FLW: Inclusive Pedagogy: A Community of Practice Approach

MODERATOR: We want to thank everyone for joining us today. We are so excited to see so many faces on this lovely Thursday morning. My name is Valerie Cheathon, and I'm here with Mary Packer with the AOI Learning Innovations. And we are so excited to be able to assist with and learn from Dr. Jaime Nolan and from her husband, Dr. Jim Burns, as they discuss inclusive pedagogy, a community of practice approach.

We are expecting about 115 participants today, so if you have a question or comment, we're asking you to kindly place it in the chat. Mary and I will be fielding those chat comments and questions as best as possible, and when Dr. Nolan and Dr. Burns have the opportunity, they will be addressing those questions and comments. You will also be engaged in group work today, so be prepared to fly from one room to the other and speak with people you may or may not know.

And in the event that you lose connection or have to leave early, don't worry about it. You can come in and out as you please as this is a two hour event. And again, we thank you for coming, and without further ado, Dr. Nolan and Dr. Burns.

JAIME NOLAN: Good morning, everybody. It's kind of cool to go through all the screens and see a lot of people I do know, and then I get to meet new people. And in this time, where all of us are isolating at home a lot, it's really quite wonderful and lovely to both see old friends, people I haven't seen in a while, as well as see new people.

I am really excited to be able to be part of this today. It's so core, actually, to the work I do, that I've done for nearly 30 years. I'm the Associate Vice President here for Community, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence. We are leaning into the social justice titles, so perhaps we'll be Community, Equity, and Social Justice. Inclusive excellence will always be part of what we do as we continue to grow and add and learn all along the way, because as all of you know, it is a lifelong learning process, and I'm sure we'll be talking about that at different points.

I want to quickly let my husband Jim introduce himself. I will tell you this little story. Jim and I met, gosh, about eight years ago, nine years ago, when we were both at South Dakota State University. And quite frankly, if I can say this, both of us going, what the hell am I doing in South Dakota?

It ended up being really positive in that we've met over common interests. I was working on trying to find somebody to develop a course on the role of community and social justice in education. Introduced to Jim, and the rest is history.

So we both feel very fortunate to have partners that we can share a lot of our work, indeed, have lots of conversation, you might say. But also faculty and administrator-- that makes for some interesting discussion as well. So, Jim?

JIM BURNS: All right, good morning, everybody. Thanks for coming on this beautiful day. And yeah, my name is James Burns. I'm an assistant professor in curriculum studies, actually. I'm a curriculum studies person, a curriculum theorist, at Florida International University.

I'm not there now because of-- well, for obvious reasons. So I'm spending a lot of time on Zoom, as I'm sure all of you are these days. I'm becoming-- what is the term-- a Zoombie now pretty much. So I do appreciate the opportunity to meet everybody and to share some information with you today and have a good dialogue on both anti oppressive education, some of the precepts of that, and we have some resources that we can share with you if you'd like to dig into that a little bit further, and also on developing communities of practice around those ideas of anti oppressive education.

I will say that I'm not Mr. Strategies and Best Practices. I know that implementing these types of-- I would call them dispositions in our teaching-- it's going to look different everywhere, I'm sure. And I'm just looking forward to seeing-- again, as we talk about these different ideas, I'm sure a lot of you are probably doing some, most, maybe all, or even more of what we're going to be talking about today. So I'm also interested in learning from you all about your own practices as well. So thanks for having me.

JAIME NOLAN: Woops, got to end mute. That's a constant learning as well, unmuting. I'm going to share my screen with you. We do have some slides to share, and we'll go over what this next couple hours is going to look like. And then we're going to jump right into an exercise, but I'll prep you for that.

So let me see if I can get to my slides. Great. Everyone can see that? Just a couple of thumbs up will just confirm that for me. Great.

So obviously, I'll introduce this other concept we're leaning to. When we first started these conversations-- gosh, it feels like a while ago, Valerie-- we were talking about a community as a practice approach to inclusive pedagogy. A lot has happened since then, and as we all know, being both in the middle of confluence of rushing rivers, we have the impact of COVID-19 and the ways in which inequities that have existed for centuries, frankly, have been laid bare. While at the same time, we've had a tipping point with regard to racial justice, the need for racial justice with George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and now the decision on Breonna Taylor's murder yesterday in terms of how that would be approached.

So a lot going on, and one of the things I noticed right off when all of this was taking place is a real desire, a hunger for engaging around issues in higher ed, whether it's how we teach, how we work with students, how are we meeting the needs of people during this time, where a pandemic has also, in an inequitable way, impacted communities of color on multiple fronts. So

this is a really good time for all of us to be both looking at ourselves, reflecting on who we are in relationship to what we do to our students and to our communities and our professions.

So as Jim and I were talking, we were-- I had an opportunity because, I'm lucky, he provides these articles and videos and so on in his world, which I find to be really helpful to what I do. He introduced me to the work of Kevin Kumashiro, and his approach is around having anti oppressive education, therefore all the tools that are part of that, including, of course, pedagogy. So he is going to talk to you a little more about that later. I'm going to go ahead and-- here we go.

So this is the first part. I'm doing it, yammer, yammer, yammer, welcome, all that. And again, just so thrilled that we have so many people who care about this, and that's been my-- we had 500 students mostly, almost 500, at an environmental justice panel last evening. Maybe some of you were there.

But seeing that participation, those participation rates with our students, and we talked about, for example, there was a panelist who specifically was looking at environmental justice as racial justice. So it was a very communities of practice approach, and we'll talk more about that also in a bit. Having faculty from different disciplines represented in that panel, talking about a grand challenge, is a really good example of a community of practice approach.

So just a quick overview, that introduction going on right now. I'm going to introduce you to an exercise, and this is maybe out of your comfort zone in a sense when we have this setup. I just want to encourage you to go for it, and also understand this as a tool that can be used in a classroom. I've used it for years as a way to start all my classes when I want to create the kind of connection, safe space where people can be uncomfortable, et cetera, and I'll be curious to both witness your experience and hear that.

We'll have a discussion after that, and then Jim is going to go into what is anti oppressive education. You'll be introduced to Kevin Kumashiro's work through a video. We'll discuss that piece. And then we'll introduce the communities of practice model and have some quick Q&A around that, and then talk about what that might look like given who all you are. Who are the faculty in your general area, where you could create a faculty led community of practice around anti oppressive education?

So that's how we're going to roll. Let me see, so we're going to have-- Valerie's going to pair you up with somebody. One of you, we'll ask to be person A, one of you will be person B. I got to check in with Valerie on something really quick here. Valerie, are you going to be able to post the framework, the questions, into whatever common chat there is for people to just see what the questions are?

VALERIE CHEATHON: Yes, I can. I will do that right now.

JAIME NOLAN: So I'll finish up with instructions.

VALERIE CHEATHON: OK.

JAIME NOLAN: So you'll be paired up, and you're going to, one be person A, one be Person B. Person A is going to be asking person B a series of questions. Each question will be responded to for a minute and 15 seconds, so hopefully have your cell phone with you so you can time this. Otherwise, just sort of feel-- I trust that this is going to happen just the way it needs to because it always does.

So person A is asking person B. The first question is who are you, and for a minute and 15 seconds, you respond to that. And there's not any crosstalk. The person listening can encourage if the person talking gets little stuck. Just keep asking "who are you."

When that time passes, then the next question is, what do you want. Same thing-- if the person gets stuck, just keep asking encouragingly "what do you want." Third question is, who do you pretend to be, which sounds probably more daunting than it actually is, because when you think about it, we all pretend in a variety of ways.

I use myself as an example, when I pretend to have it altogether when perhaps I don't, or I hold myself together by not letting on maybe that I'm sad with emotions. We can do that. I also might want to position myself as really knowing what I'm talking about, but-- I do kind of know what I'm talking about today, so I'm not faking. Or maybe I am.

Anyway, so the next question is, what do you worry about, and then once that's done, the person who's been listening is-- excuse let, me rephrase that. The person who's been doing all the talking will turn to the listener and say, now, who do you think I am, and for a minute 15 seconds, they would respond to that. Then you flip and do the whole thing over again for the other person.

So Valerie's going to pair you up, and again, I'm asking you to kind of suspend judgment you might have about this, and we'll talk about it in the context as one of the tools towards both building a community of practice as a faculty community, but also maybe within a student community that we might be working with. Sound all right? Go for it.

So we're going to try to do this kind of discussion throughout as we tackle different topics and so on. So given the experience you just had, just in general, what was that like for you? And if you want to put your hand up on your screen, and if Valerie and Mary can be helpful, if we don't see somebody's hand up. Would love to hear just what this experience was like.

AUDIENCE: I'll start. So I'm Noel Shultz, and I'm a faculty member in electrical engineering. And Collette and I were talking about, it was much easier to talk about someone else than it was to talk about ourselves. So that was the easier time, was talking about the other person.

JAIME NOLAN: Yeah. Someone else? Thanks, Noel.

AUDIENCE: [? Shyam ?] and I were talking about that it's, we just don't take time to really think about those things, and to some extent maybe because it's a little bit scary to think about what you really want and what you're pretending to be because then you have to deal with that, if you recognize those things. And it was interesting talking to a perfect stranger I've never-- we've never met before. In some ways, I think, you feel like you can be more honest, and in some ways-- it's where you really want to reveal about yourself. It's another moment when you can be pretending.

JAIME NOLAN: That's a good point. And it's vulnerable. I mean, those questions bring out vulnerability. A couple other people, just generally, what that was like for you?

AUDIENCE: Hi, Jaime, this is Philip Morgan from kinesiology.

JAIME NOLAN: Hello.

AUDIENCE: And the last question was interesting to me, and I felt-- I don't know if it was loaded. but it's not trying to judge the book by their cover so much. Hopefully you would-- it's checking your biases, especially if you can see each other with the screen. And I thought that was a very, very interesting question, and I was trying to think about what you were getting out of that.

JAIME NOLAN: The question of either where the person flips and says, now, who do you think I am?

AUDIENCE: Yeah, yeah.

JAIME NOLAN: Yeah. Yeah, it is, and this can lead us into another question I have for you all. So I've done this so many times, and I'm amazed at the impact it has on me every time. I mean, it's always meaningful.

But I'm often amazed how I feel like that person, when they share their insights as to who they think I am, they really got something. It just seems almost impossible that could happen, but as Rebecca was saying, how often do we take the time for those kinds of questions and really listen, even if it's a minute and however many seconds. It can be pretty insightful. Did any other people feel that way when the person shared who they thought you were and who's willing to talk to that?

AUDIENCE: This Corrie Wilder from Murrow College. I actually was paired with Todd Vanek, and we know each other. We actually have worked together.

JAIME NOLAN: Oh, funny.

AUDIENCE: Without him, I think Symposium may not have happened in the years that I worked with him on it. And we got to know each other a little bit, and this was, I thought, so refreshing

and so nice because I am very fond of Todd, and I thought he was amazing, and he's a great person, and we learned a little about each other. But here, it was so nice to know that I made a good impression, and that he was somebody who thought as well about me as I do about him. So I thought it was refreshing to be with somebody I knew and much easier, I think, than it would have been with a complete stranger. So it was a nice exercise, even with somebody I had gotten to know on a professional level.

JAIME NOLAN: I've also done this, where I've known the person, maybe even known them well. I'm also sometimes surprised at how much I learn even more, as if this is a little bit of a deeper moment. This may sound silly to some of you, but it's like getting a psychic reading almost, when people tell me who they think I am, and I'm just blown away at how insightful that is. How about a few others on just either generally what it was like or having somebody indicate how they think you are? Jessica, did I see you light up?

AUDIENCE: I thought it was a really great exercise. I was speaking with [? Kenyesha ?], and she and I share some similarities and some differences. And I thought that was really refreshing because I rarely get to speak with, I guess, people who aren't faculty here on the Vancouver campus.

I do work in IT, but I rarely get to speak with anybody else. And it was nice to be able to speak with someone who, we share some commonalities, but we have a lot of differences, which is really nice to hear. And she and I struggle with some of the same areas about getting respect and being seen, and being seen as someone who knows the subject matter, knows what they're talking about. In my case, I graduated from Vancouver campus, and now I work here. And having former professors who are now my colleagues, having them see me as a colleague, as an equal, rather than as a student.

JAIME NOLAN: That's interesting.

AUDIENCE: Yeah.

JAIME NOLAN: Yeah, we often hear-- and to feel seen by somebody and understood is also a very powerful moment. And that's something we all look for, and I'm hoping you're starting to see. Like I said, I use this activity. Whenever I teach, before I even dive into the syllabus, I'm saying, OK, we're good we're going to get to know each other a little bit. We're going to jump into this-- and they, by and large, love it.

And I've gotten feedback like wow, that-- well, I have to reframe that a little differently. So I use that to set the tone in my class, and to hopefully begin to create a kind of anti oppressive environment, inclusive in my approaches, et cetera, because everybody learns about each other. And as some of you've been saying, you feel both those threads that are commonalities between us, the threads that bind us, maybe through a shared experience or our shared humanity, which in general, is in dire need of repair in these times we're living in.

And the difference is-- I appreciate what Jessica was saying, because what I've learned over many years is that there's this both/and of, yes, we find our commonality, and by doing so, I create a possibility for more empathy, more connection, around what might be different. Rather than just looking at somebody or assuming-- which we do. When we teach, we look out in the classroom, and because we're human beings, we start thinking, well, this person is whatever. Without us even being conscious, we start doing that.

So it's really good to disrupt that right right away, to begin to create authentic relationships, because I think what this moment does in doing this activity, it creates the possibility for that authentic connection. And yes, it's vulnerable, so it's also an act of bravery, and you should acknowledge yourselves, for your participation, and that is an act of bravery. It's scary for us.

So I'm not going to go too much further. I think I would like to hear, though, if you see how this could be used in a teaching setting. And maybe Jim has a couple of comments to share as well. What do you think?

AUDIENCE: In practice, I think, in our classes, this would work really, really well, especially now, because we are in a situation where people are less likely to have a drive-by hello, and we need an opportunity to connect people. So while there's nothing better than being right next to somebody and asking these questions and really getting that facial expressions and body language in person, this can help a lot. And I break my students up into small groups all the time.

JAIME NOLAN: I started to tell you. So one situation in particular, when I was teaching a course called Race Matters for freshmen-- it was 30 kids, and it was during the 2016 election in the fall. Really intense. But I started this way, and we would have-- that's when it really galvanized for me that this is good.

And I recognize that there are some settings-- although we're doing it virtually with almost 60 people, so it could be possible, but in any case, in some classes, the setup might not allow for that. But in any case, what I noticed is my students were far more willing to take risks, to engage in really difficult topics and did so respectfully, because once we did this activity, we set up, here's our agreed upon ground rules as we move through the topics of this course. But also in a time, like we are right now, it's kind of interesting that that's my insight right now, because we're right in the midst of another election season where there's so much at stake.

But one student came out to us and said, I wouldn't have felt-- I haven't come out to a lot of people, but this environment, I feel really safe. I feel seen. I feel cared about.

And that really struck me that, wow, if we can cultivate that, what else might be possible? So I'll leave that. Jim, you've done this before, and you've used this exercise, too.

JIM BURNS: I see Todd had unmuted, so I just want to give him a chance.

JAIME NOLAN: Oh, good. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: I was going to add to what you said, Jaime, about to make sure it's not just a flash, that it's not just one exercise that's done, and then it's moved on. Because it really does create a safe space, and I see Mary and ? Eta ?] with us, and I've been lucky enough to go through the Equity 101, 102, and 103 classes, and that very much is self-assessment and understanding yourself, so that then you can be part of a conversation. And thanks for the plug, Cory, that was great, but I'm going to-- Cory did a presentation called empathy mapping at the Global Campus Teachers Forum last year. And so I think all of these different tools are important, that they can be used throughout our course to help students recognize that this is an ongoing process, that it isn't this one moment-- oh, I know you, great, we're going to move on-- but it's an ongoing process of discovery, who we are, who you are, and how we can work together.

AUDIENCE: Jaime, just real quickly-- hi, Todd. It's good to see you again. I've done the meet and greet type things before and have implemented them in classrooms. We've all done that.

I felt uncomfortable, like I said, with this, but this is probing a little deeper. And this was a little bit more than front porch. And I liked it because it put me off my center a little bit. It's unlike, really, the questions, I mean, anything I've really ever seen.

JAIME NOLAN: One question I've added recently was the "what do you worry about" because I had started to notice that-- I do a session called Building Coalition Across Great Divides, that when I ask that question, people were like, oh, my gosh, you worry about that? And they thought they were just miles apart in so many ways, but oftentimes, the things we worry about bring us together. Oh, my god, you're worried about your parents? And yet we may be politically in two other worlds. They're those kinds of very human connections that, I believe, is if we work with that, then we can tackle some of those other things. Unfortunately, right now, we live in a time of, what we like to say here, a hubris of certitude. I'm right, you're wrong, that's the end. So this can kind of open some of that up. Jim, was there anything that you did want to add before we go into the next?

JIM BURNS: I can't really add-- got some reverb going on there.

JAIME NOLAN: Yeah, I turned off my volume.

JIM BURNS: Yeah, I can't really add anything, I mean, to the comments that have already been added. I mean, it's my kind of instrumental example of how I've done this, I teach qualitative research methods. And when I run my class, the first thing we do is this exercise, and I just tell the folks, after they're done, I say, well, you've just participated and conducted your first qualitative research interview. It's very-- because of the very intentional act of listening, I think, that's involved, is really great, so yeah.

AUDIENCE: Can I ask a question Jaime and Jim?

JAIME NOLAN: Yes, please. So I'm coming out of a STEM-- as a STEM professor, and I'm just trying to think about how to do something like this in that environment, where the students are probably not as comfortable with some of these things. So I don't know if you've seen people do this with a STEM type environment, and I mean, I think you could add some other questions in there to maybe have them feel more comfortable. But I just wanted to ask that question.

JIM BURNS: [INAUDIBLE]. It's been punted to me. [INAUDIBLE]. No, I'm just kidding.

Yeah, as I was listening to you, Noel, I was thinking about this in a phenomenological way a little bit. And sometimes, if you want the students to orient their thinking in a certain direction-- again, not leading them or telling them, this is what you have to think about-- you might think about this in the context of your STEM studies. If you're, for example, working biology or climate sciences or something like that, thinking about where we are right now, and then with that context, setting that context, perhaps going through the exercise after setting that context.

Another way maybe, as you debriefed the exercise perhaps, you could say, so we're all sitting in this classroom. We're studying chemistry or biology or whatever. How do those concerns that we have, and this environment that we've established for ourselves-- how do they factor in, and how can we integrate those into the curriculum that we're going to be creating in the course throughout the semester? I mean, those are just something that come off the top of my head, and send it back to across the room.

JAIME NOLAN: He's going to punt it back. No, actually, it's a great question, and my first experience, which was about five or seven years ago, I went to an ACE conference. And there were two faculty members conducting a session on building inclusive classrooms for STEM disciplines, and my sense, as somebody who's worked around the area of equity and so on for so long, was, wow, if you can do it in a STEM course, if we're going to tackle it there, then you really can do it any-- it's a course, as Jim was pointing out, discussion based classes, other types of disciplines, do lend themselves more easily to what we're talking about.

And one of the resources that I will also give this group-- it's kind of a grid on strategies for building inclusive classrooms, and as I said, this was regarding STEM. And you can fill the grid out-- yes, I already do this; I kind of do this; I want to know more; or this just wouldn't work in my area. And what happens, and this would be a good tool when we later talk about community of practice.

If we look at those kinds of grids together, and you start checking them off, one, you see that, oh, I already do some inclusive practices in my class. And then you're also sharing with each other, here's what I do, and, oh, I haven't thought about doing that. But I think, even regardless of the discipline, you can also set the tone and say, yes, we're studying quantum physics, and we're doing it as a learning community.

So some of it is, how can you set the tone even in something that is very different than a political science course or feminist studies. Say, but we are a community, we're a learning

community. And so in order to learn together, it's really helpful, one, that maybe we know each other a little bit.

It's hard to, regardless of discipline, when I'm in a space where I feel like, oh, my god, I don't know anything, and there's other people probably around me who know so much more. I'm worried about-- because maybe in that activity, they say, I'm worried about I'm just not going to do well in this class, and whatever, and they say it out loud to somebody, it can also open it up for them to realize, one, they're not alone, and two, they'll do better than they think. And you also start setting up an environment where people want to help one another. Because oftentimes, especially I've found in STEM, there's a lot of competition to be the best, and we can help break down some of that, and again, create that kind of learning community.

So that might help to suspend, or at least diminish, some of their unwillingness. Like, why are we doing this weird, touchy feely thing? I'm a scientist-- when you know, of course, your sense of humanity needs to be very engaged no matter what science you might be doing. Does that help?

AUDIENCE: Yeah, thank you.

JAIME NOLAN: Sure.

JIM BURNS: I see questions as well. Erica and Erica.

AUDIENCE: Hi, Erica. I just wanted to-- I'm in STEM myself, and I felt like probably one of my students in class, if I were asked something like this, because I had a transition from I'm in class mode, to thinking about myself. And so that might be exactly what my students feel but you know not only is this a community that you're trying to create in your class, whether it's 500 or a small class. So I think icebreakers for the beginning of class, but we also discuss a lot of controversial issues.

And I was thinking how even just one of these questions, and pairing up before having a discussion about sex and gender or climate change or when does life begin, things that we talk about or reference in science classes. And if we have any aspect of what you're doing and how that relates to society, to remind the students that they're with people, that they're people and not a side, and maybe it might be more conducive for the discussion that you want to have. So anyway, that's how I was thinking about how I could have used something like this prior to some discussions that took a long time to get people to discuss and then also to realize that the people in the room are people and not a political position or a religious position or something like that.

JAIME NOLAN: Yeah, it really does create a space where people can be heard instead of right away, as-- if I'm a, for example, a pro-choice woman and engaging with somebody who-- and I have been in this kind of context before.

And I find that this sort of activity does create space for me to hear, right, what somebody whom I may vehemently disagree with or think that I do. And that's part of it too. As I said, I use this in building coalitions across divides.

Is-- and I said this to you. Oh, you worry about your kids. I'm worried about my kids, or whatever. Then we can talk about the subject instead of, I love the way you put that. And I hadn't really thought about how this activity can kind of also set the tone for a particular discussion that allows people to connect differently. So I really-- I learned something. I appreciate that.

I'm going to move us along. We were worried that we had too much time. Oh, two more questions? You want to-- Katie, you have a question?

KATIE COOPER: Yeah. I was wondering about safety involved at this exercise as well as potential power dynamics between people that might be in mixed groups, and how do you ensure that if something is disclosed that might need to be reported? I mean, how do you keep that safe?

JAIME NOLAN: Well, if you're-- that's a really good question that has come up. While I've yet to have somebody disclose something like where I might be mandated to report, if you're talking, for example, about sexual assault, or violence, which it sounds like you could be.

Nonetheless, sometimes when I know-- when I was teaching a women's studies course, for example, where we were talking about a lot of these issues, I made it clear that this wasn't the space. While it was a space to share more intimately, that if you were-- and I also try not to pair up with somebody.

Sometimes I have to because we don't have-- you can't do it in threes. It just doesn't work. But I kind of make it clear that this isn't the space, necessarily, to do that. And if there is-- if that comes up for you, if you're talking and for some reason it comes up, we also have a list of resources so people know that one, somebody can walk out in the hallway and talk with them and help them out.

We have somebody designated to handle that if, indeed, that is a concern that you're in a situation where that would come up. So you can set the tone with it, but you can also have-- like, I had somebody come from where I was prior at University of New Hampshire.

I invited the director and one of her staff, who were part of our sexual assault and rape prevention program. And they're confidential, so you can report and then they don't have to report to-- do you know what I'm saying?

So, as I said, I've never had that happen. I don't ever want to say never, because that's-- next day, that's what happens. And if, indeed, because of the nature of your course, you have that concern, there are things you can do to both set the tone for what this is for and what it isn't for.

And if that is a situation, and we've done this in larger groups where I was prior, to have somebody in the room who, if we saw somebody in distress, we could go and meet them and be there with them. So-- but it is important to be cognizant of that, Katie. You're absolutely right. And then there was Erika? Is that what you said?

ERIKA OFFERDAHL: Yeah. I'm also in STEM and I just-- there's some really interesting work that's been done looking at student learning in the STEM disciplines at the undergraduate level relating to student anxiety and active learning activities like this, which we know broad scale active learning activities tend to help all students, especially those that are from minoritized populations.

But the newer research is telling us that these sorts of activities that are deeply personal for students in STEM can exacerbate underlying anxiety issues. And so they can actually have the opposite effect and making them feel more excluded and has led to lower attendance.

So with-- I love these community building activities because they allow space for our students to lean in, but my tweak on it is to make it about preparing them for their discipline. And so with the response to Noel, as an engineer, I'm a biochemist.

So I usually frame this as teams and how we develop trust in teams that is needed to innovate in our disciplines. And I create activities for them where they each have a different piece of the puzzle, but I intentionally leave one piece out so they have to develop the trust to get it

So I think Katie's question is really important to consider when we know that our students come in already feeling imposter syndrome and the anxiety that's associated with that, particularly in the STEM disciplines.

JAIME NOLAN: Yes, and I think it's really important to acknowledge that. And I also think that there is room for pushing on the envelope a bit. The last thing we want to do is harm somebody. And I know also-- I'm very cognizant too that for different cultures, this could be more challenging.

And it really also depends on how we are with it, right? If you feel like this is antithetical to what you're trying to do, then by all means, you need to trust your own sense of those things and whatever the research is that's informing you.

One of the things, for example, when you talked about teams or work groups, and we say, OK, everyone's going to create a group, a team. Oftentimes the people in that, when that sets up, the people that are left out of that process are students from underrepresented communities. And that can also exacerbate imposter syndrome and anxiety.

So one of the strategies in the grid that we'll make available to you is either beforehand, teams are decided or they're randomly set up by the professor so that nobody is left with, oh, I'm sitting by myself in row three and I haven't been asked to be part of a group, and I'm not-- for

whatever reasons. Maybe it's a more introverted person. I'm not comfortable saying, can I be part of your group.

So there are layers and layers, of course, to this. And I also will tell people that you have to decide, like, is there an element of this that would work for you? Do you have the kind of classroom where it's totally fine? Different contexts. Context is everything, right?

So there have been contexts where I've shifted or I keep it simple, or maybe it's one question. But I don't think it has to be totally thrown out, even though I know we're talking about preparing people for their disciplines, et cetera, and I totally respect that.

And if I'm preparing people for their discipline, I also want them to understand the human connection to their discipline, whether it's, as I said, quantum physics, or polysci, or biochem, or biology, or engineering, that there is that, for whom am I doing this work? Well, it should have some sort of connection to society and people.

And so maybe there's threads in there that'll work. But again, bottom line is you need to trust your own sense of it and do what feels right and what's helpful. I think we could probably talk about this one thing for quite a while, so we're going to move on.

Please know I'm on the Pullman campus and I'm happy to engage in other discussion after the fact. Are you shaking your head at me, Jim? Jim's not on. I think that's what he's saying. He's here now, but he's normally in Miami.

Anyway, you can seek me out and I'd love to engage in discussion on any of these things. So I'm going to go back to sharing my screen here. And we are going to-- I just want to-- yeah, this is it. All right, and I'm going to also turn it over to my esteemed colleague partner to talk about anti-oppressive education.

JIM BURNS: So I'm unmuting myself. Anyway, I'm not sure about how esteemed I am or the esteemed ability of what I'm going to do here. But yeah, I think Erika's question was a really good segue into what we're going to talk about here.

And I'm going to kind of race through this because what I've done is I've actually distilled Kevin Kumashiro's, this theory of anti-oppressive education that he's been developing for about 20 years. He's written extensively on it, into a very brief four little bullet points here.

And I will say I have a love/hate relationship with PowerPoint. In many ways, I think it's kind of evil, but-- so I don't write tons and tons of stuff on PowerPoint slides. But what I'm going to do is just kind of take-- hopefully I can do this in about less than 10 minutes.

And then I wanted to show you just a brief video of Kevin so you could get-- because he kind of encapsulates this in different ways. Less kind of theoretical types of a discourse that I think just would really wrap up these points that he's kind of bringing up very nicely.

So these ideas of anti-oppressive education. First of all, I like it in terms of anti-oppressive education, because it's very-- and I think he was intentionally being quite intersectional in terms of what he considers anti-oppressive education to be, looking at all different aspects of a person's identity and the way that those identities shift and change over time in different spaces.

And also the impact of lived experience in education, which is important to me as a curriculum studies person. So Kevin conceptualizes anti-oppressive education, more of it as kind of working toward this theory in four ways. Education for the other, education about the other, education that is critical of privileging and othering, and education that changes students in society.

And I'm just going to step through each of those. And the reason I like the way that he presents this is because he talks in each one of these sort of theoretical constructs, I guess. He talks about different ways that people kind of conceptualize oppression.

He looks at the theory of change that's kind of embedded in that, and he also looks at the limitations and the strengths of kind of proceeding in terms of anti-oppressive education from those perspectives. So in terms of education for the other, this idea-- and again, Kevin uses terminology.

I have this article that I'm more than willing to share. I use it in my own teaching. Jaime has it. We can make that available to you if you want to kind of dig into these concepts a bit more deeply. I'm perfectly happy to share that with you all.

So around education for the other, in terms of this question of what is oppression, really, what we're looking at is addressing education through the understanding that students who are experiencing some sort of oppression in school and society, they talk about schools as spaces in which others-- and again, Kevin defines that term in his paper, in harmful ways.

Secondly, they talk about oppression by looking at assumptions that teachers have of others in their classroom. And here, we're getting into this idea of nonreflexivity in teachers, not really knowing-- and I think this kind of goes back to many of the questions that were asked earlier, kind of knowing who is in your classroom, right?

And this sort of gets to the idea of uninterrogated assumptions, biases, prejudices, and he also talks about stereotypes, the way that they're kind of perpetuated in classrooms. And so the theory of change around looking at oppression from this perspective really is, advocates of this perspective around educating for the other typically talk about providing helpful spaces.

A lot of times, we hear about these in terms of safe or affinity spaces in schools. But also making the school as an institution, or the university as an institution, a place where students can feel safe, but also affirmed in many ways, right?

And one of the other ways that they talk about this is in looking at the dispositions of teachers, right? So again, it gets back to that question of reflexivity on one's own biases, prejudices, one's own partiality about others. And those are very often, I think, socially constructed. We learn them throughout our lives and sort of take them as common sense.

The strengths of this approach, really, is that it calls on us as educators to recognize the extent to which we have such diversity among our students. The limitations that Kevin kind of points out here is that if we only focus on the treatment of the other, we could also ignore-- again, this is kind of the individual versus the institution, right?

We can ignore the ways in which oppression plays out in the institution itself, how the institution may be formulated around logics, say, of homophobia, heteropatriarchy, certainly white supremacist logics, and so forth.

Secondly this requires defining and addressing groups, and identities, and boundaries that are difficult to define. A form of education-- again, this points to sort of the intersectional aspect. People have-- we're not just one identity.

And so if we are focusing on otherness from a limited perspective, we often fail to see the entanglement of different aspects of people's identities. Also, we really talk about the assumptions, again, going back to the assumptions of educators that may be uninterrogated, how can we assess the needs of our students, especially those who are other?

The second sort of lens, I guess, Kevin uses that terminology, is about education about the other. And here, I think some of the idea of what oppression means to folks who are talking about education and creating anti-oppressive spaces in terms of educating about the other is really focusing on social definitions of normality, right?

And how are those these types of knowledges that are harmful? We have a long history in education and even in the human sciences of defining norms of behavior. Those are inherently exclusive in many ways. And so how do we interrogate the very notion of normality and how we view normal?

And again, how do those assumptions about normality actually produce stereotypes and myths about certain groups, certain communities that are very harmful? The theory of change around this is really about schools and teachers working against these harmful forms of knowledge creation and knowledge production.

And so one of the ideas would be around curriculum and creating a curriculum that specifically focuses on the other. Now, the second strategy is also really talking about integrating the other and others throughout the curriculum, transdisciplinary ways of looking at curriculum creation.

There are strengths, again, to these approaches. One is, again, bringing visibility to enrich students' understanding about different ways of being in the world. Sometimes, however, in

doing that, some of the weakness, really, the most important one for me is the essentialization of otherness.

We may inadvertently essentialize the experience and, in some ways, wind up perpetuating those myths and stereotypes as well. Another weakness, perhaps, is teachers-- we've all heard about this, where teachers might look at a particular student as, quote unquote, "the expert," bell hooks writes about this a lot, about putting the onus on a person who has been historically marginalized in these institutions as the expert on the experience of that group as a form of tokenization.

The third, and we're kind of moving along here, is education that is critical of privileging in others. And here, I think we're getting into what a lot of folks would kind of talk about as critical pedagogy in some ways. And so what we're talking about here is, again, looking at one's dispositions toward, and treatment of, and knowledge about the others.

And thinking about that, again, we're kind of thinking about this in terms, again, of critical reflexivity on one's own knowledge, dispositions, biases, et cetera. One of the fundamental aspects of looking at anti-oppressive education from this perspective is that schools are inherently part of society.

They're institutions that are imbricated in all the multifarious social and political discourses that impact society as well. And schools are-- I use Mr. Foucault a lot, but if we look at schools, they are actually part of the infrastructure or the institution of the state. They kind of coconstitute the state and actually perpetuate some relations of power that can be really quite oppressive and limiting.

So again, part of this is, again, in terms of critical pedagogy, we're talking about ideas of cultural hegemony. What is the common sense around, going back to earlier, the norms that are produced in society and that are actually perpetuated through the school as a space through curriculum, through pedagogy, et cetera?

So the theory of change around this orientation is it not only requires-- and we go back to theorists like Gloria Ladson Billings, Michael Apple, folks like that. The significance of this theory is that it's not only arguing against harmful approaches to society.

It requires learning what society defines as normal, recognizes and affirms that this is a social, and importantly, a contested construct that both regulates who we are and who we're supposed to be. Kevin does a lot of work on Asian-American experiences in education, particularly from a queer perspective.

And the example that he uses really revolves around sexuality and these kind of binaries that are effected through a lot of different social discourses. Again, going kind of to the strengths of this approach.

Again, what we're looking for is, again, that relationship to critical pedagogy, is that this is an awareness type of-- a consciousness awareness or consciousness raising type of education that would hopefully lead to a change, not just in people's own individuals, their subjectivities, but also to changes in the institution of the school and hopefully in social institutions as well. So reconstruction of the self, but also the social world.

The limitation that Kevin points out in this, I think it's quite nuanced here, is that very often, sometimes, in critical pedagogy, we kind of wind up perpetuating this idea of rationalization, of the idea, the rational logics that kind of actually produce the system that we're trying to critique are-- it's one of the sort of interrogated biases in this idea of critical pedagogy itself.

And curriculum theorists are kind of wrestling with this all the time, and Bill Piner talks about this in terms of the interrogated I of ideology critique. Again, one of the limitations as well is that, very often, does awareness of social structures necessarily lead to action or praxis?

I mean, people can understand things, but are they, of necessity, going to go out and act on that knowledge itself? One of the other issues, I think, with this issue that curriculum theorists like Deborah Britzman has pointed out, and this is from kind of a psychoanalytic perspective.

Is that when students are confronted, and I think I would speak maybe when a lot of teachers are confronted with dissonant information or the understanding that maybe their own knowledge, their own assumptions, their own belief systems are partial, biased, or even completely wrong, what the reaction sometimes is is actually kind of this freezing, right?

And so we often-- I think many of us may have encountered situations with students, maybe with colleagues, with others, where the conversation just stops. There's just-- once that idea of partiality or misknowledge enters the discussion, the discussion is just like, I don't want to hear it anymore.

The fourth and the final thing here is education that changes students and society, and this is really a little bit different than the previous one because it relies more on a post structural type of an orientation on oppression, what that means.

And so what that would mean in this perspective, what oppression would mean really is predicated on citations or the discursive production of certain binaries, for example, right? And we see those all the time, historically, that have been produced and reproduced over time.

I don't like to use the word reproduced, but kind of perpetuated the idea of femininity with weakness, heterosexuality and normalcy, queer sexualities and sinfulness, these types of things. Limited English language facility and not being intelligent.

I mean, Kevin talks about in his video, I think he'll talk about the highly racialized assumptions that were normalized in the Academy around race, around gender, and a lot of other ways.

So this understanding of oppression really deals with the repetition of those stereotypes and those kinds of normal binaries. What's the definition of the normal and the object? To bring about change from a curricular perspective, we're really talking about not only talking about what is necessarily said or stated in the curriculum, but we also have to understand what isn't said.

And we teach a lot. I mean, and this is a reference to the hidden curriculum. We teach a lot in what we don't teach. We say a lot by what we don't say. We teach students a lot about others by what we do not include in our curriculum.

And so I think that's a really big thing for me as a teacher, but also as a curriculum studies person, is trying to understand both what is said in the silences in the spaces in the school. So I guess one of the-- just for me, the limitations around this are I think a lot of the issues that were brought up as a result of the activity, right?

Is how do we create those spaces? How do we create spaces in which students are maybe not-- are not receptive to looking at ideas, or concepts, knowledge from different perspectives? It's the case, I think, and I think most of us know this, that students are not blank slates.

None of us are blank slates. We've already developed some form of common sense about the world, our own belief systems, and we bring that into our classrooms both as teachers and as students. And I guess the trick is to being able to create those types of spaces.

And hopefully the exercise that Jaime had you all do and many of the things that you already do in your classrooms can go a long way to creating those spaces, and I'd love to hear more about what you do in your own classroom.

So that's kind of the racing through of this. And I don't know, do you want to open this up for questions or do you want me to show Kevin talk about this? Because he can probably talk about it more cogently and nicely than I can. How do we feel about that?

JAIME NOLAN: Sure.

JIM BURNS: Want to see Kevin? All right. If you could shut stop sharing your screen, Jaime, I can share mine. And this, again, it's a very short video. I use this in most of my courses. And I'm just going to share my screen now and just show this video very quickly.

I think you'll see Kevin is not only a really smart person, but he's-- I've met him before. He is a super nice human being and he's done some really great work. So I'm just going to kick this off here and hopefully you'll all be able to hear it. There's nothing here right now.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

- And I want to thank all the organizers of the organization and all of those who allowed me to be a part of this event. As I was thinking about what it means to cultivate lifelong learners, three things really came to mind, and I think of these ideas as lenses. I think of these as lenses for thinking about education.

And what do I mean by lenses? I like to tell the story of-- I don't know how it was where all of you were growing up, but-- I grew up in Hawaii. I don't know if that's relevant. But anyway, when I was growing up, sometimes, if you were dating someone, the two of you had Our Song, right?

A song that had special meaning because maybe it was the first song that you danced to or the first song you had dinner to, or whatever. And every time you hear that song, you're both just like, oh, right? Until you break up with that person, right?

And then every time that song plays on the radio, you don't want to hear that song on the radio, right? That, to me, is a perfect example of how our life experiences are constantly creating unique lenses that we look through to make sense of the world around us, right?

And as our childhood experiences, our professional training, our cultural background, as all of these things change, so too will our lens, and it will lead us to respond and interpret differently. It's why, at different times in my life, I can respond to the same song differently. It's why two people can walk into the same movie or even listen to the same lecture and respond differently.

Well, what I wanted to do is see if I can offer three lenses today and see if that helps us to think about teaching, and learning, and education in a slightly different, perhaps slightly more uncomfortable way. And my first lens is about learning.

I want to suggest that education is about learning and unlearning, right? We so often think that education is about gaining. It's about acquiring something. It's about bringing something into our heads, right? But we need to remember that when someone walks into a classroom, there's never nothing in their head.

It's never a blank slate. It's never the case that there's nothing that they already know about a topic. In fact, we've all already have developed some sort of common sense to make sense of the world around this. That's sort of human nature. We make sense of the world. We take all these guesses. We try to figure out how things work.

The problem is, we're not always right, right? And so the purpose of education isn't to simply affirm and confirm what's already there. The purpose of education is actually to cause us to unlearn a lot of what's already in our heads. It's to question what we think we already know.

If we're simply affirming what we already think we know, what's the purpose of education, right? Education is not about bringing in the same thing over and over again. It's about bringing in difference. Well, why is this such an important idea?

Because when we think we know something and we're suddenly taught that we don't really know what we thought we knew, that's not always a very comfortable process, right? You think the world is flat, but you learn it's round. You think 2 plus 2 is 22, but you learn it's actually 4.

This is happening all the time in education. And the problem is, we don't often acknowledge that learning can be a pretty uncomfortable process, right? In fact, at a gut level, perhaps we all desire not really learning.

Like, if I pick up a book, I love saying to myself, oh, I always thought that was true. And look, here's the proof. This book says I'm right, right? I don't usually like picking up a book and saying, wow, this book just convinces me not only that I always was wrong about this topic, but maybe I was contributing to the problem, right?

We need to be thinking about how learning involves unlearning and how that process necessarily entails a lot of discomfort. And so when we think about teaching and learning, we cannot be shying away from the difficult conversations. We can't be shying away from emotion or, arguably, we're never really learning.

My second lens is about teaching, because I want to argue that education is about teaching and unteaching. I know no such word, but I was like-- I think in my notes, and I'm like, I need to come up with a really kind of lyrical way of saying this.

So education is about teaching and unteaching. And what do I mean by that? And I love telling a story about how, about 100 years ago, it was kind of common sense to say that girls should not get too much education. And why do we say that?

Well, some people felt that girls belonged in the home. Some people thought that women would compete with men for jobs. But some of you are probably aware that about 100 years ago, there was also a science of the time that was telling us something like this.

The mind is connected to the body. And if you mess up with one, you might mess up with the other. So if girls got too much education, it might make them crazy. It might make them ill. It might even make them infertile, unable to have babies, right?

Some of us today say, what? What a crazy thought. Education will make you infertile. But my point is that about 100 years ago, for many people, that was kind of common sense. About 50 years ago, it was kind of common sense to say that if you had darker skin, you should not get too much education.

And why did we say that? Well, there were some people who felt that there would be competition for jobs. But many of you are probably aware that about 50 years ago, there was also a science of that time that was telling us that people of darker skin did not have as much intellectual capacity, could not learn as much, so why should we waste our resources and our time trying to teach?

Now, today, many of us would say, wow, what an incredibly racist thing to say, right? But my point is that about 50 years ago, that was kind of the common sense. And I say all of this not to poke fun that people 50 or 100 years ago, but rather to raise the question, 50 years from now, how might we look back at the year 2014 and say, wow, I can't believe it was common sense to think this?

What is the common sense that's getting in the way of us really seeing what's going on in the world, of us understanding what really are the problems in education and what could be much better solutions? And there are so many commonsensical stories that are floating around that are getting in the way of reform.

I do a lot of workshops on teaching and I like to give the example of how I'm all about personalized instruction, making things interactive, student-centered learning. Don't just talk the whole time. And yet when I give workshops, I'm often doing exactly what I'm doing right now. I'm standing up at the front and I'm doing talking most of the time.

So my message may be one thing, make it interactive. But my actions are teaching the exact opposite, right? And you're all aware that the older you get, right, as you go through the grades, the more likely you are to get this as your primary form of instruction.

Why is this the commonsensical practice? Why is this so common, right? Hopefully it won't take 50 years from now for us to think back and say, wow, I can't believe the primary mode of instruction, particularly in higher education, was lecture, right?

What are the other things that have become so commonsensical that we don't seem to really question? What does this have to do with teaching and unteaching? Because I would argue that so much of education is about teaching what we think we know.

It's teaching with an enormous amount of certainty. We are convinced that we know this, and so that's going to be the basis of education. And I want to argue that, actually, we're not really teaching students to think for themselves if we're insisting that the goal of education is for them to think like me.

Education has to be about presenting the best knowledge that we have, but enabling and empowering students to rattle and unsettle the very things that we're teaching. It's about teaching and unteaching that thing at the same time. And what an incredibly uncomfortable process.

But I would argue that it's also arguably one of the most liberating ways that we can imagine education. And speaking of liberation, let me tell my final story. I don't have a fancy way of learning and unlearning or teaching and unteaching, so let me just say my final story is about the potential and the unrealized promises of education.

I was interviewing a father about 15 years ago, a father who had adopted a young boy, both African-American. The boy was about three years old and the boy had been in 11 different foster homes in his first three years of life. The boy had incredible difficulty interacting with other children in a positive way, listening to adults and following instructions.

And every time the father would take the kid to a different preschool, the preschool would say, we don't want this kid here. Take him to another school. And after bouncing around from school to school, just like he was bounced around from foster home to foster home, the father said, I started to use this word that I hope catches on, which is disposable kids.

He says, we act as if some kids are disposable. They're not my responsibility. Let another school take care of them or the social welfare system, the juvenile justice system, the-- let someone else, in other words, take care of them.

And I think what he reminds us of is that it's not about individual teachers not willing to take on students. Somehow, we've created systems where we think that it's OK to let entire groups of people fall through. And this is how education has operated throughout its history.

There are constantly groups of people falling through the cracks, and I think his story is a reminder that kids would not be falling through the cracks if we believed that no child is outside of my own circle, of my own community. That's not their responsibility. That's my responsibility, right?

We need to be claiming everyone as our own. We need to be seeing education as the tool that helps them to live up to that potential. And I'm so glad to see so many of you involved in these processes as we work together to shape a brighter future for all of our nation's children, particularly those who are most marginalized in our society. I hope these kind of lenses are helpful as we do this work and I appreciate the opportunity to share it with you. Thank you very much.

[END PLAYBACK]

JIM BURNS: Okey-dokey. I need to plug my headphones back in again. Yeah, so I'm going to just open it up for questions right now. I know we've got about maybe 20 minutes left and we need to talk a little bit about the community of practice model. I know Jaime's going to talk about that.

But if we have any quick comments or questions, I'd love to hear them. I'm also looking at the chat log. Did Mary already put a link to Kevin's article in there? Thank you, Mary.

KENITRA KEENEY: So Jim, excellent information. What are your thoughts on breaking down the system--

JAIME NOLAN: I really appreciate-- I just saw this video for the first time a few days ago. Jim shared it with me.

JIM BURNS: Kenitra was talking.

JAIME NOLAN: I'm sorry. I don't have my sound on because I was-- Kenitra, my friend.

KENITRA KEENEY: So my question is, right now, we have a hierarchy in higher education depending on what department, what discipline you teach. Like, for me, I'm not faculty, but I'm still an educator. But we have org charts. We have all of these things they tell us who we are in this space.

So what are your thoughts on starting a conversation that really doesn't look at natural sciences versus social science, it doesn't look at academic affairs versus student affairs? How do we level the playing field so that we can have more diverse access to all of us and all of our lived experiences?

JIM BURNS: That's the million dollar question, I think, probably. And this is probably where I'm going to get myself into trouble because we are having these-- I'm part of a unionized campus in Florida. Believe it or not, I have a unionized campus.

And we are constantly, through the various faculty governance bodies, faculty senate, which I'm also represented on, and through the union, constantly having these fights about the continued institutionalization of these practices, how we're dividing these schisms between, OK, faculty, and administration, and staff.

There's all these-- if you read The Order of Things, right? It's just The Order of Things on steroids. And I'm really wondering about-- and I'm going to get in trouble, probably, as a faculty member by saying that if we look at the way that universities have been restructured over the last 50 years, really, through the whole neoliberal era, how things have been institutionalized, formalized, how the professoriate has been reconfigured to a more much more contingent way.

How so much of teaching has been taken out of the hands of teachers, of professors, of the professoriate, and put into Centers for the Advancement of Teaching and other institutional structures that have been created. I'm really-- the way that the University has been restructured, I think, and I'm not making some left wing MAGA narrative here. I'm not saying that the University was perfect before all of this.

But I think the structure, the governing structures of universities, frankly, from my perspective as a faculty member, have really exacerbated these problems. And I think it's accelerating and I think, in the time of COVID, that this is accelerating even more.

Teaching is now looked at as a standardized-- is more and more standardized. And it's really stunning to me, when I talk to faculty, colleagues, even colleagues in my own field, I'm in teacher education, who are just like, wow, what's happening to the University?

I mean, this has been happening in K12 education. I was a high school teacher for the last 30, 35 years, particularly since the late '90s and the movement of standards and standardized testing, right?

So the university structure, the governing structures of the university, how the universities have ceded authority over what they do to boards of trustees and governing boards that really don't have any-- frankly-- I mean, there's a guy in my board of trustees that was a used car salesman. I'm not kidding.

And so one of the issues, I think, is that giving up a lot of the shared governing structures or having those weakened the academic freedom, the threats to academic freedom that I think all of us as faculty know are there, has really been-- I think we've been part of that problem, I think, unfortunately. And I own that.

How do we get through it? It's going to be difficult, particularly if we think about-- I hear conversations all the time about this being the new normal, right? The new normal as a result of COVID. I think faculty you're going to have to-- and faculty, staff, the administration.

I mean, we're going to have to figure out a way to work together, to unlearn. I mean, go back to Kumashiro. We've got to unlearn some of the things that we are taking for granted right now as just the way things are.

And we can't just keep throwing our hands up and saying, well, somebody else is going to make this decision for us. Somebody else is going to do this or that. I mean, and I know I'm probably-- I don't know if that answers the question, but it's a frustration that I've had for a long time.

JAIME NOLAN: I also would say that that's not a question, really, that we can just answer, and I think that your point, is that but we need to keep asking that question and other really critical questions. Because the only way we're going to shake it up, right, the only way that we can disrupt what you're talking about and what Jim responded is by doing that.

And even asking the critical questions can be scary, daunting, all of those things, especially because of our power structure, right? If I'm going to be the one who's speaking truth to power and I'm seeing I don't have the, quote unquote, "authority," it's more vulnerable, right, for me to speak that truth to power.

So I think a lot of it is also going to be-- and that's what this moment right now in terms of the issues of equity raise up, is that we are each trying to figure out who we are in relationship to these deeper questions, and we must keep asking them.

I, and people who know me, even on this session right now, I say this. Audre Lorde, you cannot dismantle the master's house with the master's tools. And I believe that part of what we're doing in this disruption that's occurring, we have an opportunity to develop a different set of tools or the lenses, like Kevin Kumashiro was talking about.

What I was going to say too is that I thought-- and again, I apologize for jumping in on you, Kenitra. I had to turn my sound totally off, otherwise we have an echo in here. But I think he was kind of getting at the core of that exercise, that the whole question of who we are is super important no matter what.

Who am I in relationship to this STEM course I'm teaching and to these students, and what does that mean, and what does it look like for them, and all those kinds of questions that get really at the core, regardless, really, I believe, is our discipline. Todd?

TODD VANEK: I agree, Jim and Jaime. I interestingly looked at our audience--

JAIME NOLAN: Oh, I can't hear Todd.

TODD VANEK: Oh. Can you hear me?

JIM BURNS: I can hear you.

TODD VANEK: OK. Talking about power and privilege, and this goes back to the equity 103 that was just in yesterday. Look at who's represented in this meeting right here, right? Where is the power? It's not here. And I think, Kenitra, to your point, that that's what's missing is the power is comfortable.

They're complacent. They are there and they don't necessarily want it to change. They're willing to support efforts. They're willing to do some things. But until that power comes in and does something, we are going to try hard to continue to do what we can do. But until the power steps in or is overthrown, it's going to be difficult, if not impossible, to make the types of changes that need to happen.

RENNY CHRISTOPHER: One small piece of the power is here. I'm the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on the Vancouver campus.

JIM BURNS: Hi. And I would just kind of end my answer with, again, the ways that the institutions are becoming more and more fragmented, right? Again, it kind of impedes that sense of relationality that we need to build.

And I think, again, I'm becoming very frustrated as a university professor, as somebody who studies education, of being confronted constantly with new initiatives that are actually getting into the way of the things that we're supposed to be actually moving toward.

I think about the current moment. How many initiatives are we seeing now that are being rolled out in response? I mean, we're becoming very reactive. But I think about what Todd is talking about.

A lot of the initiatives that are coming out, I wonder what the-- I wonder if we're really thinking about what if these initiatives-- what is the intention and then what are sort of the unintended consequences of these initiatives, right?

When I think about initiatives around equity and social justice, we're saying that we're all about this, right? On the other hand, how are the demands of students, for example, how have they been moderated through being sort of co-opted? How has the language of social justice been turned and co-opted into doing things that necessarily, I think, are contradictory to the goals of social justice?

Again, it gets back to asking those critical questions about understanding ourselves in a more relational way in the universe. I know it's not-- metrics and all of this other stuff that kind of drives the world, but yeah.

JAIME NOLAN: Also, I'll say that, Renny, I know that those of us who know you as the vice chancellor also know that you jump into these conversations and you've been part of dismantling with new tools. So I'm hopeful when I see people who represent.

I mean, some people would see me as part of administration. And yet we're chipping away from the inside, right? And yes, that has its unique set of challenges and it's always kind of reaffirming for me to be in this sort of a setting where we are asking critical questions, right, and digging in on it. It means a great deal.

Is there another question? We don't have a ton of time and we'd love to just introduce you to the framework of community of practice. Unless you're all really feeling like this is where you want to keep the discussion.

OK. There's no objections, I guess. I'm going to go back to sharing my screen. So now-- and actually, I'm not going to do all the talking because Jim knows as much about this as I do. We will be talking after this is over. Well, you put this together, so.

So I think, in lots of ways, what we've been modeling today is the beginning of a community of practice, right? Everybody's-- the questions you're asking, including the questions that came from particular disciplines people are teaching in like Noel, and Erica, and others.

I think that sort of expresses this idea of people coming together around a common bigger issue and allowing their different lenses from their discipline to help inform the complexity of addressing a challenge. So that's kind of the general framework of that. And I see up here Jim's put up four points, and I'm going to ask him to articulate on those briefly. Notice I said briefly.

JIM BURNS: Yeah, so-- so again, very briefly, seeing how we're kind of contextualizing communities of practice in education, what-- the ideas around community of practice, in terms of education, they can be internal to a university, to a department.

Trying to coalesce a group of people who have an interest in a certain construct, or a domain, as [? Vanger ?] calls it, in order to share information, to share knowledge, to inquire into how do we actually embody the ethics that we're trying to develop through this community. So that's the internal sort of sight of these communities of practice.

When we think about external, again, as Kumashiro was talking about, again, the school is situated in society. And so how do we then bring these external sorts of questions, practices, et cetera into the discussion around the community of practice?

And so when students learn things, how do they take what they learn in the school outside the school? Finally-- I think I'm feeding back. Am I?

JAIME NOLAN: Oh, I'm not hearing it. OK.

JIM BURNS: Anyway, again, getting back to the students' lifetimes. How do we maybe expand communities of practice in terms of lifelong learning, for example? So what happens when students leave WSU?

Are we going to give them opportunities or can we create opportunities through communities of practice where we can support students throughout their lifetimes as lifelong learners? That's it. I was brief.

JAIME NOLAN: You're good. I've got to--

JIM BURNS: One thing I would just add is that, again, the community of practice literature, and we've included, I think, in the Resources slide. Actually, [? Vanger ?] has gone online now and he's doing all kinds of really interesting things with communities of practice.

I think we all understand this is more than just kind of a social club. It's more than that. It's a very intentional gathering of people who have a specific interest and minor around what they call a domain of knowledge that we're really intentionally looking at and trying to implement those practices.

And I think a lot of you are doing this already in the University. I mean, there are probably a lot of examples of things that you're all doing right now to kind of work cooperatively to implement various aspects or practices of teaching or different types of knowledge, integrate things into your curriculum. So a lot of us are probably doing this already.

JAIME NOLAN: I have to go through two different buttons to unmute because I have to silence everything so we don't feedback, create a feedback loop here. So in thinking of this larger

discussion from where we began and where we are right now and this idea of a community of practice, let me just make sure-- OK. I'll just stay here, then.

I'd love to just ask you how you could imagine taking some of these concepts and beginning your own community of practice around some aspect of this idea of education. Just-- and obviously, nothing is going to be really super well-formed right now, but I think it could be really good to just start-- basically start creating what we've just been talking about. I'll stop sharing my screen, so there.

So before we end here, I'd love to hear from a couple of you. How is this and how could this be meaningful in your work? How could you bring this to what you do and have that kind of community? Or even what would a first step be?

JOSIE COHEN-RODRIGUEZ: I've been struggling with trying to just contextualize everything with what's going on in the world and also being-- sorry, my rice cooker is going off.

JAIME NOLAN: Josie? Oh, I can't hear. Can you all hear Josie?

JIM BURNS: I can.

JAIME NOLAN: Oh.

JOSIE COHEN-RODRIGUEZ: My rice cooker does a little song. It's over now.

JAIME NOLAN: It's all right.

JOSIE COHEN-RODRIGUEZ: I was trying to contextualize everything because it just feels more obvious than it ever has for me personally and it says a lot about me that the way we've been doing things has not been working and has been failing and is failing.

And I think of inclusive pedagogy in the classroom and how is that connected to this larger student debt problems, and social initiatives, and students not feeling included on campus, and the way that this pans out and the way that we're actually impacting students in all of the ways of their life, just outside of just the way we're facilitating discussions because it's so much more involved than that.

And that's where I'm trying to figure out how to engage in these things in new ways. And part of what I appreciated from Kevin Kumashiro was just, I think, the reminder for me of having to unlearn. And I think that applies to all of us, of having to unlearn the way we've been doing things.

And even, when Todd is bringing up kind of the powers that be and things like that, and I think that is true. Those things need to change. But it's also on all of us to be changing and all of us to be unlearning, and being critical, and stepping up and challenging things. Because the more of

us that are trying to speak up and engage with this work, the more likely that change will actually be possible.

JAIME NOLAN: Yeah. I don't think we should ever underestimate the grassroots element to all of this. A lot of this work, if you think about other ways it's manifested in our world, it's at that grassroots level. Yes, it is so fantastic when we have-- if we're operating in that hierarchy, right?

Where the leadership at the top is supporting all the different layers in between. So it's not just a top down or bottom up. It really needs to be this dynamic quality. And I guess what I ask myself is, how often am I giving my power away?

Because I won't do what you just said, Josie, as far as, you know, and when this all hit me, I mean, in fact, my colleagues gave me the t-shirt to go with what I'm about to say. I was so hyper aware of how all of my life has brought me to this moment in the work that I do and that I was called to this moment.

And my mother had asked me if I-- she said, you seemed so stressed, you must be exhausted. And I had just had this amazing experience with our undocumented students with an event we had on Friday. And I said what I just did.

I realize I've been called to this moment. It's an incredible time where anything could happen and we have tremendous opportunity to get some things right. So the t-shirt says, I will not be silent to make you comfortable.

And that is also really staying with me, because in 30 years of higher ed, always being in a role around equity and inclusion, I've often molded my words to be more acceptable, to be, quote unquote, "diplomatic," to ensure that I was bringing people along.

I had some access to power. I reported to two presidents. I reported to two provosts. And now I'm in a completely different place in understanding that. If I'm called here to do this right now, then I'm not going to be quiet. I'm probably going to make a few mistakes. But boy, I am so, like, if we don't get some of this this time, ah! I don't know what I'll do.

JIM BURNS: Dr. Morgan?

DR. MORGAN: Yeah, sorry. James, I put that up for my students. It isn't some power trip. It's Philip, thank you as an associate professor. But in my 20 plus years I've been here-- when I first started teaching, Jaime and James, it was kind of what I brought to the table, what I-- and over time, I've turned my teaching to more servanthood, to be a servant.

And I'll tell you, that is my platform. And when I started viewing the world that way, I became anti-oppressive, right? I think that-- I know that's cliche and a lot of people use it. But use it really put it into practice?

JAIME NOLAN: Yes.

DR. MORGAN: And I think this really opened me up to be even more sensitive of those things. Just my two cents. But hey, I gotta go, but thank you so much for that, and it was good seeing everybody, so thanks.

JAIME NOLAN: Thank you. Yeah. I see a time here, but--

JIM BURNS: One final word. I was going to say, Josie, as you were speaking there, I think one poignant example, really, for me, and I was a history and social studies teacher when I was in high school, and I think a lot of us know what has been said about education in terms of indoctrination and the work of Howard Zinn and how that's-- he's been a target for a long time.

But I think one of the poignant things that I saw Zinn say not long before he died was that I think part of creating those critical spaces really is to look at a narrative that offers different icons and different types of heroes, and they're all over the place.

We have this kind of infatuation with icons in the United States. I mean, the grotesque example of these-- the whole statue debate and all this kind of stuff. And who-- if we're going to approach understanding society, if we're going to historicize ourselves, if we're going to situate ourselves and help our students situate themselves historically, socially, who are the icons that we're going to introduce these students to?

Civil rights icons, indigenous leaders, women, queer people. I mean, this is-- we have a responsibility to kind of weave some different narratives. And I think that's kind of part of what Kevin has always thought about, is how are we telling the story of what we consider to be our country and our world? So I think it's-- I do. I do think. I find this to be quite-- it's a challenging time, but I find it to be kind of a generative space in a lot of ways, so yeah.

JAIME NOLAN: So I'm just going to quickly wrap up our last two slides and then yeah. So-- and you can have access to the slides. Valerie has them, so you can get all of this information as well as just an overview of what this two hours was about.

So we have both Kevin Kumashiro's website and also [? Vanger ?], who is one of the key community of practice, I would say, developers, leader. So you can also go there. And then the article Mary had up, but we also made that available to Valerie and others, so you can access that.

As well as I shared, for another session with them, the grid I was talking about. So you can access all those things. The last thing-- oh, they're not seeing my screen, are they? Did I share it? No, I didn't. OK. Share.

There we go. So there is a prior to this slide. Here we go. There is the Resource page. It's in the slides, so you can access that.

Oh my God. November 5 will be our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Summit. We do them twice a year, fall, spring. This one, and we're looking at equity in the higher ed during the time of COVID. We'll have people from each campus talking about-- not just about here's all the cool stuff we're doing, but how has our practices been transformed or shifted in this time?

How have they been improved? What are we learning? So things of that nature. We didn't want it to be just the responsive or reactive. We put this in place for the-- blah, blah, blah, no. We want to talk about the transformative quality of this moment and how it's impacting how we do what we do.

So I want to just encourage you all to attend that. A massive invitation across all campuses will go out with all the details. November 5, 1:00 to 3:00. President Schulz will be providing a welcome. He will be traveling that day, but he's creating a video for us.

And then Provost Elizabeth Chilton and Vice President Mary Jo Gonzales are going to be listening to what they hear and then sharing how it hit them, their responses. Will also have some student stories at the beginning.

So I hope that this is the beginning of us connecting in other places. You've been wonderful. Two hours is a chunk of time to be Zooming. God bless you. I hope you can get some fresh air or just step outside for a minute.

But at least I do want to say I have the deepest gratitude for the work I am able to do here and the people with whom I get to work. It's quite amazing. So thank you, all of you. And thank you, Jim. Take care, everybody.