Equity by Design: Designing Ideal Communities

ACU 2019 Annual Conference
Hi. My name is Antionette. My pronouns are she/her.

A little about me:

- Founder and President/CEO of Creative Reaction Lab
- Social Entrepreneur, DEI Consultant, and Designer
- Fellow of: TED, Echoing Green, 4.0 Schools, Camelback Ventures

Find me on Twitter at @acarrolldesign
Hi. My name is Hilary. My pronouns are she/her.

A little about me:

- Learning + Education Manager at Creative Reaction Lab
- Background in social work -- passionate generalist
- Lead facilitator of Witnessing Whiteness program
Tell us: What is your personal interest(s) / mission?
I WILL MAKE

[CITY]

BETTER BY

[PERSONAL PLEDGE]
I will make St. Louis better by walking alongside others in the journey of confronting our roles in upholding oppressive systems and building equity.
""

I will make the United States better by providing training, community, support, and access for racially underrepresented populations to design better health outcomes and improved quality of life for their cultures.

Find me on Twitter at @acarrolldesign
I WILL MAKE

[CITY]

BETTER BY

[PERSONAL PLEDGE]
Today’s Process
Leaders for Community Action + Equity

- Welcome + Introductions
- Language Setting: Defining Key Terms
- Designing Ideal Communities
- Introduction to Equity-Centered Community Design
- Revisiting Our Ideal Communities
- Closing + Next Steps
Community Agreements for Respect

1. Ensure all voices are heard
2. Actively listen and respect differences in opinions
3. Use “I” statements
4. Lean into discomfort
5. Address the issue, not the person
6. Be honest and embrace honesty
7. Don’t disclose others’ information without their knowledge and consent
Intentional Listening

Guiding Principle:
I agree to listen and think about you in exchange for you doing the same for me.

- One person at a time.
- No interrupting.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Listening is for the benefit of speaker.
Creative Reaction Lab’s mission is to educate, train, and challenge Black and Latinx youth to become leaders in designing healthy and racially equitable communities.
Creative Reaction Lab is changing the way people address systemic oppression and inequities.
Narrative and Livelihood Shapers are our focus areas for co-designing for racial equity.
Racism is a major public health issue.

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
One Black person prematurely dies every 7 minutes due to racial discrimination.

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
41% of Latinx people in the United States were uninsured between 2011-2013, compared to the 20% average of the entire US population.

Source: CDC, 2014
1 in 5 Black transgender women live with HIV (19%), and Indigenous and Latinx transgender woman reported rates of infection 15x higher than that of the average U.S. population (0.3%).

Source: 2015 United States Transgender Survey
African Americans with disabilities who have less than a high school degree are 31% more likely to live in poverty than Non-Hispanic Whites with disabilities and the same level of education.

Source: National Disability Institute, “Financial Inequality: Disability, Race and Poverty in America”, 2017
Our Goal?
Create the racial equity and justice leaders of tomorrow.
Creative Reaction Lab is training a new form of leader to address the exclusion and human inequities in our communities:

**Equity Designers**
*(and Design Allies)*
Who’s an Equity Designer?
Those who are most directly impacted by inequities are also closest to the approaches to address them.
Allyship is key to supporting and amplifying Equity Designers.
Who’s a Design Ally?

Leverage Power and Access for Equity Designers
Builds Upon Existing Resources
Iterating, Making, and Improving Interventions
Embedded in Community - possibly indirectly
Puts People & Equity First
Like privileged and targeted identities, you can be an **Equity Designer** in one context and a **Design Ally** in another context.
Competencies of Equity Designers & Design Allies

COMPETENCY / INTRAPRENEURSHIP

COMPETENCY / COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

COMPETENCY / SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FOUNDATION / EQUITY-CENTERED COMMUNITY DESIGN

www.creativereactionlab.com
Equity Designers + Design Allies = Equitable Outcomes
Your team and the communities in which you work should consist of both.
EQUITY-CENTERED COMMUNITY DESIGN

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By learning about and practicing ECCD, you’re becoming an Equity Designer and/or Design Ally.
Why should this way of thinking matter to you?
You’re a designer.
You have the power to affect outcomes.
Language Setting
Language Setting is the first step in any community-centered work.
Terms for the Day: Diversity

Diversity is defined by a variety of identifiers that, in the case of people, defines our individuality.
As a table, write as many categories of identity you can come up with (use your post-its).

E.g. gender identity, ability status, etc.

You have 60 seconds.
Diversity ≠ Inclusion

is invitation

is acceptance
Terms for the Day: Inclusion

Inclusion is not only celebrating differences, but accepting and embedding them.

Inclusion is making each individual a part of the whole.
Terms for the Day: Equality

Equality is being the same, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.
Equality ≠ Equity

is sameness

is fairness
Terms for the Day: Equity

Equity revolves around systemic and network outcomes.

Equity is when outcomes are not predictable based on someone’s identities.*

Ultimately, we want liberation.

*Modified from Forward Through Ferguson’s definition of racial equity
What does liberation mean to you?
Liberation is freedom from limits on thought or behavior.
LIBERATION BY DESIGN
Why do diversity, inclusion, equality, and equity matter?
When someone can be in any public space without feeling afraid, unwelcome, or held back THIS IS _______. 
Why?
Inclusion is about making space inviting for all - so that everyone feels like they can express themselves fully and authentically.

Food for Thought
In what spaces do you feel included? In what spaces do you feel excluded?
When all schools get distributed the same amount of financial resources

**THIS IS _____**.
Why?

All schools receiving the same amount of resources does not guarantee that the total amount of resources between schools is the same.
When the main cast of your favorite show has actors of different races and ethnicities

*THIS IS* _______.
Why?
This is racial diversity, where you can see different types of people from varying cultures represented.

Food for Thought
When have you felt your community was not represented respectfully?
When food is distributed based on how hungry each individual is or what nutrients they need, THIS IS ________.
Why?
No matter what kind of or how much food is distributed to each individual, everyone is full and healthy at the end.
Society is changing.

- 85% of United States population growth will come from groups of color between now and 2050. (U.S. Department of Commerce)

- By 2050, 53% of the United States will be made up of people of color, with approximately 40% of the population being of Black or Latinx descent.
AND YET...

These populations face disproportionate racial and economic inequities, limiting social, economic, and cultural growth.
How do we move from awareness to action?
Design
What is design?

The intention (and unintentional impact) behind an outcome.

Modified from IBM’s definition of design
Designing the Ideal Community
Design Your Ideal Community

Create two lists:

1. What do you love in your community?
2. What would you like to see changed in your community?
Illustrate and design.

1. Draw your idea of a perfect community.

Design Your Ideal Community

Activity Instructions
Define and discuss.

1. Pick one aspect of your design. Why did you design it that way?

2. What does the design of your ideal community say about you?

Share with your group.
Define and discuss.

1. How does your ideal community feel?

Share with your group.

Design Your Ideal Community

Activity Instructions
Co-design.

As a group, design the ideal community using everyone’s perspective.

Design Your Ideal Community

Activity Instructions
Case for Equity.
What is design?

The intention (and unintentional impact) behind an outcome.

Modified from IBM’s definition of design
Design is not about making things look good, but making things work.

Ruzanna Rozman
Product Designer & AIGA Cincinnati Operations Director
Graphic from the Center for Social Innovation (Canada)
Any system produces what it was designed to produce.
We have to consider the sources and impacts of exclusion and inequities.
Design for Exclusion

In the 19th century, physicians sought to understand and establish the “physical peculiarities” of Black people that could distinguish them from White people. Such “peculiarities” included:

- Thicker skulls
- Less sensitive nervous systems
- Diseases inherent in dark skin

Dr. Samuel Cartright wrote that Blacks bore a “Negro disease [making them] insensible to pain when subjected to punishment.”

Design for Exclusion

Far into the 20th century, Black people continued to be subjected to experimentation in part due to the assumption that the Black body was more resistant to pain and injury.

- Tuskegee Airmen
- WWII soldiers

“Individuals with at least some medical training hold and may use false beliefs about biological differences between Blacks and whites to inform medical judgments, which may contribute to racial disparities in pain assessment and treatment.”

Design for Exclusion
If oppression, exclusion, and inequities are designed, they can be redesigned.
Introducing ECCD.
Human-Centered approaches are not enough.
Approaches

drops in a bucket;
ongoing change

Solutions

one-size-fit-all,
misconception of silver bullet
We’re not working for process adoption, but a mindset shift.
Revisiting Our Ideal Communities
Revisiting Your Ideal Community
Revisiting Your Ideal Community

Applying Equity.

What are some diverse, inclusive, and equitable systems you’ve built into your community?
Share your ideal community [and potential redesigns] with the room.
Going Forward
A Tool & Resource

Use Creative Reaction Lab’s new Field Guide to become a specialist of our Equity-Centered Community Design process. This Field Guide will support you within your position and beyond.
A Tool & Resource

Supplement Creative Reaction Lab’s new Field Guide with our scenario planning worksheet. How will you integrate Equity-Centered Community Design into your process?
A Tool & Resource

The 2019 Artwork for Equity campaign launched on March 21. Select artists and designers created and contributed work promoting equity, inclusion, justice, and liberation for all races. Limited edition posters on sale now.
A Tool In Beta

**Liberation by Design** helps participants explore and critique definitions of equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion while applying them to real-world scenarios.

The game comes in three formats: (1) workshop activity slides, (2) card/board game, (3) online app (beta).
Going Forward: Applying Equity-Centered Community Design to Your Work

- Bring a Leaders for Community Action & Equity Workshop to Your Office, School, Community, etc.

- Download or Purchase our Equity-Centered Community Design Field Guide > www.creativereactionlab.com
Equity by Design Bootcamp Series

- Baltimore
- Seattle
- Atlanta
- Chicago
Going Forward: Applying Equity-Centered Community Design to Your Work

- Join the National Community of Aspiring Equity Designers and Allies.
  - Join the ECCD Slack community > www.bit.ly/eccdslack
  - Subscribe to our newsletter > www.creativereactionlab.com/subscribe
The notion that work only calls upon our “professional selves” and not our “personal selves” is a problematic one.

Isabelle Yisak
Experience Designer at Business Innovation Factory
Complete the post-workshop survey for a chance to receive a physical copy of the Field Guide.

bit.ly/2JA7OGK
Stay Connected.

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Post-Survey: bit.ly/2JAOGK