equityXdesign: Leveraging Identity Development in the Creation of an Anti-Racist Equitable Design Thinking Process

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equityXdesign: Leveraging Identity Development in the Creation of an Anti-Racist

Equitable Design Thinking Process

Doctor of Education Leadership (Ed.L.D.) Capstone

Submitted by Christine Marie Ortiz Guzman

To the Harvard Graduate School of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

Leadership.

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Caminante, son tus huellas el camino, y nada más
caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace camino,
y al volver la vista atrás se ve la senda que nunca se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante, no hay camino,
sino estelas en la mar.

You walking, your footprints are
The road, and nothing else;
There is no road, walker,
You make the road by walking.
By walking you make the road,
And when you look backward,
You see the path that you
Never will step again.
Walker, there is no road,
Only windtrails in the sea.

We Make the Road by Walking
Antonio Machado,
tr. Robert Bly,
The Soul is Here For Its Own Joy

for those who came before me
And those who will come after

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Abstract

Educational Equity has been situated as the civil rights issue of our time. While arguably the focus on education reform efforts has increased over the last 50 years, progress has been slow if present at all. This capstone describes my journey in creating equityXdesign, a set of technical tools that come from the merging of equity consciousness with design thinking methodologies. With a premise that racism and equity are products of design and can be redesigned, we believe that if we equip individuals, in particular street-level bureaucrats, with design tools that are centered in equity, they will be able to disrupt and redesign systems of oppression.

This capstone documents the philosophical underpinnings of and process used to create and test aspects of the equityXdesign framework, as well as the personal identity development process I engaged in as co-creator of the process. I argue that it is the interaction of my identity development journey with my entrepreneurial creative path that served to push each aspect forward, making identity work a necessary component of any innovation or entrepreneurial project that seeks equity.

Keywords: Design, Design Thinking, Equity, Educational Equity, Critical Race Theory, Identity Development, Street-Level Bureaucrats, autoethnography, Innovation

Introduction

I'm mixed – half Puerto Rican, half Nuyorican. That's my answer to the "where are you from" question. I say it as a joke but I mean: I was raised by a half-English-, half-Spanish-speaking, can-hear-her-across-the-house-when-she's-on-the-phone, take-off-her-earrings-if-you-mess-with-her-kids mom, and a you're-not-allowed-to-cut-your-hair, roast-a-whole-pig-in-the-back-yard, Roberto-Clemente-is-the-best-athlete-ever dad. My parents met in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, in high school. They got married, my dad joined the military, and they left.   But we did go back to the island regularly, spend entire summers there, and miss school in January to stay through Dia de los Reyes.

I carried visible reminders of my latinaness: my dark, curly hair, my inability to burn no matter how close I am to the equator, and my height-to-hip-width ratio. My glasses a signal of a personality style that was passive, with teachers quickly labeling me as "smart." School was a game: I was dealt most of the right pieces, I liked to play, and the more I learned about the rules, the more I made sure to follow them.

For 33 years I was certain I was winning the game. I personally had more degrees than all of the Ortizes or Guzmans that came before me. I'd collected awards, been written about in magazines and newspapers, spoken on panels and plenaries, advised national organizations, successfully lobbied governors and senators and future presidents. And for the crown jewel I had made it all the way to Harvard.

I remember the exact moment it all crashed. It was February of 2016, in Matt Miller's office on the second floor of Longfellow, at 9am. While Matt's official title is Lecturer on Education and Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching, to me he was the

guy who didn't think it was crazy to have an annual budget for pipe cleaners and play dough, who sponsored my independent study, who gave me the space to test a school design module. I walked into our weekly check-in with every intention of speeding through bulleted updates on my entrepreneurial venture at the time, [Blank]Schools, a new idea I had connecting equity and design thinking, and residency placements. I thought I would be ready to take full responsibility for failing to secure funding for [Blank]Schools as an entrepreneurial residency, then paint an incredibly optimistic picture of my next steps. But I just didn't have it in me anymore.

With a deep breath and tears streaming down my face I looked into Matt's eyes: "No one believes in me or my ideas enough to give me money. My only options are to work for white guys who are doing this work in ways I don't believe will succeed. I thought it would be different when I got here." And in saying those words out loud, I was forced to come to some uncomfortable conclusions – that even internalizing white ways of being and thinking, values and priorities, I would never have access to the privileges of being a white man, that my gender, social class and race would always be at play, that not only wasn't I winning, but the game was rigged, and most painfully that I had no idea who I was.

I had ignored the beautiful complexity of my parents and my lived realities to instead create the against-the-odds underdog story that had been my entrance ticket through ivy-covered gates. At that moment, I realized what I had been ignoring - that I was never going to be allowed to just be myself, but that "I existed triply….I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors." (Fanon, 1967, p. 112)

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This capstone is the manifestation of my racial identity development journey while also the catalyst for its progression. My own identity development and awakening led me to develop my entrepreneurial venture to what it is today, equityXdesign: a set of mindsets, frameworks, and tools at the intersection of equity consciousness (identity development work, relational proximity, anti-bias and anti-oppression interruption techniques) and design methodologies (design thinking, participatory design, and systems design). My deep personal identity development work has led me to redefine everything: the central problem in American education, the barriers keeping the education system from serving all students but particularly those on the margins of society, the potential solutions I envision, the role I see myself playing in these problem/solution spaces, and the path I have decided to take. Simultaneously, the entrepreneurial design process itself continued to push my racial identity development forward. Living this process myself while seeking to bottle it for others has been the impetus for my capstone project.

When entering entrepreneurship or design projects attempting to address issues of inequity, it becomes difficult to ignore the relationship between the work and the individual. It quickly becomes clear that equitable design cannot happen without designers engaging in identity exploration and development work. The process of engaging in identity exploration and development work gives the individual a new lens through which to see and understand people and the systems they have created. Yet to fight inequity we must go one step further: we must spark a deep desire in each individual to redesign their own reality toward more equitable outcomes. In short, we must convince everyone that they are designers.

This capstone will explore the development of a toolset and a methodology to help people design through and towards equity while documenting how my own identity development was impacting and impacted by the creation of this design process. The larger question addressed in this capstone, then, is "How might I leverage my personal experience to design an equitable design process while accelerating individuals' own identity development journeys?"

The creation of equityXdesign is the strategic project of my residency, an idea 18 years in the making. I am a serial entrepreneur who started my first company right out of high school. A social change consulting firm specializing in youth-led, youth-designed tobacco prevention campaigns, Revolution Consulting (later Allen Ortiz Consulting), started when my cofounders and I codified our learnings and best practices from designing and running both the Florida and national anti-tobacco-industry campaigns called Truth, to help additional states and countries do the same.

It was my connection with this work that seeded a transition into the education sector. While an undergraduate student at MIT, I was asked by Professor Rosalind Picard at the MIT Media Lab to distill the core design principles of the Truth campaign and apply them to the field of education. While my final proposal was never funded, the research and proposal creation process did leave me with my point of view of how we might fix education in this country - a belief in the need to fundamentally question the mental models that constrain our conception of what school is, a requirement of empowering and equipping those closest to the problem to create solutions, of redefining expertise and roles, and a belief that engagement in the process of creation is the primary outcome.

The only way I could test my thinking was to design, launch and run my own school. In 2008, I did.

My experience as founder and executive director of a small independent school in Orlando, Florida solidified my belief in this approach, but highlighted the lack of supports that existed for those deciding to take on the task of designing a new school model. Filling this need became my passion. My next entrepreneurial venture, [Blank]Schools, sought to identify and catalyze a diverse set of school founders to launch new school models in their communities to serve students who traditional school systems can't or won't serve. The more I explored the barriers to implementing this idea, the longer the list of products and services I would need to provide became. It was from prioritizing this list from the point of view of a founder and considering the areas of my personal expertise that a focus on the creation of a design process eventually emerged.

From the conception of the idea for [Blank]Schools in the spring of 2013, the majority of my energy was spent investigating structures for design. Initially focusing on reducing the amount of time and money required for and increasing the diversity of individuals involved in the school design and launch process, my goal was to increase the "innovativeness" of the school models that were being created. I was repeatedly struck by the power of our status quo conceptions of school, even in people who articulated disagreement with that conception, to limit their ability to create something different. I began to explore this more deeply, curious about the role of identity in our conceptions of possibility, in the problems we wanted to solve, and in the solution sets we considered. It was the dearth of available information about the intersections of design thinking,

innovation, equity, and identity development that made the creation of equityXdesign

urgent. The research I explored in the above fields is discussed in the next section.

Review of Knowledge for Action

This section reviews the existing literature around design thinking and critical race theory, the combination of which served to illuminate my initial criticisms of traditional design thinking practice and began to give direction to an adjusted methodology and the theory of action for this project.

Design Thinking

In recent years, design thinking has left its roots as a tool used for product design and has emerged as a powerful problem solving and innovation technique across fields and sectors. While design has existed throughout history, it has traditionally been applied almost exclusively to physical objects. Nobel Laureate Herman Simon characterized design as less of a physical process and more a way of thinking in his 1969 book *The Sciences of the Artificial*, and many see this moment as the birth of design thinking (Brown & Martin, 2015).

The formulation of the design thinking process, as we know it today, was seeded by David Kelley, one of the co-founders of IDEO, an international design firm. Founded in 1991 as a merger between a few existing design consultancies, they transitioned over time from focusing on product design to tackling things like restructuring organizations and rethinking learning environments. As the story goes, David Kelley found himself routinely inserting the word "thinking" when explaining the work his organization was doing (Brown, 2009).

Design thinking, both as a term and as a process, stuck.

The five modes in figure 1 show the Design Thinking methodology that was seeded at IDEO and codified and popularized by the Stanford Design School. They are
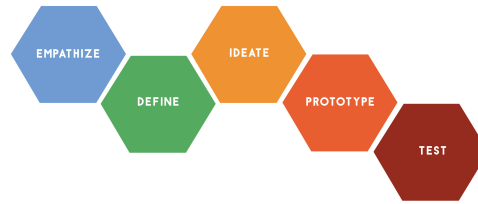
Figure 1. Design Thinking Methodology (d.School, 2009)

modes and not steps since this is intended more as a mindset than a process to be followed, acknowledging that in practice modes are rarely completed in isolation or in a linear manner. There now exist multiple variations of this process using similar language. There are also a number of processes in alternate fields (e.g., lean startup, scientific method, etc.) that also follow similar patterns. Ela Ben-Ur, former IDEO designer, current Adjunct Assistant Professor at Olin College and creator of the Innovators' Compass has created the image in figure 2 that shows how multiple

Figure 2: Innovators' Compass (E. Ben-Ur, Personal Communication, 3/17/17)

methods align to her compass and to each other.

The first mode in design thinking is Empathize, "the foundation of a human-centered design process," (d.School, 2009, pg. 1) which calls for the designer to observe
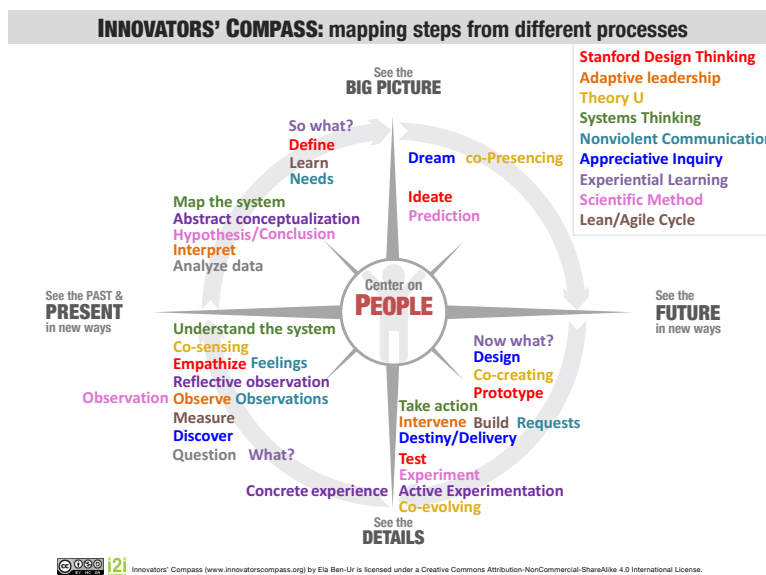
and interact with users in the context of their lives to understand how they interact, think, and feel through interviews and other methods. It also calls for the designer to experience what the user experiences through immersion in the design space. The goal is to understand users' behaviors to identify needs and insights that will lead to innovative solutions, but this mode acknowledges that our minds automatically filter information in certain ways we are often unaware of, and therefore we need to develop skills to identify key insights.

The second mode is Define, which relies on the data the designer collected during the Empathize phase to articulate a meaningful problem statement and design challenge. One of the key levers of the design thinking process over alternative problem-solving or innovation processes is this explicit focus on problem definition in the middle of the process. Many alternative approaches assume a problem has been defined at the outset of the process, and don't allow for the design team to use the framing of the problem itself as a point of innovation, instead putting all the innovation potential in the creation of solutions.

The third mode is Ideate. The focus here is on idea generation, with a focus on both volume and variety, with separate and explicit times for idea generation and idea evaluation. This mode is what we most traditionally think of when we think of brainstorming - where we believe innovation comes from and where the problem is "solved." In the design thinking process however, this pressure is relieved. Ideation may actually be the mode in which the least time is spent, with value being placed on quickly testing generated ideas, which then leads to the next two modes, Prototype and Test.

Prototyping is the process of moving ideas from theoretical to tangible. While prototypes can take any form, they must be physical (role-plays, spaces, objects, storyboards, etc.) so that one can observe individuals interacting with them. Aside from the traditional role of testing for functionality, prototyping can be used to do additional empathy work, to think through tricky aspects of the problem or solution, or to engage with stakeholders at key junctions in the process. The prototypes should be as low resolution as possible while conveying the essence of the designer's solution and allowing for interactions that serve your intended purpose.

Testing involves prototypes of the solution that are as low resolution as possible but that can be put into action in authentic scenarios in the context of users' lives to see if the designer's solution in fact solves the problem it aims to solve. The process is one of iterations, a "mutual adjustment between specifications and solutions" (Razzouk & Shute, 2012, p. 336) with intermediate states that may include conflicting requirements or that change in response to discoveries made during the design process. Generally used to test solutions, sometimes tests show us that we have defined the problem incorrectly or targeted the wrong user base, pushing us to reassess those decisions before moving forward.

Why start with design thinking? In *What is Design Thinking and Why is it Important?*, Razzouk & Shute (2012) summarize literature on design thinking and characteristics of "design thinkers." These characteristics include human and environment-centered concern, a predisposition toward multifunctionality, systemic vision, affinity for teamwork, and avoiding the necessity of choice. I believe these qualities are necessary, though insufficient, to identify, keep present, and solve for issues

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of racism and inequality more generally. Their presence, however, supports my belief that design thinking is a powerful starting point in the creation of a new tool for equity work.

In "Changing the Discourse in Schools," by Eugene Eubanks, Ralph Parish, and Dianne Smith (1997), the authors take on the education system specifically, noting that schools are "a major part of society's institutional processes for maintaining a relatively stable system of inequality… by active acceptance and utilization of a dominant set of values, norms, and beliefs, which, while appearing to offer opportunities to all, actually support the success of a privileged minority and hinder the efforts and visions of a majority. Some social scientists call this condition and its sustaining process hegemony..." (p. 151). They propose that if schooling is to be transformed, to serve the espoused purpose of educating everyone well, then two changes must take place. First, the participation of schools in reproducing inequality must be halted. Secondly, the

Discourse I deals with…	Discourse II deals with…
Singular trusths	Multiple stories
"The change process"	The desired circumstances
Improving what exist	Changing something significant
Techniques, methods, and content	Learning and school relationships
Symptoms	Causes
The way things are	What could be
Blaming others for ot meeting our standards	Questioning whether our standardsare hindrances
Dsicipline and control	Alienation and resistance
The familiar	Relevance
Answers and solutions	The uncomfortable
Information transfer	Dilemmas and mysteries
Ability and merit	Knowledge creation
Dropouts	Privilege and oppression
Reproduction	Pushouts
The work of adults	Transformation
World-class standards	The learning and experience of students
Limited time and ability	Re- creation our society
	Getting started anyway

Figure 3: Discourse I & II T Chart (Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, 2003)

discourse of schools - "how people talk about, think about, and plan the work of schools and the questions that get asked regarding reform or change" (pg. 151) must shift from a hegemonic (Discourse I) cultural discourse to Discourse II,

a discourse that is a more critical discourse, that tends to be about "uncomfortable, unequal, ineffective, prejudicial conditions and relationships in a school" (p. 156) in order to demystify and name the hegemonic cultures often taken-for-granted in schools, to and begin to offer a new path forward.

The discourse I & II T-Chart (figure 3) developed by the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools (2003), now the National Equity Project, highlights differences between the dominant hegemonic discourse and a discourse focused on equity, derived from the chapter mentioned above. While an insufficient substitute for the nuance and rich analysis of the full chapter, it serves as a helpful, brief reminder of the multiple discourses.

Both the process of design thinking and the characteristics of design thinkers have pieces (highlighted in chart) that align with a discourse II frame; namely, a bias for action that focuses on getting started. There is a focus on starting from what could be when ideating, a value placed on engaging with multiple users to get varied perspectives and to hear their stories, and the desire to create and make significant changes. This makes it a promising base from which to start the creation of a design process for equity.

It is also a great place to start because of its current level of adoption. Emerging from one design firm's internal product development process, design thinking is now used to not just design products, but also to design the launch of those products and the systems in which those products function. Teams are now using it to design interventions, organizations, and systems. A 2015 issue of the *Harvard Business Review* put design thinking on the cover, and focused on how CEO's were using design thinking to design corporate strategy.

This shift in the use of design thinking has arrived on the heels of a societal shift in how we identify problems and understand solutions. The concept of wicked problems was first introduced by Rittel and Webber (1973) as a way of explaining the onslaught of protests against modern professionals, "whether they be social workers, educators, housers, public health officials, policemen, city planners, highway engineers, or physicians" (p. 155). They note, "the professional's job was once seen as solving an assortment of problems that appeared to be definable, understandable, and consensual. He was hired to eliminate those conditions that predominant opinion judged undesirable." (Rittel and Webber, 1973, p. 155). They highlight success in these ventures: the paving of streets, the housing of most citizens, access to clean water and sewage systems, schools and hospitals for most. Now, however, the tasks ahead are more difficult:

> The tests for efficiency, that were once so useful as measures of accomplishment, are being challenged by a renewed preoccupation with consequences for equity. The seeming consensus, that might once have allowed distributional problems to be dealt with, is being eroded by the growing awareness of the nation's pluralism and of the differentiation of values that accompanies differentiation of publics. (p. 156)

In essence, they argue that these professional's jobs have transitioned from execution to design, without their realization of that transition or the addition of tools or supports to properly address this new charge.

Rittel categorizes wicked problems with ten properties:

1. There is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem
2. Wicked problems have no stopping rule
3. Solutions to wicked problems are not true-or-false, but good-or-bad
4. There is no immediate and no ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem
5. Every solution to a wicked problem is a "one-shot operation"; because there is no opportunity to learn by trial-and-error, every attempt counts significantly
6. Wicked problems do not have an enumerable (or an exhaustively describable) set of potential solutions, nor is there a well described set of permissible operations that may be incorporated into the plan

7. Every wicked problem is essentially unique
8. Every wicked problem can be considered to be a symptom of another problem
9. The existence of a discrepancy representing a wicked problem can be explained in numerous ways. The choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem's resolution
10. The planner has no right to be wrong (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 161-166)

Equity issues are fundamentally wicked problems and in their work Rittel and Webber indicate that to address these wicked problems successfully, tools to support individuals are necessary at the "juncture where goal-formulation, problem-definition, and equity issues meet," (p. 156) but they stop short at proposing any such tools.

In 1992, Richard Buchanan published "Wicked Problems in Design Thinking," where he uses the idea of wicked problems to address the field's questions around determinacy and indeterminacy, and the need for linear or nonlinear design thinking models. He argues that "the wicked-problems approach suggests that there is a fundamental indeterminacy in all but the most trivial design problems… Design problems are 'indeterminate' and 'wicked' because design has no special subject matter of its own apart from what a designer conceives it to be," (p. 16). Buchanan's article pushes the field to use design thinking to solve incredibly complex and seemingly intractable problems, accelerating the adoption of the terminology and raising the profile of the concept (Brown & Martin, 2015).

Shifts in the kind of problems facing society noted by Rittel, Webber and Buchanan, call for the use of design solutions. This is why design thinking has gotten such traction – because while it emerged as a tool for designing products, we have recognized it is a tool that can be used for so much more. Yet the calls have remained theoretical and philosophical, with the field lacking a body of tools to accomplish this more complicated goal – a symptom of a deeper root cause. While the field has asked for

design to be used more widely, it has not identified a way for the conceptualization of designer to be one taken on by those tackling the problems they envision as fundamentally ones of design.

As a product-development process, design thinking has urged us to define the problem well, required us to build sooner to receive better feedback, and altered profoundly the relationships between designers and users. This aspect of the process, its focus on end-users, is so unique that design thinking is often simply referred to as user- or human-centered design.

While this elevation of people in the process has been the key to its success, it is also a key reason why the process needs to be retrofit. If design thinking is the right tool to use to redesign products, systems, institutions and society to be more equitable then we need to redesign the design thinking process, mindsets and tools themselves to ensure they mitigate for the causes of inequity – the prejudices of the humans in the process, both their explicit and implicit personal biases, and the power of mostly invisible status quo systems of oppression. Analyzing design thinking through the lens of critical race theory can do just that.

Design Thinking Through the Lens of Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) is a framework used to examine the intersection of race and power in society and culture created specifically for use in the legal field. It has been used in a number of other fields, including education, and has led to a series of offshoots, CRT frameworks specific to racial and ethnic groups (e.g., LatCrit, Latino Critical Race Theory and TribalCrit, Native American Critical Race Theory).

Using CRT as the basis of our analytical lens, I focus in turn on four main tenets to analyze and adjust the design thinking process.

The Pervasiveness of Racism. Derek Bell, often labeled "the founder of Critical Race Theory" (Clark, 1995, p. 24), in his 1995 book *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism,* expounds on his belief and founding tenet of CRT that "racism is an integral, permanent and indestructible component of this society." (p. ix) He asserts this "racial realism" (Bell, 1993, p. 1106) as a positive, "For truth - even gloom-filled truth - serves to dispel despair and offer a basis for renewal and rededication" (Bell, 1993, p. 1103), I disagree. While this section focuses on how CRT can be used to positively impact design thinking, I believe this is one example of where CRT may be positively impacted by design thinking. Design is fundamentally an optimistic enterprise, and it is this faith that design can be used to creating something that does not yet exist that propels designers to tackle the most stubborn of problems, and in the face of defeat, work to design better tools for the next attempt. CRT could benefit from this hopeful and tool-focused approach.

While I reject the notion that racism is permanent, and as a result am creating a mechanism that I believe will empower individuals to create a society free of oppressive systems, racism is indeed pervasive. As Ladson-Billings argues, "Racism is normal in American society - enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, appears both normal and natural to people in this culture, a permanent fixture of American life" (1998, p. 11). Despite the presence of racism in our society, we live in a society that downplays the current effects of racism. Racist acts are conceived as "rare and aberrational rather than systemic and ingrained" (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller and Thomas, 1995, p. xiv). This

view allows racist acts and racism more generally to be viewed as simply deviations from an otherwise just and neutral ways of distributing power and wealth - by definition excluding solutions that seek to address status quo institutional or systematic exercises of power.

Layered on top of these two realities, that racism is pervasive and acknowledged yet dismissed as aberrational, is the fact that humans are inherently biased. "All human beings, whether they think of themselves as prejudiced or not, hold mental schemas that classify people into categories based on age, gender, race, and ethnicity...these schemas generally include implicit memories that yield subconscious dispositions toward people and objects, leading to bias and stereotyping" (Massey, 2009, p. 13). These biases manifest themselves in the ways that individuals sort others mentally. "Stratification begins psychologically with the creation of cognitive boundaries that allocate people to different social categories" (Massey, 2009, p. 12).

The pervasiveness of racism and bias challenges the assumptions of the design process as currently formulated, calling for a fundamental shift in the way we conceive of the relationship between designers and end users. Design thinking as a process was conceived to solve the problem of a disconnect and lack of understanding between designers and users, who were assumed to be different people. If the designer is still the gatekeeper in the design process, responsible for initiating each step of the process, and if the designer is biased in any way, then the results of the design process will also be biased, even if the designer and user share identity markers. In order to combat the pervasiveness of racism, the design process must both help individuals identify and make object their inherent biases and the inherent biases in the products of the design process

and then provide the designer with tools to actively fight those biases both in themselves and in the artifacts they produce - for both those of the dominant culture and not. A way to do this is to add a step to the beginning of the process in which designers are required to investigate their own biases. A potential way to do this is through the implicit bias test created by Project Implicit (Greenwald et al, 1998). Interruption of the impact of implicit biases becomes one of the primary motivations for a fundamental reinvention of the design thinking process.

Intersectionality. In his paper "Intersectionality, Critical Race Theory, and the Primacy of Racism: Race, Class, Gender, and Disability in Education," Gilborn (2015, p. 3) cites the definition and approach to intersectionality developed by CRT co-founder and the Executive Director of the African American Policy Forum, Kimberle Crenshaw, as particularly useful:

Intersectionality is a concept that enables us to recognize the fact that perceived group membership can make people vulnerable to various forms of bias, yet because we are simultaneously members of many groups, our complex identities can shape the specific way we each experience that bias….

For example, men and women can often experience racism differently, just as women of different races can experience sexism differently, and so on….

As a result, an intersectional approach goes beyond conventional analysis in order to focus our attention on injuries that we otherwise might not recognize… to 1) analyze social problems more fully; 2) shape more effective interventions; and 3) promote more inclusive coalitional advocacy. (p. 3)

Given this, it is important for those using design thinking principles to address problems of equity to ensure that we are considering the multiplicity of identities that individuals have and how their interactions might lead to their particular experiences. This leads us to paying particular attention to the selection of individuals throughout the process, for example with whom to conduct empathy work - making sure to interview multiple identity combinations to analyze the similarities and differences in their experiences. It also requires us to adjust the way we frame problems, acknowledging these differences explicitly.

Interest Convergence. Interest convergence tells us that initiatives that further goals of equity for people of color will typically be pursued only when they converge with the interests, needs, expectations and/or ideologies of those in the dominant culture, namely whites (Milner, 2008, p. 333). As Ladson-Billings reminds us, we must "find the place where the interests of whites and people of color intersect" (1998, p. 12). In a system that is designer-centric, and where the designer tends to be of the dominant culture, this means that the problems that are tackled, how those problems are defined and the solutions that are proposed will be ones in which the users benefit only if the designers benefit more, or at least equally. In an equity-oriented design process, the solution must instead address the needs of all who are on the design team simultaneously. This frame allows for individuals to demand explicitly that each of their needs be met in a way that does not seem selfish but instead as productive contribution to finding the ideal solution.

Questioning The Dominant Ideology. Many dominant ideologies are inherently present in traditional design thinking. First, design thinking is currently a color-blind

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process. As Eduardo Bonilla-Silva says, we are living in a color-blind society, one which holds "the idea that race has all but disappeared as a factor shaping the life chance of all Americans," (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, pg. 302). The victories of the civil rights movement, and now the Obama presidency, have reinforced the idea that we are a post-racial society. Racism and other forms of discrimination are shifting in our understanding from explicit and interpersonal phenomena to structural and less overt manifestations. As individuals less frequently see egregious individual acts of racism, they grow comfortable in the belief it no longer exists and withdraw from actively fighting to counter it, instead acting with complicity to perpetuate it. To combat this complacency, screening questions must be inserted at the entrance and exit of each stage that prompt the designers to ensure they see their work explicitly through the lens of race. Additional interventions that make visible the invisible role of race at play are also necessary.

Secondly, meritocracy is embedded in the process, assuming the best ideas, no matter who they come from, will be those that rise to the top in each stage and over the course of the process overall. Additional checks should be put in place to guide the decisions around who is on design teams and how decisions are made. It is generally accepted that a move towards more diverse and inclusive design teams is desirable, but it is important for us to understand how to create the conditions that allow for that diversity to be an asset. Simply increasing diversity may lead to lower commitment to an organization, job satisfaction, increases in perceptions of discrimination and more (Davidson, 2011, p. 23). The Allport Contact Hypothesis describes conditions that are required for diversity to be a positive experience which include equal group status, common goals, intergroup cooperation and support from leaders (Davidson, 2011, p. 23).

Simply increasing the number of members of traditionally underrepresented groups alone does not impact bias and discrimination. In fact it may increase it as members of the dominant culture fear for their position and react. We must change power structures simultaneously (Ely and Thomas, 2001, p. 232).

Increasing diversity leads to increases in resources – networks, perspectives, styles, knowledge, insights, and cultural styles, particularly when those included have been traditionally ignored or undervalued. Some evidence suggests that cultural diversity leads to beneficial outcomes when group members share common goals and values, what is referred to as the group or organization's diversity perspective. There are three general options for diversity perspectives. 1. Integration and learning: the view that diversity is valuable for access but also to understand new context and worlds and to change the way the organization does its work. 2. Access and legitimacy: diversity is valuable only at the boundary of the organization and minority clients. 3. Discrimination and fairness: diversity is symbolic, with everyone doing the same work in the same way, just with quotas set and met (Ely and Thomas, 2001, p. 248). Their research also tells us that while outgroups, particularly women and people of color, have the potential to bring alternative perspectives, viewpoints and cultures to their workplace, we don't yet understand the mechanisms through which they can be usefully expressed (Ely and Thomas, 2001, p. 233). A major question then arises: How do we design a design process that allows individuals to be fully present and engaged and that can leverage that diversity?

Objectivity is another dominant ideology that is present in the process, though to a lesser extent. The process does generally acknowledge that a designer's frames may

influence his or her view of the context at hand, but names this as a hurdle to innovation, not in terms of race, power and privilege.

While design thinking in its current form does not profess incrementalism, it also doesn't guard against it. "Racism requires sweeping changes, but liberalism has no mechanism for such change. Rather, liberal legal practices support the painstakingly slow process of arguing legal precedence to gain citizen rights for people of color" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 12). This same philosophy applies in all fields. One can replace the term "legal" with "educational" in the preceding phrase, and it would ring true, with arguments commonly heard among educators for working inside the system, improving existing schools, and generally doing more of the same. No mechanism currently exists for broad overhaul or sweeping change. With the right prompts and filters, however, design thinking is poised to provide designers with the process to envision and work towards significant and fundamental change.

While design thinking falls prey to many dominant ideologies, there is one that it is designed to contradict, and for which it stands as proof that a process can be designed in contrast to the dominant ideology. Especially true in the Anglo-American legal field, but seen throughout society, there is a value placed on finding universal truths over understanding specific circumstances, a view that " tends to discount anything that is non transcendent (historical), or contextual (socially constructed), or nonuniversal (specific) with the unscholarly labels of 'emotional,' 'literary,' 'personal,' or 'false.'" In contrast, critical race theorists argue "truths only exist for this person in this predicament at this time in history'"(Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995, p. 57). Design thinking with its focus on empathy and storytelling similarly places value on the personal and emotional, the

contextual and specific, and arguably it was precisely this approach that has made the adoption of the practice more tenuous. Ultimately, the usefulness was proven with outcomes that were measured in traditional metrics, validating a non-traditional process.

The tenet of the pervasiveness of racism tells us that an adjusted process must both help the designer unearth and overcome their implicit and explicit biases and provide designers with a way to understand, uncover and address institutional and systemic oppression that may be at play. The tenet of intersectionality reminds us of the need to be identity-aware and not identity-blind (i.e. color-blind, gender-blind) as we ensure multiple voices are included in the design process, and expect and make space for the different ways the interaction of identities will influence experience. Interest convergence makes us aware of the need to make explicit the ways all involved in the design process do and don't benefit from both process and product, and deal with the repercussions of that reality. Questioning the dominant ideology requires us to interrogate the ways hegemonic beliefs are embedded in the design methodology to eradicate them, as well as adding safeguards to prevent their reemergence - particularly issues of colorblindness, meritocracy, and objectivity. Taken collectively, these implications seeded the creation of an initial framework for equitable design, and a set of initial tools.

Moving Forward

Racism today looks different from the Jim Crow racism of our parents' generation. An overwhelming majority of the population no longer believes in the biological inferiority of black and brown people, and values all humans equally. For example, a 2013 Gallup poll showed that 87% of Americans favor marriages between

blacks and whites (up from just 4% in 1958). And yet, the reality is that only 1% of marriages annually are actually between black and white people (Newport, 2013).

While we may all espouse egalitarian values, and it is no longer socially acceptable to treat others differently because of the color of their skin, most of us hold many implicit biases that impact the way we behave and that allow for structural and systemic inequality to remain. We see the impact of this when we examine the disparities between actions and repercussions in disciplinary and judicial processes. For example, black children make up only 18 percent of the pre-school population, but represent almost half of all out-of-school suspensions (USDOEOCR, 2014). Black children are 18 times more likely to be sentenced as adults than white children, and make up nearly 60 percent of children in prisons (Goff et al, 2014, p. 526). On the New Jersey Turnpike, blacks make up 15 percent of drivers, more than 40 percent of stops and 73 percent of arrests – even though they break traffic laws at the same rate as whites. In New York City, blacks and Hispanics were three and four times as likely to be stopped and frisked as whites. (Sentencing Project, 2013, p. 5) White Americans use drugs at five times the rate of black Americans, but black people are sent to prison for drug offences ten times as often as whites (NAACP, 2017).

A 2004 study even found that people with "black-sounding" names had to send out 50 percent more job applications than people with "white-sounding" names just to get a call back (Bertrand & Mullainathan, p. 991). Young white men with felony convictions are more likely to get called back after a job interview than young black men with similar qualifications and clean records (Pager, 2003, p. 958).

Clearly racism is alive and well in society, and not by accident. Systems, structures and institutions that perpetuate inequality were designed to do so. Since they were designed, they can be redesigned. My premise is that while there is a moral imperative for us to fight inequity, the solution is ultimately a design challenge that can be addressed through a reconceived process of equity-oriented design thinking, one that acknowledges the precepts and implications of CRT.

While we believe all individuals would benefit from a designer's mindset and equitable design thinking methods and tools, we are most interested in equipping the kinds of workers Lipsky (1980) defined as street-level bureaucrats. These "public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work" (p. 244) include the teachers, social workers, police officers, and public health officials who Rittel and Webber (1973) describe as facing wicked problems in carrying out their seemingly clear job duties. Rittel and Webber (1973) note that this description applies not only to government employees but also to some private sector workers such as physicians. I use this same conception of street-level bureaucrats and understanding of how they operate - one of public or private sector workers who directly and indirectly control access to public programs and enforce public laws and regulations.

This population is particularly important as the literature around street-level bureaucrats shows us that, although these individuals are typically lower in the official hierarchy, their impact on the implementation of public policy is enormous. Some argue their impact is so significant that they should be viewed not as implementing policy, but instead as producing or forming policy (Meyers and Vorsanger, 2003; Hupe and Hill,

2007), essentially creating and maintaining "the normative order of society" (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003, p. 221).

With this target population in mind, I have developed the following working theory of change:

If I

Engage in personal identity development work and

Steep myself in research around implicit bias, systemic oppression, and design, and

Collaborate with a diverse set of individuals similarly interested in the intersection of equity and design and

Use an iterative, biased-toward-action approach to production

Then

We can create a design process that can mitigate the effects of implicit bias and hegemonic ideologies

And If we

Get street-level bureaucrats to embrace the idea that they are designers and use an equity-based design process in their day-to-day work

Then

We can reduce inequity in society as we design or redesign systems and institutions that currently perpetuate inequity to be explicitly antiracist and equitable.

This capstone documents the process of my own personal development work, the development of an equity-based design process, and early efforts to gauge the demand for

its use among this widened scope of street-level bureaucrats and those intermediary

organizations that train and support them.

Description, Results, and Analysis of the Strategic Project

The goal of the strategic project was to create a design process that embodied an equity consciousness, a process that would become equityXdesign. I worked to both create the tool and to test its efficacy while also testing the sector for its appetite to engage in the co-creation and use of the tools we were creating. This project grew out of previous entrepreneurial efforts specific to new school model design. To describe the strategic project, I begin by sharing this earlier work and how in combination with coursework, personal identity development work, and serendipitous introductions to my now co-founders this idea came to be. Key events in this journey are summarized in Appendix A.

The slow hunch

Being a serial entrepreneur and highly valuing the lean startup and design thinking approaches to idea development, I like to think I move through the world with strong opinions loosely held. When I launched the first pilot of [blank]schools in the spring of 2013, I had identified the initial design and launch phase as the largest barrier to the proliferation of new microschools, and specifically the lack of community and design process as the root cause. My initial solution to meet this need was to create a seven-day design sprint event that would bring together a group of individuals from the geography in which the school would launch and a group of individuals from around the country with a diverse set of experiences and expertise who would bring a new perspective and extra hands to do the heavy work. In July of 2013 I hosted the first of these events, a "Blank Schools Week" (BSW) with 40 participants from across the country, the core

participants from Orlando, Florida, where the school would open. After seven days of design sprints and community building, we emerged with a skeleton framework of what would be the Ampersand School, a k-12 independent microschool still operating in the suburbs north of Orlando.

While it was clear from the experience that there was work to be done in the design of the seven-day experience to better leverage the expertise and experiences that all participants were bringing and to ensure that the most critical portions of the school were designed in the shortest amount of time possible, overall the event was considered successful. Our primary goal - to design and launch a school in 37 days - was met. Ampersand opened its doors for the first day of school with 20 k-12 students, including my own daughter, just 30 days after the conclusion of BSW. The second goal - to create a professional development experience for the individuals who participated - also occurred. Two participants who were head of school of their respective schools each made changes to the way they ran their staff professional development and adjusted their own school's curriculum offerings after they participated in the experience. The third goal - to create a community of practice and support - also occurred. The bonds of participants during the week continue to this day, with regular communication via social media and even cross-country reunion trips.

The success of the initial event led to a series of inquiries around replicating the event the following summer. Throughout the 2013-2014 school year, BSW alumni who came from cities around the country were interested in hosting BSW's themselves and put me in contact with individuals who were also interested in the methodology. As I had anticipated, these individuals had the launch of a school in the back of their minds, but

hadn't found a process or community to join that would reduce the unknown variables in a way to make them comfortable taking on the task of creating and launching a school. As I continued to have these conversations, however, I started to question my approach. I felt comfortable getting these individuals to a core school model operating with an initial group of students but knew from personal experience that there did not exist additional supports for them as they began their day-to-day operations or the work of iterating their design while operating with students.

I knew from my first school launch and development experience that this was hard work, and I felt a sense of responsibility for seeing people through the whole way. If I was to be the catalyst for these individuals to take the leap and open their schools, I also needed to commit to supporting them through their initial years from both an operations and a model iteration perspective. This realization widened the scope of the mission of [blank]schools. Not only did we need to get individuals to move from thinking about starting schools to actually starting them, we also needed to create a system of supports to ensure that their operations supported their innovations and that they had the tools they needed to operate while simultaneously iterating on their model.

This new, broader scope highlighted the gaps in my own knowledge and experience in the independent school sector. I felt a need to better understand both the history and current politics around the strategy I was proposing. From a practical perspective, this would not be a solution I could bootstrap as a solo founder. I would need funding and a team, and I didn't have the kind of network that would enable me to secure these resources. From a personal perspective, I needed the space to reconcile some philosophical tensions, my belief in access for all to a free and high quality

education and my belief that the best existing space to create school models that can deliver on that promise is the independent school space. I had lived my life to that point with a strong bias towards action. Since I was 16 years old, the only time I hadn't been running a company was the time I was running two. I knew I had grown and learned from the successes and failures of my past ventures, and wanted to leverage that learning for [blank]schools, but hadn't ever given myself the opportunity to stop moving long enough to really reflect. The Ed.L.D. program would be just that.

Year one of the program consists of a shared core curriculum experienced simultaneously by the entire cohort of 24 individuals including myself. As much as possible, I leveraged course assignments as ways to explore the [blank]schools idea and get feedback from cohort members as well as other students and HGSE faculty and staff. I secured a fellowship to work on the idea over the summer between the first and second year of the program with a fellow cohort-mate, Catherine Pozniak. We decided to focus on running a second test of the BSW idea, again in Orlando, but this time with an outside founder, an acquaintance who in multiple conversations had mentioned wanting to launch a school. We tested new tools and processes for design, a smaller number of participants, and continued to learn about what it takes to successfully leverage a large and diverse set of individuals to co-create. But the biggest set of learnings came from the emotional dissonance that emerged as the founder drove the team towards innovation in the absence of racial equity.

This discomfort made me have to deal with a pattern that had emerged as I continued to have informal conversations with individuals who were interested in the [blank]schools model or were in the independent microschools space both before and

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after this second BSW event. They tended to be middle to upper class educated and professional white women (or occasionally men) with small children. While we shared the same vision around using independent microschools to design new school models that could depart from antiquated traditional school approaches, their motivation and approach was significantly different than what I realized was until then an unarticulated driving purpose of mine. The power I saw in the blank canvas unregulated space of independent microschools was the ability to identify a population that is under- or un-served by the traditional school system and design a school for their needs. This meant that the business model of the school needed to be one that would not just allow for but encourage all students to have access to the school, particularly those that are marginalized from traditional school options.

This dissonance led to the addition of third and fourth components to the [blank]schools mission at the end of the summer fellowship. Catherine and I had an intuition around school founders and founding teams needing to more closely share or have true proximity to the experiences of the student populations they were designing for as well as be from the community in which they were looking to launch their schools as preconditions to schools that would be designed responsively. I felt this was particularly true when designing for marginalized student populations, even though this was largely not the intent behind independent microschool founders I encountered. We also realized we would need to identify a business model or funding strategy that would support these schools, particularly through a phase where they are operation while iterating and developing the model while servicing a student population that was unable to pay out of pocket.

We closed out the fellowship and started year two of the Ed.L.D. program with more clarity around the mission of [blank]schools (to find and support non-traditional school founders to design and launch independent microschools designed to serve traditionally under/un-served student populations). I was convinced this was the work I should be pushing forward and committed to using the third year residency of the Ed.L.D. program to push it forward. And I committed to using my year 2 coursework to grow in my understanding of issues of race, power and privilege at the personal, institutional and systemic levels.

The equityXdesign Backstory

Unlike the first year of the Ed.L.D program, in the second year students select the majority of their courses with only two seminars taken as a cohort. One of these seminars is a continuation from the first year and uses Kegan and Lahey's (2009) Immunity to Change model as a way to "close the gap between what people genuinely intend to do and what they are actually able to bring about" (pg. ix.). For our second year, we are paired with another member of our cohort who will be our peer coach and help us move through the immunity to change process. We are also paired with another peer coaching pair to create a pod structure consisting of four cohort members.

Completing an Immunity To change (ITC) map specifically around my identity was the first concrete step I took in explicitly grappling with my racial identity in a way that would move it forward. The ITC map and peer/pod coaching structure was critical in helping me uncovering some of the beliefs underlying my relationship with my identity, particularly around being Latina, a woman and a mother, and specifically in relationship to my identities as an entrepreneur and an intellectual. Having a peer coach that was also

a woman of color, and a pod that consisted entirely of people of color allowed for a level of comfort, frankness and depth that I am not sure would have been possible with white colleagues.

I began to identify behaviors and uncover the underlying beliefs that created them. My discomfort and avoidance of spaces, organizations, and roles that were majority minority or that highlighted my ethnicity. My belief that my success was tied to the successful bifurcation of my self - the dominant culture acculturated intellectual and academically successful self that I used at school, work and in those social situations at the intersection of work and personal (which for me was most of them) on one side and the Puerto Rican Latina self on the other. What I realized, however, was that I had provided my Latina self less and less opportunities to show up until there was no real place for her at all. Making progress on my identity would mean creating space for me to practice bringing out the Latina part of myself in situations that I otherwise wouldn't, integrating my two halves into a whole. I realized this wouldn't be a simple matter of addition, a clean merger. Bringing both of these sides of myself together meant acknowledging the ways their separateness had informed them, and that bringing them together actually meant the simultaneous discovery and creation of a new self.

I had historically intentionally avoided situations in which I was around many other people of color, but particularly avoided Latino specific gatherings. My initial strategy for exploring my own identity was to look for more ways to put myself in proximity with other people of color but particularly with Spanish speaking Latinx's. I enrolled in critical race theory course as well as a critical conversations seminar as a way to engage my academic self in issues of race, identity and inequity. I pushed myself to

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explicitly consider the implications of my race, ethnicity, gender and other identities on my leadership as a founder and on the organization and product I was trying to create. It was the act of approaching it simultaneously from multiple angles, the personal and the professional, theory and action, intellectual and intuitive that propelled such a rapid progression of events.

By the second year of the Ed.L.D. program, I had developed my race ITC map with my peer coach and pod for a semester and had made raw the emotions and reality of my past. I was actively pitching blank schools to potential funders and to the Ed.L.D. residency office and feeling the tensions between the still strong mental models of success and ways of being that I held that were steeped in hegemonic ideologies (capitalism, the patriarchy, white supremacy) and my growing understanding of my own beliefs and mental models as a first-generation Latinx woman and mother. I was experiencing the "triple jeopardy" (p. 174) Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) discuss. The interactions of my gender, race, and ethnicity were eliciting stereotypical expectations in individuals with whom I was discussing [Blank]Schools, and incongruence between myself and both stereotype expectations and role expectations (for example stereotypes of who an entrepreneur is) were contributing to the negative responses I was receiving, though I was unable to understand or articulate this at the time.

In January of 2016, I had also attended a community summit hosted by 4.0 schools, an education reform intermediary that offers programming to support entrepreneurs addressing education related problems through market-based solutions. They intentionally paired participants that the 4.0 staff thought should know each other because of alignment in both project, values and personality. It was in this way that I met

current equityXdesign co-founder Caroline Hill. Also living at the intersection of school creation, design and equity, we were both exploring similar questions: Who are we in relation and opposition to society, and how can we support the design and creation of schools that are truly transformative for marginalized student populations? Through the spring semester, and over a series of continuing conversations, the idea of working together to create a new design process that holds equity at its core materialized. I traveled to D.C. in March for two days to continue to build our relationship and push the ideas forward. It was at this time that I met Michelle Molitor and she became involved in the work. In April we met up in New Orleans for initial conversations on what working together might look like, what our working styles were, and what our goals and expectations might be for this project.

Critical Race Theory in Education, a course taught by Dr. Daren Graves and Dr. Kimberly A. Truong, had given me a strong framework to critically analyze my past, society around me and the work I was aiming to do with [blank]schools, as well as to articulate and name what I saw. A final project assignment for the course allowed me to move quickly from idea to prototype, documenting my emerging thoughts around the blind spots of design thinking and creating a series of initial tools to resolve them. I emailed the resulting paper to colleagues across the country, both as a draft and after it was "complete." This allowed me to get feedback and identify others interested in or already working on the intersection of equity and design.   While the paper had major drawbacks - it was very preliminary thinking, long at 21 pages, and academic in writing style - the paper continued to be circulated and shared.   It also served as fodder for conversation with Caroline and Michelle. It had our first few tangible tool prototypes,

which we continued to share and iterate on.   The positive feedback told me we were onto something, and I should move forward.

The creation of an equity-based design framework became my strategic project for the residency. The ensuing work can be viewed as fitting in three parallel streams:

1. Co-creating the equityXdesign framework and tools with Caroline and Michelle

2. Testing equityXdesign tools and ideas with the public

3. My personal identity development, growth, exploration and reflection

Naturally, none of these moved forward without impact from the other, and many times they were one and the same, but for the sake of clarity in description and analysis, I will explore each of them in isolation. Before doing so, I outline our framework and 3 key tools we created that will be referenced in the three work streams.

equityXdesign Tools

It has been my goal in the creation of equityXdesign to leverage the foundations of a generally accepted practice in providing individuals with a tool to take action towards creating an anti-racist society. My collaborators and I believe we can do this by using critical race theory to analyze the existing design thinking process, and layering tools and processes from equity work as well as the latest research in interrupting implicit bias. Over the last year, we articulated an initial prototype of a framework for equitable design, and tested three key tools 1) Meta-Empathy maps, 2) Equity Pauses, and 3) the equityXdesign Crash Course.

equityXdesign framework. In November of 2016 we published our first iteration of a framework (figure 4) that incorporated our learnings, experiences, and beliefs about

equitable design to date. The framework includes three core beliefs and five design principles that stem from the interactions of the three beliefs.

Belief 1 - See: Historical Context Matters

The past is present in people, places, things, and in systems of oppression. The past was designed and the present is being designed. We are all designers.

Figure 4: equityXdesign Framework

Belief 2 - Be Seen: Radical Inclusion

The problems of equity work — racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, etc. — are rooted in our distance, our single stories (Adichie, 2009), and our habits of exclusion. Radical Inclusion is the intentional act of interrupting inequity where it lives : our separations. Recognizing the multiplicity of stories, truths, their proximities, their intersections, and the people who own the stories, are requisites for equity design work. This is radical inclusion.

Belief 3 - Foresee: Process as Product

Equity is a verb. It is the process, not an end point. When designing, both the ends and the means matter. We can't model the future on the past. We need to live the future we want today.
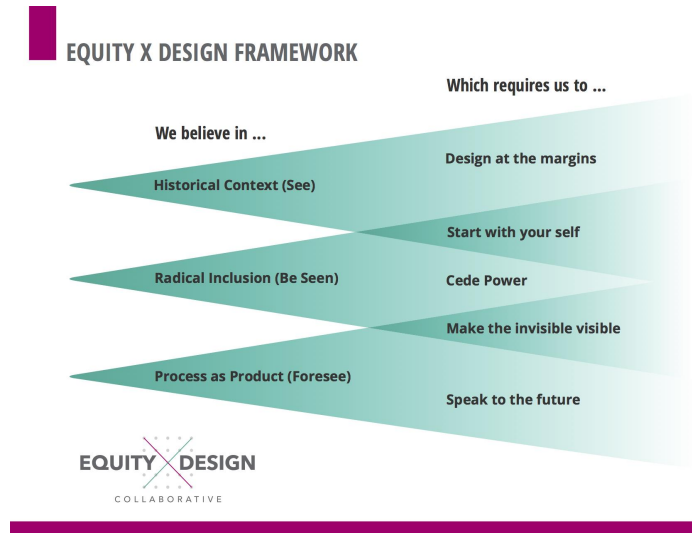
Five Design Principles

In order to design for equity, we must:

1. Design at the Margins: We design at the edge of society; solutions at the margins work for all. Innovations based in equity diffuse inward from the bleeding edge.

2. Start with Your Self: Our identities (race, gender, upbringing, social status, home language, etc.) create our lens for the world and how we make sense of it. We have to be aware of this lens, and the biases it brings with it, as we design.

3. Cede Power: Everyone has power. There is often dissonance between who we are, who we aspire to be, and how we behave. This reconciliation is both uncomfortable and discomfiting. This dissonance and discomfort reveals what power needs to be ceded. When parts of our identities prevent radical inclusion, they must be surrendered. We must cede power. This process of this active surrender creates radical inclusion, which multiplies the power of the whole and the part.

4. Make the Invisible Visible: Implicit biases, power dynamics and invisible structures all govern relationships with people in our organizations, schools and governments. By making them visible, we can assess the impact on people and create a space for reflection and repair.

5. Speak the future, Design the future: There is insidious power in language and discourse to influence and control ideas, beliefs, actions and ultimately culture. In order to write a different story, we have to use different language. We need to replace our current hegemonic discourse.

Meta-Empathy maps. Empathy maps are tools used to help design teams gather information during interviews with potential end-users. There are a total of four quadrants. Two are used during the interview: What did the interviewee say? (where you

are asked to transcribe quotes from the user) and What did the interviewee do? (where

you note non-verbal cues such as body language or intonation during the interview).

Two additional quadrants are used after the interview: What do you think the interviewee

was thinking? and What do you think the interviewee was feeling? These two quadrants

require the interviewer to make assumptions based on their observations. This is one

point in the process where an individual designer's bias can substantially impact the

outcomes. To help alleviate this, we have created a "meta" empathy map (Appendix B).

This map requires the interviewer to check in with themselves before transitioning from

what they heard and saw from the interviewee and their interpretation of that data, using

the same format. What did they hear themselves say and watch themselves do during the

interview that may be a result of their own biases? What do they think and feel about the

situation and what impact does their own identity have on those thoughts and feelings?

After doing this analysis, they are then allowed to engage in analyzing the interviewee,

hopefully having separated their own biases from their observations. This tool is a

manifestation of the "start with your self" design principle.

     Equity pauses. Equity pauses are an attempt to slow down the design process and

give designers a protocol or tool that might help them evaluate the work they have been

engaging up to that point through the lens of equity. Because language is so important,

the first equity pause we created is called a discourse check. Using the discourse chart in

figure 3 as a tool, we ask teams to pause during or between stages of the design process

to evaluate the way they have been discussing the problem or potential solutions, to

identify ways they are stuck in Discourse I and try to shift to Discourse II. This pause

stems from the focus on language embedded in design principle "speak the future" and

the desire to make visible the often invisible hegemonic systems at play, a feature of the "make the invisible visible" design principle.

Crash course. The crash course (Appendix C) is a two or three hour experience designed to introduce participants to an equity-centered design thinking process by engaging them in a series of steps with a partner. Participants experience all five modes of the traditional design thinking methodology (empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test), though many steps are adjusted for the framework's push for change. For example, a common define tool is a user-needs statement: (user) needs a way to (user need) because (user insight). Given the need to ensure we are interrogating not just individual lived experiences but also the role of institutional and systemic forces, we have adjusted the user needs statement to be: (user) needs a way to (user need) because (user insight) but/and (level(s) of oppression at play). This is introduced after we walk participants through the five levels of oppression (ideological, internalized, interpersonal, institutional, systemic).

Co-creating the equityXdesign Framework and Tools

Caroline Hill is a catalyst for equity. She is the founder of the DC Equity Lab and co-founder of the Equity Design Collaborative -- two emerging nodes in the education equity ecosystem. She also leads new school creation and redesign efforts at CityBridge Education. For the past 13 years she has worked in D.C. public and charter schools as a teacher, mentor, coach, and leader. She aspires to create learning environments that provide equitable opportunities to all people. During her tenure as the founding principal at E.L. Haynes High School, the first graduating class achieved a 100% college acceptance rate. She was also successful in launching and scaling several innovative

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learning models. Caroline began her education career as a science teacher and was later selected to mentor new teachers in D.C.   Preparing all students for college demands new and different solutions. This challenge inspires Caroline to explore innovative school and learning models that optimize the role of teachers, leverage classroom technologies, and engage young people as agents in their own learning. Caroline holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of Virginia and a Master of Education in Learning and Teaching from Harvard Graduate School of Education. An additional Master of Science in Administration was conferred through New Leaders for New Schools—a principal training fellowship.

Michelle Molitor is the founder and CEO of Fellowship for Race & Equity in Education (FREE), an organization with the mission of creating equitable educational spaces for all students through honest and open dialogue across difference, and collective anti-racist action. This equity work was built in response to the urgency for culturally responsive systemic change for our most vulnerable students—not just in DC, but nationwide. Collaborating directly with a number of national equity organizations to develop Race & Equity in Education Seminars, Michelle was awarded an investment from NewSchools Venture Fund in her first year as an Entrepreneur in Residence to continue developing the FREE curriculum. FREE has partnered with and led work alongside several national, regional and local education agencies across the education ecosystem including the Department of Education, district offices, individual schools, philanthropic groups, and education facing entities.

Our first test of working together was for a design sprint event Caroline ran through her organization, the DC Equity Lab, in partnership with the DC Deputy Mayor

of Education's Truancy Taskforce. Caroline ran a series of meetings and trainings for the Truancy Task Force where they learned the essence of empathy interviewing and unpacked the implicit bias that they each held. They then interviewed students and families about their school experiences in relationship to truancy, ultimately using that data to create five user needs statements. Those user needs statements were the starting point of a full-day design sprint where, after brainstorming, 11 teams prototyped and presented solutions before the participants and a panel of judges. The winners presented their idea at the U.S. Department of Education Attendance Conference (Hill, 2016).

One of the first tools we created and tested during this event was the discourse check equity pause introduced above. Using a structured protocol, we asked participants to analyze their current discourse and responses around truancy and asked them to be aware of their discourse and commit to a discourse of transformation for the remainder of the experience. This discourse check was one of the most powerful and memorable parts of the day. Multiple individuals asked for the source of the chart, wanting to bring it into their day-to-day work and to their teams.

Much of the learning of this event was around the tensions that exist around traditional equity practices and traditional design thinking practices. At its base, the idea of a "hackathon" design sprint was problematic. Though we were able to draw more than 80 students, teachers, community members, policy makers, police officers, and government agency employees it was clear that if we fundamentally believed that those most affected needed to be at the table, we would need more inclusive structures to make that happen. There were also tensions around time - how do you allow the time and space for deep and vulnerable discussions and sharing of individuals experiences and

realities while also making sure you don't stay in the talking space and move to action as another way to share stories and build relationships. Lastly, there were clear power dynamics in the interdisciplinary teams. Students who were themselves chronically truant were on teams with the very truancy officers that handle their cases. What might be the best way to ensure everyone can bring their full selves when positional and identity driven power dynamics are at play?

The need for answers to these questions and the success we felt at this first attempt at collaboration fueled our interest in continuing to work together. We decided the next steps were to continue to find places to test tools as we create them, and to work together to write a whitepaper. The goals for the writing project were:

- To use it as a forcing mechanism for us to make our individual thinking visible and get to a co-created approach

- To outline what we believe the intersection of equity and design looks like

- To present initial thoughts on what tools could look like

- As a marketing piece to surface potential collaborators

- As a way to solicit feedback on our thinking to date

We decided to split the main arguments of the paper into three pieces, and each write the initial drafts. I would write a piece about why design thinking needed equity. Michelle would write about why equity work needed design thinking. Caroline would write about what we think equity and design together looks like, theoretically and practically. We had a few calls where we discussed aspects of each of our arguments, then once we had drafts we met to discuss common through lines and give feedback and input to each section.

The initial drafts led us to a conversation about how to best communicate our emerging thoughts about how to achieve equity in design. In a conversation we had over dinner after spending a day together at the Stanford d.School, we first sketched the 3-triangle equityXdesign framework.

We continued to revise the sections individually until finally combining them into one piece to continue to work through. Our first complete draft was 16 pages, a length we felt was too long for most people to read. We sent this to dozens of individuals for feedback, throughout the month of September, and then spent the month of October making revisions based on the feedback we received. We tightened the language to 11 pages, and then worked with a copy editor and designer to produce branded visualizations of our framework to include in the public version. We published the end result on Medium on November 16, 2006, just days after the election.

The release of the paper achieved all of our intended goals. We were able to use the act of writing to collaboratively create a common understanding of our beliefs around what it would take to design equitably, ultimately manifesting itself in the form of our three-triangle framework. We received dozens of email communications from individuals and organizations who were looking for tools like this and who were interested in some kind of relationship or partnership. People continued to send us articles, papers or information from others who seemed to be doing similar work. As of March 15th, 2017, over 5100 people have viewed our post with 1.2K reading all 19 minutes of it.

One of the big things we knew had to be next was the development of an experience that would introduce people to the framework and tools we were testing. We

had landed on a strategy of using existing clients and projects we already had in the pipeline to create and/or test new tools, and of saying yes to as many low-resource opportunities to work and share as possible. The work with Flamboyan was an example of the former, as the existing contract language and their goals aligned with the equityXdesign tools and they were excited about us testing new material with them.

I created the initial version of the crash course 2-hour session right before thanksgiving, for use in a session to be conducted in early February, but continued development was on hold. Collectively, we took a kind of hiatus throughout the holidays - from thanksgiving through the middle of January, to read, reflect, and rejuvenate ourselves. Our first team meeting in the new year occurred in Washington DC, the weekend of inauguration and the day after the women's march. We worked on the crash course Sunday night, and tested it for the first time Monday with The Flamboyan Foundation, a foundation that works to improve student outcomes through increased family engagement in education in Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. Additional details about the work with Flamboyan will be explored below. February was the 2nd Annual community summit at 4.0 schools (where I had met Caroline the year before), and during that month we tested the second iteration of the crash course. We would test the third iteration of the crash course at SouthXSouthwest Education Conference (SXSWedu) in early March.

I was in DC again for an engagement with Flamboyan in mid-February, and we had a team meeting where we decided how we were going to move forward as an organization. I would be working full time on the idea post-graduation, and Michelle would allocate a portion of her time to work on it as she sees it as a missing tool for her

to fully do the work she already does with FREE. Caroline would explore how to create more time and space for her to do this work while maintaining her current role. We would prioritize fundraising for seed capital, which Michelle would lead, and securing fee-for-service contracts, which I would lead, in order to continue to create and test tools, as well as a strategy to create community, identify opportunities to co-create with aligned individuals and organizations, and disseminate our thinking and learning to date. We would postpone making any decision on legal organizational status, working with FREE as a fiscal sponsor for the time being, until we had more information to indicate what the best path forward would be.

Testing equityXdesign Tools and Ideas with the Public

My strategy was to share with as many people in my network as possible the direction of the work we were doing and leverage any low-lift and low-cost or revenue-generating opportunities to create and test tools. This led to a heavy reliance on my cohort and the greater Ed.L.D. network as well as past clients for opportunities.

Through Andrew Frishman, Co-Executive Director of Big Picture Learning and Ed.L.D. Cohort 2, I learned of their annual conference. We submitted an application to present about our emerging ideas at the Big Picture Learning Annual Conference held in July of 2016 and had our application selected for one of 38 slots out of 75 submissions. Submissions were selected "due to their alignment with the conference strands, and their potential interest to our attendees, and proposed new ideas we believe will push attendees' thinking and provide new tools to support their work." (J. Ghidiu, personal communication, February 22, 2017) Sessions varied in attendance from 3 to 40, with our session having 11 registered attendees. Two of the attendees were Frances Olajide, a

cohort member who is doing her residency at Big Picture Learning, leading their Deeper Learning Equity Fellowship (DLEF), and a current DLEF fellow. Their experience in the session led to later conversations about how to bring equityXdesign as a tool for the DLEF and ultimately resulted in an engagement outlined below.

The Ed.L.D. network also began to test virtual workshops and equityXdesign was selected as the first topic for a session held in August of 2016. We had 12 attendees while the second virtual workshop was cancelled due to low attendance. While it is difficult to draw any conclusions from this, as there are many variables that could be at play, it did serve as additional data to us that there is appetite for this work. Though only 4 attendees responded to the post-event survey, 100% indicated they enjoyed the workshop, found it valuable and would attend a follow-up session on the topic. Samantha Cohen, Ed.L.D. Cohort 2, currently the Senior Managing Director of National Family Engagement and lead designer of a new fellowship, attended the session. A follow-up call led to the engagement with their fellowship outlined below.

Requests for additional information and coffee conversations after each of these interactions continued to indicate that there was indeed an appetite for work at the intersection of equity and design from my cohort and the wider Ed.L.D. network, among designers connected to the Stanford design school, and at intermediaries engaged in supporting new school design work. They also confirmed that there were few other players in this space.

Sheff Coalition

The Sheff Movement is a coalition of parents, students, educators, and community members working to expand awareness about Connecticut's voluntary, two-way

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interdistrict school integration programs and promote improvement and expansion of those programs to promote quality, integrated education for all children. The 20th anniversary of the *Sheff v. O'Neil* decision that mandated intentional desegregation of Hartford Public Schools provided Sheff staff an opportunity to pause, reflect and start to plan for the next phase of their work. Gina Chiringo, a staff organizer for the Sheff Movement had attended a design challenge I designed at Harvard for Lee Teitel and the Integrated Schools Network in 2014. Gina saw the power of the design thinking methodology, and in 2015 hired me to design and lead a design challenge for teams from the National Coalition on School Diversity. She saw design thinking as a great tool she could use with the Sheff Movement Coalition members to design their new strategy.

Gina contacted us to help her conduct a community wide design challenge around the 20th anniversary in the summer of 2016. We identified a need for extensive empathy work and data to be collected in order to have sufficient fodder for a successful open design challenge, and decided to train a smaller group of coalition members to do empathy work two months prior to the open design challenge. In July of 2016 we held a one-day training for coalition members around conducting empathy interviews. They were charged with conducting interviews, synthesizing the data and using that data to get to problem statements in advance of the community wide design challenge to ideate solutions around the presented problem statements.

Once again, we introduced meta-empathy maps as a tool. While the conceptual issues it was addressing were compelling, many participants were unsure of how to use the tool. This training also surfaced a set of missing tools and guidance around who

conducts empathy interviews, how you identify potential empathy interview participants, and how you make sure the experience is mutually beneficial.

The trained team had approximately 2 months to conduct a series of interviews, and this was incredibly hard to do. This highlighted issues around getting people to invest the time and energy it takes to do proper empathy work, particularly if you are exploring an area that is your "expertise" or that you have been working on for a very long time. It also highlighted for us issues around urgency and a feeling of wanting to jump into stuff that feels like "doing the work" and a discounting of things like empathy work as valuable part of the process. The experience also reminded us that getting to good problem statements is really hard, and teams will almost always need coaching and an outside perspective.

The one-day open design challenge itself was an incredibly difficult experience for me. Most attendees had little to no experience with design thinking as a process, and the act of learning it, particularly with a contrived prompt, felt like a waste of time and something that was getting in the way of the urgent work that individuals were there to do. With over 100 participants, this was the first large scale attempt to use some of our new tools. Size was layered with the fact that the attendees were all folks who care deeply about this issue and largely people of color.

There were a number of challenges that arose throughout the day. The teams got stuck in problem definition, had a hard time with user needs statements, deciding who the key users were. Conversations around symptoms and root causes were circular and it was unclear the best level at which to tackle the problem. My facilitation was unable to move most teams forward. We introduced a new tool - transformation cards - but it just

added to the confusion. The only immediately powerful tool was the discourse checks, which people were able to use intuitively. We were surprised at how few good ideas came out of the day.

In a room full of people who are highly literate around issues of inequity and oppression - multiple participants approached us with concerns that design thinking as we introduced it felt very steeped in white cultural values. The need to create an introductory experience that introduced equitable design as a unified process was made clear, although we knew we were not at a place in the development of our thinking to build such a tool.

The experience also reintroduced issues we had struggled with during the truancy task force design challenge - specifically issues of access and inclusion - while raising a new question for us about when to involve whom and in what ways. It was clear from this large event and past experiences that the more people that are involved and the more diversity among those people, the more "inefficient" progress becomes. We also know that the potential for more successful solutions also increases in this scenario, when managed correctly. We would have to think about those trade offs and have some opinions.

This also then made us question the value of "design challenges" as a mode, specifically the time bound and rushed nature of them. If we thought about them more strategically, as a tool and not as a product in and of itself, how might that help account for the tensions we were facing? We wondered if design challenges were useful for the solution output or if their true value was something else. When reflecting on the decision to do an open challenge, and even discussing whether the event was successful at its

conclusion with few actionable ideas, Gina said that it was. One of the reasons to do the challenge, she said, was specifically around community building and sending a tangible signal that the coalition knows there are problems, and is looking for community involvement in the change. Gina felt that this was accomplished.

Stanford d.School

The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (known as the d.School) at Stanford University is not a traditional "school" in that it does not admit students or grant degrees but offers courses to graduate students from any program at the university. It is where the codified design thinking process as we know it today began. The K-12 Lab within the d.School focuses on supporting educators and education innovators through workshops, programming, and fellowships. I co-taught a course at the Stanford d.School on high school redesign with K-12 Lab Network Director Susie Wise and IDEO Partner and Managing Director Sandy Speicher. In the spring of 2016 Susie brought me into her team's conversation about convening innovative schools, which reintroduced me to David Clifford, whom I had met at Stanford.

David, Senior Learning Experience Designer at the K-12 Lab, was working to explore the intersection between equity consciousness and design consciousness. A rapid succession of conversations, emails, and text messages showed that we were both contemplating similar questions at the intersection of equity and design and that working together would be useful for both of us. Caroline, Michelle, and I quickly moved toward official collaboration with the Stanford d.School, although our interactions were primarily with David. We held an in-person, full-day collaboration session in August of 2016 at the Stanford d.School in Palo Alto that David and I co-facilitated. This

experience was powerful in strengthening David's and my existing relationship and trust as we worked through the planning and co-facilitation, while also providing time for initial relationships to grow among the four of us.

While the content of the day was specific to how our collaboration might work, the exercises also made us explore questions about our selves, the relationships and potential organization evolving between Caroline, Michelle, and myself, and the equityXdesign process. We agreed to continue moving forward without formal arrangements, to continue to build out our idea and test it with clients we each already had. We determined we would all equally own the rights to the content, and we would re-evaluate the question of a new organization at a point where we felt the product had developed further.

Over the course of the last year, I have met with David numerous times to discuss the intersection of equity and design, as well as to share feedback on tools and artifacts we each created. As a white man engaged in this work in a mostly white institution, he has perspectives and experiences that are incredibly insightful. It has also been emotionally and psychologically important for us to have each other.

We can see that there is burgeoning interest in the d.School in exploring issues of equity and design through the inclusion of equity as 20% of David's paid role, though he saw it as 100% of his work. When students were asked what topics they wanted to see the d.School take on for the 2016-17 school year, Equity and Engagement were at the top of the list (Carter, 2016). Alissa Burkholder Murphy, a teaching fellow at the d.School focusing largely on the "Design for Extreme Affordability" Course, developed a tool around the ethics of empathy work (A. Burkholder Murphy, Personal Communication,

October 10, 2016). Emi Kolawole, former editor-in-residence and senior media designer and lecturer at the d.School published "Design for Worldview" which focused on the intersection of implicit bias and creative design (Kolawole, 2016).

In January, David gave notice to the d.School that he would withdraw from his position and that April 13th would be his last day. He is leaving to focus 100% of his work on creating design school X (DSX), a school founded on the values of equity and design and intended to dismantle systems of white supremacy and patriarchy, by bringing together disparate groups (historically designed to learn separately) to inspire humanity and revolution. I am particularly excited about David's work with DSX, however as he departs it is unclear how a partnership or collaboration with the Stanford d.School might look.

Flamboyan Foundation

The Flamboyan Foundation works to improve student outcomes in education in Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico through collaborations with nonprofits, school districts, educators, government and community leaders while investing time and money to solve educational challenges. One focus area of their work is specific to family engagement, and in the fall of 2016 they launched the National Family Engagement Collaborative Fellowship. The fellowship is designed to build knowledge and skills in participants, specifically around family engagement, strategic planning, equity and design thinking, as they design and implement short-cycle projects and pilots. This work will help each team develop a long-term sustainable, organizational approach for family engagement work.

Samantha Cohen and I met following the Ed.L.D. virtual session and she shared information about the fellowship experience she was designing and the potential to use equityXdesign as the framework for what at the time were separate equity and design thinking strands in the design of the fellowship convening's. We agreed to a coaching relationship in which I would consult on the overall and specific session designs and assets, making specific recommendations on how to use equityXdesign methodologies. The quick turnaround from convening to call to partnership indicated to me that there was indeed demand for this product, and that the demand was so great that there was a willingness to pay for and rely on a solution that was in-progress and for the organization to play a co-creator role.

This was also confirmation of a view I already had: many organizations are using design thinking with facilitating staff having only surface knowledge or experience with the design process but are either not in a position to bring in outside facilitators or expertise or don't think it's necessary. They are more likely to outsource equity work, believe they can't do it or that it will be more successful led by outsiders, as evidence by the fact that Flamboyan had been using Michelle Molitor and FREE services since 2014.

The focus of Convening 1 from an equity/design perspective was on introducing design thinking as a methodology, introducing the equityXdesign framework, and preparing fellows to conduct in-depth empathy work back in their communities. The experience of sharing the framework with Samantha was the first external use of the framework language, and her questions and feedback helped me refine the language. The meta-empathy map tool (Appendix A) was not clear to a subset of the participants when used during the convening, so Samantha created another worksheet (Appendix D) for

those for whom the initial image was not useful. This new version, with feedback around the way participants responded helped identify where next iterations of the tool needed to go. It also indicated that there was indeed a comfort with a co-creation relationship.

Convening 2 was designed to push fellows from problem definition through prototype development. As a consultant, I was not in charge of the agenda, just in giving feedback where the design team needed it. In looking through the agenda and slide presentations of the convening, there was significant time allocated both to personal work (identity, bias, assumptions) and to design work. It still felt like two separate tasks - and while the time between each oscillation decreased, they still felt distinct. Participants were asked to engage in the problem definition, ideation and prototyping parts of the design thinking process and then pause to check what they just did with an equity lens, which felt different than doing design equitably. While this was is a positive step in a progression from design absent of equity to design and equity both being present, it is a step away from our ultimate goal of equitable design. It was clear that our own work to date had remained in a mental model of equity and design - layering on equity to design tasks - and that we would need to progress our thinking and tools to achieve a true merging of the two fields.

In retrospect, it was clear that time allocations favored design over equity. In the reflections of the planning team, captured in Appendix E, they said "We cut down on the amount of time spent on race/equity identity by design, and we shouldn't have." This view of equity and design being two separate things is, I hypothesize, tied directly to time allocation decisions. Equity work is seen as an extra thing to do that gets in the way of the real work - design. A participant wrote in the follow-up survey "I feel that we did

not, as a team, do a good job of intentionally connecting race and equity work to our specific work within design thinking. Perhaps other groups did a better job of this, but I (personally) could use more guidance and intentionality to really connect and name the links as we move forward." Their analysis was correct, we had placed the responsibility for making the connections between equity and design on the individuals, when our goal had been to place that burden on the process and tools. We clearly still had work to do.

One of the thoughts of how to start to achieve this integration was to introduce equity and design as one thing from the beginning, not as two things we are merging (even if that was our development process internally), particularly for those with little to no previous experience in either design or equity work. This realization directly led to our creation of the equityXdesign crash course we used with Flamboyan in later months.

My assistance in preparing for the third convening of the fellowship was more difficult to navigate and less clear that it had been in the first two. In looking at the goals for the third convening, they were specifically towards the creation of deliverables. "Specific Outcomes for the Fellows include: (1) Write 1-3 year strategic plan for family engagement, based on landscape assessment, short-cycle pilots, and deepened perspective on race and equity and (2) Create, build, identify an organization or vehicle for housing family engagement work" (D. Suarez, personal communication, January 6, 2017). Even when incorporating the design thinking mode of prototyping into their plan, it seemed to be inserted into a linear traditional project plan, a simple change from run a pilot and write a strategic plan to run a prototype, then run a pilot then write a strategic plan. The underlying assumption being that prototyping is a discrete stage you engage in, then check off the list and keep moving forward without acknowledging the role of or giving

space for iterating, learning, failing, etc., with a restricted timeline for prototyping still leading towards traditional strategic plan format.

As mentioned earlier, Michelle Molitor and FREE already had a contract with Flamboyan and had been working with them on issues of equity since 2014. Michelle asked me to work with her to develop the next round of internal organization-wide seminars and team-based tasks, which were specifically to be designed around the topic of implicit bias. We decided that we would develop a curriculum around implicit bias that we would deliver whole-group to the DC based Flamboyan staff, and then walk their organizational teams through equityXdesign design cycles to identify and tackle implicit-bias-related issues they were facing at a team level. It was for the first of this four-month series of seminars, beginning in January of 2017, that we created the equityXdesign crash course.

The crash course experience was a marked departure from the past experience of introducing the design thinking process through the Stanford d.School crash course and then exposing participants to the equityXdesign framework and requiring them to do the work of adjusting the process for equity. There was a marked difference with in the conversations we overheard throughout the experience than those typically heard with the d.School crash course experience, as well as a difference in the end of activity reflections. Participants mentioned having a number of insights into their own assumptions or biases surfaced quickly through the adjusted empathy protocols. They also indicated the forced conversation around power dynamics and the relationships between users and designers as pushing on their thinking. With this initial positive experience we decided to double down on testing and iterating the crash course with a goal of having that be our first big

open source tool release. A post-training survey completed by approximately ⅓ of the participants rated the initial crash course experience as 3.3 out of 5, with other components of the day ranging from 2.7 to 4.7. The following day, we met with each team individually and used the same process the crash course introduced to identify and start to tackle a team-based problem around implicit bias. This experience was rated a 4 out of 5. As expected, value of the process comes with repeated use and increased understanding. This reinforced our need to work with clients through multiple cycles of using the process and our rising issues with the design challenge model.

The deep dive into the science around implicit bias has been enlightening in two ways. First it has illuminated the may ways that traditional design thinking is susceptible to implicit bias, giving us places to focus in the creation of tools and redesigning the process. Second, it has led us to believe that creating a curriculum specifically around how implicit bias works that designers can have easy access to is a piece of the puzzle. These things need to happen in tandem - creating a process that is less susceptible to the influence of bias while also arming designers with the deeper understanding of bias necessary to actively interrupt it when the tools are insufficient.

Deeper Learning Equity Fellowship

A partnership between Big Picture Learning and the Internationals network for public schools, the deeper learning equity fellowship (DLEF) is a 24-month cohort-based leadership program that aims to strengthen and sustain leaders who will influence the policies and practices that expand access to deeper learning in public education across the country. Fellows are asked to identify the barriers that exist to providing access to deeper learning practices to low-income and minority students in their communities, and develop

an initiative to address that barrier. Frances Olajide, member of Ed.L.D. Cohort 5, is

leading the design of the fellowship experience as her residency strategic project, and felt

that equityXdesign would be a useful framework for fellows to use to identify problems

and create solutions. The first convening for the fellowship occurred in November of

2016, and I was asked to help the fellows refine their problem statements using the

equityXdesign process.

The 4-hour session I conducted introduced them to the idea of design thinking, the

equityXdesign framework and how that is seeking to address some of the issues in the

traditional design thinking process. We then used our equityXdesign adjusted user needs

statement format and two equity pauses to refine their problem statements. Unlike at the

Sheff convening, where people raised issues with the design thinking process and my

answer was only that we were working on it, during this presentation I had anticipated

and prepared those answers. As participants raised issues - like a tension of designing for

others versus co-design - a reply was embedded in the experience.

In a mid-session debrief, a participant indicated the framing of inequities as

having been designed, and equity work as the work of redesign, as being an incredibly

powerful reframe. This has brought to the forefront the fact that our work is really

fundamentally one about getting people to rethink the way they think of themselves and

their roles from traditional job titles to one of designer, and that at the core of what we

are doing is attempting to democratize design.

This felt like a turning point in the development of equityXdesign. My fluency

with my own framework, speaking about equitable design (and no longer equity and

design) and having the session feel like a cohesive narrative were significantly better than

previous presentations. The tools and problem definition strategies were clear and really pushed all the participants fairly quickly. It was the first time I felt like I was sharing expertise, not an idea.

At the conclusion of the DLEF convening a survey was used to gather feedback of their experiences of the week, and three open-ended questions were included specific to the equityXdesign problem definition presentation. The questions and fellow responses can be found in Appendix F. There were conflicting pieces of evidence around the co-creation process. While one fellow said, "I appreciate the transparency that the equityXdesign process is a work in progress." Another said "I suppose I'm wondering if this design system has been used in educational equity before and if so, is there an example we could reference? I felt like we were 'piloting' a system when it would have been nice to see some examples." This call for concrete examples is a recurring one, and is pushing us to think about how we might quickly develop them.

One comment that was shared in a less direct but still clear way during the session, and then in the survey, was particularly hard to hear but necessary to continue to push me to interrogate my own identity in this process. The participant wrote "It is essential that Whiteness, including that of Latinos, be deeply interrogated because this session oozed Whiteness, and Equity pauses don't address that issue. It's deeply problematic that this session was even presented at convening as it just reified White ways of knowing like much of the experiences at the session. And it doesn't matter that 'people of color' created the session because drinking the Whiteness Kool-Aid happens to people of all colors. We need to move away from 'big names' by assigning expertise to folks because of their elite schooling and instead focus on the people actually doing the

work in responsive and equitable ways. This session felt like it was done because of the Harvard [connection] between the presenter and programming staff and not because it was at all beneficial to participants." This feedback is emblematic of the kinds of interactions that make the designer - product relationship a symbiotic one. I had been focusing on all the ways I was experiencing oppression, interrogating internalized oppression, all the while minimizing the many parts of my identity that give me great privilege and feel oppressive to others in many rooms. This interaction gave even greater urgency to my bubbling desire to connect more deeply with Latinx and specifically Puerto Rican history.

As participants left the convening and returned to their home organizations, Frances identified a gap in supports they were receiving, particularly if participants were being pushed to use a design thinking methodology to engage in their work. Between the first convening in November 2016 and the second in March 2017 fellows were expected to move from problem definition through ideation, prototyping and testing while also being ready to present a plan for a pilot of their solution at the March convening.

In working with Frances to design a series of toolkits for fellows, dissonance between the design thinking process and the existing requirements and timeline of the DLEF capstone project emerged. As outlined in Appendix G, the key components of the project presentation due in March include traditional project management and reporting guidelines. They require a timeline with milestones, presumably dealing with the execution of the plan. There is a logic map and theory of action required. These components, if not framed correctly, can minimize or be contradictory to a learning cycle approach to moving a project forward.

This experience has led us to make a requirement for future potential clients that the scope of the work include not just embedding equityXdesign into their programming, but reassessing things like timelines, deliverables, and requirements of the program design.

Personal Identity Development, Growth, Exploration and Reflection

I lay in bed and was once again unable to fall asleep. I reached for my Kindle and began to scroll through the books. This just would not work. I needed to escape from the deep sadness, the frustration. Having recently discovered e-book rentals from my local library I decided to see what my favorite authors had been up to lately. I read Isabelle Allende's *Japanese Lover*: World War II, Nazis, Japanese internment camps on US soil. So much for a lighter read. I tred again with Allende's *Island Beneath the Sea*: slavery, rape, incest, and revolt; a story spanning the genocide of the native Arawak people, the Haitian Revolution, and the Louisiana purchase. I was shocked to realize I had never understood the significance of Haiti as the first black republic in the world in contrast to its being the poorest nation in the western hemisphere today. I realized that I had no historical context for any of the Caribbean, let alone for Puerto Rico.

I felt an acute desire to better understand my people's history. I went online looking for a course or reading list that would point me in the right direction. I stumbled upon the Puerto Rico Winter Institute (PRWI), a two-week collaboration between Harvard University and the Universidad de Puerto Rico (UPR). Organized by Latinx Professors Pedro Reina Perez (UPR), David Carrasco, María Luisa Parra, and Mayra Rivera Rivera (Harvard), the 2017 topic was "Fragmented Borders: Transnationalism, Inequality and Citizenship." This would be one of the most significant tests I would run

on the big assumptions outlined in my ITC map (Keegan & Lahey, 2009) - engaging in a purely academic endeavor with mostly people of color both as students and professors, almost entirely in my native yet secondary language of Spanish, in Puerto Rico.

I already had plans to spend time with family in Puerto Rico, so I headed to Cabo Rojo the day after Christmas with my daughter, Yasmin. My parents split their time between Orlando and Puerto Rico, and had been there since early November. I took advantage of the two weeks before the institute to spend time with my parents, my paternal grandparents, my maternal grandmother and great-grandmother, and a number of aunts and cousins. I sat with my mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother to look through old photo albums, asking questions and probing their memories for stories.

I also took the time to watch "The Last Colony," a documentary on the issue of the political status of the island, and interrogated all of my relatives about their stances. I read a number of books, including *Puerto Rico: The Trials of the Oldest Colony in the World*, by Tri'as Monge, a nonfiction work outlining the history of the island, as well as *When I was Puerto Rican*, a memoir by Esmerelda Santiago, and *The House on the Lagoon*, by Rosario Ferre', a historical fiction set on the island.

For the first time I felt like I had the base of an understanding of who I was in context, at a group level, and in a larger sociopolitical setting. I saw my family's stories and experiences in the arc of our country's history.

The seminar topics (the syllabus is Appendix H), particularly the ones surrounding language, were especially powerful. My avoidance of affinity spaces partly resulted from a fear of being judged on my Spanish-language fluency. It was powerful to

hear this not as an issue specific to me but one that challenges a generation of Puerto Ricans.

The experience also sparked my curiosity around western ways of knowing as compared to indigenous or traditional ways of knowling. I started to consider what it would mean and look like to value both ways and engage in both, as well as the implications they both had for equityXdesign. Design thinking was already trying to value some non-western forms of knowledge in individuals and their lived experiences but the power of western ways of knowing permeated any discussion of information. This was a topic we would need to explore further.

When I got home, I ordered a Puerto Rican flag. I have no idea what to do with it, but having it gives me peace.

The Why

The analysis of the personal identity development aspects of my work and this capstone were inspired by autoethnography, a methodology I was drawn to given the parallel nature of its history, values, form and function to the equityXdesign work. Created in response to a realization that "the 'facts' and 'truths' scientists 'found' were inextricably tied to the vocabularies and paradigms the scientists used to represent them," recognition of "the impossibility of and lack of desire for master, universal narratives," and "an increasing need to resist colonialist, sterile research impulses of authoritatively entering a culture, exploiting cultural members, and then recklessly leaving to write about the culture for monetary and/or professional gain," autoethnography "acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist" (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011, p. 274).

Autoethnography is both process and product (research and writing) that seeks to use the description and analysis of personal experience to understand cultural experience, which is seen as "a political, socially-just and socially conscious act" (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011, p. 273). Through that lens I engage in the following analysis of the pieces introduced in the introduction and description sections of this capstone.

Torres' (1999) Bicultural Orientation Model (BOM) merges constructs of assimilation, ethnic identity, and biculturalism to provide practitioners a way to more fully understand the complexity of Latino student development, and provides an entry point to analyze and understand the personal identity development journey I describe in this capstone.

Acculturation models, one aspect of the BOM, have progressed from linear and polar (which assumed that strengthening of the mainstream identity meant weakening of the ethnic) to two-dimensional (allowing mainstream and ethnic identity development paths to be considered independently) to multidimensional (allowing individual traits to be considered independently) (Torres, 1999). This shows how additional understanding of Latino identity development continues to unearth complexity. My positioning in the BOM model of a bicultural orientation that comes from high levels of acculturation and high levels of ethnic identity is what I describe in my introductory story of self.

The term "encounter" was used by William Cross (1995) to name the dissonance experienced between individuals' held beliefs of race and new understandings due to an individual's experience. The meaning-making of this experience, one typically involving racism, leads the individual to recognize that racism is a part of what it means to be [a person of color] in the United States (Cross, 1995). It is this encounter that propels an individual to actively engage in identity development work. The experiences I had in attempting to secure funding for this residency, the lack of support I felt, the disinterest from funders and the culmination of my residency being funded at 50% of the guaranteed amount, left me with no other way to explain my experiences except through the lens of race, gender and class. This was my encounter experience, which I began to process during the meeting with Matt Miller.

Ladson-Billings (2003) asserted "racism is normal, not aberrant, in U.S. society, and because it is so ingrained in our society, it looks ordinary and natural to people in the culture." (p. 11) I would apply the same for sexism and classism. This hidden nature of oppressive systems at work had led me to explain away barriers, failures or difficulties as

contextual or as personal deficits. My exposure to intellectual frameworks, specifically

Critical Race Theory and the differentiation of internalized, interpersonal and

institutional forms of oppression, had primed me to question this internalization. I had

experienced very few instances of explicit interpersonal racism or discrimination, and

other aspects of my identity, most specifically my educational attainment and

professional success, had given me a level of privilege. Given this reality, I likely began

my racial identity development journey in a state most akin to the pseudo-independence

status described in Helms's (1995) theory of White identity: a person who has an

intellectualized commitment as a non racist self, but sees his/her role as "helping" other

racial groups with a deceptive tolerance that is not internalized. I believe this location

was not just due to my perceived privilege and bicultural orientation, but also because of

the difficulty I was having in placing myself in discussions about race.

As discussed by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001), Latino/a racial identity

development is difficult as most racial identity development frameworks are constructed

from a base of black/white racial constructs. (p. 33) Puerto Ricans, for example, can be

"both white and black, while also neither white nor black," an issue when race (rather

than nationality, ethnicity or culture) is used as the primary marker and assumed to

correlate to ethnicity, which does not hold for Latinos. (p. 38) This is my own lived

experience. While my skin color is one more traditionally associated with Latinos, I have

first and second cousins who are white, blonde and blue eyed, who have black skin and

afro-textured hair and freckled redheads. More specifically, Puerto Ricans tend to use

white and black as cultural terms (versus phenotypic categories) with a definition of

group membership tied to ethnic or cultural markers, not solely based on ancestry. (p. 44)

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Given this understanding of racial constructs as cultural terms, engaging in phenotypically constructed racial discussions becomes problematic for me, with the solution being to intellectualize race discussions. This problem would be solved if conversations about identity included both race and ethnicity, but in my experience this has not been the case. It has only been through my own investigation in the writing of this capstone that I have gained any understanding of ethnic identity development.

Using Ferdman & Gallegos' (2001) Latino and Latina Racial Identity Orientations, however, I have begun to interpret my experiences. Ferdman & Gallegos (2001) explicitly state that their Latino and Latina Racial Identity Orientations are patterns and orientations and are not to be viewed as linear, sequential or as stages. Of the six orientations, White-identified, Undifferentiated/Denial, Latino as Other, Subgroup-identified, Latino-identified (Racial/Raza) and Latino-Integrated, I can use two to describe the majority of my experience (Subgroup-identified and Latino-identified) and see my current state as one of entering Latino-integrated.

I entered the Ed.L.D. experience as Subgroup-identified, thinking of myself primarily as Puerto Rican in terms of my ethnic or national-origin subgroup. While I considered myself distinct from white people I did not necessarily identify with other Latino people or people of color, joining coalitions only when necessary and practical. The theory of change underlying my work to that point, and specifically in the initial stages of the development of [Blank]Schools, was consistent with this orientation's preference for collective social change, as opposed to the individual social mobility preferred by those who are white-identified. Race was not a central or clear organizing concept for me, nationality/ethnicity and culture were primary.

As I was forced to consider race more prominently through my Ed.L.D. experience, I transitioned to a Latino-identified orientation where my conception of race was a uniquely Latino one that views Latinos as constituting a distinct racial category. I began to see structural racism as quite real and began to value the fight against it. This change played out in my transition from on [Blank]Schools to equityXdesign.

I am currently engaging in a transition from Latino-identified to Latino-integrated. This orientation is marked with a philosophy of "both/and rather than either/or." (p. 50) While I have become increasingly aware of my Puerto Rican background and culture my exploration into historical texts has also helped me understand and relate my experiences to those of other Latino subgroups. I have come to a place where I both appreciate and value many aspects of my culture while also being critical of features I disagree with. I feel enough of an understanding of my ethnic identity that I can begin to integrate it with my other social identities, such as gender, class, profession, and education. Intersectionality tells us that the combination of our identities does not result in the addition of individual identity-specific experiences, but instead in a unique intersectional experience.

The merging of my ethnic and other identities began as a result of my participation in the PRWI, when I realized that until that point I had lacked any interaction with Puerto Rican, let alone female, academics. During the PRWI, all the professors were Latinx, and all but two were Puerto Rican. In scanning through the professors in my undergraduate program and three graduate programs, the only Latinx professor of note that I studied under is Dr. Andres Alonso in the Ed.L.D. program. Given the heterogeneity discussed about the Latinx community, I did not and still do not

see him as sharing my identity as he is of Cuban descent. This lack of exposure had led to implicit biases and stereotypes that had led me to separate my ethnic identity from my identity as an academic. It was only through the PRWI experience that I was able to begin to reconcile those and deal with the internalized racism I discovered was present.

Getting Started

I attribute the progress I made in the creation of the eXd process in a short time with limited resources to a mindset of design thinking called "bias to action." EquityXdesign has taken shape in just over a year, since meeting Caroline at the 4.0 Community Summit, and despite limited resources we have pushed the idea forward quite quickly. Bias to action is tied to what we know about how good ideas come to be - with constant interaction with other people and ideas.

- After less than two months of having explicit conversations about the idea, I wrote a paper exploring potential philosophical and theoretical underpinnings and offered prototypes of potential tools and process adjustments.

- Having written the paper, I sent it to anyone I thought would be interested in it, gave a presentation about it to my cohort, and generally started sharing with the world that this was something we were working on.

- When approached with potential opportunities to build and test tools, I took advantage of them, even if we hadn't built anything yet and weren't sure what we might test. This included the truancy task force event, convincing the Sheff movement to allow us to try new tools, applying to present at BPL, network virtual sessions, to host an affinity group, to present at SXSWedu, to host a session at the 4.0 Community Summit, etc.

- I moved our founding team to think by producing a product - the whitepaper - versus waiting to have the answer before publishing. I pushed us to share for feedback and publish to the public before we fully felt it was ready.

- I coordinated a trip to the d.School to solidify that partnership, and ensured regular communication with David Clifford.

Steven Johnson, in his book *Where Good Ideas Come From*, outlines nine key thoughts as sources of good ideas, many of which are present in the genesis story of equityXdesign. First, Johnson proposes that innovation tends to occur in what he calls the "adjacent possible" - the realm of possibilities that is available at any given moment. Our work sits squarely in the adjacent possible. As outlined in the RKA, design thinking has in recent years moved into the mainstream of problem solving processes and in education specifically is seen as a powerful tool. It has been around enough that there are critiques, yet not long enough that people have given up on it. Similarly, the conversations around equality, diversity, and inclusion have advanced to conversations around equity. We see this, for example, in the Annenberg Institute's recent shift from analyzing and explaining the inequities that exist in education to designing solutions (Brown University, 2017).

Another of Johnson's sources of innovations is "environments that are partly contaminated by error." Organizations and individuals have become frustrated with the lack of results from traditional diversity and inclusion work while urgency around issues of race, power and privilege has increased over the last few years. With the regular police shootings of black men and women and now with the election of President Trump, equity has taken center stage. There is also increasing frustration from a new generation

of education reformers that the last big bets in education haven't led to the kind of sector-wide improvements they had anticipated. Finally, those who are using traditional design thinking methods are experiencing "errors" regularly as they find the process unable to meet their needs.

The merging of two existing bodies of knowledge - in this case, design thinking and equity work - is supported as a positive path forward by Johnson's framework. He notes that 1) innovation thrives on reinventing and reusing the old - both design thinking and equity work at this point are "old", 2) that lucky connections between ideas drive innovation (bringing those two together in this way), and 3) that serendipitous discoveries can be facilitated through "creative collisions" through a shared intellectual or physical space. Most concretely 4.0 provided the space for the initial collision between me and Caroline, and my design focus with a seed of equity and her equity focus with a seed of design. Additionally, Ed.L.D. provided that space for me through the cohort and through the mix of coursework and projects I took on over the first two years. I've also created a life that provides that space for collision, having multiple interests and engaging with organizations and individuals across interests, having a default of saying yes to opportunities even if only tangentially connected.

Lastly, Johnson notes that collaboration is at least as important a driver of innovation as competition. It wasn't until Caroline and I met that our work moved exponentially faster, even though we were both toying with the idea in different ways. With every additional collaborator we added to the network - Michelle, David, etc. - we continued to accelerate the work. These collaborations were useful and occurred quickly because of the investment we made in face time and relationship building. For

cooperation to be useful, there has to be trust. Cooperation can be taken off-line afterwards, but people need in-person time to build it initially. Christian Catalini, who studies the economics of innovation, entrepreneurship, and scientific productivity at MIT, and his colleagues found that the introduction of flights by low-cost US airline Southwest Airlines led to a 50% increase in paper collaborations by scientists at universities linked by those flights (Sohn, 2016). My access to cheap quick flights to DC and our ability to meet in other cities was directly responsible for our collaborations. All three of us were together face-to-face on average once per month since meeting last January, with combinations of two of us meeting regularly as well. Aside from face time with my co-founders, I also made sure to see other collaborators as much as possible.

Getting Traction

We have also seen what we think is a quick take-up of our ideas and interest in implementations. Part of this can be explained through the lens of Rogers' Innovation Diffusion model. He notes that innovations spread relative to 5 characteristics 1) relative advantage 2) compatibility with existing values and practices, 3) simplicity and ease of use 4) trialability and 5) observable results.

Relative advantage. The innovation is better or perceived to be better than previous ideas, where better can be defined by factors such as economics, social prestige, convenience, or satisfaction. equityXdesign so far seems to meet this criterion, people have criticisms of both equity work and design thinking and believe bringing them together could be better than doing both strands of work independently. Organizations and individuals need to be seen as addressing issues of equity to maintain their status in

the field, and their association with our product provides that, while also giving them status through being associated with an "innovative" emerging product.

Compatibility with existing values and practices or norms. All of the initial interest for collaborations have come from people and organizations who are already doing equity work and who had included or were actively looking to start including design thinking as their methodology. They all have equity at the core of their missions and organizational values. It is interesting to note that the driving value is one of equity, versus one of innovation or design. There has been interest but less urgent take-up of our work in organizations whose primary value is innovation/design related versus organizations whose leading value is equity.

Simplicity and ease of use. This is the place where we will have the most trouble. We have struggled with this in a number of ways already. It took us months and 4611 words to simply articulate what we were trying to do. We have yet to develop any individual simple tools that we can share widely. This has become most apparent in our attempts to create the crash course - a 2-hour introduction to the equityXdesign process. The equivalent process for design thinking can be done in 1 hour with ¼ the number of steps. This is also doubly complicated since we are asking people to toggle back and forth between the work and analysis of the way they are engaging in the work at a metacognitive level. It is also not "easy" to do deep personal introspection, find things out about yourself you don't like, engage in difficult conversations about race, power and privilege while also trying to push work forward.

Trialability. This refers to the degree your product can be experimented with on a limited basis. Design thinking generally does well here, since organizations or

individuals can attempt to use it in limited cases before trying to implement across an organization or for large scale problem solving. We are also working to build out tools in modular ways, so that teams can pick and chose which parts of the process to use, embedding pieces over time without having to wholesale revamp their existing workflows.

  Observable results. The easier it is to see results, the more likely individuals or organizations are to adopt the innovation. Results as traditionally quantified will be difficult here. First, the goal is that the thing that is produced using the equityXdesign process is more "equitable." There are all kinds of issues here as there may not be a common definition of equitable for a given product type, or the results may be significantly in the future. Second, part of the equityXdesign framework is that the "process is the product." What we aim to analyze here is if the process itself was equitable. Again we lack existing tools to measure this either in relative or absolute ways. The major shift lies in expanding the definition of "results" to include process-oriented outcomes. If we don't create something on the back end or the thing we create doesn't work, we could still think of the engagement as achieving results and being successful if through engaging in the process relationships were built, growth was seen in team members understanding of their identities, biases and assumptions, muscles were built around the tools and processes and the organization is engaging in deeper and more open conversations than they previously had.

  Equitable design also means that progress is not linear, even though part of the appeal of the design thinking process is that it brings with it a linear mental model and representation of a nonlinear innovation and problem solving process. This nonlinearity

reinforces the need to expand on traditional definitions of results - including what might have previously been thought of as setbacks. We will need to find ways to ensure organizations value the path and not just the outcome, and even further, understand that "good outcomes don't come from obsession with the outcomes, but from obsession with improving the processes to achieve those outcomes" (M. Miller, personal communication, March 12, 2017).

Rogers also refers to the idea of reinvention, that the success of an innovation will depend on how well it evolves to meet the needs of more and more demanding and risk-averse individuals. He notes that a good way to achieve this is to make users partners in a continuous process of redevelopment. This is encouraging, as our approach for our initial subset of clients has been positioned more as partners and collaborators. We explicitly speak to individuals who have approached us of our desire to co-create solutions while bringing our point of view and experiences. Making it clear that we are not offering a turnkey solution will allow us to help filter potential engagements for those who are interesting in engaging in deep work.

Figure 5: Bass Forecasting Model. (Rogers, E.M., 2003, p. 210)
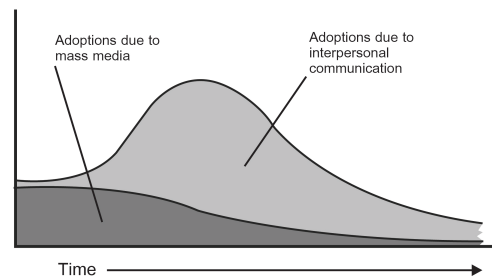
The Bass forecasting model (figure 5) illustrates the relative influence of face-to-face communication over mass media over time for new innovations. While impersonal marketing spreads information about new innovations, conversations spread adoption of those innovations - it is only through conversation with people we know and trust who successfully adopted the

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innovation and give credible reassurance that we adopt. While this is not true for those individuals in the innovator and early adopter categories since those categories are full of individuals who are okay with higher risk in return for the potential of higher reward, this is not the case for most individuals. This is traditionally overcome by the use of opinion leader tactics and was behind the instinctual desire to invest in opinion leader work within our group, with the writing and release of the initial whitepaper and multiple other pieces in the works.

Getting Results

While we've seen success in the idea creation process and in initial interest and uptake, getting to change will be an uphill battle. Looking at our work through a lens of critical race theory (CRT) will help us understand what we are up against and why getting to results will be so difficult.

CRT tells us that racism is endemic. Some scholars go as far as to say it is permanent. While the premise of our work is that we can design the future disappearance of systems of oppression, racism and other forms of oppression are indeed endemic today. White supremacy, patriarchy, capitalism, heteronormativity, ableism, and other biases are alive and well in of the world of design, in the context and communities in which we will work, in the organizations with whom we will partner, and even within ourselves. On a daily basis we find ways that our biases and the power of hegemonic systems has manifested itself in the tools we are creating and the work that we do. Since these systems are at work in everything at all times, it means that if we are serious about working towards equity, it can't be simply a part of what we do. It can't be a work stream, or a department. Equity must be at the core of our work, and at the core of the

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work our partners do. It is not design done in an equitable way, but the manifestation of equity as design and through design.   Equity is a verb, a way of being, speaking, doing, and thinking that we must all commit to.

My personal journey in the creation of equityXdesign has really highlighted the pervasiveness of systems of oppression and hegemonic ways of thinking. In discussing colonized minds, Pablo Freire (2000) noted "one of the gravest obstacles to the achievement of liberation is that oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge human beings consciousness." (p. 36) Simply adding additional people to an organization is not the answer to issues of equity. We are all on a spectrum of awareness of the impact of the dominant culture to our understanding of the world and we all bring our own baggage to these conversations. The developmental journey for people of color may require different approaches and supports than that of white people, and the intersectional nature of identity leads to a number of further segmenting populations that we will need to support differentially.

Alongside with identities, differentiating entry points is important to consider. I needed an academic mental model (CRT) that would allow me an entry point to critically assess my lived reality. It wasn't until I had the academic space to explore issues of race, power and privilege that I was able to start to see the world in ways that made me question and want to take action towards equity. It is because of this tenet around the endemic nature of systems of oppression that we must move forward in praxis - "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it," (Freire, 2000, p. 36) – as the only way to successfully resist the power of hegemony. It is through acting that we have the mirror for reflection and in reflection that we determine alternate ways of acting.

There is an emotional component to waking up – realizing you have been living in a reality that you couldn't see, that the forces of white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism have been at play, that you were and continue to be complicit. This realization is painful and disempowering – until you latch on to taking action that empowers you, and gives you a way forward. You must believe that you are a designer and have agency to identify the ways inequity has been designed into being and redesign it. The act of being a designer helps you believe it to be true if you don't feel it at the beginning.

My identity journey merged with my journey in building equityXdesign illustrates this relationship. I helped write the premise "racism and inequity are products of design. They can be redesigned. We are all designers." Yet, I continue to refer to myself as not a designer. I struggle with reclaiming or redefining the conception of designer implicit in traditional definitions of the word. Questions emerge around who gets to use that title, who gets to decide, what is design, what does design expertise or experience consist of, or if everyone is a designer is anyone a designer, and my ability to answer them for myself.

This also reinforces the idea that words have great power. The word designer has the power to give permission or take it away. Words influence values beliefs, actions, how we interpret reality and what we think is possible for the future. We must be intentional about the words we use.

Through the tenet of interest convergence, CRT tells us that individual's act in ways that are self-serving, and that their interests must be served for them to take action. This has repercussions for us as we attempt to build a business model and/or fundraise for this work. Individuals and organizations will only hire us when it is in their interest to do

so. Because of the political climate, it is currently "in style" to be focusing on issues of equity. Do people want to work with us because it will make them look good, or are they really interested in doing the hard, long work to more towards equity, even if it means a personal loss of power, comfort, time, or resources?

CRT requires the critique and displacement of a number of false dominant culture ideologies, many of which are embedded in traditional design methodologies.   The idea of meritocracy, that the best idea from the best person will naturally rise to the top; The idea of an objective designer, which doesn't allow us to identify and account for biases that may transfer to the process; The idea of colorblindness in the creation of a process that is itself color blind, with no explicit tool or step for sussing out racial components or issues of power and privilege generally. If people are steeped in these beliefs and society is built around these beliefs, the equityXdesign process needs to both correct for them while simultaneously working to disabuse individuals of them. This is a large load for a process to carry.

At the core, equity issues are adaptive challenges. We are converting what was previously a technical tool into a tool that can be used in adaptive work. We are simultaneously spurring individuals to do work both on their identity development and in adult development through their interaction with this tool. This kind of work is full of discomfort and distress. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) tells us that we need to regulate the distress so as to not overwhelm individuals but maintaining sufficient tension to maintain urgency.

The episodic nature of our work over the last few months has been due to the emotional journey each of the three of us is on individual and our shared journey. There

were times where the distress was simply too great, and we were unable to get work done. The times the stress was in the target range, those where the bursts of creation we saw. We will have to continue to figure out how to manage the distress with our collaborators as well.

Implications for equityXdesign

Thought leadership

The Bass Forecasting model introduced in the Getting Traction section of the analysis indicates that, for new innovations, adoption comes from conversations with trusted individuals. While impersonal marketing spreads information of new innovations, the way that equityXdesign will gain traction is through relationships. The three of us are engaging in the work of creating and disseminating equityXdesign with fairly extensive networks already in place. The question then becomes one of how we best leverage what we have accumulated over our careers while continuing to grow our connections. The most efficient way to do this will be to solidify ourselves as thought leaders in this emerging space at the intersection of equity and design. We must strategically think about investing our resources, at this point namely time, in this area. Speaking at conferences with broad audiences and continuing to write and publish our latest thinking on the subject must be priorities. We also need to be thinking about collaborations moving forward through this lens, identifying those with the most clout in the sector and who can help us scale our reach exponentially.

Who is our best customer?

Aside from who can help us scale our reach, we need to be intentional about our initial set of clients. We know we need organizations that have a clear and deep commitment to equity and the power of design methodologies. We need that commitment to authentically exist at the top of the organization. We need them to have some tolerance for risk and ambiguity and be excited about co-creation with us, not just

be looking for a solution. They need to understand and want someone to work through an adaptive challenge with them, and not be looking for a technical fix.

The intensive nature of this work means that we are constrained by our own capacity as individuals. As we continue forward, we will need to be intentional about the way we increase our organizational capacity. Since we don't have, and will likely never have, a turnkey "solution," we will need to source collaborators that share our core values and that have experience and expertise in equity work and design. We will have to share our thinking and tools and create the conditions for them to be full co-creators of this new process, both with us and the clients they are tasked to work with.

Proxy measures of success

Scaling our impact goes further than simply reach of the idea. We also want to go for depth and sustainability, ensuring that the work we do and the process we create leads to long-term meaningful movement towards equity. We will soon need to have an opinion or at least begin to test ideas for measuring progress and showing success. While initial clients will be chosen specifically for their disinterest in traditional measures, for us to continuously improve the effectiveness of our tools and for our process to gain traction at a wider scale, we will need to have measures. It would be wise to look at current engagements with an eye towards trackable changes with plans to begin small scale testing of potential measurement protocols in the near future.

Identity and Intersectionality

The fact that we are three women of color leading this work is, we believe, an incredible asset and part of the reason the work has progressed as it has to date. We must also, however, be aware of the impact our identities will have on our success. Women

face a number of manifestations of "glass ceiling" effects while women of color face an even more impeding level of barriers due to the interaction of sexism with racism referred to as "concrete wall" or "sticky floor" effects (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010, p. 172). These issues are a result of a complex interaction of factors, with stereotypes of females and stereotypes of successful managers being in conflict. Women are caught in a lose-lose situation with violations of either stereotype (female or strong manager) leading to negative evaluations (Ryan, Haslam, Hersby and Bongiorno, 2011, p. 471).

These issues will be important for us to be aware of, particularly since our services will be requested by individuals and organizations that may recognize they hold biases but will not have yet exposed, understood or developed ways of combatting them. My greatest fear in reading the literature surrounding women of color and leadership, however, is the idea of a "Glass Cliff" - the tendency to appoint a woman to a leadership position in times of crisis, in positions that are high risk where they have the potential of being set up for failure (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010, p. 172). Ryan, Haslam, Hersby and Bongiorno (2011) conducted a study that "suggested that women may be favored in times of poor performance, not because they are expected to improve the situation, but because they are seen to be good people managers and can take the blame for organizational failure." (p. 470) While this research is specific to leadership inside organizations, I believe it can also apply to consultant relationships. Work addressing issues of bias, identity and equity is already emotionally charged and full of conflict. We complicate that with messy, ambiguous and adaptively focused work, where the "process is the product" with a lack of metrics to measure progress and success. This

combination, I believe, makes us prime targets to be pulled into glass cliff situations if we are not vigilant.

This is tied to a concern we have around sustainability. If the emotional toll this work has taken on me personally over the last year is any indication of the future of this work, which I have every indication to believe it is, this is going to be a long hard road. As three women of color, we must intentionally and organizationally create structures, policies, and supports to sustain us in this work. As Audre Lorde (1988) said, "caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation (and that is an act of political warfare)." (p. 131) Framing self-care in this way will allow us to not only maintain ourselves in this work, but also incorporate and emphasize the role of self-care with those who take up equityXdesign work.

Lastly, the parallel and intersecting roles of my journey in both identity development and adult development to engage in useful equity-based work lead to two implications for the development of the equityXdesign process moving forward. First, if the visceralness and freshness of my own realizations and development have been the fodder that has led to the creation of tools and aspects of the equityXdesign process, will the development process be hindered if and when I am no longer struggling with issues of identity and adult development but find myself fully situated in the final stages of the developmental process? I believe that my ability to create tools currently stems from my ability to capitalize on my own recent experiences struggling through, feeling and dealing with equity related issues. My noviceness and freshness is an asset. As time goes on and I become more of an expert, this could be a barrier to the continued development of useful tools. It will be important for us to find ways to maintain this freshness and

closeness to the developmental experience on our design team. Secondly, there is a

question as to the prerequisite nature of identity development and adult development to

engage in truly equitable design work. Is it necessary that an individual be in a self-

authoring adult development stage and Integrated/Autonomous Identity development

stage to design equitably? If so, how are we ensuring the equityXdesign process pushes

people in their development? If not, how will the process account for conflicts or blind

spots that will exist for individuals in other stages of development?

<center>**Implications for Self**</center>

Personal work as part of the work

Because the things we create are limited and influenced by who we are as people, it is imperative for me to continue to intentionally prioritize and make space for my personal development and growth, the development of my identity, understanding of my biases and surfacing of my assumptions, and I need to see this as a part of my work not in addition to or instead of my work. With limited resources, this raises questions about how best to accomplish this task. What is the appropriate amount of time to spend? How do you know if the time spent is "working"? Or is that fundamentally the wrong way to think about it?

Self-Care

I now weigh what I weighed when I was 6 months pregnant with my daughter. This weight is a physical manifestation of the emotional toll my personal development journey has had on me emotionally and psychologically over the course of the last year. I remember feeling utterly overwhelmed with the amount of information I was consuming through books, articles and documentaries about the pervasiveness and impact of systems of oppression. I was reading about it, writing about it, presenting about it, thinking about it, and talking about it. This leads me to some serious wonderings about self-care particularly in relationship to information gathering. There is a right balance of thinking and action and I need to find it.

I had a particularly difficult time realizing that I was for so long a pawn in the system, that my mind was and is colonized. My attempts to rid myself of all manifestations of hegemonic thinking and internalized oppression as quickly as possible

<center>95</center>

led to overload, burnout and exhaustion, but were and continue to be driven by urgency and fear surrounding its impact. There is a need to find ways to manage all of the emotions involved with identity development - fear and resentment, anger at myself, frustration with the system. The hyper vigilance and criticality with which I now analyze my thoughts, actions and decisions is unsustainable and ultimately may be counterproductive.

Bias Toward Action

My default mode of operation is to have a bias toward action. This leaves little time for reflection and likely a manifestation or adaptation I have made to the hegemonic systems of being that value and prioritize production and efficiency. While a bias towards action is a reason we chose design thinking as the core structure upon which to build equityXdesign, we acknowledge that equity work fundamentally requires reflection and slowing down. I had previously avoided intentional reflection because I felt like it was a barrier to or got in the way of getting the "real work" done. My time in Ed.L.D. has shown me the power of having structures for reflection. I fear as I re-enter the "real world" I will revert to my natural patterns of work, so creating systems and protocols and routines to ensure I continue to invest in reflection will be important.

Implications for Sector

Reframe Equity to be The Work

If organizations truly value equity they need to fundamentally embed equity in their mission, vision, and guiding documents. It can't simply be a strand of their work or a lens they evaluate their work with. They must fundamentally shift they way they see, discuss and act on equity from a strand of the work or a layer of the work to the work itself. They need to make tangible their priority and value around equity by figuring out how to manifest for their employees a priority around their own personal development. This means adjusting job responsibilities to allow individuals the time and space to engage in activities around their identity and adult development journeys, creating the opportunities to develop the relationships necessary for the personal work to occur, and providing experiences or suggestions for how to engage in developmental work.

There is also a need to embed equity in each and every person's job role, and not as an additional bullet but integrated into fundamental job responsibilities. This shift will eliminate the need for or fundamentally change the job responsibilities of the individual with the words equity, diversity or inclusion in their job title from implementer to capacity builder.

Given the strain of personal development work and equity work more generally, organizations will have to figure out how to acknowledge the emotional toll and help with employee self-care while continuing to move work forward. Organizations will also have to assess the way they measure, define or prioritize things like efficiency and progress.

Organizations will need to learn how to screen for employees that share their values. This does not necessarily mean screening up front for individuals who have engaged in deep identity development work but screening for values around equity and openness to engage in developmental work. I started the Ed.L.D. program not identifying as an "equity" person, but was a point in my developmental trajectory where I was ready for the right experience to push me in ways I didn't know I needed. Determining a way to measure potential, coachability, a desire to grow and change, and a bias to action will be crucial.

Organizing for Design and Innovation

Most traditional organizations are not designed to encourage a design thinking innovation approach to problem identification and solution testing. Structural changes will need to be made to allow for relationships and closer proximity between staff and the communities they serve. Siloed and linear implementation and execution ways of working need to give way to iterative and exploratory team-based ways of working. A culture that allows for the sharing and presenting of ideas before they are fully formed, of creating prototypes and running tests to learn how they might work, of acknowledging the expertise and necessity of co-creating with end users will be necessary.

More specifically, the rapid cycle testing that is a core part of the design process requires having regular access to a diverse set of potential users. They must be invested in your design process and be in search of an actionable solution while also understanding the low-resolution nature of the prototypes they will be interacting with. I had this with my cohort and the broader Ed.L.D. network, which made it easy to test my work at each stage of development. Organizations will need to figure out how to provide

their employee-designers a way to access a similarly diverse but mission-aligned group of people to crowd source feedback and ideas and test prototypes as they develop their designs.

Organizations will also need to prioritize random interactions, and provide both time and funding for individuals to be in a variety of places around a variety of people to engage in informal conversations. The developmental trajectory for equityXdesign has included structured and planned work sprints, but we have had some of our greatest breakthroughs during our informal times together - during meals, in random texts or quick phone calls. The genesis of this project was at a convening we each attended with no agenda or motive other than meeting interesting people. The times we have had with no external deadlines has allowed us to read, talk, share and start to mold our theory and philosophy while impending deadlines and events leads us to produce artifacts for specific users, contexts, and situations; both modes of working that were necessary to move the work forward. Organizations will have to find a way to balance working to produce on deadline with having space to think, play and explore.

Redefining progress and success measurements

One of the greatest hindrances to the shifts required to make equity the work and organize for design and innovation are the ways the organization measures, implicitly or explicitly, progress and success. If progress is no longer assumed to be linear, what does it look like for organizations to plan and track their work? What will it take to shift cultures to a place where project plan benchmarks are around learning, cycles and tests versus executing on an initial plan?

We must also investigate how we give individuals the autonomy and flexibility to make moves - both physically and philosophically. As an entrepreneur, I have complete autonomy over my schedule. When I felt I needed to engage with my ethnic history I was able to spend a month out of the country. When I felt I needed face time with my co-founders, my cohort mates, or other collaborators, I booked a flight. When I felt the need to question all the assumptions and decisions I had made in my work on [Blank]Schools, I was able to hit pause on running programming to do so. When I felt the pull to pivot from my work on [Blank]Schools to equityXdesign, I shifted my attention. How might we create the conditions for all staff to make similar moves? How do we make visible the systems of oppression that are replicated in the organization and put systems in place to dismantle them and value that investment of time and resources?

While we need to continue to have metrics around the success of the "end product," we also need to broaden our definition of what "end products" could be. If organizations are to truly internalize our core belief that "Process is Product", products will include things like personal growth, strength of relationships internally and externally, shifts in mindsets and increased fluency with equity and design tools. We know that organizations prioritize what they measure and track. The creation of the Implicit Bias Test (Greenwald et al, 1998) shows us that it is indeed possible to measure and track changes on seemingly impossible to quantify things like a persons implicit biases. This means, however, that we must seek out partnerships with researchers working to create the kinds of measurement tools that we are seeking to employ. Looking at the evolution of the non-cognitive assessment movement may also provide

insights into how best to move this work forward.

Conclusion

"The struggle is inner: Chicano, indio, American Indian, mojado, mexicano, immigrant Latino, Anglo in power, working class Anglo, Black, Asian--our psyches resemble the bordertowns and are populated by the same people. The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in outer terrains. Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the "real" world unless it first happens in the images in our heads."
—Gloria Anzaldua, Borderlands/La Frontera

"Tu naciste aquí," my grandmother informed me as we sat in the waiting room on the 6th floor of the Centro Medico in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. Less than 24 hours earlier I had gotten a succinct phone call from my dad. Mima, my great grandmother, was being rushed to the hospital. It didn't look good. The next flight out was at 10pm. So there I was, waiting for the 30-minute window of visiting hours in the ICU so that I could see my great grandmother for what I feared could be the last time.

If I believed in such things I would say she did this on purpose. Less than a week from the deadline for submitting this capstone, the top of my list of things to do that weekend had been to write this conclusion. I had been unsure about how I would end this capstone, and then my great grandmother brought me, literally, to where I began.

In chatting about my great-grandmother and my need to finish this capstone, Caroline used the phrase "You are your ancestors' wildest dreams." This phrase stuck with me since I had visited Studio BE, the art studio of Brandan "Bmike" Odums in New Orleans, in which there is an iconic image of a young woman wearing the phrase on her shirt. I wanted so badly to embrace the phrase, to believe that I too was my ancestor's wildest dreams, but I couldn't. There was something that would not let me fully embrace it. And now, sitting with my ancestors, I began to understand why.

The more I learn about my ancestors, about the long line of incredible women centered around Mima - her mother, my mother - the less distance I feel between their stories and my own. The more I learn about the history of my country, the more I see the parallels between my family's story and the story of my people. And now that I have written the story of my internal struggle I see how it reflects the struggle of oppressed people.   It is clear to me how the separation that had existed - a separation from the history of my self, my race, and my ancestors - was fueling my oppression. I was uncomfortable with the phrase because I didn't know what my ancestor's dreams could possibly have been, but now I do.

I may be my ancestors' wildest dreams, but I would go a step further. I know my ancestors, and that allows me to have the wildest of dreams.

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Appendix A: Personal Identity Journey Landmarks

Date	Milestone	Notes
January 21-23, 2016	Meet Caroline at 4.0 Community Summit	
March 4-5, 2016	Go to DC to talk more with Caroline, meet Michelle	
April 23-26, 2016	EDC Planning Meeting, NOLA	How we were going to work together, relationship building
April/May 2016	Write CRT Paper and share	David (Alyssa Murphy, Tom/David NEP), Susie, Ela (Nicola Chin)
June 4-5, 2016	Truancy Task Force Event, DC	Discourse Checks
June 13th ish	Start writing white paper	Framework/Beliefs
July 16, 2016	Empathy Training for Sheff Coalition in Hartford	meta-empathy
July 27, 2016	Big Picture Learning Conference Presentation	meta-empathy
August 2, 2016	Ed.L.D. Network Virtual Session	Meta-empathy; Samantha Cohen, Flamboyan
August 10-11	d.School Collaboration Day	Produced v1 of beliefs and design principles
	Flamboyan Convening 1	Framework, meta-empathy
September 12-16	Transcend Collaborative Convening 1	Framework, Equity Pauses
October 3	Flamboyan Team Meetings	
October 5	Mindtrust Training	Framework,
October 6	First Monthly Virtual Happy Hour	Test Community Building

October	City Bridge Innovation Fellows	Adjusted User Needs Statement
October 22	Hartford Design Convening	Transformation Cards
November 16, 2016	Medium Piece Drops	2/3/17: 3.9K views, 1k read, 103 recommends
November 14	IDEO Presentation	
November 15	Co-working with David and Catherine	
November 17	DLEF Problem Definition Session	
November 2016	Flamboyan Convening 2	
January 10-17	PRWI at University of Puerto Rico	
January 20	Flamboyan equityXdesign crash course test	Crash Course Test 1
January 30	Beta Test Cohort Invitation to Mailing List	28 Responses in 1 week
February 2	Monthly Virtual Happy Hour	
February 9-11	4.0 Community Summit	Crash Course Test 2
February	Flamboyan IB Session 2	
February 18-19	Ed.L.D. Affinity Group Meeting	Crash Course Test 3 13 sign-ups, 9 attend in-person meeting
March 6-9	SXSWedu	Crash Course Test 4

Appendix B: Meta-Empathy Map Version 1

after the interview

Think   Feel

What did you say and
do during the
interview? What were   Think   Feel
you thinking and
Feeling? How might
that impact how you
interpret the
interview?   Say   Do

Say   Do
    during the
    interview
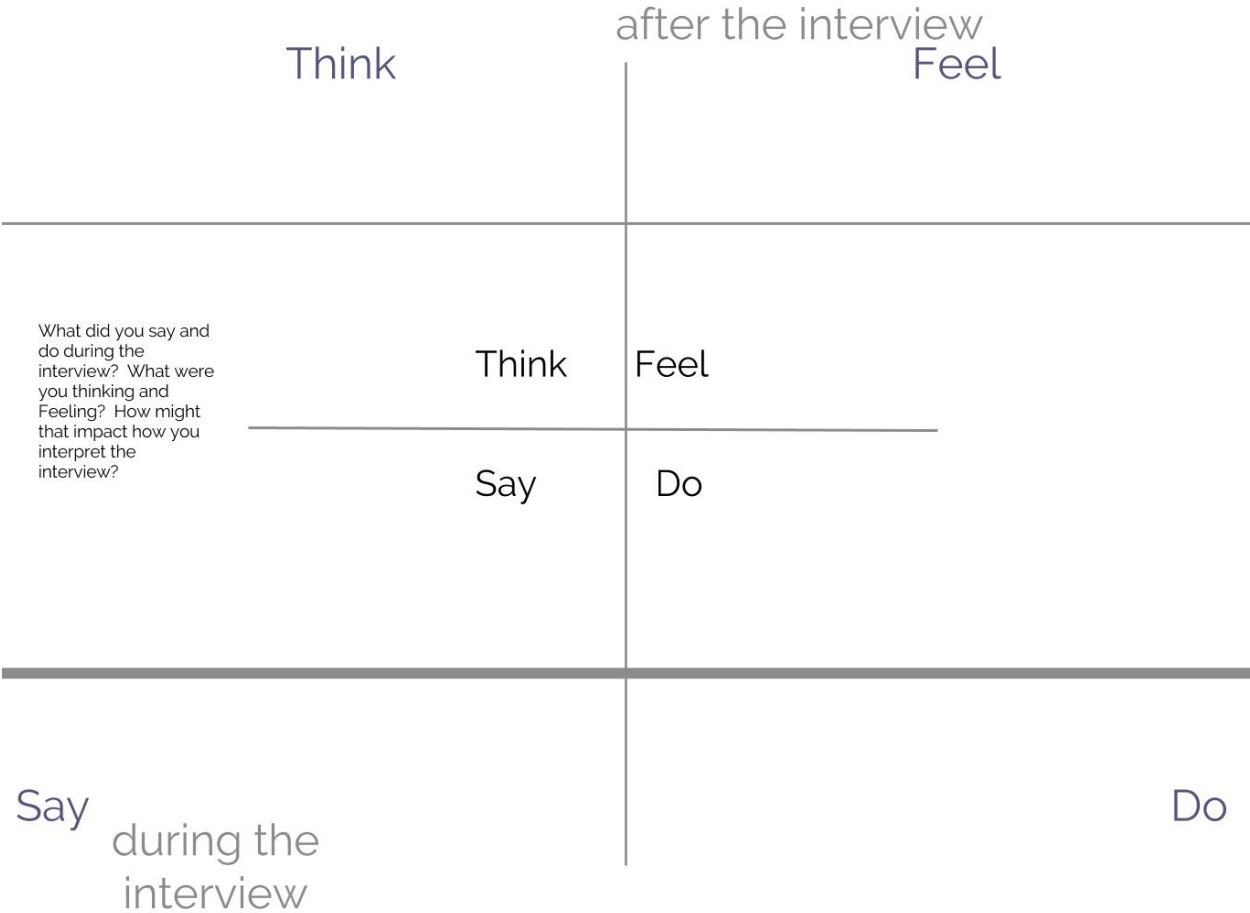
Appendix C: Crash Course

equityXdesign
crash course

EQUITY X DESIGN
COLLABORATIVE

Racism and inequity are products of design.
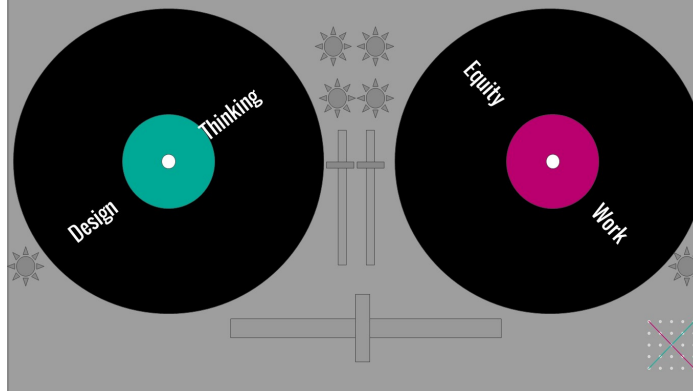
They can be redesigned.

equityXdesign remixes the wokeness of racial equity work with the power of design thinking

4

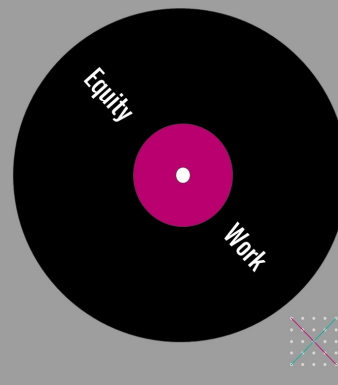# The Remix: Pump up the Volume

Design Thinking

Equity Work

The Remix: Pump up the Volume

Track Listing

1. Surface Identity Development

2. Engage with Self and Others

3. Historical Context Matters

4. Naming Inequity

5. Language Matters

Equity Work

The Remix: Pump up the Volume
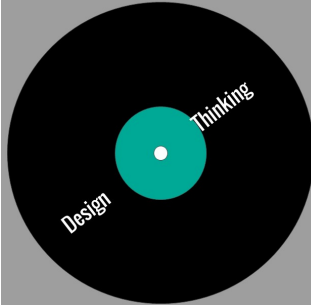
Track Listing

1. Let's Get Closer To Our Users

2. Go Deep with Real Problems

3. Push to Build

4. Let's Get Started, Anyway!

5. Creating a New Reality

NOTICE

REFLECT

EMPATHIZE

DEFINE

IDEATE

PROTOTYPE

TEST
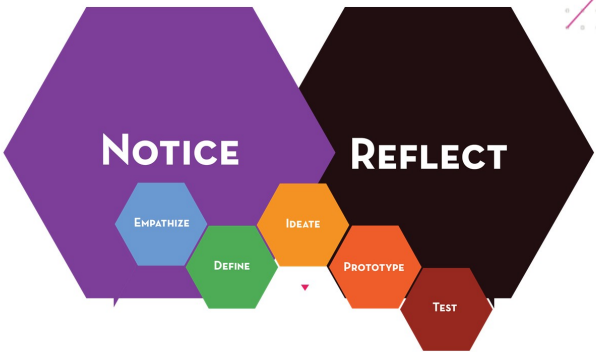
d. HASSO PLATTNER Institute of Design at Stanford

d. K12 LAB NETWORK

Uncertainty / patterns / insights

Clarity / Focus

Research

Concept

Design

EQUITY X DESIGN FRAMEWORK

We believe in ...

Historical Context (See)

Radical Inclusion (Be Seen)

Process as Product (Foresee)

Which requires us to ...

Design at the margins

Start with your self

Cede Power

Make the invisible visible

Speak to the future

EQUITY X DESIGN
COLLABORATIVE

10

EQUITY X DESIGN FRAMEWORK

SEE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT MATTERS
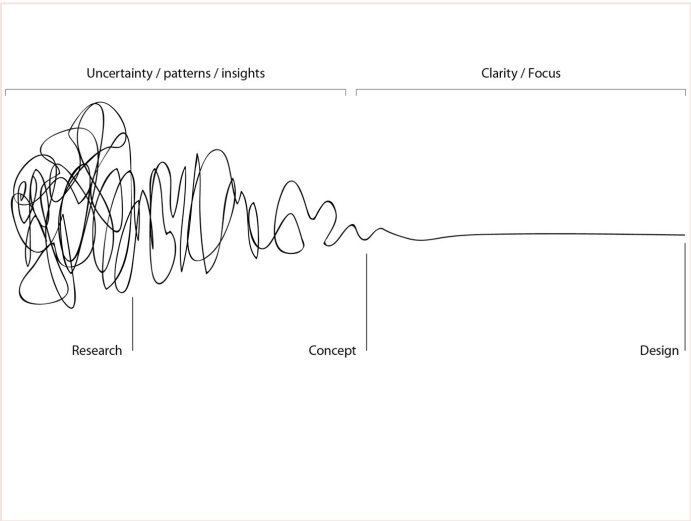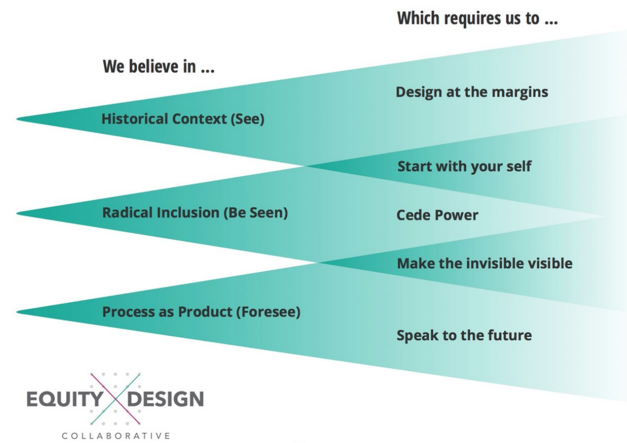The past is present in people, things, and systems of oppression. The past was designed, and the present is being designed. We are all designers.

BE SEEN: RADICAL INCLUSION
The problems of equity work—racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, etc.—are rooted in our distance, our single stories, and our habits of exclusion.

Radical inclusion is the intentional act of interrupting inequity where it lives—our separations. Recognizing the multiplicity of stories, truths, their proximities, their intersections, and the people who own the stories are requisites of equity design work. This is radical inclusion.

FORESEE: PROCESS AS PRODUCT
Equity is a verb. It is the process, not an end point. When designing, both the ends and the means matter. We can't model the future on the past; we need to live the future we want today.

5 DESIGN PRINCIPLES
In order to design for equity, we must:

1. **Design at the margins:** We design at the edge of society; solutions at the margins work for all. Innovations based in equity diffuse inward from the bleeding edge.
2. **Start with yourself:** Our identities (race, gender, upbringing, social status, home language, etc.) create our lens for the world and how we make sense of it. We have to be aware of this lens, and the biases it brings with it, as we design.
3. **Cede power:** Everyone has power. There is often dissonance between who we are, who we aspire to be, and how we behave. This reconciliation is both uncomfortable and discomfiting. This dissonance and discomfort reveals what power needs to be ceded.
4. **Make the invisible visible:** Implicit biases, power dynamics and invisible structures all govern relationships with people in our organizations, schools and governments. By making them visible, we can assess the impact on people and create a space for reflection and repair.
5. **Speak the future, design the future:** There is insidious power in language and discourse to influence and control ideas, beliefs, actions and ultimately culture. In order to write a different story, we have to use different language. We need to replace our current hegemonic discourse.

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What to Expect

- All 7 stages of the design thinking process

- Examples of equity based protocols

- Mindsets and concrete tools

- An incomplete, non linear process

- A process not totally authentic

- A taste of process, issues to think about, tools

12

equity X design

A toolkit for equity work

Start with your self.

1.1 Self-Interview

What are your current thoughts and reactions to the prompt and this exercise?

1.2 Analysis

What might that be telling you about yourself? What should you be aware of or do differently as we engage in this process?

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Start with your self.

1.3 The Pre-Interview

Jot down notes as you imagine an interview you might have with your partner.

1.4 Analysis

What assumptions, biases or stereotypes might be at play? What do you think you already know about your partner? What might you be projecting onto your partner?

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Step Back: Permissions and invitations.

0.1 Your why

Why are you interested in engaging in this process generally, and specifically in working with your partner?

0.2 Give/Get

What might you have to offer your partner in engaging in this process together? What are you hoping to receive?

Gain empathy.

1.5 Interview 1

Notes from your first interview

1.6 Reflection

Prepare for your second interview. What thread do you want to follow deeper? What do you want to know more about?

Take a minute to silently reflect and prepare for next interview

Switch roles and repeat interview

Meta empathy.

1.7 Interview 2

Notes from your second interview

1.8 You during the interview

What did you notice about yourself as you interviewed your partner?

Switch roles and repeat interview

Switch roles and repeat interview

Meta empathy.

1.7 Interview 2

Notes from your second interview

1.8 You during the interview

What did you notice about yourself as you interviewed your partner?

User Needs Statement

2.1 Capture Findings

Needs: Things they are trying to do (use verbs)

Insights: Learnings to leverage in your design (make inferences)

2.2 User Needs Statement

_____ needs a way
　　　(user)

to _____
　　　(user need)

because _____

_____.
　　　(insight)

Make Power Dynamics visible.

2.3 How will you interact with each other?

User-Centered Design ●————————————● **User-Created Design**

Co-Design

stakeholders consulted

stakeholders part of design team

stakeholders as designers

Make Power Dynamics visible.

2.3 How will you interact with each other?

User-Centered Design	Co-Design	User-Created Design
stakeholders consulted	stakeholders part of design team	stakeholders as designers

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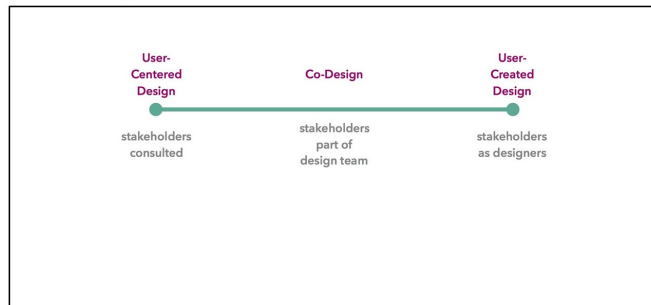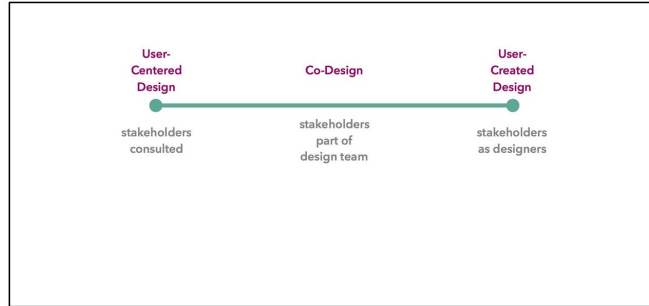
Ideas fuel oppression.

Ideas govern our relationships.

They **manifest** in our being and our world.

Idea One: lighter skinned people are more worthy of love, power, affection, wealth, grace, and dignity than darker skinned people

Idea Two: male people are smarter, more trustworthy, better leaders, more responsible, and more honest than female people

Idea Three: richer people are smarter, more trustworthy, more responsible, and more worthy of aspiration than poorer people

Idea Four: christians are more trustworthy, more responsible, more justified in their violence, than non-christians

Idea Five: heterosexual people are more responsible, more natural, more worthy of love, dignity, and humanity than non-heterosexual people.

Idea Six: the gender binary and those who conform to it are more responsible, more natural, more worthy of love, dignity, and humanity than people who do not conform.

Think about the experience of your partner.

What ideas are at play?

Think about your own experience.

What ideas are at play?

Contextualize the need.

2.4 What's at play?

Ideological Oppression: The idea at the core of any oppressive system that one group is somehow better than another, and in some measure has the right to control the other group. Oppressive ideas are rooted in habitual mistreatment of people such that it is normalized. *Ex: racism, sexism, classism etc.*

Systemic Oppression: a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate group inequity. *Ex: racism plays out across education, health care, incarceration, unemployment, etc. for groups of people fitting the out social identity group.*

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Contextualize the need.

2.4 What's at play?

Internalized Oppression occurs when people experiencing mistreatment adopt and subscribe to oppressive ideas and rationalize their own mistreatment. *Ex. A person of color believes that they cannot succeed academically.*

Interpersonal Oppression occurs when a person adopts and subscribes to oppressive ideas and uses them to justify the mistreatment of others. *Ex. A teacher of color has low expectations and accepts low quality work from her students of color.*

Institutional Oppression refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, systematically mistreat people within a social identity group, solely based on the person's membership in the social identity group. ... Institutionalized oppression is a matter of result regardless of intent. *Ex. Schools remain segregated and parent choice is made policy.*

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Contextualize the need.

2.4 What's at play?

Internalized:

Which oppressive ideas are playing in the background?

Interpersonal:

Is your partner experiencing mistreatment?

Institutional:

What is the collective experience of your partner's identity groups - Are there disparities in outcomes intentionally or unintentionally perpetuated through institutions?

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Contextualize the need.

2.5 Define the user need statement

_____ needs a way to _____ because
    (user)   (user
need)

_____
    (insight to leverage in solution)

but/and _____.
    (level(s) of oppression at play)

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Make Power Dynamics visible.

3.1 Visualize Power

User-Centered Design	Co-Design	User-Created Design
stakeholders consulted	stakeholders part of design team	stakeholders as designers

3.2 Idea Decision-Making

Who gets to decide what ideas move forward? How?

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Ideate: generate alternatives to test

3.3 Sketch 3-6 ways to meet need across multiple levels

_____
(user need statement)

Construction	Deconstruction	Transformation

3.4 Feedback

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Discourse Check.

3.5 Reflect on the way you are discussing the problem and solution

How can you shift your discourse from Hegemonic discourse I towards transformative discourse II?

Discourse I deals with. . . .	Discourse II deals with. . . .
Singular truths	Multiple stories
"The change process"	The desired circumstances
Improving what exists	Changing something significant
Techniques, methods, and content	Learning and school relationships
Symptoms	Causes
The way things are	What could be
Blaming others for not meeting our standards	Questioning whether our standards are hindrances
Discipline and control	Alienation and resistance
Competency	Relevance
The familiar	The uncomfortable
Answers and solutions	Dilemmas and mysteries
Information transfer	Knowledge creation
Ability and merit	Privilege and oppression
Dropouts	Pushouts
Reproduction	Transformation
The work of adults	The learning and experience of students
World-class standards	Re-creating our society
Limited time and ability	Getting started anyway

Chart Developed by Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, 2003. The contents of this chart are derived from: Eugene Eubanks, Ralph Parish and Dianne Smith, "Changing the Discourse in Schools." In Race, Ethnicity, and Multiculturalism: Policy and Practice, ed. Peter Hall. New York: Routledge, 1997.

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Iterate based on feedback.

3.6 Reflect and generate a new solution

Sketch big idea, note details if necessary

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Unintended Consequences.

3.7 Intention and impact are not the same thing

What may be the potential unintended consequences of implementing this solution?

40

Build and Test.

4 Build your solution

Make something people
can interact with.

[Not Here!]

5 Share and Reflect

What worked…	What could be improved…
? Questions…	**! Ideas…**

Uncertainty / patterns / insights   Clarity / Focus

"This sucks!"

"A-ha!"

"I got this."

Research

"F*$k Concept This!"

"No I don't!"

"I'm done"

Design

"I suck!"

Thank Your Partner

Feedback Please!

Follow Us for Updates

🐦 **@multiplyequity**

ⓕ **Equity Design Collaborative**

Appendix D: Flamboyan Adjusted Meta-Empathy Worksheet

Empathy Interview

Step 1: The Empathy Interview

Interviewer & Partner record what they hear and observe in the interview. What does the interviewee say and do?

Interviewee Says…	Interviewee Does…

Step 2: Interviewer Reflects on Self Post-Interview

Interviewer Reflects

What was my approach?/What did I do?	What language did I use?/What did I say?	How might I have been interpreted by the interviewee?

Step 3: Interviewer and Partner Reflect on Interviewee Post-Interview

What might the interviewee been thinking?	What emotions might the interviewee have been feeling?

Appendix E: National Convening Debrief Notes

November 2016

What did we aim to do
● Give feedback on landscape assessment process
● Support fellows to move through design thinking process, including problem definition, ideate and prototype stages
● Set fellows up to continue prototyping in their communities
● Deepen their FE content knowledge through Denver presentation and observation
● Build stronger teams
● Encourage cross team collaboration
● Give teams more work time
● Make logistics seamless
● Facilitate content well
● Reflect on identity, especially race, and its impact on work dynamics

What actually happened
● Fellows received feedback on their landscape assessment process
● Led fellows through problem definition and & ideation. Fellows planned their prototypes.
● Fellows set up to start their prototypes
● Deepened their knowledge of a systems approach to FE through Denver's practice
● Teams are closer to performing & are prepared to collaborate in person.
● Teams received a lot of guided work time.
● Logistics were good w/ some hiccups related to observations in Denver
● Content was facilitated well but timestamps were off
● Reflection on identity was not deep enough

Why were there differences
● We spent a lot more time on problem definition than we realized. Didn't do a good job of timing out the sessions, which left less time for prototype and test stages.
● Fellows weren't as prepared to prototype as we planned. We'll have to adjust our coaching calls to provide more support for this stage of design thinking.
● Our objective was broader than the actual content. Knowledge of FE is massive and vague - we probably should have narrowed the focus specifically to district/systemic FE programming and assessment (We should keep this in mind for Convening 3)
● Only devoting an hour to team-building isn't strategic. We need to build out more time in-session, but also provide more support when fellows are back in their cities. Also, fellows came into the experience with different relationships, but our supports aren't differentiated to respond to the different levels of support needed
● We didn't have all necessary details from Denver (specifically on observation activities - home visits) in order to support and ensure smooth and seamless logistics
● We cut down on the amount of time spent on race/equity identity by design, and we shouldn't have

What worked
● Laura did a great job setting up psychological safety as a framework which allowed for exchange of feedback in and across teams
● Hosting the meeting in a facility that had a cafe allowed us to be efficient with time
● Outside speakers were on message

● Fellows leaned into landscape assessment presentations; consultancy protocol worked well
● We stayed on time
● Fellows enjoyed observations and social opportunities
● Fellows report that they got significant work done
What didn't
● Schedule was too jam-packed
● Some fellows reported they did not get to know other fellows
● Hard to keep fellows attention during long work periods; a lot of people stepping out for work related emergencies
● Fellows self reporting on comfort with design thinking shows a broad range- we need to differentiate a bit more during work periods or in individual calls
Why
● List of objectives for the convening was already rigorous and then we realized fellows would need to move through the entire DT process in order to set up their prototyping stage.
What would you do differently next time
● Schedule more down time (break and social)
● Add another day (Monday) or use all day Thursday and have fellows travel Thursday evening
● Incorporate more parent and educator voice
● Differential supports for each team
● More time spent on team-building and race and equity content
● Make observations optional
Lessons
● 2.5 days is too short | 12 months might also be too short
● More time is needed for team building OR teams should convene after having done some team norming and storming
● If we continue to want fellows to perform research and prototypes at site, there needs to be a clear leader driving the team forward.
● We need to be very clear that we expect FE work to continue and grow at site, and the fellowship is a catalyst for that. Thus, teams need to identify in their application what the vessel will be for carrying forward FE work within their geography.
● Creating a psychologically safe space is critical for fellows to be able to challenge each other and get the most out of the fellowship.
● Design thinking is an important approach to doing context specific, equity work AND it is unknown and unfamiliar
● Fellows value a mix of research, practice, and observations
● More time and guidance are needed during landscape assessment phase, but fellows found the activity very useful
Questions
● What is the ideal configuration of a team for the design process for family engagement work?
● How can we be clearer (and give more explicit advice) about the ideal team makeup?
○ What should be similar/different about our approaches in working with:
■ Districts

■ Charters

■ Teacher Preparation Programs

■ Foundations

■ Non-Profits

■ Can we work with all of these actors simultaneously? Within one cohort?

○ What is the most effective composition of the team in terms of seniority?

● How long should the fellowship be—12 months, 18 months, 2 years?

● What type of pre-work (team building, landscape analysis, etc.) should fellows do before
a convening?

● What is the ideal time of year to launch a fellowship?

● Is a "fellowship" the right approach? How might a multi-series conference approach be different or better?

● Is it ideal to convene fellows as teams? As individuals?

● Should each convening be in a different location? All in the same location?

Appendix F: Feedback from DLEF Problem Definition Workshop

5. Praise for Christine Ortiz:	Response Count
	11
Skipped question	2

- *Christine provides a great resource and did a good job of having us experience the content she was sharing. It was good to use something personal to understand what she was introducing. I also really appreciate how she pushed us to think about wording the problem we want to address through our work well and thoughtfully instead of focusing on the action/solution up front. I also appreciate how she inserts the equity lens into design thinking.*

- *Good pacing.*

- *Great explanation of design thinking; Fun, struggle together in learning; and I appreciate the updates to the DT framework.*

- *Helpful.*

- *I appreciated the way that Christine walked us through the process of design thinking and contextualizing our work with the process.*

- *I'll be honest that I am assuming Christine Ortiz was the person in charge of the equity/design presentation/session. If so, I think this was one of the most powerful components of the convening in relation to our individual projects. The idea/approach was accessible but transformative. I have seen similar structures to equity/design but none were as thoughtful/creative/innovative.*

- *Love the model and idea- directly impacted my capstone by pushing my thinking. Also loved diving in with partner toolkit activity*

- *Not sure who this was.... the equityXdesign person? I am extremely familiar with HCD - design thinking and so it was good to see it introduced.*

- *The speed session through design thinking process was useful. Graphic organizer was clear. I appreciate the transparency that the EquityXDesign process is work in progress.*

- *This was the most useful part of my time during the session.*

- *Well executed workshop*

6. Push(es) for Christine Ortiz:	Response Count

- *Clarity around the goal/directions. I wasn't sure if it was intended for us to focus tool belt around our work or was the tool belt exercise meant to teach us DT as a strategy in this work with a low risk activity.*

- *How to apply the framework to education policy advocacy.*

- *I am not sure if this sits with Christine or the larger planning of our time. The sessions seemed rushed in general. It was a lot of information to take in and use in one morning. I also would have liked to have her (or someone else) directly connect what she was introducing to the big picture of the fellowship. Explicitly address why we are doing this and how it connects to Fellowship expectations. It is linked to the Capstone, but we never got a clear explanation of the capstone expectations.*

- *I suppose I'm wondering if this design system has been used in educational equity before and if so, is there an example we could reference? I felt like we were 'piloting' a system when it would have been nice to see some examples. Since we didn't follow this session up with much in terms of solid plans (I think this was probably unintentional) I would also ask we continue the work in some capacity...it would have been nice to do this under the gaze of Christine and Frances.*

- *I would have liked to spend more time considering iterations of our own work through this lens.*

- *It is essential that Whiteness, including that of Latinos, be deeply interrogated because this session oozed Whiteness, and Equity pauses don't address that issue. It's deeply problematic that this session was even presented at convening as it just reified White ways of knowing like much of the experiences at the session. And it doesn't matter that "people of color" created the session because drinking the Whiteness kool-aid happens to people of all colors. We need to move away from "big names" by assigning expertise to folks because of their elite schooling and instead focus on the people actually doing the work in responsive and equitable ways. This session felt like it was done because of the Harvard connect between the presenter and programming staff and not because it was at all beneficial to participants.*

- *It was unclear to me how the empathy interview we were asked to complete beforehand applied to our work during the session. I think the pre-reading covered much of what was presented to us. I would have liked more work time/design time.*

- *More relevance - it is hard to have design thinking be disjointed - b/c it is already abstract by design. Valuable time/real estate was given up for this.*

- *More time to understand and go deeper.*

- *PowerPoint slides could have been explained a bit more- e.g. Stanford project? I would have loved to hear more.*

- *N/A*

15. Please comment on equityXdesign (toolbelt prototype session only):	Response Count
	12
Skipped question	1

- *Comments mentioned earlier [" I wasn't sure if it was intended for us to focus toolbelt around our work or was the toolbelt exercise meant to teach us DT as a strategy in this work with a low risk activity."]*

- *Enjoyed this session very much. Really liked the premise of the Equity x Design group. However, the experience did not feel markedly different than other design thinking experiences I have had that were not focused on equity. I suspect this was a function of time but I did not feel we really got to access the equity dimensions of equityXdesign.*

- *Excellent. Like I commented above, it would have been nice to see some examples/exemplars and then follow this session up with more concrete feedback from leadership.*

- *Felt rushed. The content was helpful, but more work is needed to make the connection between equity and design theory.*

- *I found that the Equity X design was a very useful workshop because it pushed me to think about the objective of my capstone project. However, I expected more guidance in terms of how and when should we aim for different benchmarks in order to fully develop and/or implement, our project.*

- *I have done many design thinking processes, so this was a repeat for me. I did not feel a significant difference between DT and EXD.*

- *I would have liked to take this further and implement this work inside my own thinking about the work I am doing presenting and hope to be doing in the future.*

- *LOVED it as well. Thought this was one of the tightest sessions in terms of planning and the one with the most direct connect for capstone.*

- *Really interesting concept. Still don't know how to transfer what I learned to ed policy advocacy that is not school-focused*

- *The least helpful most problematic session of the convening next to the BART sessions.*

- *This was helpful for me to get my ideas out, practice empathetic listening and to learn the design process.*
- *This was very helpful and I was very eager to learn more about this design approach. I would like to spend more time with the presenter and get her to Denver.*

Appendix G: Equity Fellows Program Capstone Project Template

A. The Challenge
    1. problem/challenge and its context
    2. significance of the challenge (in light of program mission and goals)
    3. personal/professional connection to the challenge (in light of personal goals and connection to the DL Leader Framework)

B. Background: Literature and Research
    1. important dimensions/variables/factors (including the DL Leader framework)
    2. related research
    3. related projects

C. Project Approach
    1. Specific project focus/question/outcome
    2. Methods/interventions/actions
    3. logic map and theory of action (change theory)
    4. anticipated challenges and how you will address them

D. Project Tasks Timeline
    1. milestones
    2. progress reports

E. Project Deliverables
    1. initiatives/actions taken
    2. reports and publications
    3. dissemination

F. Project Evaluation
    1. evaluation question(s)
    2. success indicators (e.g., evidence of policy/practices/programs/budget changes; evidence of vision for deeper learning being adopted and/or implemented; # of students and teachers the project will impact)
    3. data collection and analysis

G. Requested Mentors for the Project (in order of preference)
    1.
    2.
    3.
    4.

Appendix H: PRWI Syllabus

	GECU 6994 - SÍLABO
Lunes 9 de enero	
9-10:45 am	Sesión #1 *Las voces del agua*- Prof. Pedro Reina Pérez Un día cualquiera (1953) Cantera: Ciudad de las aguas (2005) Agua Mala (2013) Estudio de caso- Kennedy School Informe sobre las OSFL en Puerto Rico (2015) Resumen ejecutivo
10:45-11:00 am	Café
11-12:45 pm	Sesión #2 *Fronteras híbridas*- Prof. David Carrasco Fronteras híbridas- Carrasco
1-3pm	Almuerzo
4-7 pm	Taller de arte –Agua, Sol y Sereno
Martes 10 de enero	
9-10:45 am	Sesión #3 *Propiedad y derecho*-Prof. Érika Fontánez Torres -Nicholas Blomley, "Landscapes of Property", en *The Legal Geographies Reader* (2001) -Eduardo Peñalver & Sonia Katyal, *Property Outlaws: How Squatters, Pirates, and Protesters Improve the Law of Ownership* (2010 -Daniel Bonilla, "Propiedad Extralegal, Monismo y Pluralismo Jurídico", en *Propiedad* (2008), -Érika Fontánez Torres, "Contingencia Propietaria: la propiedad en contextos puertorriqueños de justicia social y medioambiente", en *Ambigüedad y Derecho: ensayos de crítica jurídica* (2014), -María Hernández Torrales, "El Fideicomiso de la Tierra del Caño Martín Peña: Corolario de un modelo de participación ciudadana en Marcha"
10:45-11:00 am	Café
11-12:45 pm	Sesión #4 *Hacia una ecopoética caribeña*-Prof. Mayra Rivera Rivera -Savory, "Toward a Caribbean Ecopoetics" -DeLoughrey and Handley, "Toward an Aesthetics of the Earth" -Walcott, "The Argument of the Outboard Motor A Con"

1-3pm	Almuerzo
4-7 pm	Taller de arte- Buena Vista Santurce
Miércoles 11 de enero	
9-10:45 am	Sesión #5 *Lengua, poder e identidad* -Prof. María Luisa Parra Velasco - Juan Flores, "Prelude" and "Broken English Memories" from book *From Bomba to Hip-hop.* - Esmeralda Santiago. Introduction "When I was Puerto Rican" - Tato Laviera poema: "My graduation Speech" -Do Puerto Ricans Speak The "Ghetto Version" of Spanish? by Dorothy Bell Ferre -Zentella, Ana Celia. (2016). Spanglish: Language politics versus el habla del pueblo.
10:45-11:00 am	Café
11-12:45 pm	Sesión #6 *Gestión cultural: Agenda ciudadana y subjetividades políticas*- Prof. Mareia Quintero Rivera -Arditi, Benjamín. (2007). "Agitado y revuelto: Del arte de lo posible a la política emancipatoria" -Bonilla, Yarimar. (2010). "Guadeloupe is ours. The Prefigurative Politics of the Mass Strike in the French Antilles". -Quintero Rivera, Mareia. (2016). "Gestión cultural y agencia ciudadana: reflexiones desde la experiencia puertorriqueña". -Vich, Víctor. (2004). "Desobediencia simbólica: Performance, participación y política al final de la dictadura fujimorista".
1-3pm	Almuerzo
3-6 pm	Taller de arte – Agua, Sol y Sereno
Jueves 12 de enero	
9-10:45 am	Sesión #7 *Reimaginar el desarrollo: Un desafío epistemológico y politico*- Prof. Mareia Quintero Rivera -Casimir, Jean. (2008). "Cultura y Creación". -Grimson, Alejandro. (2014). "Políticas para la justicia cultural". -Kliksberg, Bernardo. (1999). "Capital social y cultura, claves esenciales del desarrollo". -Rao, Vijayendra and Walton, Michael. (2004). "Culture and Public Action: Relationality, Equality of Agency, and Development". -Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. (2011-12). "Introducción: las

	epistemologías del Sur"
10:45-11:00 am	Café
11-12:45 pm	Sesión #8 *Lenguaje y Frontera*. Prof. María Luisa Parra Velasco -Otheguey, R. & Stern, N. (2010). On so-called Spanglish. -Ricardo Otheguy and Ana Celia Zentella. Debate sobre el término "Spanglish" o "Español de los Estados Unidos" (). -Parra, M.L. (2016). Understanding identity among Spanish heritage learners: An interdisciplinary endeavor. In D. Pascual (Ed.), *Advances in Spanish as a Heritage Language.* John Benjamins. -Poema de Tato Laviera "American"
1-3pm	Almuerzo
3-6 pm	Taller de arte – Buena Vista Santurce
Viernes, 13 de enero	L-I-B-R-E
Lunes 16 de enero	
9-10:45 am	Sesión #9 *Territorios imaginados*- Prof. Mayra Rivera Rivera -Glissant, Selections from *Poetics of Relation*: "The Open Boat," "Relation," "Distancing, Determining" ____, Selections from Caribbean Discourse, "Introductions" and "Cross-Cultural Poetics" -Wynter, "Ethno or Socio Poetics"
10:45-11:00 am	Café
11-12:45 pm	Sesión #10 *El derecho a la ciudad*- Prof. Érika Fontánez Torres -David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (2012) -Don Mitchel, "The Annihilation of Space by Law: Anti-Homeless Laws and the Shrinking Landscape of Rights", en *The Right to the City* (2003), pp. 161-194. -Érika Fontánez Torres, "Las limitaciones del Lente Jurídico en la Configuración del Espacio Público", en *Ambigüedad y Derecho: ensayos de crítica jurídica* (2014), pp 73-87.
1-3pm	Almuerzo
3-6 pm	Taller de arte- Agua, Sol y Sereno

7pm	Cena de despedida- Mona Lisa, Río Piedras
Martes 17 de enero	***