs into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crime Prevention Act, which strengthens existing US laws by extending federal hate crime protection to cases where the victim was targeted because of their sexual orientation, gender, disability or gender identity.

Federal hate crimes legislation initially passed in 1994 and increased sentencing penalties for crimes committed on the basis of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity or sex of any person.

⁴⁸ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thirdwaythinktank/4072210995/>

Crossing the Border



50 minutes

SUMMARY

Gay, lesbian and bisexual people share some key experiences with immigrants. We all know what it feels like to be afraid for the security of our families, be a scapegoat for society's problems and feel vulnerable and unsafe because of policies that keep us on the margins. And the experiences shared by transpeople and immigrants are even stronger. This lecture draws the clear connections between trans and immigrant communities, and demystifies the federal REAL ID Act.

MATERIALS

- Flip chart

GOALS

- To introduce the experiences and causes that trans and immigrant communities share.
- To build a shared understanding of the REAL ID Act, and just who it impacts.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	5 minutes
Crossing the border	Lecture	15 minutes
Becoming "Legal"	Lecture and large group discussion	10 minutes
Barriers to transitioning as an immigrant	Lecture	10 minutes
REAL ID? Real Nightmare!	Lecture	10 minutes

► Introduction

Trainer says:

Working in identity-based movements, we can often feel like we're in silos—choice activists separate from racial justice activists, the immigrant rights movement separate from the LGBT rights movement. And it's easy to forget the experiences we share. Today, we'll talk about the shared experiences and policies impacting two marginalized communities—trans and immigrant communities.

► Crossing the border

Trainer says:

Crossing borders of sex and gender may seem like a far cry from crossing national borders, but there are some big similarities:

Crossing the Border *(continued)*

“Nation” and “Sex and Gender” portions written on flip chart:

Nation	Sex and Gender	Trainer explains:
Everyone has a legal national identity.	Everyone has a legal documented sex.	When we think about citizenship or sex documentation, we often just think of those who don't have it—immigrants and transpeople. But the truth is, in the same way that all of us have a sexual orientation, all of us have a legal national identity, and all of us have a legal sex.
They are usually determined by your place of birth.	Sex is usually determined by the shape of your genitals at birth.	And both sex and national identity are determined at birth—not by anything anyone does right or wrong.
Many people take long journeys to cross the U.S. border.	Many people take a long process to transition, and some never finish.	Both transpeople and immigrants go to great lengths to change their legal status—
Many people are murdered for crossing the border.	Many people are murdered for transitioning.	—and some lose their lives in the process.

Trainer says:

In addition to these broader frameworks, there are some much more concrete shared experiences between transpeople and immigrants in the United States:

“Immigrants and transpeople” portions written on flip chart:

Both immigrants and transpeople...	Trainer explains:
Difficulty finding employment—and are often unemployed or underemployed.	Both trans and immigrant communities experience unemployment due to broader social stigmas and pervasive employment discrimination. And in most cases, both lack legal protection against that discrimination.
Many have to work underground—often in a dangerous and unprotected work environment.	As a result, many are forced to work under the table or in street economies—where they're often put at risk of nonpayment, or of physical danger.
Have difficulty accessing anything when an ID is required.	Since neither transpeople nor undocumented people can access accurate documentation, they're cut off from key things that we'd often consider to be basic human rights.

Trainer asks:

What are all the things you do each day that you need your ID for?

STANDING TOGETHER COMING OUT FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

An Anti-Racist Organizational
Development Toolkit for
LGBT Equality Groups
and Activists



Crossing the Border *(continued)*

► REAL ID? Real Nightmare!

Trainer says:

Having documentation really determines our access to a broad range of things—of which, if you have accurate and reliable access to documentation, you’re likely to take advantage. Everything from seeing a movie to seeing a doctor requires a valid state ID. And in 2005, the REAL ID Act drastically changed the way we use ID in the United States.

What is REAL ID?

- Federal law passed in 2005, designed to standardize personal identification information. Under this law:
- State-issued identification, such as drivers licenses, must meet national standards to be valid in other states. For transpeople, that means that the requirements to change the most accessible documentation will become even more stringent.
- Personal information is centralized in a federal database, so identification information can be accessed by state and federal agencies across the country—and that includes changes in documentation. So transpeople could be outed to any agency at any time.

Who’s impacted by Real ID?

- Immigrants, refugees, and transnational adoptees, whose birth certificates and other documentation may be thousands of miles away from them.
- Elderly people, natural disaster survivors, homeless people and anyone else whose documentation may be lost to time, distance or natural disasters.
- Domestic violence survivors, runaway youth and anyone who has had to escape an unsafe home life.
- Transpeople, whose documentation may out them, and for whom changing documentation is costly, difficult or even impossible.

Trainer closing:

Sometimes it can be hard to see the connections between our experiences and our struggles as marginalized communities, but as you can see, we’ve actually got a lot in common. That’s why it’s critical that we all keep an eye on the progress of REAL ID as it moves through the implementation process in states across the country—and that we work in allegiance with immigrant rights movements.

Crossing the Border is adapted from a workshop tool originally created by Maceo Persson, former BREF staff, for the 2008 Conference on Gender, Families and Latino Immigration to Oregon.

Moving to Action

The process of moving forward racial justice is not just about individuals changing our behavior and ways of thinking. This important individual work must in turn trigger a commitment to dismantling racism in our organizations in order to position us to move effective and accountable racial justice organizing.

Organizations, like individuals, can evolve to become anti-racist. This transformation begins with developing a comprehensive understanding of how racism and oppression operate within an organization's own walls. From that analysis comes a commitment and concrete

plans for dismantling racism internally and solidifying the commitment by taking our actions more broadly and calling our base into action.

Yet, there is no cookie-cutter approach to anti-racist organizational development. The process is necessarily impacted by the size, structure, mission, constituency and geographic location of an organization. Each road to becoming an anti-racist organization is unique and never complete—rather, this is an ongoing journey that must be integrated in all aspects of our work for LGBT equality and social justice.

IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL FIND:

WORKSHOP TOOL	FORMAT	TIME	PAGE
Moving racial justice: Are you ready?	An introduction	N/A	141
Assessing Organizational Racism	Lecture, small group activity, and large group discussion	110 minutes	146
Case Study: PFLAG	Case study	N/A	160
Putting racial justice into workplans	An introduction	N/A	163
Naming and framing racism	Lecture and large group discussion	50 minutes	171
Building alliances across race, gender and sexuality	Lecture and large group discussion	60 minutes	182
Case Study: An Unlikely Collaboration	Case study	N/A	185

Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready?

Assessing Your Organization's Readiness and Capacity to Move a Racial Justice Agenda

Not every organization is ready to take on racial justice work even if it is eager to do so. The following assessment is designed to raise critical issues as organizations and organizers think about their capacity to move a racial justice agenda. These assessments are designed to identify potential barriers to taking on a racial justice focus and outline the preparatory work that may be needed to effectively engage in and sustain racial justice work for white and multi-racial organizations. This section does not address the potential challenges that people of color organizations may face in moving a racial justice agenda.

Read through the questions designed for your organization based on the descriptions of white and multi-racial organizations. Allow these questions to help you identify barriers, challenges and opportunities for moving racial justice through organizing.

By “white organizations” we mean organizations that are almost entirely made up of white people among staff, leadership, constituency and membership. A few people of color could be part of the organization even in meaningful ways, but the organization is dominated by white people. A multi-racial organization has equity in leadership and power between people of color and white people.

Both white and multi-racial organizations need to be incredibly thoughtful about their role in racial justice organizing. They must become active allies in struggles for racial justice. And they need to take leadership from and be accountable to people of color within their organizations as well as people of color organizations and communities as much as possible. Multi-racial membership organizations are also at risk of being wedged apart by racist attacks.

In either case, for those working in the LGBT movement, this means taking direction from and being accountable to LGBT people of color organizations as well as primarily straight people of color organizations.

The following are questions that will help identify whether your organization is ready to take on a new or expanded commitment to engage in racial justice work.

Who is committed to and interested in taking on racial justice work? Is the Board actively engaged and committed?

As a staff person or leader, are you the primary one pushing the agenda? Is there a shared commitment among leaders and people who hold power and influence within the organization? Are the Executive Director and Board of Directors equally committed to this agenda? How thoughtful and deep is the commitment? Are people committed enough to expend real resources for the work? Do people understand that this will involve internal work, possibly internal resistance and tension, and may impact external relationships? How much push-back are people prepared to address? Are people going to back off at the first sign of trouble? The fiftieth?

If there is not a shared commitment among a critical mass of people with power in the organization who also share a sense of the potential barriers and problems that could arise, then the

Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready? *(continued)*

organization is not ready. More internal education and more effort building a base of support for taking on a racial justice focus are necessary.

If the staff and Board of an organization are not equally committed to this work, it can create significant problems. All too often, staff will charge ahead without getting the necessary, deep buy-in from the Board of Directors. Eventually this will come back to haunt you.

What motivates people within the organization to take on racial justice work?

Are people interested in the work out of a sense of solidarity with people of color, political thinking that prioritizes the work, a sense of guilt or opportunism? Seriously thinking about these questions can help get a sense of how deep the commitment is as well as identifying potential major pitfalls.

Some examples: When is adding a race analysis to your campaign work opportunistic?

When this is done to garner money or to generate numbers for a grant.

When spokespeople of color are used without any depth of relationship: The spokesperson of color isn't rooted in the community, or the organization is engaging that spokesperson without any interest in engaging the community itself.

When this is done solely in reaction to outside pressure. This often occurs in response to race-based wedge issues pushed by anti-LGBT forces.

Do you have intentional and effective approaches to developing leadership throughout your organization?

In order to sustain and build the work, organizations need to be intentional about leadership development. Building power for communities of color means building a strong base of people of color and anti-racist white allies as members and leaders. Concentrating leadership in the hands of a few weakens the work and makes it easier for opponents to hurt the organization by discrediting one or two individuals.

What is and has been your organization's relationships with people of color organizations and communities of color?

White or predominantly white organizations that have no relationship with people of color or organizations and communities of color are not ready to move a racial justice campaign. Nor are they ready if the relationships they do have with people of color are tenuous—not particularly deep or lacking a level of meaningful trust. In this context, white organizations should begin to develop alliances with organizations and communities of color by educating themselves about relevant issues and building relationships.

In many parts of the country, people of color organizations are few and communities of color are isolated. And in most of the country, LGBT people of color organizations are severely un-

Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready? *(continued)*

derfunded. In these situations, predominantly white organizations must act creatively to seek avenues of accountability in their racial justice work. This may mean building relationships with key organizations of color and leaders outside their community, town, city or state. Or it could mean building relationships with key community leaders who are not necessarily connected to formal organizations.

Is there a shared and sharp analysis of race and racism among the organization's leadership and membership?

An organization that is really struggling to find a language to talk about race and racism internally and in its organizing work may not be ready to move a racial justice campaign. Dismantling racism training and political education are effective methods of developing shared organizational analysis.

Are you intentionally building alliances with other organizations and communities of color?

To what extent does the organization's analysis of racism affirm the shared experiences of various groups of color both within the organization and in relationship to other communities?

One of the ways racism operates in the United States, is that it divides to conquer, driving wedges between various ethnic groups and communities of color. It is critical for organizations to proactively build alliances among people of color. We cannot ignore real differences and tensions, but should consciously and constructively try to mend problems and create collaboration. If people of color are divided, our work for racial justice is jeopardized.

Does your organization have a strategic approach to weighing the costs and benefits of entering coalitions, particularly with white organizations?

Multi-racial organizations need to be careful about coalition work with white organizations. Although such coalitions are often necessary—especially given the demographic realities of various regions—there are many potential pitfalls. White organizations are often larger and better resourced, creating significant power imbalances. Few white organizations “get” racism at a deep level and have a track record of fighting racism in appropriate ways. How can multi-racial organizations collaborate with predominantly white organizations without tipping the balance of multi-racial equity in leadership within their own organization? What type of internal strength do you need to build before entering new collaborations in order to support leaders of color in your own organization? How can you assess the capacity of predominantly white organizations to be effective anti-racist allies to your organization?

Do you expect some resistance to taking on more explicit racial justice work?

Resistance should be expected and can be worked through. Who is likely to put up this resistance and why? Staff, leaders, Board members, major donors and others can all put up roadblocks. Educational programs designed specifically for each group are critical to help avoid resistance as well as surface inevitable resistance in a structured setting where it can be productively discussed and challenged.

Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready? *(continued)*

Common Points of Resistance Among White Organizations

Fear of losing power in the organization

If key players in an organization are nervous that they could lose power or status in the organization if people of color join, then that organization is not in a good position to seriously take on a racial justice focus. Rather, the organization should most likely focus on internal dismantling racism education.

The research phase of an organization's campaign may provide an opportunity to provide some of the internal education needed to dismantle racist fears. Empirical and anecdotal data may move white members and leaders to begin to focus on issues rather than their own racist beliefs, fears and anxieties.

People feeling unprepared and inexperienced at working with a race analysis

Organizations can build on the work and expertise of other organizations and institutions that have experience working with a race analysis. This can be an impetus for building alliances or coalitions that bring organizations with a strong history of racial justice work together with less experienced organizations.

Relying on tried-and-true organizing strategies—while still being flexible—may provide an opportunity to overcome assumptions that racial justice organizing is a whole different ballgame than familiar organizing strategies. While we don't want to deny that moving a racial justice campaign may have unique strategies and challenges, sometimes the feeling of not being equipped does not represent a lack of capacity to move a racial justice agenda.

Fear of wedging membership, wanting to avoid “divisive” issues

If we avoid issues of race because we think it is divisive, we are avoiding some of the most critical issues. Too many progressive organizations have sat out key racial justice fights for fear of wedging their membership, with the effect of strengthening the racist right wing.

It's better to strengthen your constituencies' understanding of and commitment to racial justice than to avoid the issues of race and racism. Building a strong and shared analysis of oppression is key to undermining this “cardinal organizing rule.” Sometimes confronting points of disagreement can move an organization past seemingly huge barriers to a whole new level of work.

Is the organization prepared not to tokenize the few people of color who are part of the organization?

Tokenism is the act of placing a limited number of people (pick one and only one) from a non-dominant group for a prestigious position in order to deflect criticism of oppression. Tokenism is a form of co-optation.

Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready? *(continued)*

When predominantly white organizations and multi-racial organizations take on racial justice work, the people of color in the organizations are often put into uncomfortable positions within the organization.

People of color may want to take the opportunity to caucus in order to build a strong network of support as they enter a racial justice campaign. The caucus may allow people of color to assess whether the organization is tokenizing them in order to put a “colored face” to the campaign while marginalizing people of color from meaningful positions of leadership in the campaign. The caucus may also allow people of color an opportunity to address the impact of internalized racism on members and leaders as active participants in moving a racial justice agenda.

If your organization is primarily white...why?

This is an incredibly useful question to reflect on before proceeding. In thinking about this question, it is crucial to “step out of the box” and seriously test your basic assumptions.

- Is it because of demographics: few people of color in your area? Has your organization allowed demographics to be an excuse for not doing the work?
- Is it because your organization has historically framed LGBT issues in ways that aren’t relevant for people of color?
- Have there been specific incidents where the organization has tried to build relationships with and include people of color but it didn’t work? Why?

How is your organization prepared to deal with racist attacks?

If your work is effective, you will most likely be targeted at some point, if not also constantly, in a million small ways. Many established organizations develop “risk management” plans to deal with all kinds of potential crises. People of color and multi-racial organizations should consider adding to these usual disaster possibilities (fire, embezzlement, financial crisis, etc.) some of the liabilities that come with building power for people of color in a deeply racist society: media misinformation and mischaracterization, harassing lawsuits, challenges to your nonprofit status, etc.

Moving Racial Justice: Are You Ready? is adapted from Western States Center’s Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 90-103). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

Assessing Organizational Racism



110 minutes

SUMMARY

Since racism is reflected in every institution and organization in the United States, it is also present in the LGBT movement. The structures and cultures of nonprofits and grassroots organizations reproduce white privilege and racial oppression found in wider society even though, as organizations working for equality, it can be easy to feel exempt from this dynamic. A major step in anti-racist organizational development is explicitly identifying where our organizations are in terms of racial justice through some guided internal assessment.

GOALS

- Gain an understanding of what it means to be an anti-racist organization.
- Assess where your organization fits in the four stages of anti-racist organizational development.
- Determine next steps in advancing your development as an anti-racist organization.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Overview	Lecture	20 minutes
Assessing your organization	Small group activity	25 minutes
Report back to the group	Large group discussion	25 minutes
Brainstorm next steps and assign tasks	Large group discussion	30 minutes
Closing	Lecture	10 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Tape
- Handouts:

Four Stages of Organizational Development

Stages of Anti-Racist Organizational Development: Worksheet

Chart of Characteristics

► **Introduction**

Trainer Points:

- When it comes to race and racism, many LGBT equality organizations have trouble walking their talk—or even talking their talk. This becomes especially pronounced working in a movement whose leadership is predominantly white. Sometimes we think we don’t have to deal with racial justice until people of color are involved with our work. Some of us may even think that the extent of our work around race is to get more people of color to join our groups or attend our events.
- In reality, racism is everyone’s issue—especially those of us working in the LGBT equality movement. And that doesn’t necessarily just mean “coloring up” by getting more people of color involved. In fact, becoming a multi-racial organization isn’t a necessary goal of anti-racist work.

Assessing Organizational Racism *(continued)*

- Becoming an anti-racist organization is a long process. The transformation begins with developing a comprehensive understanding of how racism and oppression operate within an organization's own walls. From that analysis comes a commitment and concrete plans for dismantling racism within the organization and in larger society.
- But in order to know where we're going and how to get there, we first need to know where we are! So we're going to take a few minutes to take stock of our organizations and find out where we stand. Let's start by getting a better understanding of what kinds of organizations exist.

Trainer says (bold text written on flip chart):

Introducing the four stages of organizations:

1. The All White Club, without trying, finds itself with an all-white organization.

Key points about All White Clubs:

- *They don't intentionally exclude people of color*—in fact, they've often tried to get more people of color involved. But when people of color join, they're asked to fit into the existing culture, and many leave after a frustrating period of trying to be heard.
- *They can't figure out why they don't have more people of color involved*, and often blame people of color for not being interested in the group's work.
- *They don't think deeply about internal change* and often don't understand that without changing organizational culture, norms and power relations, they will always be an all-white club.
- *They're good people! They just don't have an analysis* of racism, power relations, the issues of multiple/intersectional identities experienced by LGBT people of color, or accountability to people or communities of color.

2. The Affirmative Action or "Token" Organization is committed to eliminating discrimination in hiring and promotion.

Key points about Affirmative Action Organizations:

- *They set clear Affirmative Action goals* focused on the hiring process, with clear job criteria, a percentage of people of color who need to be in a candidate pool and a bias-reduced interview process.
- *They hold sensitivity/diversity/tolerance trainings* aimed at reducing person-to-person prejudice, or "Personal Racism."
- *They sometimes have one or two people of color in leadership positions*, but for many people of color, coming into the organization feels like little more than tokenism.
- *They're basically all-white clubs with a few adjustments* aimed at bringing people of color in.

3. The Multi-Cultural Organization reflects the contribution and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, products and services.

Assessing Organizational Racism *(continued)*

Key points about Multi-Cultural Organizations:

- *They actively recruit and welcome people of color* and celebrate having a diverse staff and board.
- *They are committed to reducing prejudice* within the group and offer programs that help members learn more about the diverse cultures that make up the organization.
- Their commitment makes white people feel good, but *people of color are still asked to fit in to the dominant culture*. White people in the organization tend to feel good about the commitment to diversity. Like the previous two, however, people of color are still asked to join the dominant culture and fit in.
- *Most multi-national corporations are at this stage*—while most LGBT organizations and nonprofits are still in the first two stages. Multi-national corporations recognize that their financial success is tied to their customer base and that their customer base is racially diverse. So, for example, in states where there are active English-only campaigns, the banks are offering ATM machines in English and Spanish. This is not to say we should model ourselves after multi-national corporations, but it is worth thinking about how they are further ahead than most of us in thinking about the implications of changing demographics for their organization.

4. The Anti-Racist Organization supports the development of anti-racist white allies and empowered people of color through the organization's culture, norms, policies and procedures. Their work is based in an analysis of history of racism and power in this country.

Key points about Anti-Racist Organizations:

- *They help white people work together and challenge each other* around issues of racism. They also help white people share power with people of color, take leadership from and be accountable to LGBT and straight people of color, feel comfortable with being uncomfortable and understand that we are all learning all the time.
- *They help people of color become more empowered through taking leadership*; sharing in the power; transforming the organizational norms and culture; challenging white allies and other people of color; sharing in decisions about how the organization's resources will be spent, the setting of priorities; what work gets done as well as how it gets done; and allowing people of color to make the same mistakes as white people.
- *Their anti-racist analysis manifests itself in every part of their work*. The organization provides training and encourages discussions about racism, white privilege, power, multiple identities and accountability; sets clear standards for inclusion at all levels of the organization; reviews the mission, vision, policies, procedures, board agreements, etc. to ensure that the commitment to end racism is a consistent theme; helps people understand the links between the oppressions; and devotes time and resources to building relationships across race and other barriers.

► Assessing your organization

Trainer distributes:

Handouts: *Four Stages of Organizational Development*, *Stages of Anti-Racist Organizational Development: Worksheet*, and *Chart of Characteristics*

Assessing Organizational Racism *(continued)*

Trainer talking points:

- This organizational assessment chart offers us a place to start tackling these really big questions and dynamics.
- This sampling of questions is designed to help you examine and change the ways your organization replicates larger racist patterns.

Trainer instructs:

- Participants should break into small groups.
- If multiple organizations are present, participants should group by organization. If the audience is all from one organization, they should break into small groups and take different sections of the chart.
- Small groups should go through the chart, line by line, and figure out where their organization stands.
- As you fill out the chart, note what characteristics your organization shares with each stage, and write them down on the worksheet. Then use those notes to determine what your organization's dominant stage is.

► **Report back to the group**

Trainer asks each group to report back:

- What's your organization's dominant stage?
- What surprised you about filling out the chart?
- Did this change the way you think about your organization's work? How?

► **Brainstorm next steps and assign tasks**

Trainer talking points:

- For some of us, this may feel really good and clarifying, just to know where we stand when it comes to race in our organizations. For others of us, it may feel daunting—like there's a lot to take on. And there is a lot to take on, but that doesn't mean we can't break it down and take it on piece by piece.
- So let's come up with some action steps!

Trainer instructs:

- Return to your small groups, and write down one action step for each category on the chart. One thing your organization can change.
- Be sure to write bigger structural changes, like who has the power to make decisions, as well as smaller changes, like what kinds of decorations are on the wall. This is a range of work! Some things will be long-term challenges, and others are smaller changes you can make a little more easily.

Trainer gives groups 20 minutes to come up with tasks, then further instructs:

- In your small groups, assign tasks. Who's the decision maker in charge of this area? And

Assessing Organizational Racism *(continued)*

what's a reasonable time frame for getting this done?

- Assign a point person AND a time frame. Then set a meeting date to check in on everyone's progress and to start building a more in-depth organizational work plan.

Trainer gives an additional 10 minutes to complete task assignments and timelines.

► Closing

Trainer talking points:

- Does everyone have their tasks assigned? Feeling ready to move forward? Good.
- This can feel like a lot of work, but you've got your first steps—which is much, much more than many organizations take on. And there are a few things to remember as you move forward through anti-racist organizational development:
 - **It's hard work.** The fundamental evolution needed to become actively anti-racist is a long, slow, deep process. It takes time, and it takes effort.
 - **This is the work we're always talking about.** It's the coalition work we always wish was happening, but don't often have the time (or take the time) to tackle. It's the answer to the question that so many predominantly white LGBT organizations ask: "Why aren't more people of color involved?"
 - **It's strategic work.** This is how we counter the myth that communities of color are somehow "more homophobic" than white communities. It's how we build deep, meaningful coalitions. And it's how we win—not just for LGBT rights, but for racial justice and social justice.
 - **It's doable work.** Organizations that have made the commitment are living proof that it can be done. The changes they've made confirm that the hard work of transformation is worth every minute. And on those worksheets, you've got a place to start. So start!

This workshop tool was adapted by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun based on work done by the Exchange Project of the Peace Development Fund, Grassroots Leadership's Barriers and Bridges program, and the original concept by Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman.

changework - 1705 Wallace Street, Durham, NC 27707, 919-490-4448 and adapted from Western States Center's Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 57-64). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

The Four Stages of Organizational Development

The All White Club

All White Clubs are LGBT groups that, without trying, find themselves with an all-white organization.

These are not groups that have intentionally excluded people of color. In fact, many times they have developed recruitment plans to get more people of color involved in their group. However, when people of color join the group, they are essentially asked to fit into the existing culture. Many leave after a frustrating period of trying to be heard.

After years of trying, the Club cannot figure out why they do not have more people of color in their group; they begin to blame people of color for not being interested in LGBT issues or work, or they just give up. They do not understand that without analyzing and changing the organizational culture, norms, and power relations, they will always be an all-white club. While they are good people, they have no analysis of racism, the LGBT person of color experience or power relations and no accountability to people or communities of color.

The Affirmative Action or “Token” Organization

The Affirmative Action or “Token” LGBT Organization is committed to eliminating racial discrimination in hiring and promotion.

The Affirmative Action or “Token” Organization sets clear affirmative action goals, clear and unambiguous job qualifications and criteria, a percentage of people of color who need to be in a candidate pool for a new job, and a bias-reduced interview process. Staff and board are encouraged to reduce and/or eliminate their prejudice and the organization may conduct prejudice reduction workshops toward this end. There may be one or two people of color in leadership positions. For people of color, coming into the organization feels like little more than tokenism.

The Affirmative Action or “Token” Organization is still basically an all-white club except it now includes structural and legal means to bring people of color in.

The Multi-Cultural Organization

The Multi-Cultural LGBT Organization reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, products and services. It actively recruits and welcomes people of color and celebrates having a diverse staff and board. It is committed to reducing prejudice within the group and offers programs that help members learn more about the diverse cultures and identities that make up the organization. White people in the organization tend to feel good about the commitment to diversity. Like the previous two, however, people of color are still asked to join the dominant culture and fit in.

An interesting point to consider is that most multi-national corporations are at this stage, while most nonprofits, even LGBT and other social change nonprofits, are still predominantly in one of the first two stages. Multi-national corporations recognize that their financial success is tied to their customer base and their customer base is racially diverse. So, for example, in states where there are active English-only campaigns, the banks are offering ATM machines in English and Spanish. This is not to say we should model ourselves after multi-national corporations, but it is worth thinking about how they are further ahead than most of us in thinking about the implications of a changing demographic for their organization.

The Anti-Racist Organization

Based on an analysis of the history of racism, power and the lived realities for LGBT people of color in this country, this LGBT organization supports the development of anti-racist white allies and empowered people of color through the organization's culture, norms, policies and procedures.

The Anti-Racist Organization integrates this commitment into the program, helping white people work together and challenge each other around issues of racism, share power with people of color, take leadership from and be accountable to people of color, feel comfortable with being uncomfortable and understand that we are all learning all the time. The Anti-Racist Organization helps people of color, especially LGBT people of color, become more empowered through taking leadership; sharing in the power; transforming the organizational norms and culture; challenging white allies and other people of color; sharing in decisions about how the organization's resources will be spent, the setting of priorities; what work gets done as well as how it gets done, and allowing people of color to make the same mistakes as white people. The organization does this by providing training and encouraging discussions about racism, white privilege, power and accountability; setting clear standards for inclusion at all levels of the organization; reviewing the mission, vision, policies, procedures, board agreements, etc. to ensure that the commitment to end racism is a consistent theme; helping people understand the links between LGBT and racial oppressions; and devoting time and resources to building relationships across race and other barriers.

Stages of Anti-Racist Organizational Development: Worksheet

List of characteristics my organization shares from the following stages:

The All White Club

The Affirmative Action or “Token” Organization

The Multi-Cultural Organization

The Anti-Racist Organization

My organization’s dominant stage is _____.

Things I noticed:

Some goals for the future in terms of our organization's anti-racist development might include:

Four Stages of Organizational Development

	All White Club	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multi-Cultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> made by white people (often gay, non-trans men) made in private in ways that people can't see or really know 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> made by white people decisions made in private and often in unclear ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> made by diverse group of board and staff token attempts to involve those targeted by mission in decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> made by diverse group people of color are in significant leadership positions everyone in the organization understands how power is distributed and how decisions are made
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed, controlled and understood by (one or two) white people (often gay, non-trans men) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed, controlled and understood by (one or two) white people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed, controlled and understood by (one or two) white people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed, controlled and understood by people of color and white people at all levels of the organization

HANDOUT

Four Stages of Organizational Development

	All White Club	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multi-Cultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Money From	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> select foundations wealthy or middle-class college-educated white donors (often gay, non-trans men) often a small number of very large donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> foundations wealthy or middle-class college-educated donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> foundations wealthy or middle-class college-educated donors some donations from people of color and lower-income people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comes from the community most affected by the problem(s) being addressed supplemented by foundation grants and donations from allies (those concerned but not directly affected)
Accountable to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> funders a few white people on board or staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> funders board staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> funders board and staff token attempts to report to those targeted by mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communities targeted in mission

Four Stages of Organizational Development

	All White Club	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multi-Cultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Power and Pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white people in decision-making positions, paid very well people of color (and/or trans-people) in administrative or service positions paying low wages few, if any, benefits and little job security people at bottom have very little power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white people in decision-making positions, paid relatively well people of color (and/or trans-people) in administrative or service positions that pay less well one or two people in positions of power, particularly if their work style emulates those of white people in power training to upgrade skills is offered people of color may not be at equal levels of power with white people, but a level of respect is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white people in decision-making positions, paid relatively well people of color in administrative or service positions that pay less well one or two people in positions of power, particularly if their work style emulates those of white people in power training to upgrade skills is offered people of color may not be at equal levels of power with white people, but a level of respect is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> people of color in decision-making positions that pay a decent wage comparable to the wages of white people in the organization administrative and service positions perceived as stepping stone to positions of more power (if desired) and those positions reflect some decision-making power and authority training and other mentoring help provided

HANDOUT

Four Stages of Organizational Development

	All White Club	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multi-Cultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Located	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in white community (often where gentrification is pushing/pushed out people of color and attracted white LGBT folks) decorations reflect a predominantly white culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in white community decorations reflect some cultural diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> physically accessible to people of color decorations reflect a commitment to multiculturalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> physically accessible to community served decorations reflect a commitment to multiculturalism and power sharing
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white people, with token number of people of color (if any) members have no real decision-making power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white people and people of color, with only a token ability to participate in decision-making people of color are only aware of the organization because it is providing a direct service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> from diverse communities token encouragement to participate in decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> from range of communities targeted by mission encouraged to participate in decision-making provided training to enhance skills and abilities to be successful in the organization and their communities

HANDOUT

Four Stages of Organizational Development

Culture	All White Club	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multi-Cultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • top down, paternalistic • often secretive • success measured by how much is accomplished • little, if any, attention paid to process or how work gets done • little, if any, leadership or staff development • no discussion of power analysis or oppression issues • conflict is avoided at all costs • people who raise issues that make people uncomfortable are considered troublemakers or hard to work with • leaders assume “we are all the same” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • still top-down, although inclusivity is stressed • those in power assume their standards and ways of doing things are neutral, most desirable and form the basis for what is considered “qualified” • people expected to be highly motivated self-starters requiring little supervision • some training may be provided • no power analysis • conflict avoided • emphasis on people getting along • discussion of race limited to prejudice reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization looks inclusive with a visibly diverse board and staff • actively celebrates diversity • focuses on reducing prejudice but is uncomfortable naming racism • continues to assume dominant culture ways of doing things most desirable • assume a level playing field • emphasize belief in equality but still no power analysis • workaholism desired and rewarded • still uncomfortable with conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization actively recruits and mentors people of color • celebrates diversity • has a power analysis about racism and other oppression issues • a diversity of work styles encouraged with active reflection about balancing what gets done and how it gets done • a willingness to name racism and address conflict • resources devoted to developing shared goals, teamwork and sharing skills and knowledge (mentoring) 	

Case Study:

PFLAG

(Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)

Lessons Learned

PFLAG demonstrates that primarily white LGBT support organizations can be effective forces for racial justice, and grow multiracial membership, by providing meaningful support and resources to programs by and for people of color—rather than simply integrating people of color in existing programs.

Background

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) is a national non-profit organization with over 500 affiliates in the United States. PFLAG is a support, education and advocacy organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, their families, friends and allies. In 2007 PFLAG launched a new effort to support the nation's first standalone PFLAG chapter within the Black community and for the Black community.



Starting the Conversation

The origins of the new PFLAG Portland Black Chapter began in 2005-2006 in the midst of several conversations between PFLAG leadership and African American community members expressing a profound lack of support and resources for Black families impacted by homophobia and transphobia.

Teri Noble, President of the PFLAG Oregon State Council, has played a central role in the organizational transformation PFLAG has undergone since. Noble identifies as a white, straight ally to the LGBT community and emphasizes the importance of support from allies and families. “People are not safe if they don’t have family support and sometimes it’s a life-saving thing to keep a family together. Nobody should be alone in the world without their family,” says Noble.

Yet Black families with LGBT loved ones experience the multiple struggles of homophobia, transphobia and racism, which manifests itself as gentrification, loss of jobs, racial profiling, and more. As it stands—and despite their best intentions—most primarily white LGBT support spaces are not equipped to address these daily realities. Compounding that struggle, anti-LGBT groups in Oregon have long highlighted the leadership of conservative anti-LGBT African American faith leaders, which only showcases one perspective in Black communities. It also drives the wedge between LGBT communities and communities of color, fueling racism in many white LGBT groups and creating unsafe spaces for people of color.

Like many organizations with primarily white membership, PFLAG lacked an understanding of these dynamics. Conversations regarding support for communities of color often began and ended with “Why don’t people of color come to our meetings?” This question, while commonly asked by primarily white LGBT organizations, lacks the critical component of assessing the group’s own organizational culture and systems, which can create real barriers that keep people of color from participating. In order to move beyond this dynamic PFLAG leadership sought support from Unity Project of Oregon, the region’s only African American LGBT organization, for leadership within the impacted community, and Basic Rights Education Fund, to gain tools on how to further the conversation with their white members. A deeper dialogue to address the impacts of race and racism in a primarily white LGBT and allied community began to surface.

“One of the first things we did was talk about the whole concept of how institutionalized racism is. You just can’t hear that enough because we don’t see it—because it favors us,” says Noble. “You realize ‘I am not the keeper of all knowledge. I’m the keeper of a set of white stereotypes that have been taught to me.’”

She also notes that the shift in explicitly naming the reality of racism and white privilege was pivotal but not easy. “We opened the door to a potentially volatile conversation and now we need to have it. There are piles of muck that we might step in, mistakes we may make but our motives are genuine and collaborative we want you to call us on it at any point—our souls are laid bare. If the underlying theme here isn’t true honesty, sincerity and most of all humble in the face of the challenges others face daily it isn’t going to work.”

Organizational Transformation

“We had to educate ourselves as to what was the correct dynamic, and that was absolutely a 180-degree turnaround from what our guts were telling us. Everyone just went to that ‘politically correct’ place of ‘we can’t separate, we can’t segregate, otherwise we’re doing something bad,’” recalls Noble, acknowledging the initial resistance some PFLAG members voiced with creating a stand-alone chapter specifically for Black families. But the organization understood that this pushback was rooted in a lack of racial justice analysis, not hostility.

“Successfully supporting the new chapter also means redefining long-held beliefs from the white community of what constitutes family. Family has a less fixed definition in communities of color, and one that deserves special recognition,” says Dawn Holt, President of PFLAG Portland. “In addition to the notion of “family,” supporting this chapter has also meant letting go of our understanding of what it means to be a PFLAG chapter. In the white community, we tend to meet monthly for a designated period of time, adhering to a fairly rigid format. In the Black community, events and personal invitations and contacts have been the keys to helping the chapter to coalesce.”

Another critical component for PFLAG was recognizing that being effective allies in racial justice work means providing resources and guidance when appropriate, but allowing those impacted by the issues to take the lead and share power. “Our biggest lesson learned was ‘Do with, not for.’ It’s not just a matter of getting people to come to our meetings; it’s about empowering people within their own communities,” explains Noble. “We encouraged and supported the community in making its own decisions because otherwise it’s the white folks telling them what to do. However, there’s been gratitude and certainly acceptance of the white allies that have participated and of the dynamic that has been established. We’re not being told to go away.”

Moving to Action

As part of successful anti-racist work, PFLAG recognized that it must invest real resources of time and funds to live out their commitment. For the first time in its history, the Oregon based group raised funds to hire a paid community organizer—Geri Washington. Washington has a long history of working for LGBT justice as a straight ally and member of the Black/African American community—most notably as the deputy director for 1992’s ‘No on 9’ campaign, which defeated one of Oregon’s most heinous anti-LGBT ballot measures.

The Chapter’s inaugural meeting took place in April of 2009 and continues to meet monthly. Growth is slowly, but surely, taking place. Noble states, “Many parts of the process—hiring, outreach, recruitment—are taking more time than we thought it would, which is fine. It’s the underpinnings of trust and community building that is going to be the foundation for anything and that is paramount. It is also a community with long unattended needs for safe sharing, mutual support and much personal healing to be done on the long road through support, education and on to roles of self advocacy. We want to take enough time to do that right.”

A steering committee comprised of PFLAG leadership, family members of LGBT African Americans, staff support from BREF, and Black LGBT organizers and leaders came together to support the growth of the new chapter in early 2009. The committee has built an outreach and organizing plan that aims to build relationships with several parts of the Black community with special attention to people of faith, businesses, LGBT-identified African Americans and Gay Straight Alliances in neighborhood schools.

As the new PFLAG Portland Black Chapter grows in membership, deepens its role within the community and develops into a strong and sustained group by and for the Black community, the larger goal is to develop and share a working model with other chapters around the nation, and to provide the real and lasting support that Black LGBT people and their families deserve.

Putting Racial Justice into Workplans

Workplans guide what we hope to accomplish in any given day, month or year. So it's critical to ensure that both individual and organizational workplans include anti-racist organizational development goals. These are the goals that will make sure you are building a successful anti-racist organization.

Use the grid on the following pages as a tool to help develop your organization's own anti-racist organizational development workplan.

The first column outlines the general work area to be addressed.

The second column poses several critical questions for evaluation and self-reflection.

The third column proposes options for how to develop elements of the workplan in this work area.

And the fourth column provides a sample workplan, including specific benchmarks to measure success.

In order to develop a successful anti-racist organizational development workplan, you'll need to involve key players in the organization – Board, lead staff and key decision makers. All of these people should be involved in the evaluation, as well as in developing the details of the workplan.

This may take a number of meetings over the course of several weeks, or even a few months. But it is critical to the success of your efforts. It can easily be done at the same time as staff and board members work on the rest of the organization's work plan for the year – or as part of developing a long-term strategic plan for the organization.

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>Internal Political Education and Skill Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the skill level of board and staff members in this area? • Do board and staff members feel comfortable and confident talking about racial justice, articulating the organization's race analysis and interrupting oppressive moments? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide formal trainings for board and staff members. • Develop and share internal talking points that outline the organization's work on racial justice. • Provide opportunities for board and staff to practice talking about the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide three trainings (nine hours total) to all board and staff members: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dismantling Racism 2. Naming and Framing Racial Justice 3. Challenging Racist Moments

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>Board Development and Staff Hiring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who makes the decisions in the organization? • What's the composition of the board and staff? • Are people of color represented in all levels of the organization, or primarily in non-managerial positions? • Do people of color board members hold equal power? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an evaluation of current staff and board representation – including confidential surveys to understand power dynamics. • Develop plans for board and staff recruitment that include benchmarks for where you want to be in a couple of years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a board recruitment plan that sets one, two and three year benchmarks. • Develop hiring protocols that ensure broad and diverse applicant pools for all staff positions. • Write staff development plans that ensure that people of color staff gain access to professional development opportunities.

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>External Political Education and Skill Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the depth of knowledge about racial justice among your core activist and engaged volunteers? • Can volunteers speak confidently about the organization's work for racial justice? • Are volunteers experienced at interrupting oppressive moments? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct trainings for volunteer leaders. • Provide opportunities for volunteer leaders to talk about the organization's anti-racist work to other volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide dismantling racism training to 120 volunteers (four training sessions across the state). • Provide training on immigrant rights to 120 volunteers (four training sessions across the state).

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>Building Alliances and Relationships with Racial Justice Organizations and People of Color Leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your organization have strong and mutually respectful relationships with organizations based in communities of color? • How about relationships with individual people of color leaders? • Do you have a clear understanding about networks of influence in particular communities of color? • How would people of color leaders describe your organization's commitment to racial justice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of who's who in communities where you don't have strong connections. • Spend time meeting and building relationships with people of color leaders - use this time to learn how your organization can provide support to racial justice campaigns, rather than just asking for help on your own campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an influence map that outlines networks, organizations and leaders in specific communities of color. • Conduct 20 one-on-one meetings with leaders in communities of color to build relationships and offer support for racial justice campaigns. • Show up as an ally at events and activities important to people of color leaders in the community.

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>Racial Justice/Anti-Racist Organizing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How committed are volunteers to participating in racial justice campaigns? • What campaigns are under way? • What kinds of support can you offer to these campaigns? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a campaign that you can support—where your support will make a difference, can be public and can involve volunteers. • Set benchmarks for participation in the campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select one racial justice campaign for significant support. • Send three to five action alerts via e-mail with a goal of generating 250 contacts to the target. • Mobilize 50 volunteers to take action.

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>Communications and Messaging: Naming and Framing Racial Justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you talk about your racial justice work? • Do your materials reflect this commitment? • Do you tell a story of transformation – how and why the organization came to make a commitment to racial justice? • Do your materials include images of people of color who are active in the organization, or from stock photos sources? • How do you explain the combined impact of racism, homophobia and transphobia on LGBT people of color? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop talking points and a storyline that explains the organization’s commitment to racial justice. • Regularly highlighting the contributions of people of color volunteers and donors in the e-mail newsletter. • Conduct an assessment of the organization’s materials – printed literature, websites, photos used, etc – to evaluate how people of color are portrayed in your publications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and print a new brochure to explain the organization’s commitment to racial justice. • Regularly highlight the contributions of people of color volunteers and donors in the e-mail newsletter. • Develop specific talking points for staff, board and volunteer leaders regarding the organization’s work on racial justice.

Putting Racial Justice Into Workplans *(continued)*

Work area	Internal evaluation discussion questions	Potential components of a workplan	Sample of specific workplan goals for the year
<p>Fund Raising and Donor Education be able to handle questions from donors about this work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What portion of your budget comes from individual donors who are white or institutional funders led by white people? • What impact does this have on your work? • How often do you talk to major donors about your organization's racial justice work? Do your Executive Director and development team feel confident talking about this work? • Do you have a plan to increase the portion of your budget that comes from people of color communities – and donors who have a racial justice analysis? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an evaluation of the organization's funding base. • Develop a plan for donor education and donor recruitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a private briefing for 15 major donors outlining the approach to incorporating racial justice goals into the organization's workplans. • Provide training for Executive Director and other fundraisers to be able to handle questions from donors about this work.

Naming and Framing Racism



95 minutes

SUMMARY

In order to truly advance racial justice in a long-term and sustainable way, LGBT organizations must name and frame racism explicitly in our organizing. That means clearly and publicly using language and analysis that describes an issue as a matter of racial justice and explain how LGBT and straight people of color are disproportionately impacted by the issue.

GOALS

- Review the forms of racism.
- Learn how to analyze and articulate an issue as a matter of racial justice.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	5 minutes
Forms of racism (optional)	Large group discussion	25 minutes
Naming and framing race	Lecture	25 minutes
Developing racial justice campaigns	Small group activity and debrief	30 minutes
Organizational/campaign analysis	Small group activity and debrief	10 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Tape
- Handouts:

Defining Racism: A Review

Talking About Racial Justice

Campaign Analysis

Organizational Racial Justice Analysis

► Introduction

A major step in coming out for racial justice is to have our organizations explicitly and publicly talk about the impacts of institutionalized and structural racism. But sometimes this can be difficult to do, especially when referencing our own campaigns. We'll discuss how to begin naming and framing our issues as a matter of racial justice, but first let's review what we mean when we talk about race and racism...

► Forms of racism

(The following is a review of definitions regarding racism. It is an optional piece but can be useful for participants who need a refresher on terminology.)

Trainer asks:

When we talk about racism, what are we talking about?

Try to get participants to articulate elements of personal, cultural, institutional and structural racism by using examples.

Trainer says:

We know that racism happens at multiple levels: personal, cultural, institutional and structural. Let's define each one.

Naming and Framing Racism is adapted from Western States Center's Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 107-111): <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

Naming and Framing Racism *(continued)*

Trainer asks:

Who can give me a definition of personal racism?

Occurs between two people, like jokes, comments and the expression of beliefs that are racially prejudiced or biased.

Trainer asks:

Who can give me a definition of cultural racism? What's an example of cultural racism?

The norms, values or standards assumed by the dominant society that perpetuate racism. Examples: white standards of beauty, white dolls and toys.

Trainer asks:

Who can give me a definition of institutional racism?

The discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and inequitable opportunities and impacts based on race that exist in institutions like banks, government, the health care industry, housing and the criminal justice system.

Trainer asks:

Are folks familiar with the term structural racism?

Structural racism is the interaction between institutions, policies and practices that inevitably perpetuates barriers to opportunities and racial disparities.

Example: A government agency decides that low-income housing must be built, which will house low-income Blacks and Latinos. It fails to look for locations near jobs and important infrastructure, like working schools, decent public transportation and other services. In fact, it is built in a poor, mostly Black and Latino part of town. When the housing is built, the school district, already underfunded, has new residents too poor to contribute to its tax base. The local government spends its limited resources on transportation to connect largely white, well-to-do suburban commuters to their downtown jobs. The public housing residents are left isolated, in under-funded schools, with no transportation to job centers. Whole communities of people of color lose opportunities for a good education, quality housing, living-wage jobs, services and support systems.

Trainer says:

As we do our work as organizers, we run into these various forms of racism in our organizing on a day-to-day level.

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Defining Racism: A Review*

Naming and Framing Racism *(continued)*

► Naming and framing Race

Trainer says:

When we name and frame racism, we are explicitly and publicly using language and analysis that describes an issue as a matter of racial justice. In other words, we are addressing an issue for which racism is one of the root causes, we are clearly explaining how LGBT and straight people of color are disproportionately impacted by the issue, and we are organizing in a way that eliminates those inequalities.

Trainer asks:

Why is it important to have an explicit and public analysis of race within our LGBT work? Why is it important to name and frame race?

Trainer says:

There are many reasons that it is critical to intentionally name and frame race. Let's flesh some of these out.

Bold text written on flip chart:

1. In order to advance racial justice, it has become necessary to argue the existence of societal racism.

Before the Civil Rights Movement, more or less everyone in the United States agreed that there was an institutionalized system of racial inequality. People debated whether this system was just, not whether it existed. Since the mid-1960s, when sweeping federal laws were passed that largely instituted “equality under the law,” there has been a steadily increasing denial of the existence of racism, or at least of institutional racism. White people increasingly believe that, while individual acts of meanness based on racial prejudice persist, racism as a system that oppresses all people of color is a problem of the past. This is reinforced in the media where country's race problems seemingly have more to do with so-called reverse discrimination against white people and cultural defects of at least some people of color. Therefore, to advance racial justice, it is increasingly necessary to first argue and prove the existence of institutional racism.

2. Naming and framing racism reclaims our right to define our own reality.

One way racism and other forms of oppression are perpetuated within the dominant society is by institutions renaming and reframing our reality. By calling out and naming racism for what it is, we are engaging in a fundamental and critical form of resistance, reclaiming truth and reality. How damaging is it when the media, schools, legislatures and other institutions call racist myths truth?

Example: Politicians and mainstream media have defined welfare reform as a way to protect hardworking taxpayers from mostly single, mostly women of color, mostly mothers of several children who are “abusing” the system. This definition of reality has been used to blame

Naming and Framing Racism *(continued)*

families in poverty for their lack of resources. When, instead, we choose to define this lack of resources as a result of racist, sexist and profit-driven institutions, we take a first step toward creating real solutions. [Note: It was only once welfare rights organizers began desegregating the welfare system—winning access for poor people of color who had been excluded—that the welfare system became a target. And it’s only in the past few years, as the system has been largely dismantled, that the “typical” recipient of assistance is now a woman of color.]

3. We cannot defeat (or at least contain) racism unless we name it for what it is.

It is not enough to work for reforms and policy initiatives that may positively impact people of color or move forward racial justice if we are not explicit about racism as a root cause of the problem. We must not only attack institutional racism but also the racist culture and beliefs that support and propagate racism. Ultimately, if we are not educating and advocating for people and institutions to think and act in anti-racist ways, then we are NOT addressing the root causes and are allowing for inevitable rollbacks of any of our victories. We aren’t going to end racism by tricking racists and racist institutions.

Example: If we are working on an issue that is fundamentally about racial justice but our key frame for the issue is about economic efficiency—“it would save the city money”—we may be able to convince people it is the right thing to do today, but those same people could do away with the policy in a heartbeat based on some other argument tomorrow. Or those people could vote for a completely racist initiative on the same ballot because of the economic efficiency argument. We must move people politically, not just stick with what is expedient. Of course, this makes our work harder.

4. By naming and framing racism you can take the “mask” off of coded language and denial.

In organizing we’re often taught to find broadly popular, “common denominator” issues and to avoid divisive ones. But when the issue is about racism, people generally respond to “coded” messages and ideas about race, even if that’s not how you frame your messages or demands. Trying to make the issues about something else can make your arguments irrelevant to decision-makers and the public. By naming and framing racism, you may have a better chance of influencing your target audiences. If you name and frame the issue of racism, people can no longer be in denial and base their actions on myths that justify those actions.

Example: Washington voters overturned that state’s affirmative action laws in 1998. Voters were able to justify their positions in a variety of ways, including that they were supporting civil rights! The ballot title was “Washington Civil Rights Initiative” and the case was not effectively made through mainstream media, etc. that institutional racism persists and that affirmative action is a necessary, if only partial, remedy. The No on 200 campaign targeted white women voters who were seen as possibly going either way on the issue, and designed messages that pointed out the benefits to them of affirmative action. But research has shown that affirmative action is widely perceived by whites across gender as a race issue, with Black men seen as the primary beneficiaries. By trying to make the issue about gender, the campaign seems to have

Naming and Framing Racism *(continued)*

missed the mark, failing to convince a majority of white women voters to reject the repeal of affirmative action.

5. Naming and framing racism can help us connect with our constituency, particularly people of color.

By naming racism and calling it out the way it is, you are more likely to connect with your constituency, if your constituency is people of color, because you are speaking to their reality. Amilcar Cabral, a revolutionary fighting Portuguese colonizers in Guineau-Bissau in Africa, said that leaders must always tell the truth as a matter of integrity and as a necessary means to keep trust with the marginalized, the oppressed—their constituents. It's hard to motivate people to engage in struggle when you're not naming things the way they are. Calling the problem economic mismanagement, when your members (or would-be members) know that the problem is racism, perpetuates the racist myths about the problem and will inevitably alienate parts of your constituency. Tell it like it is and people will know you are speaking the truth and develop trust in your organization, rather than become skeptical of a message that doesn't speak to their reality.

6. Naming and framing racism can prepare us for post-campaign work.

What happens if your campaign loses when you decided, for short-term gain, to avoid naming and framing racism? Now you've failed to win your demands AND you've also failed to educate anyone about the problem of institutionalized racism that you were fighting. If you frame and name racism, you have created a context in which the post-fight still positions you to work with your constituency. And, hopefully, you have developed a higher level of consciousness about institutionalized racism with the public and your membership. If you are fighting a defensive battle against a racist initiative and lose, then unless you have named and framed around race, racism has now been further institutionalized and that reality is invisible! How do you now draw attention to the fact that racism has won a major victory, when the fight was never framed around racism?

It's one thing to know why we should do it, it's another thing to know HOW we do it. Here are the things that we want to focus on to make race clear:

1. Develop a clear description of the racial inequity you want to address through your LGBT organizing and use it when you talk to your members, the media, and the public.
2. Research the details of the disproportionate impact (inequity) on LGBT and straight people of color in order to have strong facts.
3. Look for opportunities in your framing to challenge the traditional racial divisions in our society and within LGBT communities.
4. Provide clear suggestions of how institutionally racist practices can change.

► Developing racial justice campaigns

Naming and Framing Racism *(continued)*

Trainer says:

As we work on any issue, we are always thinking of how we tell the story. How do we tell LGBT and allied community members what is going on?

Written on flip chart:

Any good campaign answers the following questions:

1. What's the problem?
2. Who is affected?
3. Who is to blame?
4. What is the solution?
5. What action is needed?

When we use a racial justice lens in developing the answers to these questions, we can explicitly highlight the inequality of our institutions and the ways in which our solutions create more racial equity.

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Campaign Analysis*

Trainer says (referencing Campaign Analysis handout):

Let's look at the following ways of talking about issues.

Trainer instructs:

Break into groups of three.

Each story on this sheet talks about the same situation, but offers a different version of the problem, who is affected, and who is to blame. In your small group, read each story and answer the following questions for each scenario:

- What is the problem?
- Who is affected?
- Who is to blame?

You have 20 minutes to complete this!

When groups have finished, call everyone back together for a large group debrief.

Trainer asks:

What differences did you notice in the way each scenario was presented?

Why is it important in this scenario to name and frame the issue as a matter of racial justice?

Write answers up on a flip chart.

► **Organizational analysis**

Trainer says:

Now that we've looked at a scenario together, we're going to break into small groups again and look at the work that we're doing in our own organizations.

Naming and Framing Racism *(continued)*

(If there are participants from several organizations, have them group together. If all participants are from one organization, have them split into groups of 3-4 depending on size.)

Trainer distributes:

Handout: *Organizational Racial Justice Analysis*

Trainer instructs (referring to Organizational Racial Justice Analysis handout):

You are going to answer the following questions for one issue or campaign that your organization is working on at this time:

1. What's the problem?
2. Who is affected? How are LGBT people of color affected?
 - a) Which LGBT &/or straight communities of color?
 - b) What statistics do you have that back you up?
 - c) What additional research do you need to do?
3. Who is to blame?
4. What is the solution?
 - a) What institutional policy or practice needs to change?
 - b) How does your solution address the underlying racial inequity?
5. What action is needed?
 - a) What steps need to be taken in the short term and long term?

We're going to split into our own organizations/small groups and each group is going to take 20 minutes to answer these questions.

Trainer calls participants back together after 20 minutes for report back:

Have each group summarize their answers in a 3-5 minute report back.

Trainer asks:

What questions came up during your discussion?

Write responses on a flip chart.

Trainer explains:

These will be important for your organization to follow-up with in your work to name and frame racial justice.

► Closing

Trainer says:

Unless we clearly talk about and educate people about the existence of racism as a current and critical social justice issue, we will lose the culture war. In other words, we will allow racist institutions to perpetuate the myth throughout society that racism is no longer relevant and doesn't affect LGBT communities, undermining our ability to dismantle it.

Naming and framing race and racism is about proactively creating opportunities within our LGBT organizing to do political education about racism and take action to build a movement.

HANDOUT

DEFINING RACISM: A Review

Level	Description	Strategic Intervention Options
<p>Personal Racism</p>	<p>Racism between <u>individuals</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial prejudice, bigotry and bias. 	<p>Diversity trainings and prejudice reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race relations and tolerance workshops • Cultural awareness/multi-cultural activities
<p>Cultural Racism</p>	<p>Racism within the <u>culture</u> of society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The norms, values or standards assumed by dominant society that perpetuate racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural awareness/multi-cultural activities
<p>Institutional Racism</p>	<p>Racism within and between <u>institutions</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racially disparate outcomes, discriminatory treatment and unequal opportunities produced and perpetuated by powerful institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power analysis/target research • Issue campaigns/direct actions • Demand institutional accountability and policy change • Highlight injustices and equitable values
<p>Structural Racism</p>	<p>Racism underneath and across <u>society</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interaction between institutions, policies and practices, culture and history that supports chronic systemic inequity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose historical roots and cultural bias • Solutions that focus on systemic inequalities/change • Social justice movement-building

Copyright 2002, Applied Research Center, Racial Justice Education and Action Manual (revised 7/01/04)

Talking About Racial Justice

	Without Race	With Racial Justice
1. What is the problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denies existence of racism and white privilege Conceals racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explicitly acknowledges the existence of racism Reveals structural racism and embedded inequities
2. Who's affected?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generalizes the community affected by the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies how people of color are disproportionately affected
3. Who's responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blames individuals; scapegoats people of color 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holds institutions accountable for inequities
4. What's the solution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change individual's intentions, beliefs and attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change institutional policies and practices to produce outcomes that are racially equitable
5. What action is needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a "colorblind" perspective Stop focusing on racial differences and disparities, "get over it and get on with it" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a race-conscious racial equity perspective Implement goals and strategies to eliminate racial impact disparities

Campaign Analysis

Scenario 1: Fare hike justified, says commissioner for transportation

Neighborhood activists are complaining about the City Council's proposed transportation budget and the included fare hike for commuters. President Dawn Bitters of government watchdog group Seattle Communities United said, "The Department of Transportation has raised fares three times in the past ten years; it's a serious challenge for commuters to keep pace with rising costs." Commissioner of Transportation John Walters responded, "Seattle residents expect a top-notch transportation system, which requires funding—riders have to pay their fair share especially if they choose to live far away from where they work."

Scenario 2: Proposed transportation budget a "sweetheart" deal for developers

A closer analysis of the proposed transportation budget shows that proposed new service and extension of service are directed to areas where developers have given significant contributions to City Council members' election campaigns. Seattle for All People, an election reform group, held a press conference today denouncing the proposed budget. "This budget shows how broken our election system is. The only communities that will receive additional services are ones in which big developers have given money to the City Council person representing that area of town—like Ballard and Capitol Hill." Ballard City Council member Jackie Northrup disagreed, saying, "The extension of services are to areas of Seattle that have seen extensive growth in the past ten years and are continuing to grow."

Scenario 3: Transportation budget reveals transit racism

When the latest budget for the Seattle Department of Transportation came out yesterday, it shed new light onto the city's failure to address racial disparities in transit. The proposed budget takes money out of bus service and redirects it to light rail service. Pauline Johnson, chairperson for Seattle Neighbors United, said, "The Department of Transportation's own ridership data shows that light rail serves primarily White communities, and this budget takes money out of bus service, which is predominantly used by communities of color in Seattle, in order to support expanded light rail. The proposed budget also does nothing to address long-standing concerns about public transportation in communities of color, including hours of service, increasing bus lines to South Seattle and improving quality of bus stops." Johnson and her group also believe that the fare hike will disproportionately affect low-income riders.

Adapted from Applied Research Center and Western States Center

Organizational Racial Justice Analysis

- 1) What is the problem your organization is addressing in this campaign or project?

- 2) Who is affected by the problem? How are LGBT people of color affected?
 - a) Which LGBT and/or straight communities of color specifically?
 - b) What statistics do you have that back you up?
 - c) What additional research do you need to do?

- 3) Who is to blame for the problem?

- 4) What is the solution?
 - a) What institutional policy or practice needs to change?
 - b.) How does your solution address the underlying racial inequity?

- 5.) What action is needed?
 - a. What steps need to be taken in the short term and long term?

Adapted from Applied Research Center and Western States Center

Building Alliances Across Race, Gender and Sexuality



60 minutes

SUMMARY

In much of the United States, communities of color have not yet built enough political power to move their agendas entirely on their own. In this context, communities of color and primarily white organizations, including LGBT organizations, who would like to think of themselves as anti-racist allies, must build effective alliances in order to successfully move racial justice organizing—particularly at a statewide level. People often talk about building coalitions and alliances in a very idealistic way, but this is not easy work. This discussion surfaces the potential fears, barriers and gains that we can expect in alliance building and coalition work.

GOALS

- Identify barriers, gains and best practices in alliance building and coalition work as an ally organization to racial justice.

AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introduction	Lecture	5 minutes
Fears, barriers and gains	Large group discussion	25 minutes
Principles	Lecture	20 minutes
Closing	Large group discussion	10 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers

► Introduction

Trainer says:

A major component of our work as an anti-racist organization is to actively and publicly support work on racial justice issues, especially efforts being led by communities and organizations of color. This will mean working in coalition and building meaningful alliances with groups or communities we may not have worked with before. However, building alliances across difference, especially race, gender and sexuality, can be riddled with potential pitfalls and conflict. This work is incredibly important and requires a great deal of thoughtfulness—much more than good intentions.

The following conversation allows us to collectively identify fears, barriers, gains and best practices in alliance building and coalition work to help us do this important work successfully!

► Fears, Barriers and Gains

Trainer has three columns written on a flip chart:

What are some fears you have with working across race in your organization?

What are some barriers?

What are some gains?

Building Alliances Across Race, Gender and Sexuality *(continued)*

Trainer records a couple of things for each and allows for a discussion.

► Principles

Trainer says:

These principles were designed to help groups proactively think about how to build effective, working relationships in an organizing context across racial differences.

Trainer explains:

Trainer will introduce and go through the principles (ideally with some region–and/or organization-specific examples) and connect any that apply back to the fears, barriers or gains that participants listed.

PRINCIPLES:

1. *Have a clearly stated organizational commitment to multi-racial, racial justice organizing.* It is not enough for individual members of an organization to have a moral or personal commitment. This commitment must be supported by the organization's time and resources.
2. *When primarily white organizations are building alliances with people of color, white organizations must have a commitment to becoming anti-racist.* In practical terms, anti-racism means much more than a superficial commitment to "diversity." To be anti-racist involves, among other things, willingness to critique and change organizational culture, practices and structures that oppress and exclude people of color. This work requires openness to changing how you do things. It is not always easy.
3. *Do not assume that the self-interests of organizations in the alliance are the same.* To build healthy alliances, it is critical to take the time to understand why people are coming together across difference to work on a particular issue. With this approach, you are more likely to find a unifying strategy.
4. *Have the political will to use anti-racist practices even under enormous pressure.* This may mean taking the time to be more inclusive despite a sense of urgency to move quickly. This may mean rejecting a source of funding for work that might conflict with your anti-racist goals.
5. *Decision-making must be above-board and transparent.* It will not work if some people or groups make decisions behind the scenes.
6. *There should be equity in agreements on how resources and power are shared within the alliance.* Equity does not always mean equal. For example, a one group, one vote approach may seem equal, but could undermine accountable power relationships. If an alliance is being built around supporting a particular community, naturally representatives of that community should be providing more leadership within the alliance.

Building Alliances Across Race, Gender and Sexuality *(continued)*

7. *There should be recognition of the valuable contributions organizations of color bring to the alliance.* Oftentimes, white organizations may be larger and better resourced (more staff and money) than groups of color. With such imbalances, white organizations can believe they are contributing more to the work, often ignoring contributions that groups of color may bring, like issue and community-related knowledge or a base of volunteers.
8. *Rather than avoiding conflict and disagreement, embrace it as an opportunity to learn.* Conflict does not need to be a bad thing. If it is approached the right way, it can ultimately make the work stronger. This requires people and organizations to not get defensive or be dismissive, but instead to be self-reflective. Actively listen to people's concerns or frustrations and critically think about why the disagreement exists.
9. *Defining the work of the collaboration needs to be a shared process.*
10. *Meetings should be held in an environment that is comfortable and accessible for participants from all organizations.* Are there people who are not able to participate in meetings because of lack of childcare or transportation? Is the meeting space culturally offensive or inappropriate, or is it welcoming and comfortable?
11. *Create space and opportunity for social and personal relationships to develop as well as political relationships.* Political work becomes stronger if people are not all about business. Creating space to get to know each other in personal ways will make the work more rewarding and potentially prevent conflict.
12. *Principles and practices should be mutually reinforcing and consistent.* It is not enough to say you believe in the value of these principles; you must practice them. Walk the talk to be successful.

► Closing

Trainer asks closing questions:

- What fears or barriers remain—those that were not addressed by these principles? (Flag these for organizational discussion and future follow-up.)
- What additional gains did people identify while going through these principles?

This workshop tool was adapted from Western States Center's Dismantling Racism Resource Book (Pages 112-114). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center <http://www.westernstatescenter.org/resources/drresourcebook.pdf>

Case Study: An Unlikely Collaboration

Latino, rural and LGBT rights activists unite to challenge anti-immigrant measures in rural Oregon

Lessons Learned

Effective and meaningful coalition work takes time, resources and dedication but is a critical component of moving forward racial justice. Not many expected LGBT activists to team up with rural and Latino communities in order to defeat two anti-immigrant ballot measures but this coalition demonstrated that, together, they could run a sophisticated and aggressive political campaign while working across lines of identity and building a progressive movement for the long-term.

In the summer of 2008, anti-immigrant activist Wayne Mayo succeeded in gathering signatures to place two regressive measures on the ballot in Columbia County, Oregon. The ballot measures were placed on the November election.

Measure 5-190 would impose a \$10,000 fine on any business found to be employing undocumented workers. Measure 5-191 would mandate that 4' x 8' signs be posted at every construction site, stating "Legal Workers Only" and posting the contact number for the Department of Homeland Security.

Columbia County is a historically democratic, blue-collar county, with a conservative tradition on social issues. Known as a timber county, it is viewed as the center for the decline of resource extraction industries in the state—and perpetually facing fiscal crisis due to the ever-shrinking tax base. Combine this with high levels of unemployment, and the county is all too often ripe for wedge politics and scapegoating.

An unlikely collaboration

While these measures had obvious implications for many progressive groups in the state, most statewide organizations were tied up in fighting eight statewide ballot measures. As a result, three organizations stepped up to fill the void and coordinate the campaign: Rural Organizing Project, CAUSA and Basic Rights Oregon.

For CAUSA, Oregon's immigrant rights coalition, this campaign represented a critical struggle core to its mission. Rural Organizing Project (ROP) also saw this effort as mission-critical. First off, ROP is based in Columbia County and has one of its strongest chapters there. And while it was founded in response to anti-gay measures in the 1990s, more recently it has prioritized immigrant rights and racial justice—countering wedge politics on several fronts.

Case Study: An Unlikely Collaboration

In contrast, few expected Basic Rights Oregon, a 501(c)4 advocacy and political organization for the LGBT community, to put resources behind this campaign.

A decision to step up for immigrant rights

In developing plans for the 2008 election cycle, the leadership of Basic Rights Oregon saw a tremendous opportunity. For only the second time in twenty years, no anti-gay proposal would appear on a Presidential-election ballot.

“It felt like a huge relief,” says Basic Rights Oregon and Basic Rights Education Fund Executive Director Jeana Frazzini. “We had spent months making sure that domestic partnership legislation would not end up on the 2008 ballot. Now we had an opportunity to be proactive during the election—building power for the LGBT community, and supporting our partners in the progressive community.”

Through its political action committee, Basic Rights Oregon planned to support pro-equality candidates for state and local office, through a combination of cash and in-kind donations and field organizing. But this still left room on the organization’s plate to step up for partner organizations.

According to Frazzini, “It was an easy decision. CAUSA and Oregon’s immigrant rights community have always been there for us when our rights were up for a vote on the ballot. It was time to return the favor.”

Leveraging Basic Rights Oregon’s experience at the ballot

Each organization involved—CAUSA, Rural Organizing Project and Basic Rights Oregon—brought its own expertise and capacity to the table. CAUSA has a base of immigrant rights supporters and years of experience educating and engaging the public on these issues. Rural Organizing Project has hundreds of active volunteers in the county, long-standing relationships with businesses and community leaders, and a history of working effectively on divisive ballot measures.

Basic Rights Oregon was able to add to this mix—bringing strong relationships with statewide organizations including public sector unions, a team of senior political advisors, a small troupe of LGBT activists dedicated to a broad racial justice agenda and staff with experience in campaign management.

This allowed each organization to play to its strengths. For Basic Rights Oregon, this meant devoting senior staff to win financial support from statewide organizations, develop and manage the paid communications program and set the voter targeting strategy. It also meant mobilizing urban-based volunteers to work on phonebanks and raise money for the campaign.

“We’d spent two years educating our core volunteers about why racial justice matters, and about the links between LGBT equality and immigrant rights,” says Basic Rights Oregon Field

Manager Aubrey Harrison. “This gave us a chance to ask our volunteers to step up to the plate—to make a contribution of their time and money. We got to put our values to work.”

A win and a loss at the ballot. And a much stronger coalition.

Working together, CAUSA, Rural Organizing Project and Basic Rights Oregon were able to run a robust campaign. In a county of 28,000 voters, the campaign placed 35,160 calls, knocked on 3,380 doors and completed 13,378 one-on-one conversations with likely voters. Moreover, the campaign sent 60,000 pieces of mail plus 11,000 hand-written postcards, placed 140 radio ads, three newspaper ads, and won the support of all five newspapers in the county. Overall, the campaign raised close to \$70,000.

As a result, Measure 5-191 was defeated by a resounding 61 percent to 39 percent margin. However, Measure 5-190 passed by 57 percent to 43 percent. Since the election, Rural Organizing Project and CAUSA collaborated to file a lawsuit and succeeded in getting Measure 5-190 thrown out in court.

Through the campaign, this coalition grew stronger and stronger. Staff and grassroots leaders developed strong working relationships across organizations. The coalition demonstrated to its statewide partners that they could run a sophisticated and aggressive political campaign. And they showed funders that this kind of unusual collaboration can help grow the progressive movement over the long run.

“Our opponents always try to divide us by race or sexual orientation or geography,” says Frazzini. “By taking a stand for immigrant rights, we show our own community, and the public at large, that equality means equality for everyone. And when we build bridges across lines of identity, we ensure that no one is left out.”

Resources

Below is a short and incomplete list of resources and readings that may serve as a starting point for additional race and racial justice resources.

RESOURCES AND READINGS ON THE INTERSECTIONS OF RACIAL JUSTICE AND LGBT EQUALITY

The Movement Advancement Project: Issues of Racial Justice and Inclusion

www.lgbtmap.org

Issues of Racial Justice and Inclusion – A Primer for LGBT-Movement Funders (May 2007)

This primer aims to inform and motivate LGBT-movement funders to work explicitly on issues of racial justice and inclusion within and around the LGBT movement. Included in the primer's appendix is information on nearly 50 nonprofit and philanthropic organizations working on race, which can serve as a starting point for learning more about existing resources related to race work.

The Williams Institute

www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute

The Williams Institute advances sexual orientation law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates it to judges, legislators, policymakers, media and the public.

Many of The Williams Institute's reports and publications focus on the intersections of race, immigration and LGBT policy issues.

Racial Equity: Funders for LGBTQ Issues

www.lgbtracialequity.org

The Racial Equity Online Toolkit provides a range of grantmaking tools, commentaries and best practices to support grantmakers in implementing an LGBTQ racial equity lens into their grantmaking and internal operations. The toolkit is a project of Funders for LGBTQ Issues that—as part of its Racial Equity Campaign—seeks to increase the amount of foundation dollars reaching LGBTQ communities

of color by raising awareness among philanthropists and the public at large.

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force California's Proposition 8: What Happened, and What Does the Future Hold?

http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/prop8_analysis

An in-depth analysis of the Proposition 8 vote, which shows that party affiliation, political ideology, frequency of attending worship services and age were the driving forces behind the measure's passage. The study finds that after taking into account the effect of religious service attendance, support for Proposition 8 among African Americans and Latinos was not significantly different than other groups.

The Task Force has many additional reports and resources on LGBT and racial justice issues on their website: www.taskforce.org

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)

www.glaad.org

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

GLAAD has many materials on their website specifically created for communities of color and LGBT immigrants.

Human Rights Campaign: Equality Forward Project

<http://www.hrc.org/issues/equalityforward.asp>

This study began in January 2007 to identify the priorities and experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people of color. It is part of Equality Forward, an initiative to unite lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and straight allies of all races and backgrounds to win equality for all.

Resources

A Different Shade of Queer: Race, Sexuality, and Marginalizing by the Marginalized

<http://bad.eserver.org/issues/2006/76/gaysofcolor.html>

A gay man of color shares his experiences and thoughts on racism in LGBT communities and homophobia in communities of color.

“An Open Letter to My White LGBT Sisters and Brothers” by Diane Finnerty

A link to a pdf can be found here:

www.pflag.org/fileadmin/user_upload/An_Open_Letter_12-04.pdf

A white LGBT ally calls upon other white LGBT folks to take action for racial justice.

RESOURCES ON ANTI-RACIST ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Western States Center: Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups

Full download available here:

<http://www.westernstatescenter.org/tools-and-resources/Tools/Dismantling%20Racism/>

This resource book, published in 2003, is a compilation of materials designed to supplement a Dismantling Racism workshop. A good portion of the workshop tools in Standing Together are adapted from the Dismantling Racism resource book. There are many more tools that do not appear in this handbook.

Western States Center: Sharing the Lessons Learned: Reflections on Six Years of Anti-Racism Work

Full download available here:

www.westernstatescenter.org/tools-and-resources/Tools/DR-Lesson-Learned

This document was produced after six years of the Dismantling Racism Project at Western States Center. Through this work we have seen inspiring successes and challenging pitfalls. This document shares our thoughts on the value and utility of anti-

racist organizational work and education as well as the critical questions our work has raised

LGBT RACIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

The Audre Lorde Project:

The Audre Lorde Project is a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Trans and Gender Non Conforming People of Color center for community organizing, focusing on the New York City area. Through mobilization, education and capacity-building, we work for community wellness and progressive social and economic justice. Committed to struggling across differences, we seek to responsibly reflect, represent and serve our various communities.

Immigration Equality

www.immigrationequality.org

A national organization that works to end discrimination in U.S. immigration law for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive people, and to help obtain asylum for those persecuted in their home country based on their sexual orientation, transgender identity or HIV-status.

Queers for Economic Justice

www.q4ej.org

QEJ is a progressive non-profit organization committed to promoting economic justice in a context of sexual and gender liberation.

Our goal is to challenge and change the systems that create poverty and economic injustice in our communities, and to promote an economic system that embraces sexual and gender diversity.

We are committed to the principle that access to social and economic resources is a fundamental right, and we work to create social and economic equity through grassroots organizing, public education, advocacy and research.

Resources

GENERAL READINGS ON RACE AND RACISM

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?": And Other Conversations About Race

By Beverly Daniel Tatum;
Harper Collins Publisher, 1997

Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work For Racial Justice

By Paul Kivel
New Society Publishers, 1996

MultiRacial Formations: New Instruments for Social Change

By Gary Delgado
Applied Research Center, 2003

Women, Race & Class

By Angela Davis
New York: Random House, 1983

Lies My Teacher Told Me

By James Loewen
NY, NY: Touchstone, 1995

From Different Shores: Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America

Edited by Ronald Takaki,
Oxford University Press, 1994Second Edition.

A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America

By Ronald Takaki
Back Bay Books, Little, Brown and Company, 1993