

Presenter



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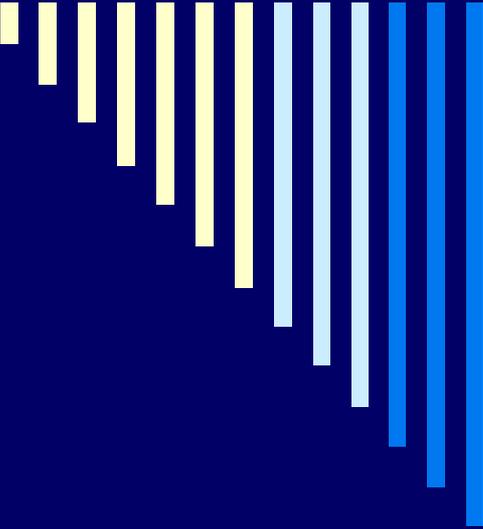
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Exploring Solutions from *Racism: Science & Tools for the Public Health Professional*

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RACIALHEALTHEQUITY.ORG



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



OBJECTIVES & OVERVIEW

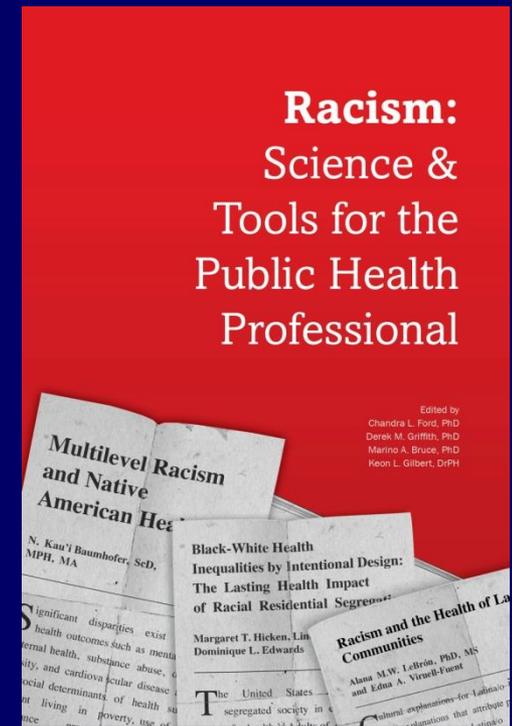
- Racism: a public health issue
 - Defining racism
 - Racialized populations & communities

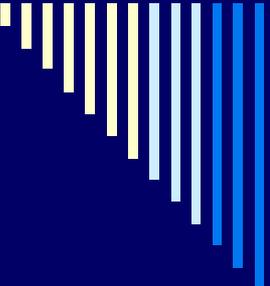
- EJ through the lens of racism

- An example of the problem

- Possible solutions

Forthcoming book:



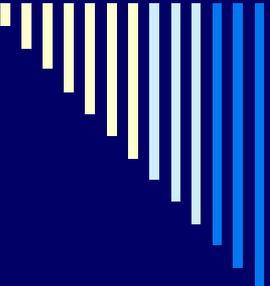


RACISM IS...

a **system** of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what [people] call 'race'), that unfairly

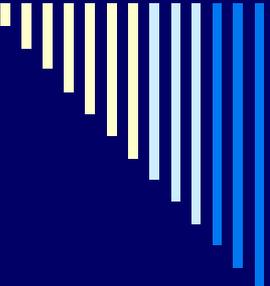
- disadvantages some individuals and communities,
- unfairly advantages other individuals and communities,
- and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources.





DEFINING RACISM

- Complex, multifaceted, social construct
- Permeates all dimensions of life
- Relative
 - Unearned advantages/privileges
 - Unearned disadvantages/penalties
- Functions at all levels of every socioecologic framework



IS RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

- ❑ Racism influences the well-being of populations
- ❑ The populations disproportionately served by public health efforts are racial/ethnic minorities
- ❑ Historical and legacy effects of medical racism

HOW ARE EJ & RACISM RELATED?

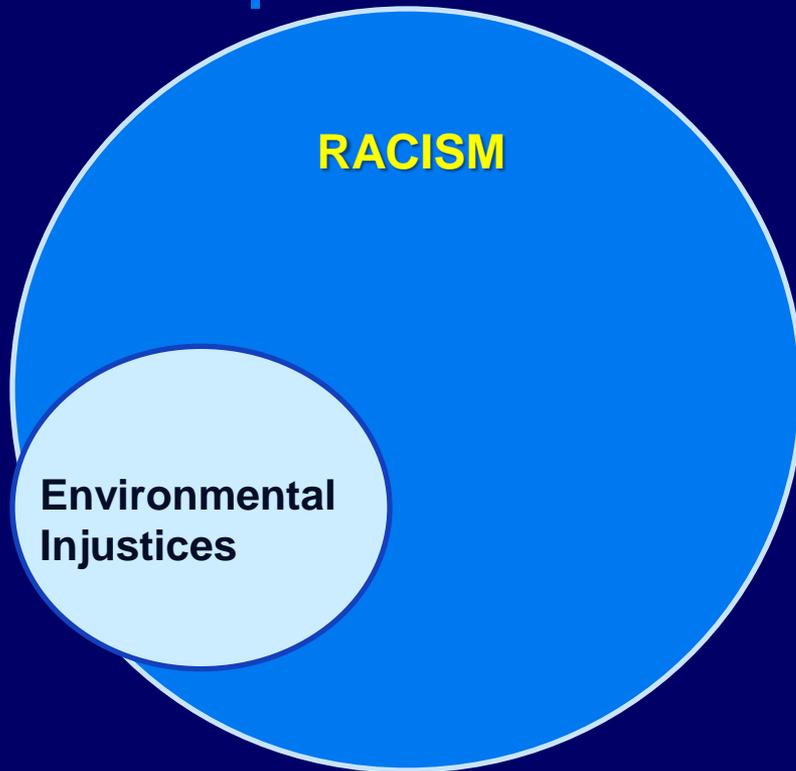


Figure 1. Through the lens of racism

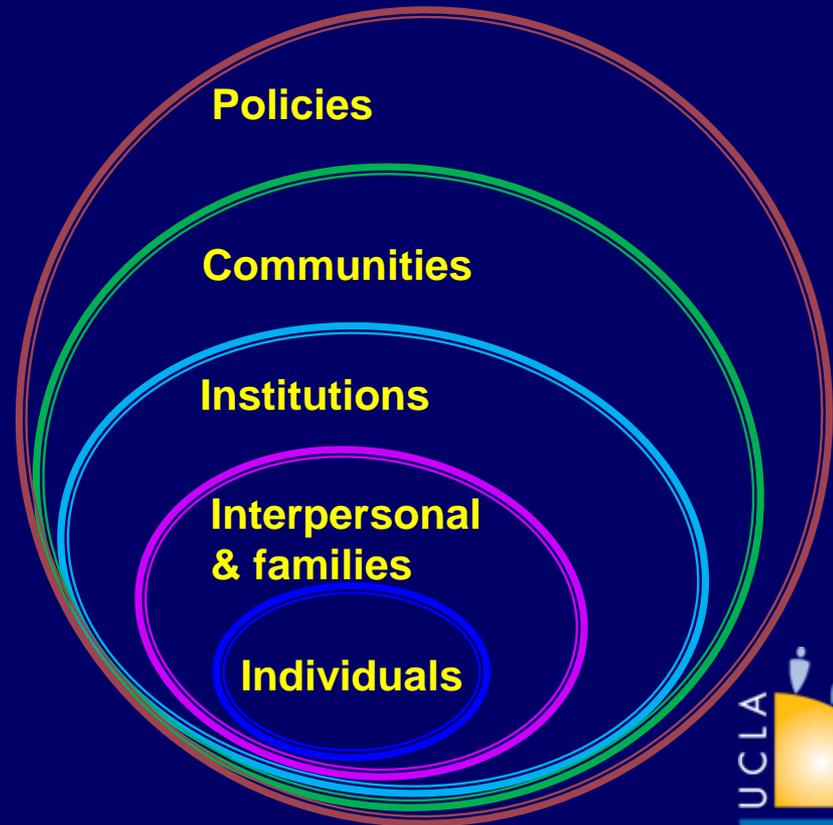


Figure 2. Socioecologic framework

HOW ARE EJ & RACISM RELATED?

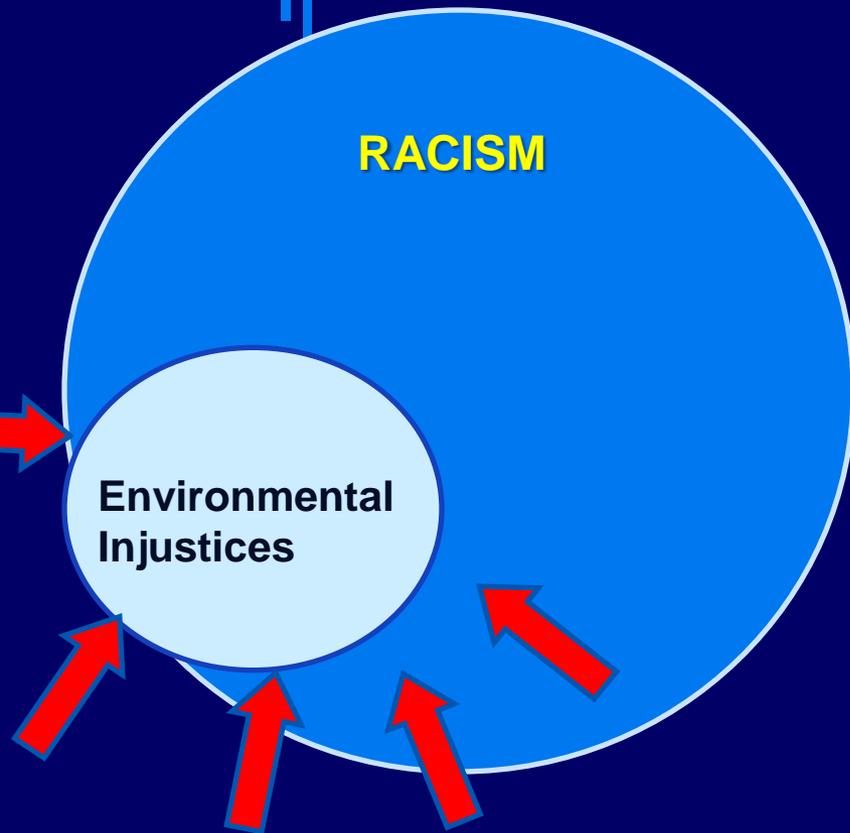


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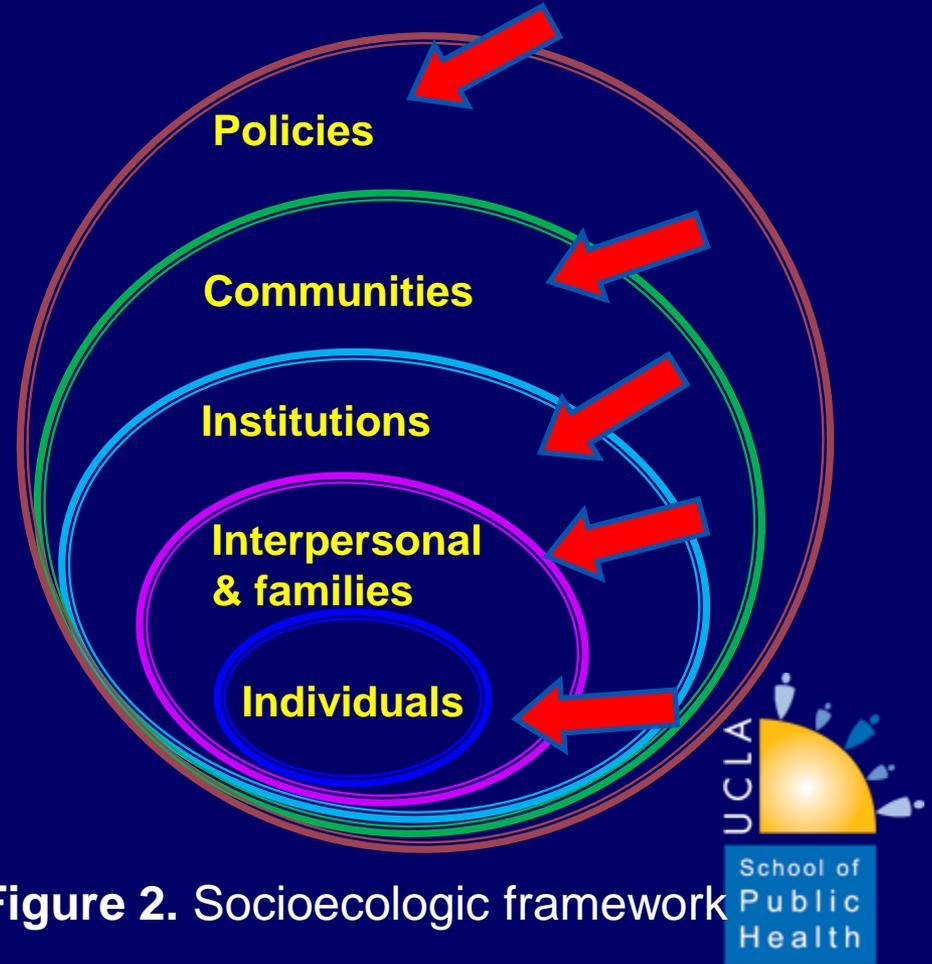
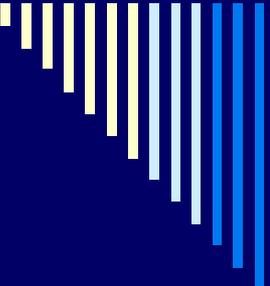


Figure 2. Socioecologic framework



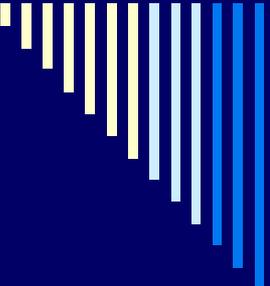
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS: “RELATIVE RISKS”

1 HAZARD , 2 COMMUNITIES

- Hazards are placed in poor and racial/ethnic minority communities disproportionately
- One group’s disadvantage (i.e., exposure to the hazard) is by definition another’s health advantage (i.e., low(er) risk of exposure to the hazard).

The conditions in minority communities are not mere attributes of those communities. They can only be understood by considering how disadvantages and privilege are distributed across racial (and other) groups in society.





POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS: FIRST THINGS FIRST

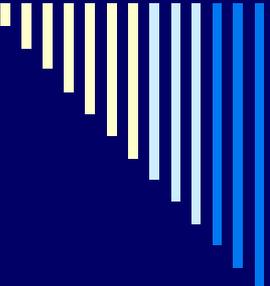
- General antiracism solutions
 - Learn about racism and antiracism

Box 16-1. Five Reasons to Involve Practitioners in Racism-Related Research

1. Practitioners work with many populations of color that are impacted by racism. To promote health in these populations, it is important to understand and address their experiences with racism.
2. Practitioners working on the front lines of public health have experiential knowledge about communities, public health problems, and solutions that academic researchers often lack.
3. Practitioners can improve the quality of data on race, ethnicity, and agency/program indicators routinely collected by their organizations. This can help them identify and monitor the underlying causes of any racial/ethnic disparities in their programs. In addition, it can make the data more useful for health equity research (e.g., in collaborations with academic partners).
4. The settings where practitioners work (e.g., public health clinics) are the subject of a growing number of studies that seek to understand how and why racial inequities occur in the delivery of public health services and programs. Practitioners understand the policies, practices, workflow, etc. of the settings in which they work, making them the natural leaders for conducting this type of applied research and evaluation.
5. Understanding and assessing racism-related indicators can help practitioners identify and address subtle ways racism may be operating within their programs and agencies.

- Build knowledge & capacity
 - Learn the language
 - Promote advocacy
 - Support efforts to document the problem
- Get involved
 - Start where you are
 - Community
 - Organizations
 - Self



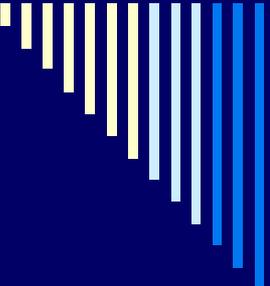


POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS (cont'd)

- Don't recreate the wheel, join the work of existing organizations

- Shift from “objective science” to equity
 - From environmental science → to environmental justice
 - From health impact to health equity impact

- Acknowledge racism, don't ignore it



THE OBJECTIVITY OF DATA?

“The systematic nature of the scientific method enhances the reliability of empirical findings, but does not necessarily eliminate the influence of racial bias.”

-Ford & Airhihenbuwa, *Ethnicity & Disease*, 2018

“At issue is doing correct science, not "politically correct" science. Blot...inequity from view, and not only will we contribute to making suffering invisible but our understanding of disease etiology and distribution will be marred.”

-Krieger N. *Epidemiology* 2007

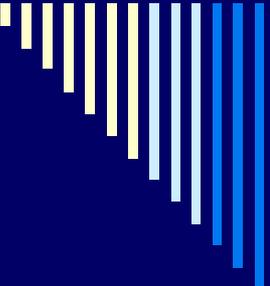


GETTING INVOLVED WITH ANTIRACISM WORK

- Work with and defer to the affected communities.



Courtesy: personal collection of Patty Anh taken during actions at Standing Rock, ND



GETTING INVOLVED: OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

□ White allies and those with privilege

- What should you do?
- What should you **not** do?

□ Examples

- Use your privilege for good
- Do not pretend you lack any privilege
- Listen more, talk/tell/teach less

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Organizing—What Do White People Need to Know to Be Effective Antiracism Allies Within Public Health?

Jen Margaret, MA, and Heather Came, PhD

Antiracism praxis lies at the heart of ethical public health practice. In the context of busy professional lives, this imperative can be overlooked by those from nonminority White backgrounds. Drawing on decades of antiracism ally experience in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and informed by indigenous and international perspectives, this chapter by two Pākehā (White settler) women provides White nonminority public health practitioners with some direction to embed antiracism in our everyday practice. It outlines core aspects of allies' practice: (1) understanding and addressing power, (2) skills for working



GETTING INVOLVED: Other Considerations

- See the bigger picture
- Connect the dots
- Acknowledge resilience

Violence & murder targeting
native women



Wholistic wellness



Courtesy: personal collection of Patty Anh taken during actions at Standing Rock, ND

POSSIBLE EJ SOLUTIONS: DRAW ON EXISTING MODELS

Northern Manhattan Climate Action (NMCA) Plan

"In order to protect NYC's most vulnerable people from climate change, the NMCA promotes environmental policies that also address the root issues of inequality."

Demographics of Harlem, NY



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey Data reported by statisticalatlas.com.

Organization

West Harlem Environmental Action (WE ACT)

Planning Process

The NMCA Plan is the result of a 6-month, community-based planning process led by WE ACT in partnership with multiple organizations and local government agencies. Between January and June of 2015, WE ACT hosted

7 public workshops

Hundreds of community members attended.

Participants worked through "serious games" - a team activity where facilitators described a

Core Concepts¹

Energy democracy

calls for all green energy projects to provide direct economic and environmental benefits to low-income residents. This may include local hiring agreements and investments in local companies and organizations.

Emergency preparedness

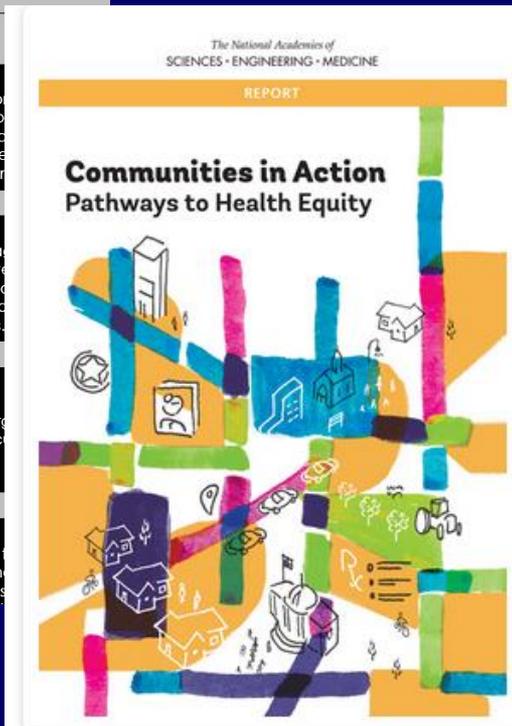
focuses on creating a locally-managed communication system that operates in analog and digital formats and can reach vulnerable populations to access resources during a climate crisis.

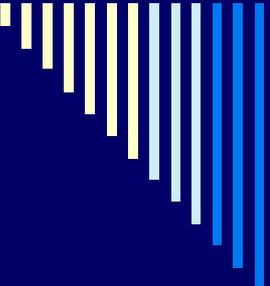
Social hubs

provide spaces for local activists to organize meetings, produce materials, and incubate projects.

Public participation

should include, but not be limited to, increasing political education and mobilization, developing partnerships

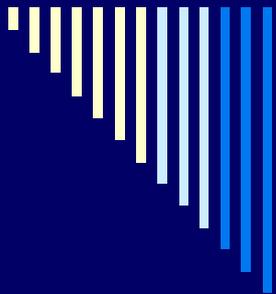




CONCLUSIONS

- Racism is a public health issue
 - Environmental injustice is one of many forms of racism
- It can be helpful to view environmental injustices through the lens of racism
- Solutions can be found among existing and emerging resources
- Everyone can play a role in EJ solutions





Thank you!

