



## IDA + CDA DEI Summit

April 29, 2021

12:00 PM – 3:00 PM ET

Speakers:

**Jackie St. Louis**, Principal, D-Fine Concepts Consulting

**Ishmael Nuñez**, Project Manager, BDS Planning

**Maureen Benson**, Co-creator, Cultivating Intersectional Leadership

# WHO WE ARE

**JACKIE K. ST. LOUIS, MSCC, LMHC (HE/HIM)**

PRINCIPAL, *D-FINE CONCEPTS CONSULTING LLC*

FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL OWNER,  
*TENDER TONGUES COUNSELING LLC*

**ISHMAEL NUÑEZ, MUP (HE/HIM)**

PROJECT MANAGER

*BDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN*

**MAUREEN BENSON (SHE/HER)**

CO-CREATOR

*CULTIVATING INTERSECTIONAL LEADERSHIP*



INSPIRED LEADERS  
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# Welcome!

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## Format

- Three lecture-style “convenings”
- Two breakouts
- Report out in the chat

## Participation

- Active participation
- Don’t jump to solutions ... yet
- Personal work + collective effort

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# A FOUNDATION TO BUILD UPON: A BRIEF HISTORY OF RACE IN AMERICA

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JACKIE K. ST. LOUIS

# The Metaphor of the Mountain



Photo Credit: Yann Allegre



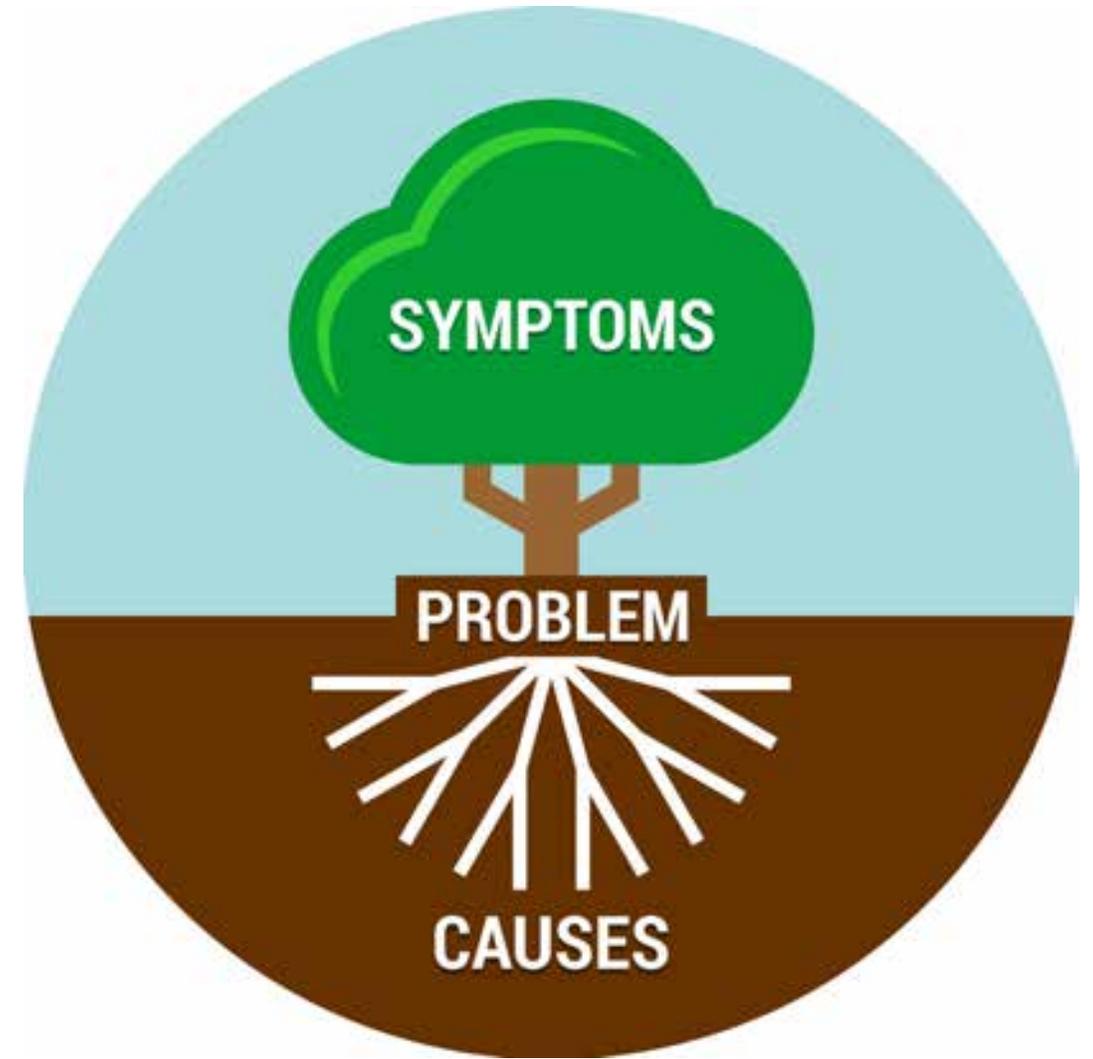
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# WORKING FROM THE ROOT

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- Often, we deal with the effects of problems rather than dealing with the underlying cause.
- White dominant culture thinks “bottom-line”, I’m asking you to think “process.”



## TWO UNIQUE STORIES AT THE COUNTRY'S ORIGIN

- We honor the history and travails of the **Indigenous Americans** and acknowledge that we all draw sustenance from the land which they cultivated. We acknowledge that they are the rightful owners of this land and stand in solidarity and partnership toward these wrongs being made right.
- We center blackness and the plight of the **people of African descent**, who against their will were brought to a foreign and hostile land. We acknowledge that their blood, sweat and tears were the foundation upon which this nation was built, and we commit to righting these wrongs which continue to perpetuate to this very day.



# TURTLE ISLAND

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- Turtle Island is the original name by which the American Continents were known.
- Turtle Island was renamed after Italian Explorer Amerigo Vespucci.
- Native Americans are descended from prehistoric hunters who walked from northeast Asia across a land bridge, formed at the end of the Ice Age, to Alaska some 12,000 years ago. (National Geographic)
- Native Americans turned wild plants farm crops for human consumption.
- They had their customs, belief, practices, traditions and commerce (systems of trade and barter)



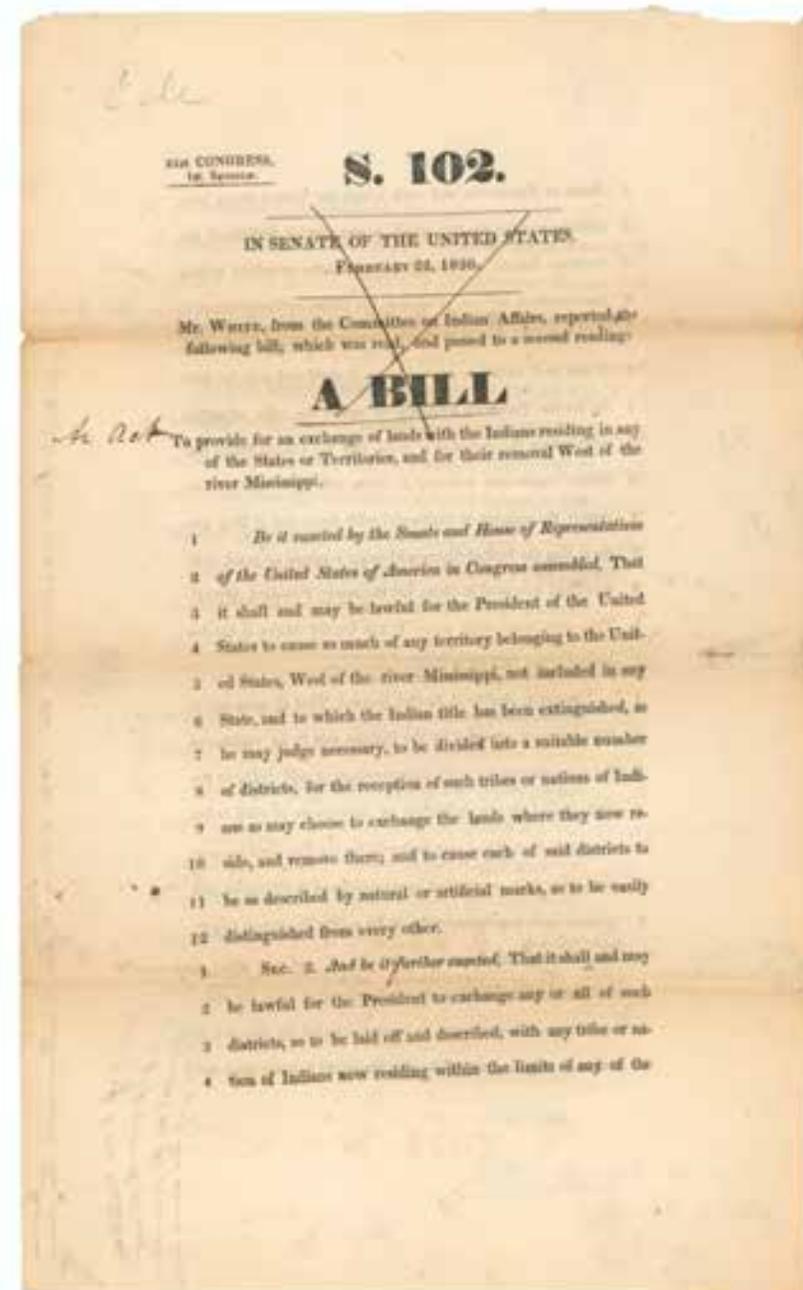
# A CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAND

- The indigenous Americans did not recognize land appropriation by individual members of the tribe
- Indigenous Americans lived in harmony with nature according to their traditions
- The first settlers were assisted by the Indigenous Americans
- Violent conflicts followed as European colonizers began laying claim to land
- Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries Native Americans fought to preserve their land and way of life from external forces



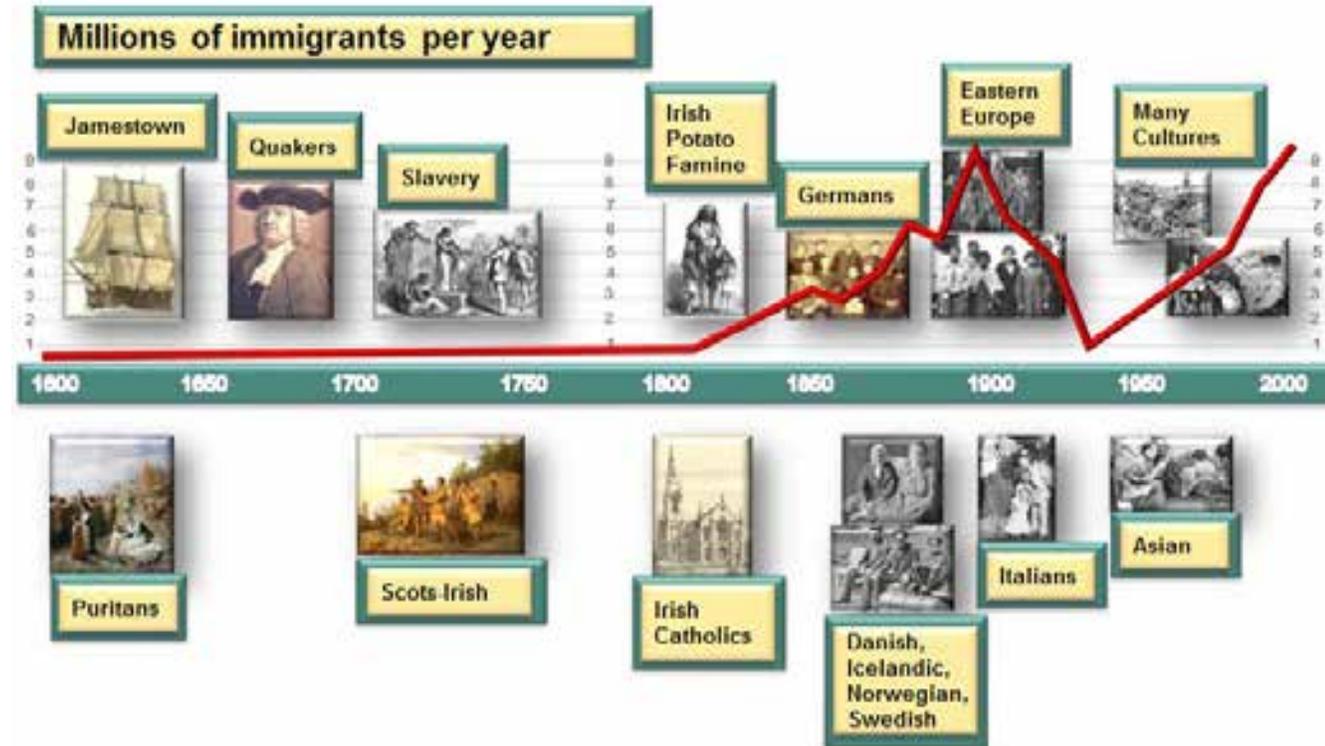
# NATIVE AMERICAN GENOCIDE

- Indigenous Americans were removed from their homes under the Indian Removal act of 1830.
- Many Indigenous Americans lives were lost in the journeys that ensued.
- 90% of indigenous Americans died due to violence and disease.
- To this day many Indigenous people live on reservations and many in poverty



# ARRIVAL OF THE COLONIZERS

- The arrival of what would become the “Religious Institution” –
  - Pilgrims fleeing religious persecution and death
  - The Puritans seeking land ownership and the formation of their own church
- Others followed, many of whom sought to lay claim to land
- Those migrating to North America were fleeing persecution in their own lands, or seeking opportunity
- Save for the Africans, who were brought against their will in chains



# NORTH AMERICAN IMMIGRATION

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- Naturalization Act (1790) grants U.S. Citizenship to “**free white persons**” who have lived in America for two years.
- Origins of whiteness

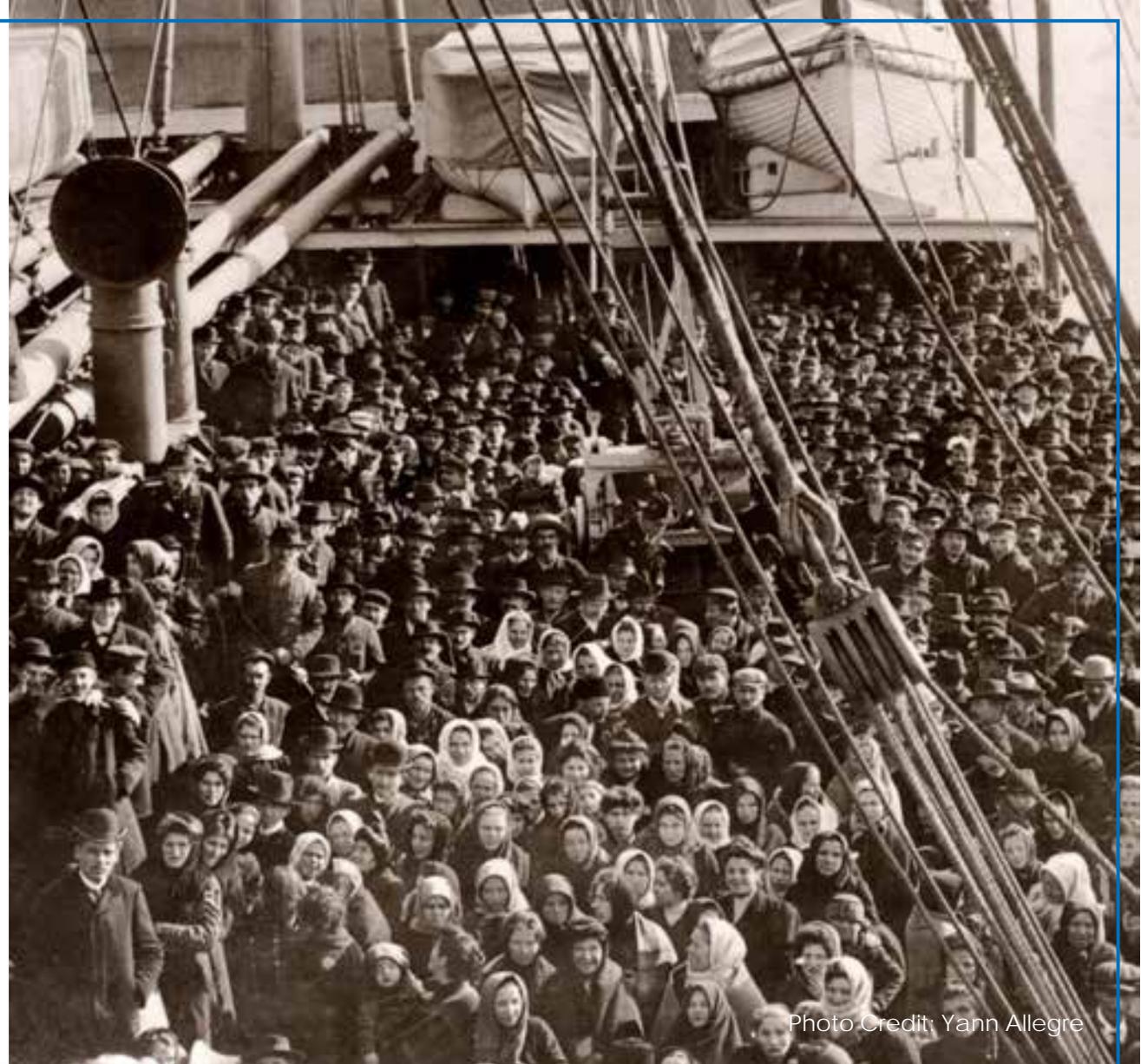
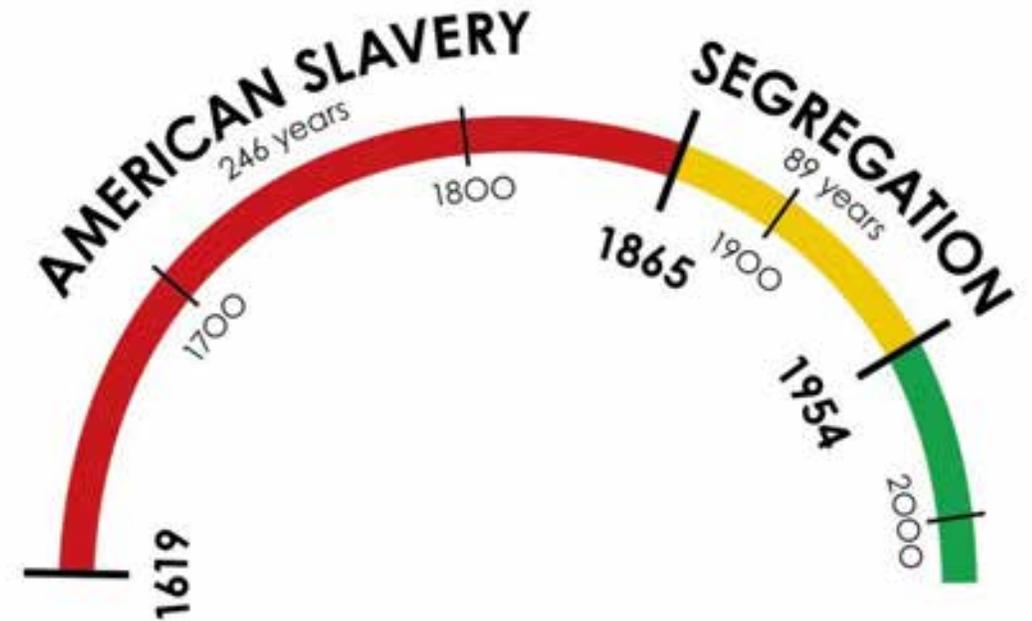


Photo Credit: Yann Allegre

# SLAVERY: A TIMELINE

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- In 1619, the White Lion brought 20 enslaved Africans ashore in the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia. These people had been seized from a Portuguese slave ship.
  - 246 years of Slavery  
Operationally ending in 1865 when the last enslaved people in Texas received news of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The celebration of this moment in history is known as "Juneteenth".
  - 89 years of Jim Crow Segregation  
The first Jim Crow laws overruled in 1954  
*Brown v. Board of Education*
  - 57 years of "freedom" since the Civil Rights act in 1964
- 



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF SLAVERY: WHEN?

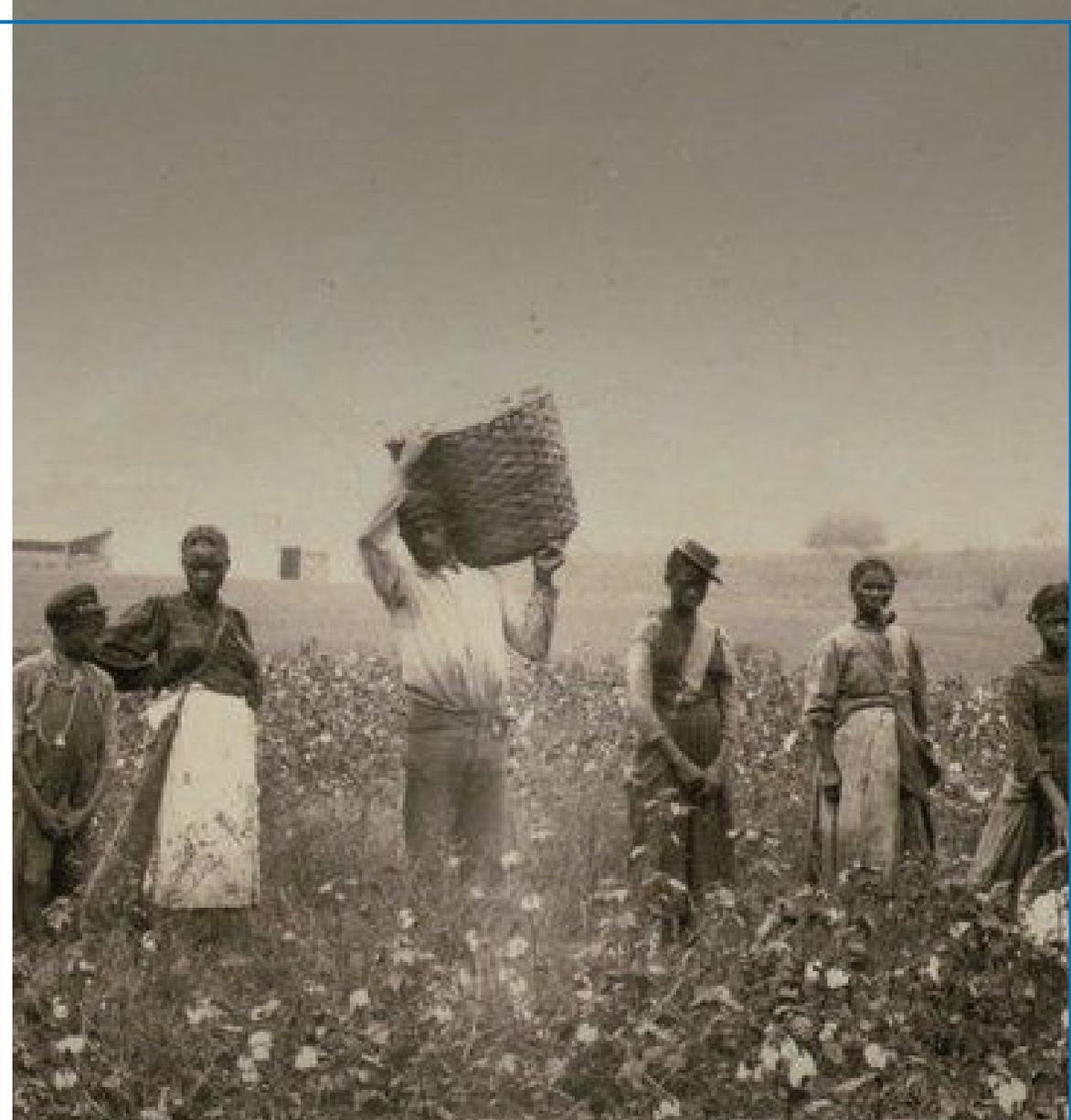
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- The transatlantic slave trade began during the 15th century with the Portuguese
- The Spanish took the first African captives to the Americas from Europe as early as 1503
- By 1518 the first captives were shipped directly from Africa to America
- The first enslaved people brought from Africa to a settlement in Puerto Rico after the native Taínos had been wiped out
- In 1619, the White Lion brought 20 enslaved Africans ashore in the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia.
  - These slaves had been seized from a Portuguese slave ship.

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SLAVERY: WHY?

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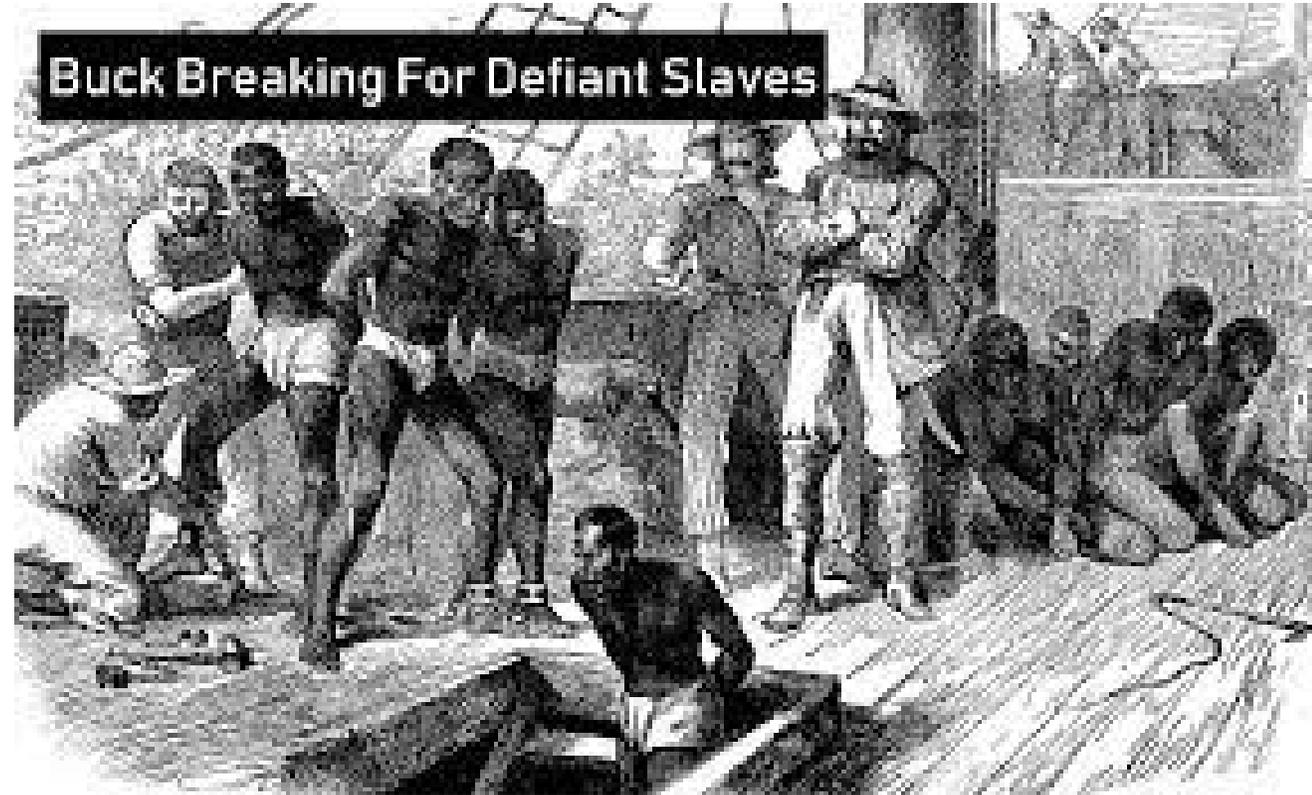
- Economic
    - The settlers/indentured laborers were too costly
    - Other free labor had diminished with the genocide of the Indigenous Americans
    - Cotton, sugar, and tobacco were profitable but labor-intensive crops
- 



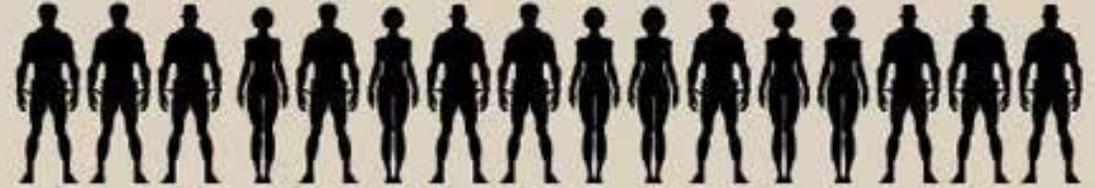
# BRIEF HISTORY OF SLAVERY: HOW?

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- Compliance:
    - Slave owners prevented rebelling through brutality, violence, and murder
    - Conversion to European religions and power of bible texts: “slaves obey your masters”
    - Origins of house & field
- 



# THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN SLAVERY



## How (and why) Virginia legalized slavery

As tobacco becomes the colony's most profitable – and labor-intensive – crop, more workers are needed to grow it. Workers soon outnumber owners, who view black slaves as more profitable than white indentured servants.

In response, state legislators pass more laws to marginalize and control blacks. A sample of laws:

**1640**

Virginia's General Assembly requires free white men to arm themselves and masters to supply white servants with arms. Blacks, however, are forbidden to own weapons.

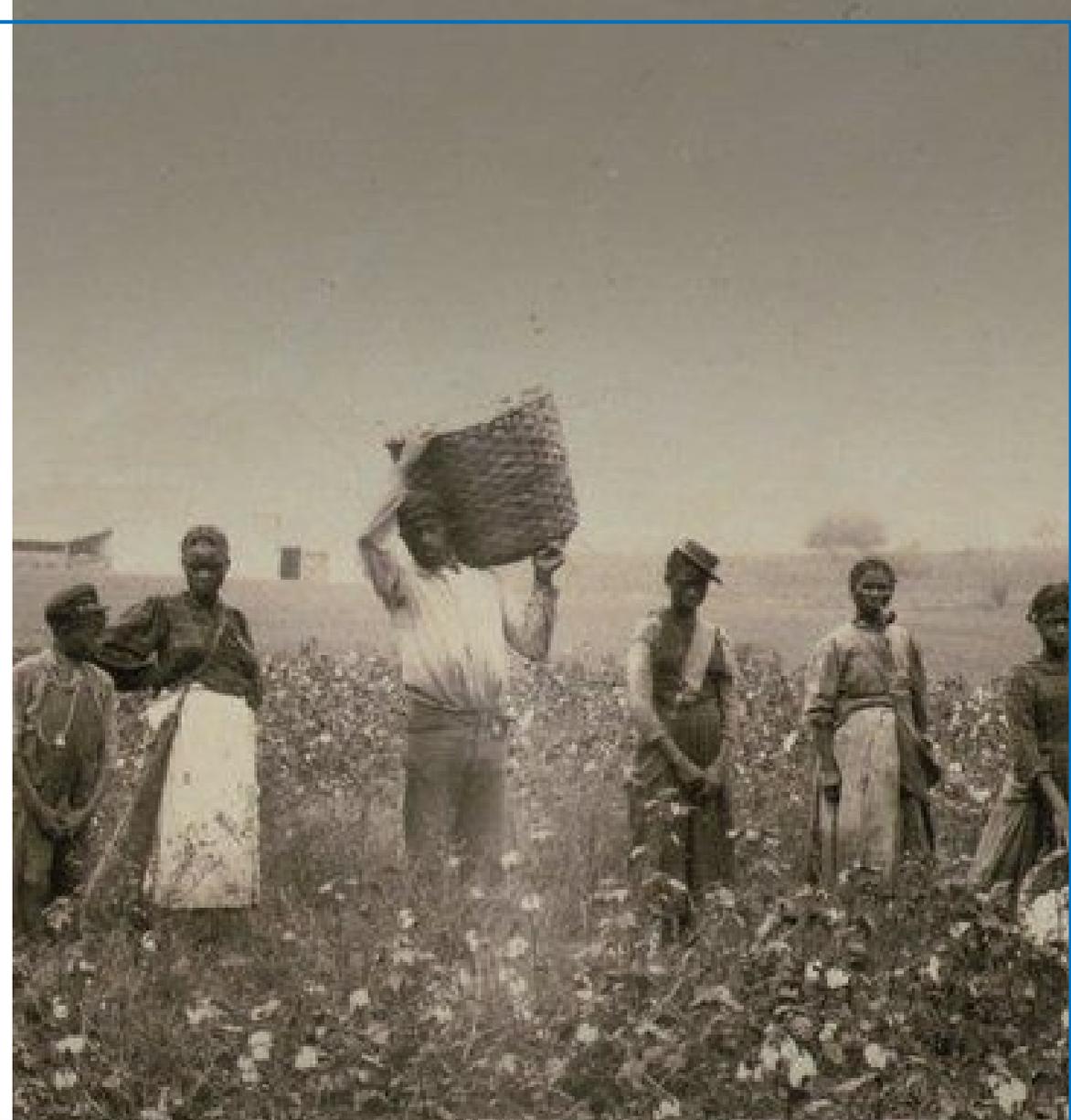
**1642**

Black women are classified as taxable, a law that separates them from indentured white women.

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SLAVERY: WHY?

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# THE BUILDING BLOCK FOR AMERICAN CAPITALISM

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- During the peak of slavery, the American South supplied between 60 and 70 percent of the entire world's raw cotton
  - The growth of the cotton industry shaped the history of early North America
  - Many of our modern-day institutions and continue to directly benefit from slavery
  - People of African descent have never been compensated for their contributions and it is hardly acknowledged
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# A HISTORY OF DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION

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- The abolition of slavery had a dual unintended effect:
  - People who never intended to be citizens became tied to this nation.
  - It removed the purpose for which those people had been forcefully displaced from their homelands: Free Labor!
- There was never a plan for Black people post-slavery, it was intended to last in perpetuity
- Black Americans are the only people to have ever:
  - Been brought to this land involuntarily
  - Had their humanity denied

And then by way of an amendment, had their fate bestowed on them by the same people who participated in an enterprise which had at its core false imprisonment, kidnapping, rape, forced abortions, murder, starvation and every incarnation of inhuman suffering.

# BUILDERS OF A NATION

To say that America was founded on self-sufficiency is a fallacy when its history is written in the blood of those who — against their will — built much of this nation as a heritage to men who not only enslaved them, but only provided restitution in the form of **partial** citizenship.



# MODERN DAY IMPACTS OF SLAVERY

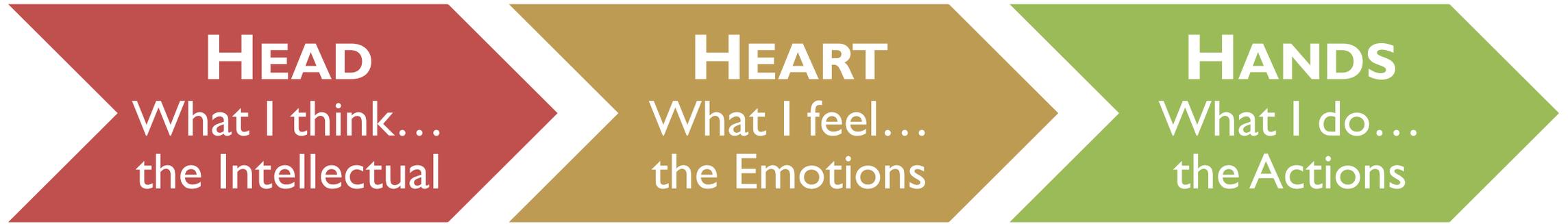
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- The median net worth of Black Families at \$17,150 is nearly 1 / 10<sup>th</sup> of White families at \$171,000 (*Brookings, 2016*)
- Although only making up ~13 % of the total U.S. population, Black Americans comprised 27% of all arrests in 2016 (*FBI, 2016*)
- 1 in 11 Black people are under correctional control compared to 1 in 45 White people and 1 in 27 Hispanic people. (*Pew Research Center, 2009*)
- African Americans have the highest mortality rate of all minority groups in the United States (*Juon, Evans-Polce & Ensminger, 2014*).
- COVID-19 hospitalization rates for Black Americans are 4.7 times higher than White non-Hispanic people. Deaths are 2.1 times higher (*CDC as of August 6, 2020*)
- Homeownership rate among white Americans 73.3% compared to 42.1% among Black Americans (*USA facts, 2020*)
- Black Americans account for 39% of people experiencing homelessness and more than 50% percent of homeless families with children (*National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020*)

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# RACISM'S NEW FRONTIER

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# When did I discover that I benefit from my skin color and cultural privilege of whiteness?

A cis-gendered white woman who has been an educator and organizational leader for over 25 years

I am the daughter of a retired NYPD detective, great granddaughter of Irish immigrants who lived in Hells Kitchen in NY.

I was raised to believe that if you work hard enough, you succeed....

I was taught to trust police

I have lived and worked in communities of color for the entirety of my adult life, and focused on education, community organizing and social justice...I've made a LOT of mistakes and have had to be accountable when my intent does not match the impact. And, I still do....it's a lifelong journey.



Maureen Benson

# RACISM'S NEW FRONTIER: **WHITE PRIVILEGE**

- White privilege are the benefits afforded to one race (whites) over another solely based on the racist belief that they are superior and more deserving.
- White privilege has its origins in the creation of whiteness
  - Europeans took on whiteness as they assimilated in North America
  - This came with benefits, the first of which was guaranteed citizenship
  - Citizenship meant that you could purchase and own land, something that slaves could not

# RACISM'S NEW FRONTIER: **WHITE FRAGILITY**

- Inability to accept or defensive response to perceived attacks against one's race or culture. It is an attempt of white privilege to protect and perpetuate itself.
  - This is based in an innate behavior common to all humans: self defense



# RACISM'S NEW FRONTIER: **WHITE GUILT**

- Describes the guilt brought upon by “the recognition of unearned and unfair racial privileges, the acknowledgement of personal racist attitudes or behavior, and/or the sense of responsibility for other’s racist attitudes or behavior
  - *White guilt itself offers no benefit to people who are oppressed and can at times paralyze well-intended white people leading them to do nothing*

# WHITE FRAGILITY: HYPER-ACTIVISM

**Hyper-activism** is the excessive and exaggerated attempts by “white allies” to demonstrate their willingness to challenge racism and white privilege. Though appearing to have strong moral and social justice roots, it can often have the effect of disarming and silencing those who they intend to help. In other words, they may be “doing too much” to prove how “down with the cause” they are, that they drown out those who they are “fighting for.”

*Jackie St. Louis*



# RACISM

- Racism, which has no scientific basis, is the belief that there are racial differences which make one race superior to another.
- Racism promotes the domination of one race over others by perpetuating these erroneous beliefs, both by overt and covert means.
- Racism can be individual, institutional or systemic. Many if not all of our institutions were built on racist principles
- In the United States of America, racism has served to oppress people of color, primarily those of African descent, while simultaneously affording disproportionate opportunities to whites.
- Racism is a highly adaptive system. It is an organism that evolves in order to survive, taking on other forms to do so.

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# WHERE DO WE GO?

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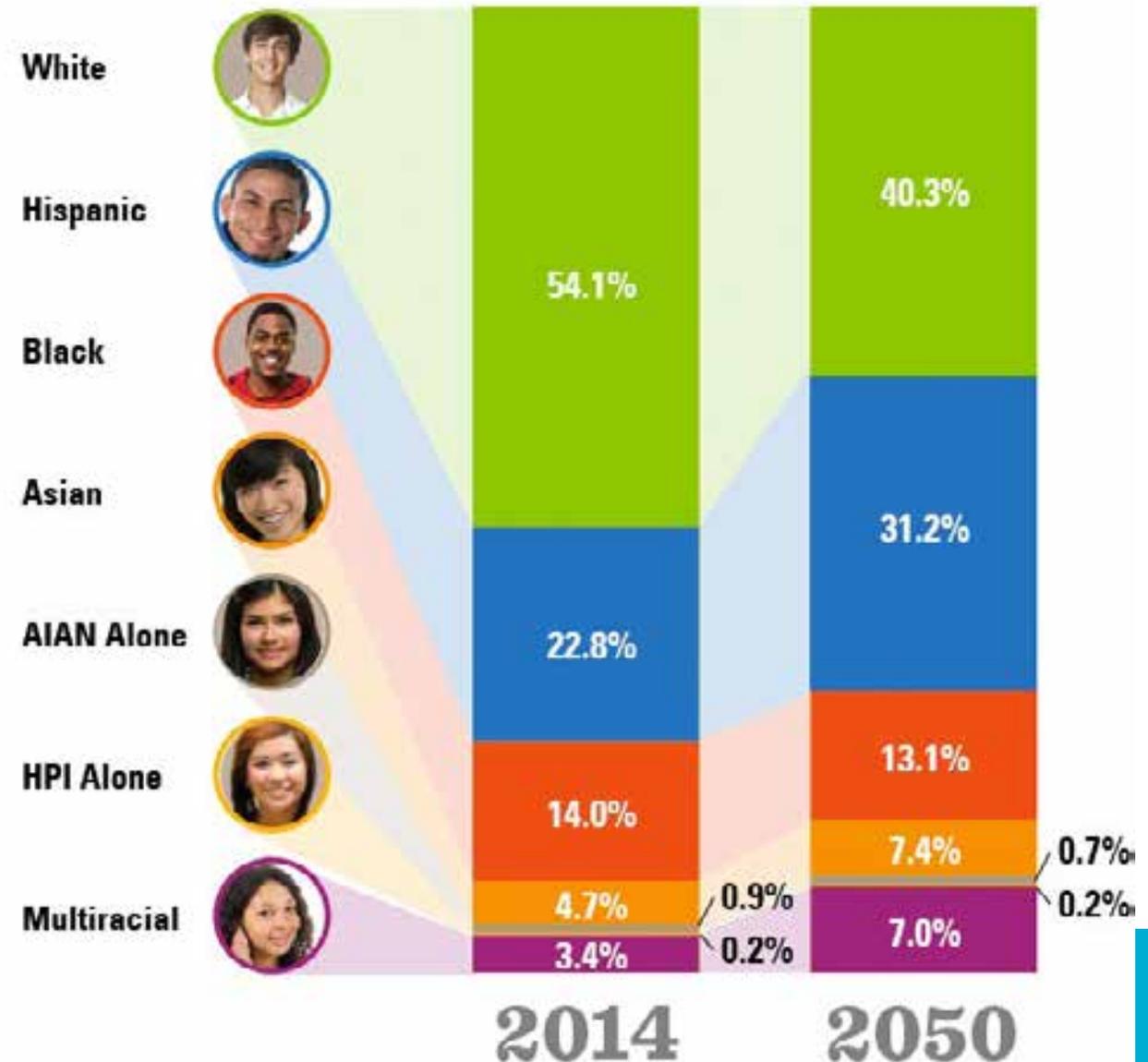
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# THE CHANGING FACE OF AMERICA

- By 2055, the U.S. will not have a single racial or ethnic majority.
- Nearly 59 million immigrants have arrived in the U.S. in the past 50 years.
- Millennials, young adults born after 1980 have likely surpassed Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) as the largest U.S. generation.
- Millennials are the most racially diverse generation in American history: 43% of Millennial adults are non-white, the highest share of any generation.

## Changing race/ethnicity of America's adolescents



# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Our communities, neighborhoods, downtowns, and workplaces are more diverse
- Underscores the importance of a multicultural approach to our lives and work
- The place where we live and those we manage should be affirming, welcoming, and empowering
- The importance of accountability to history
- It is no longer acceptable to be ignorant
- We need to not just be allies, but anti-racist



# BEING ANTIRACIST

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- Being anti-racist does not mean being anti-white
- To be anti-racist means to be cognizant of and accountable to:
  - The lingering effects of slavery;
  - The inequities which exist in our communities as a result of it; and
  - The ways in which those inequities are perpetuated in modern day society
- To be anti-racist means to adopt interpersonal attitudes which affirm the lived experience of those who have been oppressed, and work to undo the systems, structures, and policies which perpetuate systemic racism.

# STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING YOUR EQUITY LENS

- Congruence
- Cultural Humility
- Openness
- Anti-racism
- Transparency
- Research/Study/  
Experience – Learning  
disposition
- Network
- Find purpose
- Training
- Seek out experts
- Look outside your scope



# Undoing of whiteness and racism within me

- Unaware of what dominant white culture is
- Default to “academic” English
- Prioritized white colleagues comfort over Black pain
- I am not exempt, I have a lifetime of unlearning to do
- Attempting allyship

# WHY RACE MATTERS

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- Because it's woven into the bloody fabric of this country
- Because it was the means through which this country became what it is today
- Because we continue to make it matter
- Because unless we reconcile with our history it will continue to dictate our present and shape our future
- Because as long as we live in a society that is not equitable, it will continue to matter

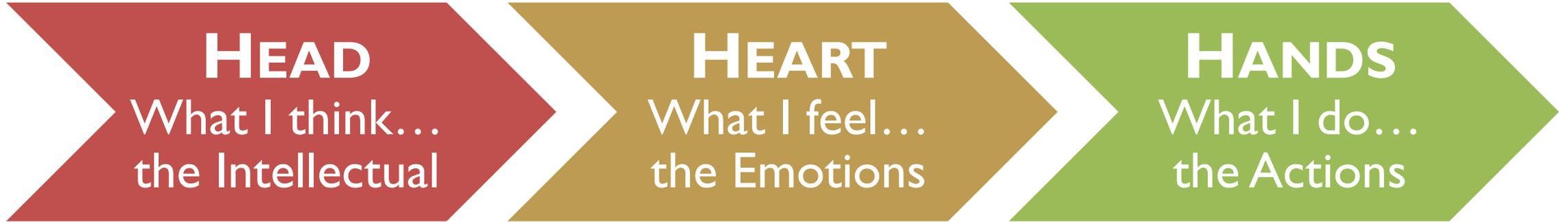
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# BREAKOUT #1

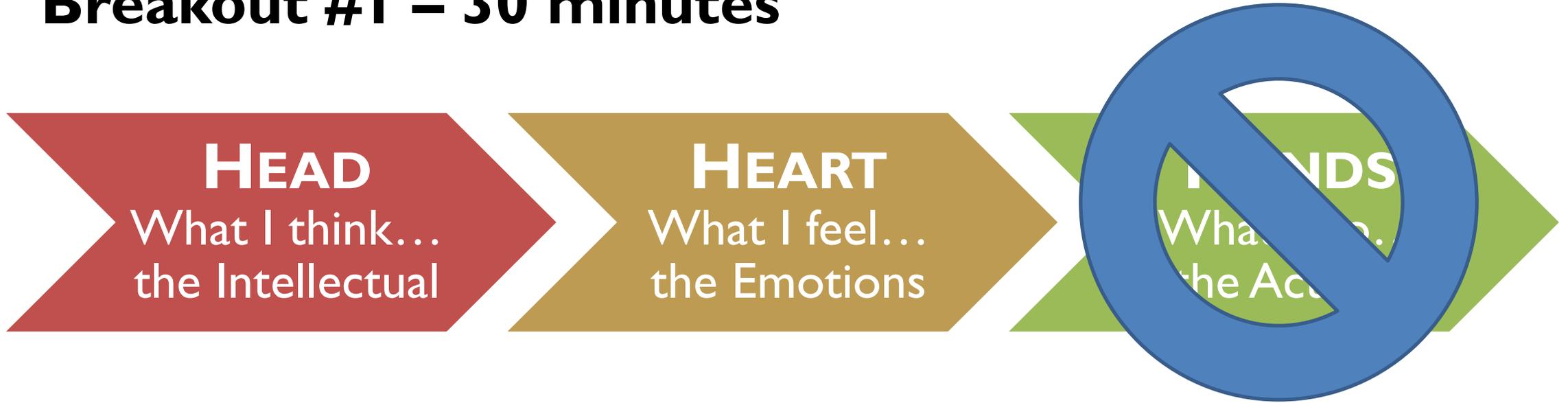
# HEAD, HEART, ~~HANDS~~

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# Breakout #1



# Breakout #1 – 30 minutes



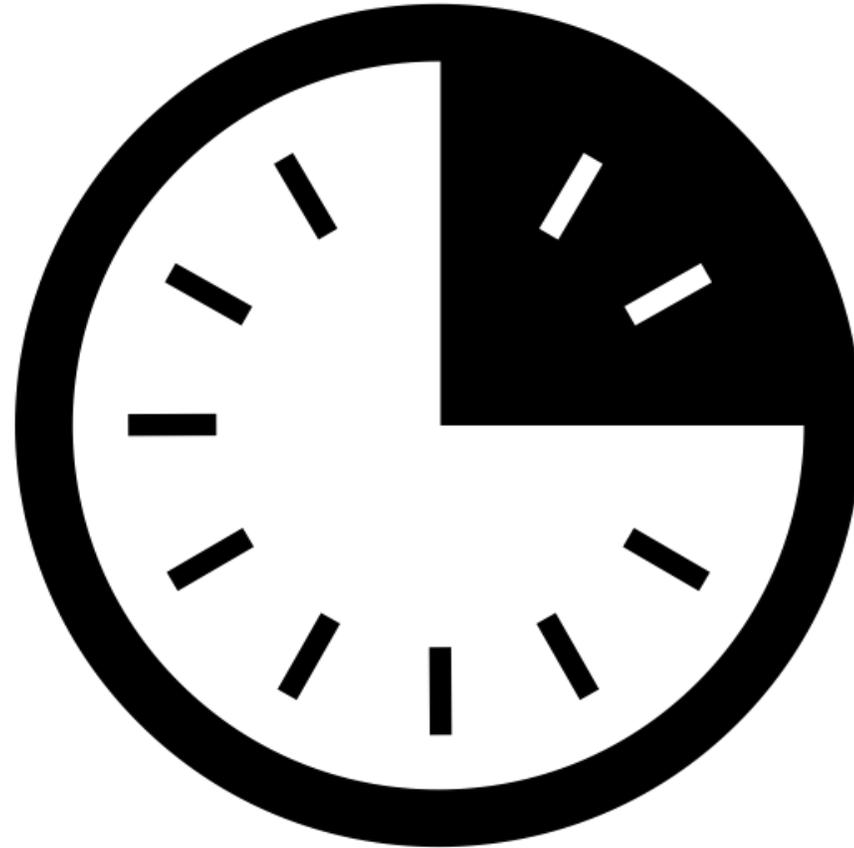
- **Prompts:**

- How am I, in my heart and in my head, as I arrive in this space?
- What are some responses I'm having (without jumping to solutions) as I think about this morning's keynote?
- As I think about the call to action, what challenges (without offering solutions) come up for me?

- **Considerations for our conversations:**

- Stay in the “I”
- Give each person about 5 min to share responses to the prompts
- Practice active listening, do not interrupt with your own stories...holding space for colleagues to share is a gift!

# Break & “Report Out” in the chat



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# PLACE, RACE, & IDENTITY

MOVING THE PLACE MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

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ISHMAEL NUÑEZ

# HISTORY OF “PLACEMAKING”

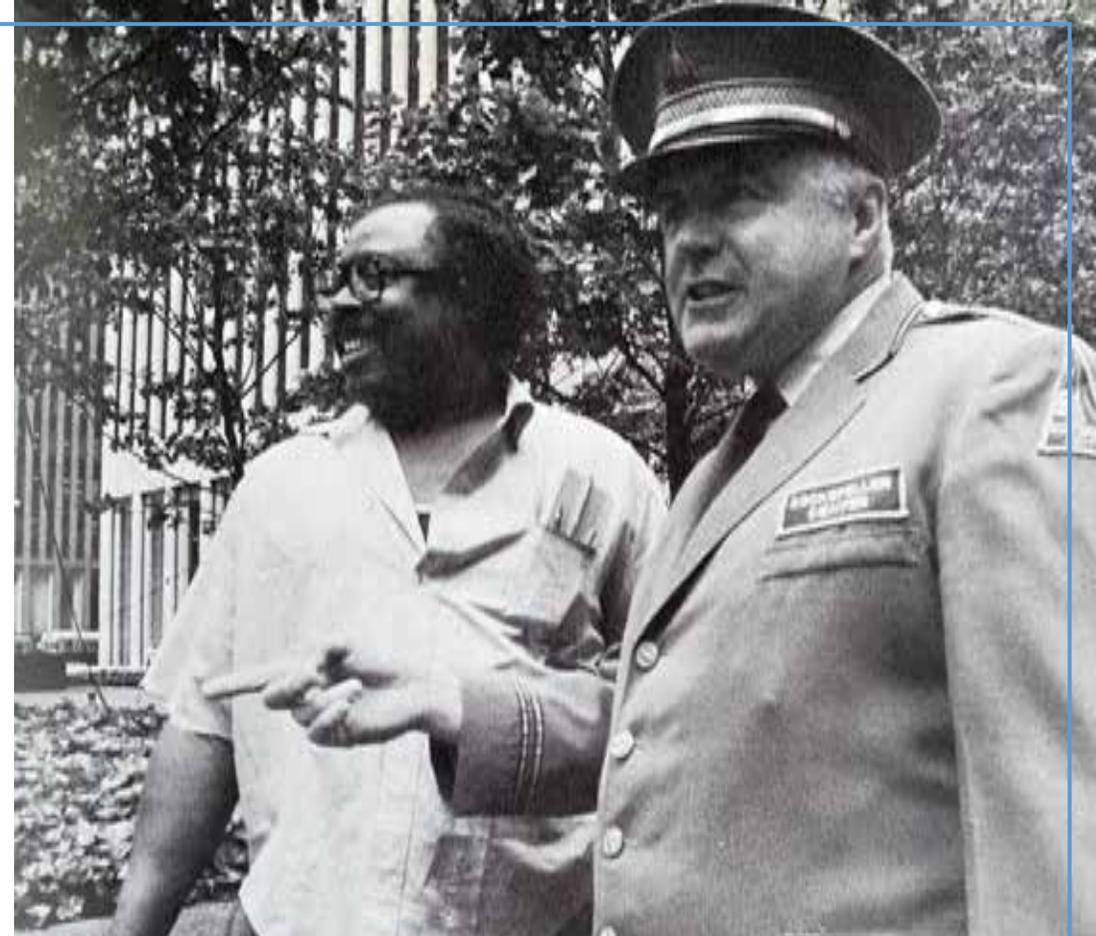
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- Placemaking considers the vitality, success, and identity of a space as defined by the experience of its users
- Origins in the 1970s with urbanists like Jane Jacobs, William Whyte, Jan Gehl and others
- Emphasis on the public realm, which includes sidewalks, streets, plazas, parks, and waterfronts
- Professions that contribute to placemaking include:
  - Architecture and design,
  - Urban planning,
  - Community development,
  - Policy makers,
  - and, of course, Place management



# “MAYOR OF THE PLAZA”

- In *The Social Life of Urban Spaces*, William Whyte describes the “Mayor of the Plaza”
- The inclusion of pedestrian-centric design or elements in a space is not enough on its own to attract users and make them feel comfortable.
- Deliberate programming and encouraging human interaction in a space to give it life.
- This idea is fundamental to the role of the Place Management industry today, including parks “concierges” activating public space.



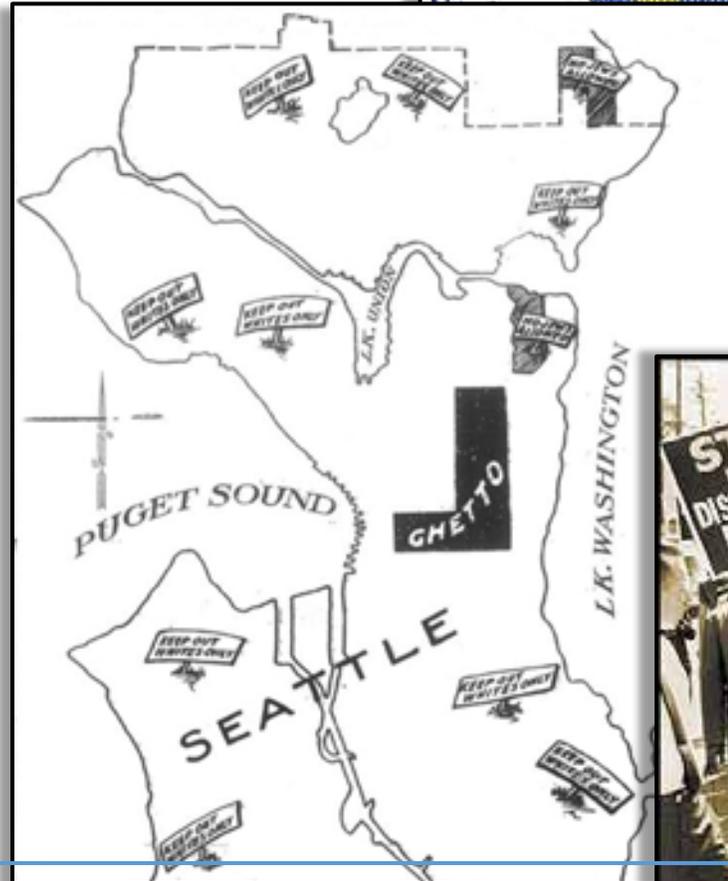
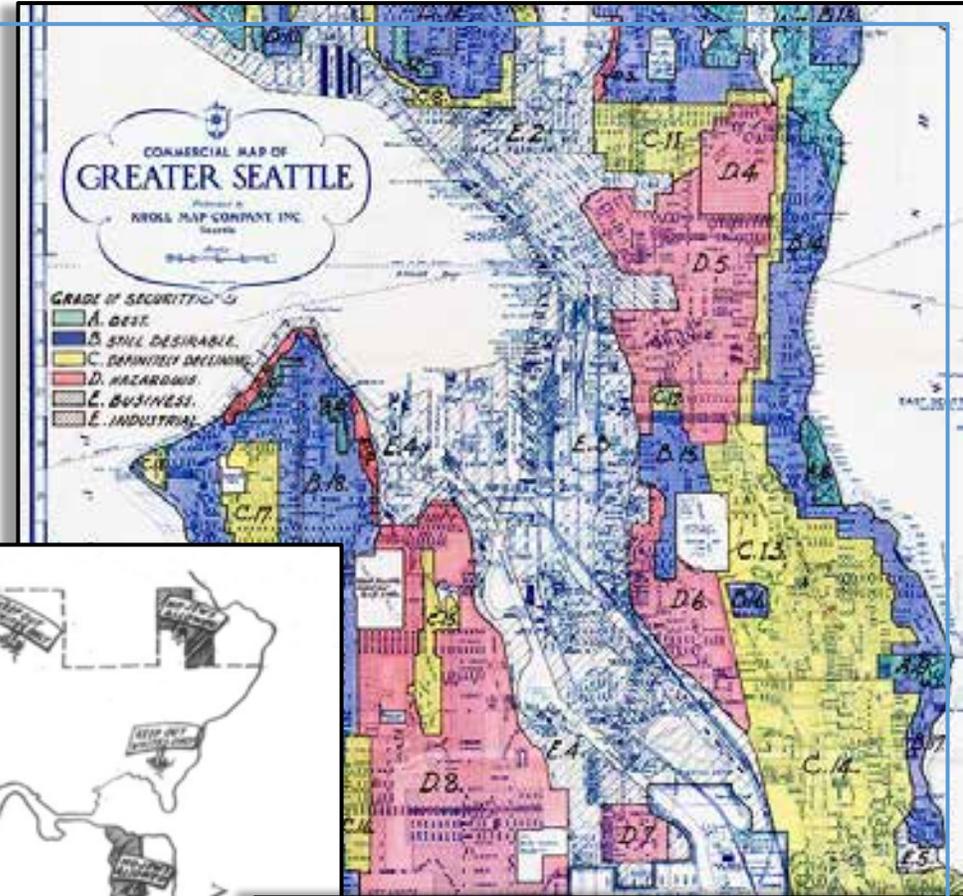
# PLACE MANAGEMENT HISTORY

- 1950s: Downtowns Decline
  - G.I. Bill
  - Interstate Highway System
  - Urban Renewal
  - Redlining
- 1960s: Downtown Organizing
- 1970s: Public Area Management (mostly physical)
- 1980s & 1990s: Assessment Districts (clean & safe first)
- 2000s: Neighborhoods; programming; social services
- Today: Thousands of Place Management organizations



# URBANISM'S RACIST HISTORY

- Built upon this history and dominated by whiteness-centered beliefs, systems, and practices:
  - Homestead Act 1862
  - Racially Restrictive Covenants 1920s - 1948
  - Redlining 1937 - 1968
  - Urban Renewal 1940s - 1970s
  - Policing of public spaces and era of Mass Incarceration: 1971 - present
- Explicitly or implicitly disrupted Indigenous and Black families from their ability to thrive in place



***“James Baldwin wrote about the same neighborhood as Jane Jacobs, where as a queer Black man he was regularly harassed by the police and viewed as a dangerous outsider, rather than part of the delightful diversity of Jacob’s own version of Greenwich Village ... we need to set aside the rose-coloured glasses and notice who is missing from that picture of idealized city life.”***

*- Leslie Kern, 2019*

# Background

- The emerging value of equity in placemaking has sought to characterize public spaces as being for “everyone.”
- Misalignment between the rhetoric of a public realm for everyone and the experience of being Black, Indigenous, a person of color in public space, or any other identity whose population has been oppressed

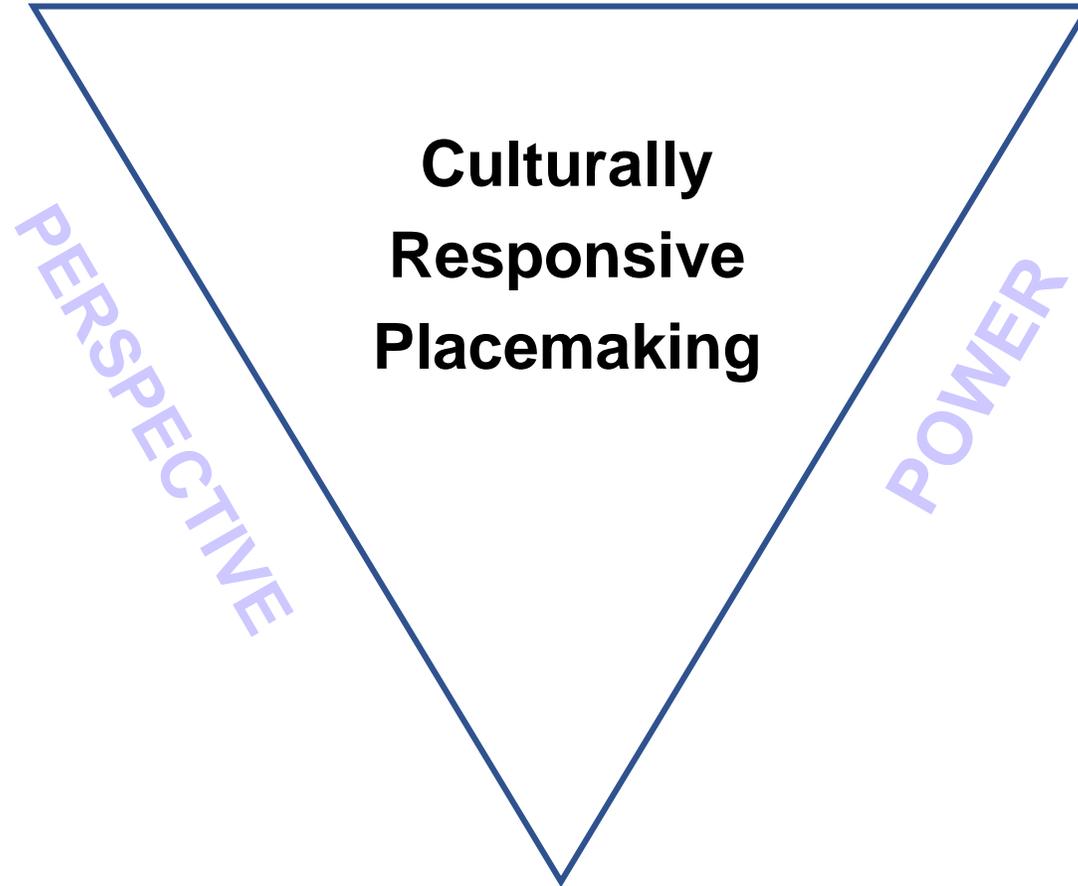
# Problem

- A “Black sense of place” or Black belonging in the public realm is under threat.
- This manifests through self absence, policing and surveillance, displacement, and erasure of Black experiences from public spaces and cities.

# Your Role

- The Place Management industry has a direct role in the conditions and experience of the public realm
- This gives you and opportunity, a purpose, and a responsibility to make the public realm experience better for a diverse set of users
- You can't "control" those conditions, and that's okay
- Approach this work with openness and

EXPERIENCE



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# EXPERIENCE

## Belonging and Sense of Place

*“undifferentiated space  
becomes place as we get  
to know it better and endow  
it with value”*

(Tuan, 1977 p.6)



Photo credit: Craig Adderley



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# EXPERIENCE

## Belonging and Sense of Place

*“undifferentiated space  
becomes place as we get  
to know it better and endow  
it with value”*

(Tuan, 1977 p.6)

- Place attachments can be positive or negative – creating a sense of belonging or othering
- Place has been important to the self-exploration of culture and identity, while at the same time being linked to its oppression
  - Urban Renewal
  - Redlining
  - Racial Restrictive Covenants
  - Racist Monuments and other public representation

# Tatyana Fazlalizadeh



# Tatyana Fazlalizadeh

Of course not all of the reaction to her work has been positive. Many of the posters have been defaced and torn down. Three posters put up in Chicago were defaced



# Jasmine Iona Brown

An Art Project Called *Black Teen Wearing Hoodie* Has Been Repeatedly Destroyed in Seattle



POWER

# Production & Management of Space



Photo credit: Visit Ballard



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# POWER

## Production & Management of Space

- Formalized “placemaking” professions have historically had the most control over the creation of physical space and growth
- Control the funding, development, management, and narrative
- These decisions directly impact the experience of place

## PERSPECTIVE

# Bridging Framework

*“The lived experience of race has a spatial dimension, and the lived experience of space has a racial dimension”*

(Lipsitz, 2007 p.12)



Photo credit: Naomi Ishisaka

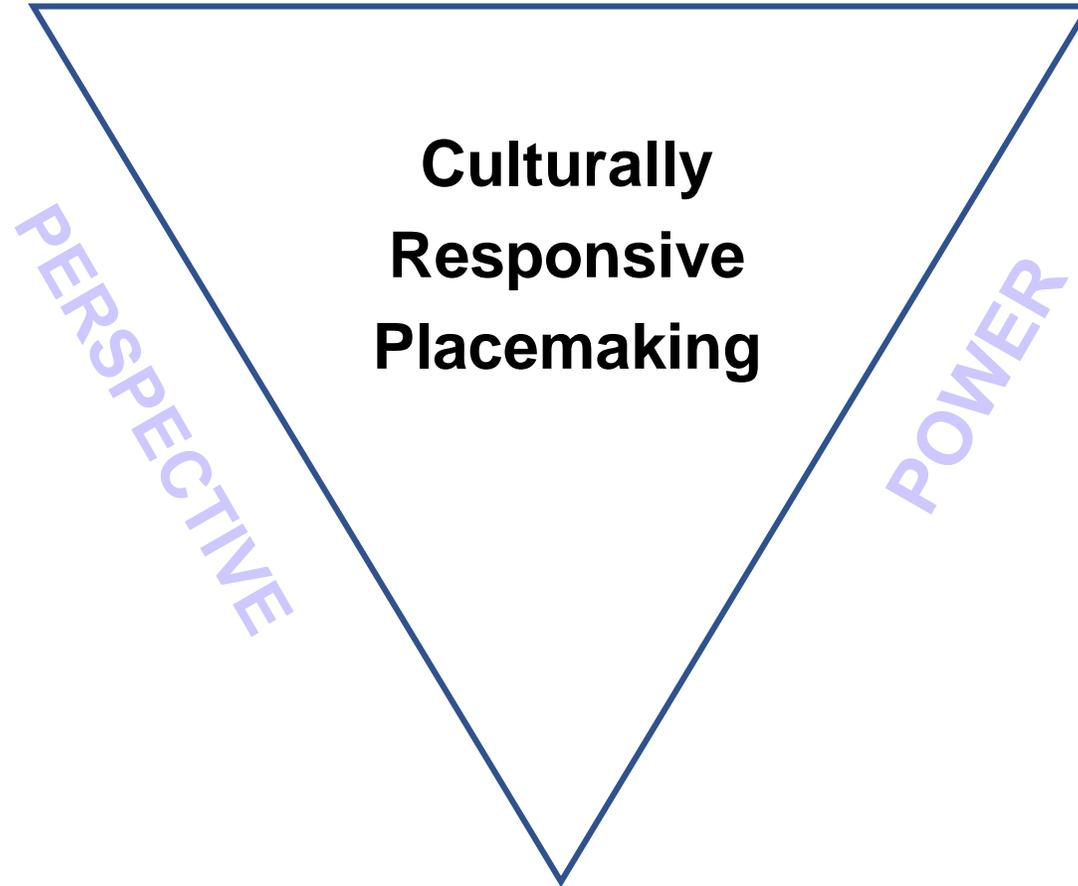
# Bridging Framework

*“The lived experience of race has a spatial dimension, and the lived experience of space has a racial dimension”*

(Lipsitz, 2007 p.12)

- Recognize that to talk about society, politics, economics, culture, **race**, gender, the environment and so forth, inherently, is to talk about space (and vice versa)
- As a placemaking agent, you have to actively seek to bridge **experience** and **power** together

EXPERIENCE



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# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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- Accountability to those closest to impacts and harms
- Power in collective action, this work is done in partnership
- “Move at the speed of trust”
- Course correcting is inherent
- Conflict is an important element of growth

# Lessons for Practice

1. Expand the role of the place management industry  
*what does impact look like?*
2. Community is not bounded by district borders  
*what does advocacy look like?*
3. Utilize participatory ways to influence decision making  
*what does engagement look like?*
4. Recognize that in placemaking, community wounds may open, and trauma may surface  
*what does reconciliation look like?*
5. Be willing to create what appears to be impossible or unlikely  
*what does imagination look like?*

# Your Role

- The Place Management industry has a direct role in the conditions and experience of the public realm
- This gives you an opportunity, a purpose, and a responsibility to make the public realm experience better for a diverse set of users
- You can't "control" those conditions, and that's okay
- Approach this work with openness and

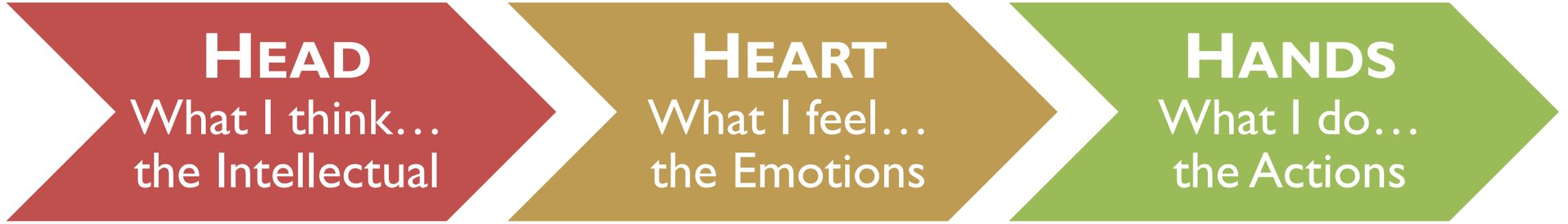
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# BREAKOUT #2

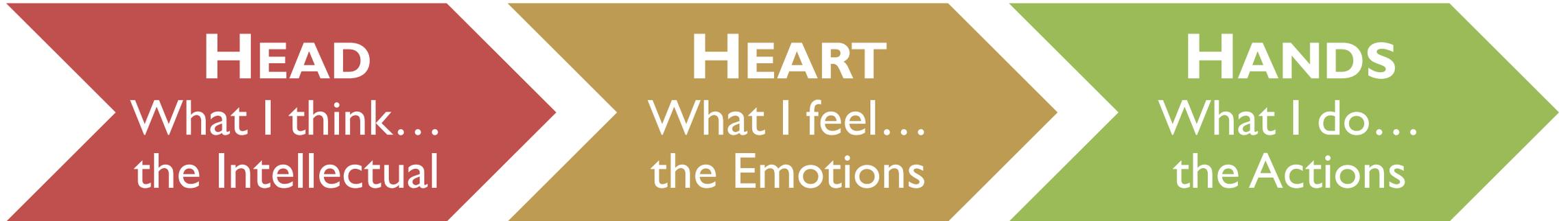
# DEFINING OUR ROLE

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# Breakout #2



# Breakout #2 “Defining Our Role” – 30 minutes



- **Prompts:**
  - **Experience:** What populations are we prioritizing our accountability to?
  - **Power:** What are we trying to accomplish? How does this intersect with what we know about the target group?
  - **Perspective:** Who else has a similar goal/is accountable to a similar target group?
- **Considerations for our conversations:**
  - Don't lose sight of the Head/Heart
  - Think collective action – connect the “I” to the “We”
  - Be honest about what you do and do not know – identify questions