



Developing Anti - Racism Community Dialogues: A Community - Driven Participatory Action Research Project



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Community Justice Dialogue Overview

1 hour 15 min (total)

- 30 min: Research Study and Program Presentation
- 30 min: Interactive Dialogue
 - **A Practice in Community Healing Circle**
- 15 min: Feedback / Questions and Answers



“Antiracist teaching is not just about acknowledging that racism exists, but consciously committing to the struggle of fighting for racial justice”

(Love, 2019, p. 54)



Research Team





Background

- Formed out of a partnership between the Dornsife Center and the Kline School of Law at Drexel University .
- This Partnership was grounded in the pillars of Deliberative Democracy and Beloved Community.
- This partnership sought to listen to the voices of the community and build connections
- This desire for community connection expanded to additional partnerships including a partnership with a community mediation center called CORA, formerly Good Shepherd Mediation Center.
- Led to a desire to build an opportunity for conversations around race and community dialogue and empowerment among community members .
- The partnership with JoYEducation Lab and our Participatory Action Research project was born to further explore ways to bring these concepts together in a way that supported the community.



Rutgers Themes:

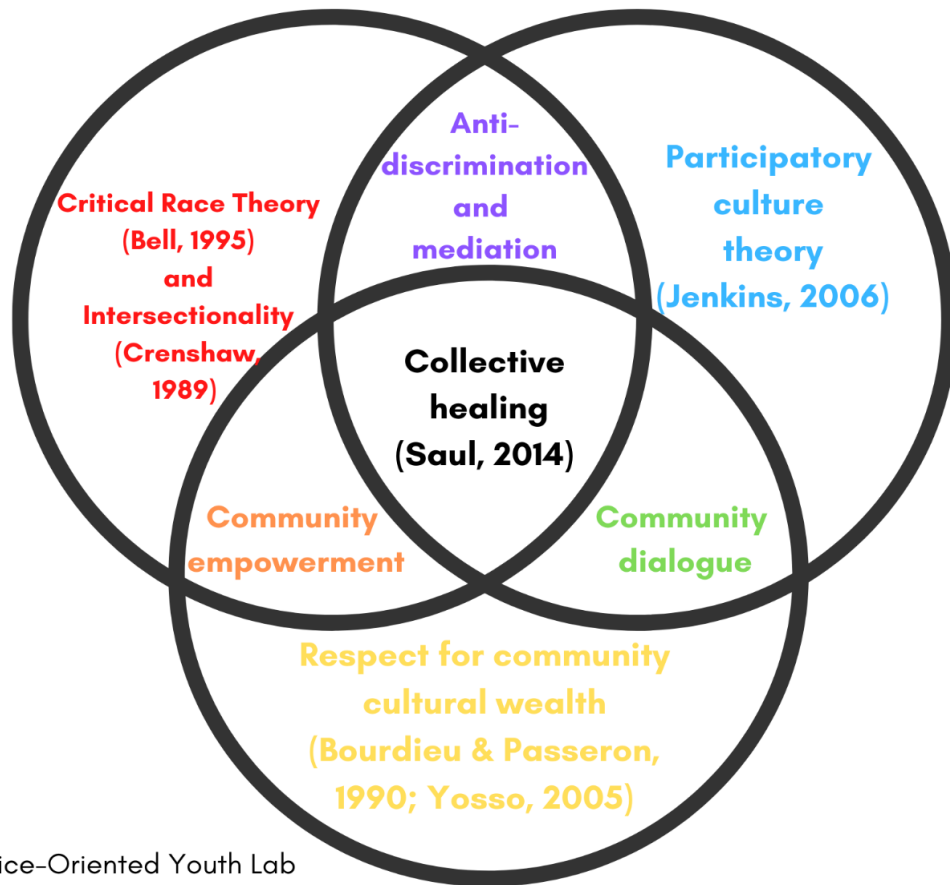
(1) A New Social Compact: How can "institutional practices center community, democracy, and education as a public good?"

(2) Holistic Campus Community: How can we ensure that "institutional culture and decision - making are inclusive and participatory?"

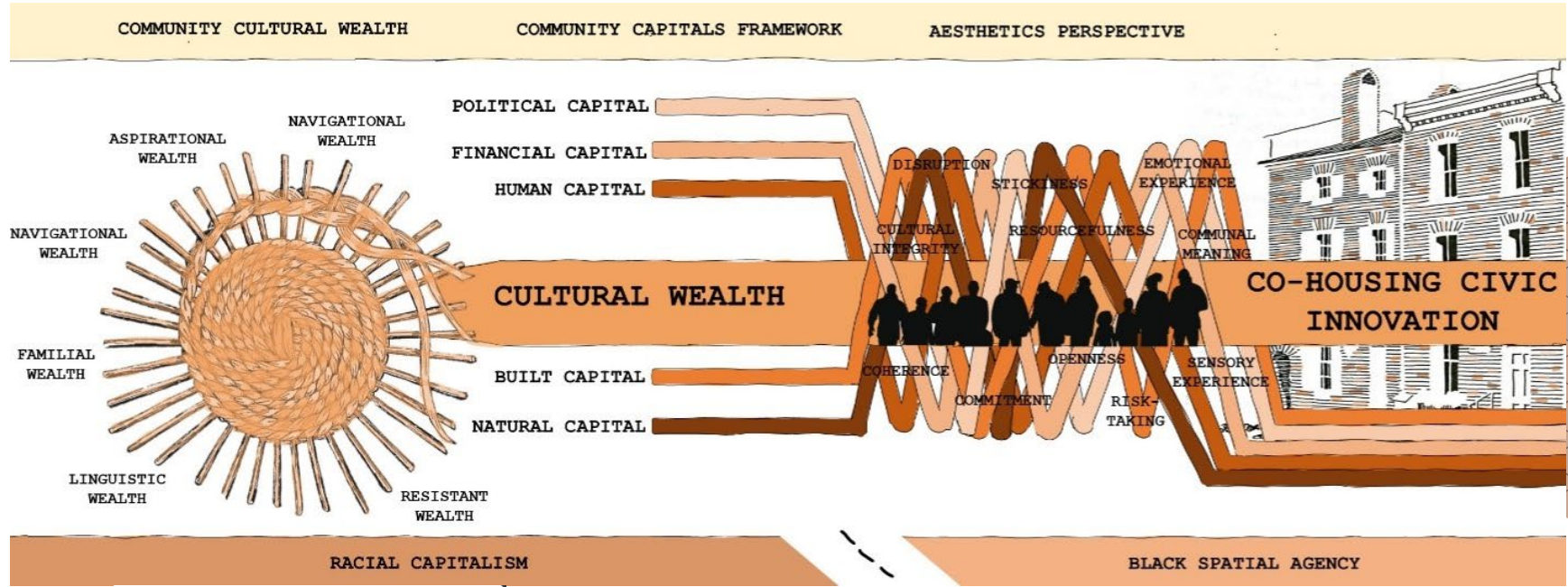
Project Objectives

- (1) Develop the research knowledge and skills of our community researchers to conduct qualitative research that examines community perspectives, needs and concerns connected to racial justice, equity, inclusion, and belonging within an urban university
- (1) Utilize the findings to create a culturally sustaining, asset - based facilitated dialogue and conflict transformation training; and
- (1) Examine the impacts of the training on critical consciousness and anti - racist praxis in addition to overall community impacts.

Dialogue Conceptual Framework



NSF Civic Project Conceptual Framework



© Justice-Oriented Youth Lab

Research Questions

RQ1:What are the community - identified needs and concerns surrounding racial justice, equity, and inclusion in West Philadelphia?

RQ2:How can findings help guide the development of culturally sustaining, asset - based dialogue and conflict transformation training for West Philadelphia residents?

Methodology

Research Design

- Community-led Participatory Action Research (CPAR) design (Torre et al., 2012)
- Involves community-generated and executed issue identification, research and plan development, collection and analysis of evidence, reflection on the findings, sharing results, and taking action to address the concerns (Burns et al., 2012)
- Empowers historically minoritized and marginalized communities, such as those in urban areas, by elevating their voices and expertise to foster trust (Edwards, 2020)
- Our epistemological stance is that our community researchers have led the overall design and execution of the research project, as they are the experts in relation to their lived experiences and their community's cultural wealth (Espino, 2012; Yosso, 2005).

Participants

Participants' Alias	Age	Race	Gender	Affiliation
Ms. Coco	72	Black/AA	woman	Community resident
Destiny	31	Black/AA	woman	Community resident
Double O-Seven	67	Black/AA	man	Community resident
Ms. Rocky	90	Black/AA	woman	Community resident
Thomas	80	Black/AA	man	Community resident
Bobby	56	Black/AA	man	Community resident
Laurel	80	Black/AA	woman	Community resident
Cassie	60	Black/AA	woman	Community resident

Methodology

Data Collection

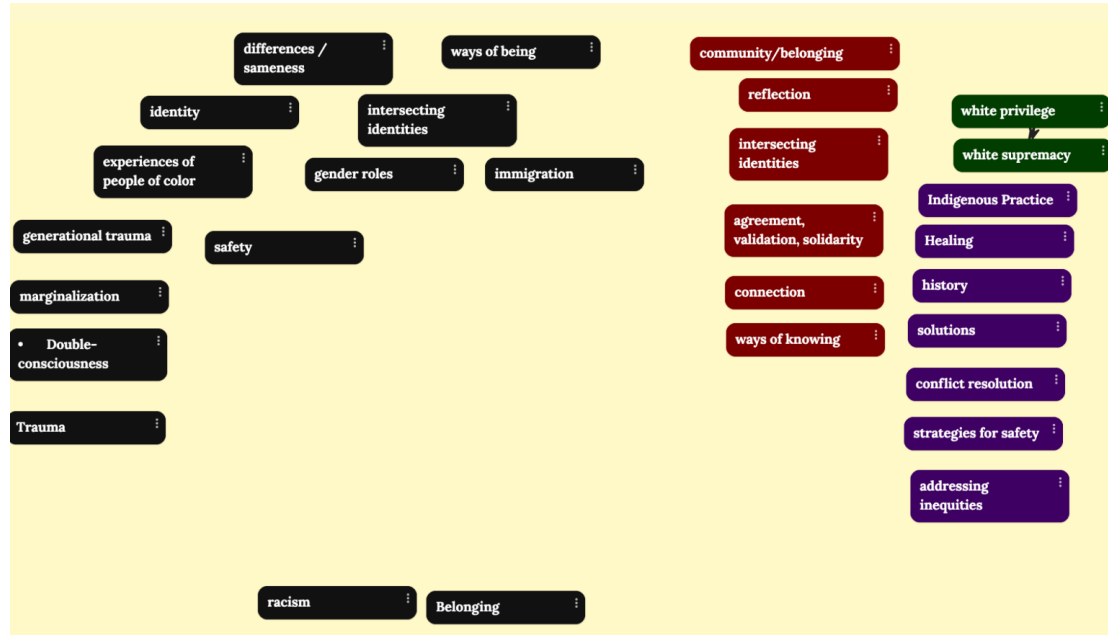
- Community researchers collected data through 1 - 1.5 hour semi-structured interviews and focus groups with West Philadelphia community residents
- Data was transcribed and analyzed through holistic-content and thematic analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008)

Data Analysis

- We observed the community-identified responses surrounding racial justice, equity, and inclusion and the wider community
- Developed a codebook for various forms of community-identified concerns using CRT as a framework for thematic and holistic content analysis
- Step one entails low-level coding; Step two includes selecting data that requires further analysis; Step three includes CRT question coding by asking specific questions relating to CRT's tenets (Winkle - Wagner et al., 2019)

Examples of Reflexivity & Raw Data

<p>1st round of coding:</p> <p>Range of emotions, range of impact</p> <p>Emotions: How do emotions dictate how I interact with my community?</p> <p>Pain: <i>"I kind of try to keep my guard up you know and protect myself from the slings and arrows of man."</i></p> <p>Trauma: ability to be aware of trauma and the depth of our experiences and responses around racism. <u>How can we engage in a discussion around the causes of this trauma?</u></p> <p>Guilt: <i>"Racism is a phenomenon going on in our society now where people perceive that racism is bad and they might feel like they've been guilty of influencing it up on another group. And since it's bad rather than owning up to it and trying to do better, they just</i></p>	<p>2nd round of coding:</p> <p>Underlying finding that some can openly address racism, while others suppress dialogue</p> <p>(which is suppressing my voice) and reinforced by my environment</p> <p>affects life output, trajectory, Different levels of biopsychosocial impact on the individual</p> <p>Outer layer of the collective</p> <p>People who could not express themselves at the biopsychosocial level communicated their pain at the collective they don't experience, and suppress it to unconscious feelings of pain)</p> <p>Their voice was arrested, they find their voice through the community marginalization collective</p> <p>This Environmental racism = economic injustice (less resources and capital</p>	<p>3rd round of coding:</p> <p>suppressed pain: people have pain, whether they consciously & psychologically recognize it or not, and this pain has biopsychosocial effects stemming from racism or any feeling of inequity. We know this can have physical (health and violence), material (career and economics), and mental, <u>environmental: consequences</u> *Ability to be aware of pain</p> <p>Who is suppressing? Individual level,</p> <p>Effects of suppressed pain</p> <p>Implications: Modes of expression should be explored to relieve suppressed pain:</p> <p>Utilizing modes of expression towards resolution</p>	<p>Theme 1: Systemic and Institutional Racism</p> <p>Theme 2: Individual Biopsychosocial Impacts</p> <p>Theme 3: Collective Impact on Marginalized Communities</p> <p>Theme 4: Yet Still: Sustainability, Transparency, and Allyship</p>
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Findings

1. Systemic and Institutional racism

Inequities seen through harmful environmental neglect.

2. Individual Biopsychosocial Impacts

Racism and residual impacts directly affect one's life output: personality, emotions, health and wellbeing (mental & Physical, etc.), stress, and familial contexts.

3. Collective Impact on Marginalized Communities


Racism has long-term intergenerational impacts.

4. Yet Still: Sustainability, Transparency, & Allyship

Engage with communities through authentic and transformative relationships centering community cultural, institutional, and educational preservation efforts.

“I kind of try to keep my guard up you know and protect myself from the slings and arrows of man.”


- Participant 1



“Racism is a phenomenon going on in our society now where people perceive that racism is bad and they might feel like they've been guilty of influencing [inflict] it up on another group. And since it's bad rather than owning up to it and trying to do better, they just tried to change the meaning of it, they tried to ameliorate the word racism.”

- Participant 2

“I reached out about a stop sign, and I got no response. What I did see was the city come out and put up cameras, which I thought was an interesting response. I think a lack of surveillance would be helpful, only because it's usually set under the guise of safety and protecting the people. But it's most of the time used against the people... The people in government are the facilitators of what the people need. And what ends up usually happening is power gets corrupted, or people start serving their own needs and forget the fact your job is to serve the people. And it's cool if you don't want to do it, but don't act like you are, when in reality that's not -- you're just here to make some cash and bounce.”



“ We have no recreational programs, no social programs, and we have no substantial needs being met. Somebody gets killed in our school, they don't send any counselors and people to come and check if they're okay... like we had a Boys and Girls club and they cut the funding, we had a crime prevention program and they cut the funding we had. Some programs came and went. We had an after school program and they cut the funding, so now these guys went from no money to say, you know they gotta they gotta do, communities are left to themselves to stay involved. ”



**Rebecca Rose Metzger,
Lead Community Researcher
West Philadelphia, PA**


“Critical Race dialogues are vital to the mental, spiritual, social, and physical health of all people, yet especially important for people of African descent because of atrocities suffered and innately carried across generations, which requires so much healing significantly important for a mutually safe and fair social economy.”

A Practice in Community Healing Circle



Audience Q&A:

Have any of you collaborated with neighbors as researchers?



Think about an existing community research partnership or one you would like to create.

What are the opportunities and what might be some challenges?

Audience Q&A:

- Did you identify any theme, patterns, or quotes that stood out to you from the dialogue?

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- How did those different perspectives impact what could/came to be?

Reflections & Implications

Opportunities

- Intra - university collaboration: breaking down silos
- Building on success / foundation of existing organizations : Dornsife Center Advisory Council (DCAC) & Community Lawyering Clinic (CLC)
- Deepening community relationships
- Building community capacity
- Acknowledging community strengths : paying community members , including them in dissemination / publication
- Sustainable funding

Challenges

- Logistics - team size, meeting scheduling, pandemic
- Team dynamics
- Needs of different funders, bureaucracy

Thank You



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