

Responsive Philanthropy

NCRP'S QUARTERLY JOURNAL

SPRING 2015

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Implicit Bias and Its Role in Philanthropy and Grantmaking

Philanthropy has proven itself a powerful mechanism for working toward a more equitable society by challenging oppression and seeking to ensure social, economic and political change. No one can doubt that we have removed important barriers over the years, but new mechanisms for exclusion and marginalization are constantly emerg-

ing. For example, we did not have mass incarceration when the Rev. Dr. King marched in Selma for voting rights, and we have since seen the emergence of new ways to suppress the vote.

Only recently have we begun to understand the complicated ways that race, gender and other nodes of identity can interact with each other, structures and processes of the mind to result in marginalization. This article will focus on the processes of the mind. Even when people explicitly and consciously support fairness, nonconscious processes can undermine their intentions through implicit bias. As we learn more about this complex phenomenon, it is critical that philanthropy

By john a. powell

uses this knowledge to help move us toward greater inclusion and fairness – and that those in philanthropy realize their own susceptibility to implicit bias.

WHAT MIND SCIENCE TEACHES US ABOUT IMPLICIT BIAS

Studying implicit bias helps us to understand how we can embrace fairness at the conscious level, and yet undermine fairness at the implicit (nonconscious) level. For example, in recent years, a continuation, and in some cases, increase of racial stratification (seen in incarceration rates, health, home ownership, education and life expectancy) have strengthened the claim that race (continued on page 12)



challenging grantmakers
to strengthen communities

A Message From the Executive Director



Dear Colleagues,

Like most white people in the United States, I grew up completely oblivious to the many privileges I enjoy because of the color of my skin. It wasn't until I took courses in college like "Race, Power and Inequality in America" from Paul Wellstone or "Race, Reform and Rebellion" from Manning Marable that I began to develop an understanding of how our nation, its institutions and the experiences of its people are overwhelmingly shaped by race and racism. Serving as a community organizer for 15 years, primarily working with communities of color, deepened that understanding.

That's why I'm so pleased that this edition of *Responsive Philanthropy* is a special issue devoted to what philanthropy can do to combat implicit bias, or the way in which our unconscious minds shape and contribute to our thoughts and actions. Our fantastic roster of authors explores how this phenomenon both affects the many challenges we as a society face and its implications for how philanthropy addresses these issues.

In our cover story, acclaimed scholar and activist John A. Powell lays out "Implicit Bias and Its Role in Philanthropy and Grantmaking." He provides a comprehensive overview and definition of implicit bias, and explains how the study of mind science gives the sector vital information about how to overcome it. John reminds us that, while those who work in philanthropy have an especially strong commitment to fairness and equality, even this can be undermined by our own susceptibility to biases of which we may not even be aware.

Next, in "Implicit Bias and Native Americans: Philanthropy's Hidden Minority," renowned Native rights champion Crystal Echo Hawk shares how this process affects one of the nation's most underserved communities. Crystal conducted several interviews with both Native and non-Native nonprofit leaders to provide unique assessments of how this hidden bias is affecting the state of Native American philanthropy.

In "Gender Norms: The Missing Part of Gender Equity Philanthropy," Riki Wilchins, executive director of TrueChild, details how American foundations are lagging behind international grantmakers in their gender justice programming. Riki explains how gender norms, or the ways in which people identify what it means to be male or female, demand a more comprehensive funding approach to successfully effect equal outcomes.

Finally, in "A More Progressive Approach: Recognizing the Role of Implicit Bias in Institutional Racism," DeAngelo Bester, executive director of the Workers Center for Racial Justice, delves into how racism can look radically different to those who recognize the way implicit bias pervades systems and institutions. DeAngelo offers practical advice on how recognizing one's own implicit bias is an important first step in negating its effect.

Our Member Spotlight showcases the work of Asian Pacific Community in Action, an organization that advances health equity in Arizona by helping remove barriers to care.

Special thanks to Niki Jagpal, our senior director of research and policy, for her work and guidance in putting this issue together, and to Rachel Godsil of Seton Hall University School of Law for her thoughtful feedback.

As always, we hope *Responsive Philanthropy* is a useful resource for all those in the philanthropic sector, and we are always trying to improve. Let us know how we're doing at readers@ncrp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to read "A. Dorfman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Executive Director

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Responsive Philanthropy is the quarterly journal of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy.

2015, Issue No. 2
Yearly subscription: \$25
(free to members)
ISBN: 1065-0008

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Implicit Bias and Native Americans: Philanthropy's Hidden Minority

By Crystal Echo Hawk

As a dual citizen of the U.S. and the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, and a nonprofit professional for more than 18 years, my work is to challenge my colleagues in philanthropy to examine implicit racial bias within our sector. In recent months, there have been encouraging developments on this front, such as the National League of Cities' recent launch of its "Race, Equity and Leadership" initiative "to facilitate an honest discussion around race and equity ... to examine critical issues of implicit and explicit bias and how it shows up in our individual lives, communities, policies, systems and structures."

However, too many times in recent years, I have spoken with colleagues in philanthropy for whom I have great respect who, despite their work to address disparities and create strategies to achieve equity, are only inclusive of data and realities pertaining to Blacks, whites and Latinos. I am by no means advocating an "Oppression Olympics." Rather, if we are truly to confront, address and begin to overcome all implicit and explicit racial bias, it must be a fully inclusive conversation had by all – including Native Americans.

In the course of writing this essay, I reached out to both Native and non-Native colleagues for their thoughts. As you'll see, I'm not alone in believing that implicit bias against Native Americans exists in philanthropy. And, however well intentioned, it begins with ignorance and the ease of believing in stereotypes.

According to Michael Roberts, a member of the Tlingit tribe and president of First Nations Development Institute, a nonprofit institution and grantmaker that has been a fixture in philanthropy for almost 35 years:

"I would say that American Indians are mostly invisible to philanthropy, and where there is some semblance of awareness, that there is definitely implicit bias. [For] most foundation program officers, most of what they know is what they were taught in school. Generally, Indians are examined in one of two ways, that they are either relics of the past (lived in tipis, hunted buffalo and were either savages or at one with nature; the mythical Indian), or that the study of them is like a tourist visiting a culture."

Rick Williams, a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe and former president of the American Indian College Fund, the largest and arguably one of the most successful Native nonprofits, noted:

"The current myth of wealthy Indians not needing help relates directly to misguided media presenting only information about [Native] nations that have done well financially and have casinos. The other myth is that we no longer exist. And if we do exist, it is easy to ignore our plight. Im-

PLICIT bias carries all the stereotypes and subconsciously influences one's actions. I often see/feel that bias even when it is unintended or sublimely disguised."

Jasmine Hall Ratliff, program officer at The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, stated:

"In many areas of this country, Native Americans are quite literally an invisible community. When a foundation wants to address disparities in communities of color, when you look at data, Native Americans are completely left out. Data is so often displayed for Black, white, Latino and sometimes (though not always) Asian populations; it is incredibly rare to see Native Americans included. So unless you pause to ask, 'Who's missing?' and make the concerted effort to ensure that all people of color are included, it can be easy to have an implicit bias against Native Americans."

That bias is documented by a 2011 study published by Native Americans in Philanthropy and the Foundation Center that found that giving to Native Americans accounts for only 0.03 percent of all foundation giving. This is despite the fact that Native Americans consistently score the lowest on almost every social indicator in the country.

In my former but recent life as an executive director of the Notah Begay III Foundation (NB3F), a national Native nonprofit, I heard justifications like "The Native American population is too small" and "We've made grants to Native communities before and they haven't gone well" to explain the dismal rates of giving. These program officers worried that the return on their investments was too small to warrant sizable grantmaking

to Native communities. They gave examples of Native grantees lacking the capacity for financial management and having difficulty achieving stated deliverables.

When I shared these explanations with Williams and Roberts, they acknowledged the difficulties, but challenged the underlying logic. Williams explained,

"These reasons for not giving are real. However, the question that is not asked is, 'How do you deal with these issues to consistently create successful projects?' The underlying premise is of course that the 'Indians failed' when in reality it is the foundations that

failed to understand and learn different ways to create success."

Roberts shared:

"All I ask is that funders hold all nonprofits to the same standard, and paint grantees of every race or sovereign nation equally. I can say that I have never heard a funder say something to the effect of 'Yeah, we funded a white nonprofit once that failed to deliver, so we are not going to fund white folks again.' I say this completely tongue-in-cheek, because, in most peoples' mind that sounds so absurd. Well if it sounds so absurd when we say this about white nonprofits, why does it not sound so absurd when Indian nonprofits are painted with the broad brush?"

At NB3F, my staff and I felt constant pressure to not make any missteps because that could mean potentially ruining it for other Native nonprofits seeking investments from grantmakers. This very real pressure was often crushing as we sought to pioneer high-risk, high-reward approaches and build programs to address the epidemic of childhood obesity and type 2 diabetes facing Native children.

It is evident that foundations often feel a great deal of uncertainty is involved when making grants in Indian Country, but this is often a direct result of the lack of grant diversification in this area. According to Roberts, the way to counter this is to "practice the same sort of diversification strategy that foundations use with their investments in universities, community foundations and organizations led by white folks: make sure that there are many of these investments so that a singular investment in this sector does not sink the entire portfolio."

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The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has incorporated support of Native nonprofit intermediaries (such as NB3F), including technical assistance, to make its work in Indian Country successful. Ratliff explained, “When working with Native American grantees, we practice the essential philosophy from Steven Covey to ‘seek first to understand then to be understood.’ We learn from our grantees how to best succeed in Indian Country in a way that is culturally appropriate.”

However, increasing philanthropic investment in Indian Country is not the only means to overcome the impact of implicit bias. Change must happen at the board level. Williams explained:

“Only a handful of American Indians are serving on the boards of foundations. And currently there are none at the top 20 foundations. I have never heard of a single foundation board getting training to help members understand funding in Indian Country. Very few seek out knowledgeable consultants to help construct good funding programs. Most hire unqualified non-Indians who only have a perfunctory understanding with no real significant in-depth experience in complex funding of programs in Indian communities.”

Many Native colleagues polled noted that change also will come from hiring more Native Americans as program officers and foundation executives. In a recent conversation with a Native colleague, we could not name more than 15 Natives serving as program officers or in leadership positions at foundations.

Change will only come when we first acknowledge the dearth of data about Native Americans, which makes this population nearly invisible in an



Photo by Ryan Red Corn.

increasingly data-driven philanthropic sector. We must then work to invest in data collection efforts led by and for Native peoples. This means acknowledging that Natives are unrepresented in philanthropy and foundation giving, and also inviting Native nonprofit, community and tribal leaders to the table as active participants in confronting the very real challenges that do at times exist in funding in Indian Country, as well as other communities of color and/or low-income communities.

While calling out the existence of implicit bias within philanthropy with regard to Native Americans, we also must cite examples of foundations “doing it right” and taking steps to build positive relationships and increase investment in Indian Country. These include the Northwest Area Foundation (which has pledged 40 percent of its grant dollars to Indian Country projects), the Ford Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Walmart Foundation, American Express Foundation, Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, Marguerite Casey Foundation, Kalliopeia Founda-

tion, Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, CHS Foundation, Otto Bremer Foundation and many others.

Being inclusive of Native Americans in philanthropy does more than address injustice; it also recognizes that Native Americans and tribes are an equally important part of American society as other groups and can be partners to achieve social change across a range of communities and sectors. In the words of the late Cherokee Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller:

“The history, contemporary lives and future of Native America are intertwined with that of surrounding communities. Tribal governments and organizations do not conduct their lives and work in a vacuum. Tribal governments collectively contribute billions to the economy and employ thousands of people. When tribal governments build roads and water systems, develop business enterprises or provide family services, it benefits everyone in the community, not just tribal members.”¹

Mankiller’s words are easily applied to grantmakers invested in overcoming implicit bias against Native Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities – the interconnectedness of our communities mean that all must be welcomed in the process of devising solutions to the very real problems we face. ■

Crystal Echo Hawk is president & CEO of Echo Hawk Consulting.

Notes

1. Patricia Powers, *Native Americans and the Public: A Human Values Perspective*, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Winter 2006-2007, http://fcnl.org/assets/na_mediasymp_report.pdf.

Gender Norms: The Missing Part of Gender Equity Philanthropy

By Riki Wilchins

Our shared philanthropic vision of a more fair and just society can't happen without gender equity. Yet, funders, especially in the U.S., often fail to recognize that gender norms, or the implicit stereotypes associated with gender, create obstacles to the success of their well-intentioned programming for gender justice.

In particular, recent "gender lens" investing has tended to be used in ways that omit deeper analysis and ignore the critical impacts of gender norms, especially as they play out at the community level. To realize broader goals of gender equity, it is crucial that domestic grantmakers follow the lead of the many international funders that have begun to challenge, rather than ignore, the power of gender norms.

"Gender" is an overloaded term that is used in a variety of contexts (gender equity, gender mainstreaming, gender identity, etc.). Adding to the confusion, some years ago the gender equity field shifted its linguistic frame from referring to "women and girls" programming to "gender lens" programming, to better focus on the system of oppression that perpetuates inequity between women and men, rather than women as a group. Having a gender lens generally refers to understanding how different groups (boys and girls, families, LGBTQ individuals, etc.) are treated differently by the gender system.

However, the systemic focus this new linguistic frame heralded hasn't happened. Over time, "having a gender lens" has morphed back into shorthand

for "funding for women and girls." Funders have overlooked the critical fact that having a gender lens means more than just focusing on one sex. Consider a few examples:

- A foundation announces prominently that it funds from a "strong gender lens," yet its projects benefit only women and girls.
- A leading health policy organization publishes a groundbreaking report asking "Will the California Office of Health Equity Use a Gender Lens?" that mentions "women" 91 times but not "men's health" once.¹
- The landmark guide "Funding for Inclusion" mentions race and racism upfront along with lesbians, gay men, transgender and intersex people; yet, it never addresses any of these again in 32 pages.²

Of course, increased funding for women and girls is important; after all, they still receive only 7.5 percent of U.S. grants.³ But funding women and girls does not constitute "having a strong gender lens" any more than funding youth of color implies having a strong racial justice analysis.

As Loren Harris, now director of Family Economic Security at the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, has noted, "Gender impacts every issue funders work on. But grantees and program officers aren't challenged to do innovative work around gender [like they are race and class]."

In the Ford Foundation's paper *Why We Can't Wait: A Case for Philanthrop-*



World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim (left) visits a school in Peru. CC image courtesy of Dominic Chavez/World Bank.

ic Action: Opportunities for Improving Life Outcomes for African American Males, Harris points out the little-explored, but important, influence that gender roles have “on the way men understand and engage in educational opportunity, the labor force and relationships with women and other men.” He continues, “Men also suffer the adverse consequences of rigid gender roles that limit conceptions of opportunity and success and expose some men to stigmatization, abuse and violence.”⁴

Funders in the international sphere are doing work that can serve as a model for domestic funders. Major donor institutions such as CARE, the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank and the World Health Organization all have developed “gender transformative” initiatives that highlight, challenge and ultimately try to change rigid gender norms.

For instance, USAID will not even consider funding new programs that lack a strong analysis of gender norms and inequities. And the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Initiative lists challenging harmful gender norms among its top three priorities.

Even the conservative World Bank, after investing hundreds of millions of dollars in loans, grants and other direct aid to improve the lot of women and girls, has launched an organization-wide initiative to integrate gender norms into every facet of its work to get better results. The group’s president, Jim Yong Kim, recently called gender norms one of the “foundations of inequality, as important as education or opportunity.”

As one of its senior managers put it, “We’re not doing this because it’s trendy or politically correct – we’re data-driven economists, after all – we’re doing it because the numbers show it works better.”

Even if they do have full agency, group norms can act as invisible “guard rails,” locking inequalities into place while shaping and narrowing young women’s opportunities.

A deeper implicit bias is also in play. U.S. funders tend to work from what might be called an “empowerment model,” treating each person as an individual actor able to take action on his or her own behalf. This model is rooted in capitalist economic models in which everyone is a rational consumer, weighing product information, comparing prices and taking individual action.

Following the empowerment model, grantmakers provide funding, opportunity programs and training to improve a girl’s circumstances.

Yet, the model doesn’t really work when addressing the economic behavior of teenage girls, who are as likely to make decisions based on a combination of peer group behavior, pressure from boyfriends, the power imbalances inherent in boy-girl relationships and how they might be seen as they are on a measured appraisal of the facts.

Particularly in low-income communities where resources are scarce, young women and girls are likely to

be enmeshed in complex social networks necessary for survival; they likely have extensive family obligations and responsibilities (such as taking care of younger siblings and infirm elders, doing chores and bringing in extra income), and lack anything like the full agency the empowerment model assumes.

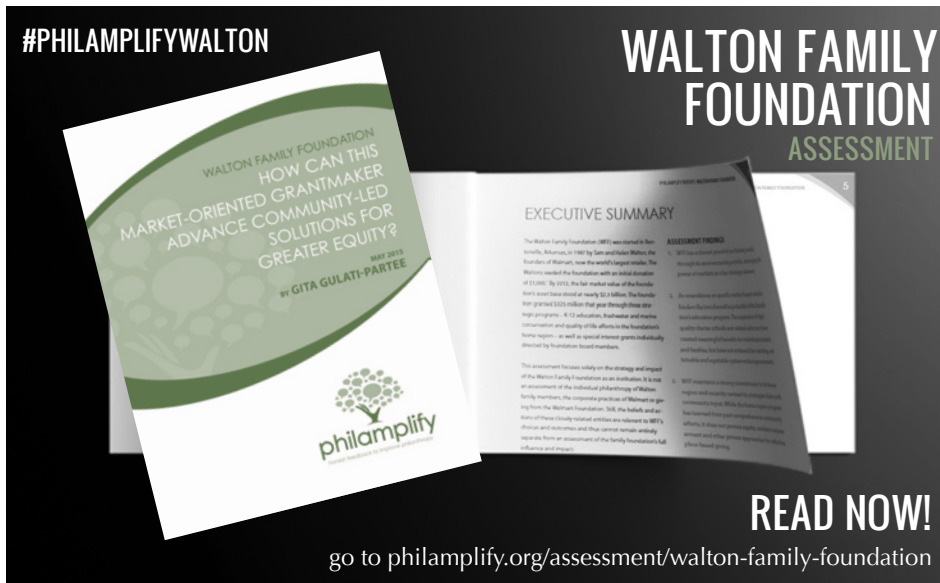
Even if they do have full agency, group norms can act as invisible “guard rails,” locking inequalities into place while shaping and narrowing young women’s opportunities. Such norms don’t show up as overt discrimination, but rather more quietly through doors that just don’t open, choices that just aren’t made, actions that just somehow seem off-limits.

For instance, consider this story from the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota’s 2014 report, *On the Road to Equality*:

“Our daughter was one of the top welders in her junior-high school program and would have been very successful in that field, but she wasn’t encouraged by us as parents or people in construction. Why not? Because she would have had to struggle for acceptance by men in that field, and they would not be welcoming. So, she’s not in that career. Even though they may have the skills, women have to always fight that battle.”⁵

Funding, opportunity, training and programs are all available for young people looking to follow this career path; yet, cultural norms were still able to defeat the best of philanthropic intentions and keep this young woman from the high-paying welding job her skills merited.

Imagine how U.S. grantmaking might improve if we broadened our perspective. For example, we might finally fix



Riki Wilchins is the executive director of TrueChild and the author of three books on gender theory. *Gender Transformative Philanthropy: A Key to Improving Program Outcome and Impact in At-Risk Communities*, a new report from TrueChild, is now available online at www.truechild.org.

Notes

1. Kate Karpilow, Ph.D., *Will California's Office of Health Equity Use a Gender Lens?* California Center for Research on Women & Families, January 2013, <http://ccrwf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/OHE-and-Gender-Lens-WPS2013-FINAL.pdf>.
2. *Funding for Inclusion: Women and Girls in the Equation*, GrantCraft, 2012, <http://mamacash.org/content/uploads/2013/06/Grantcraft-Guide-Funding-for-Inclusion.pdf>.
3. *Accelerating Change for Women and Girls: The Role of Women's Funds*, Foundation Center, June 2009, http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/womensfunds2009_highlights.pdf.
4. Marcus J. Littles, Ryan Bowers and Micah Gilmer, *Why We Can't Wait: A Case for Philanthropic Action: Opportunities for Improving Life Outcomes for African American Males*, Ford Foundation, January 2008, http://www.fordfoundation.org/pdfs/library/why_we_cant_wait.pdf.
5. *On the Road to Equality: Statewide Findings & Policy Recommendations*, Women's Foundation of Minnesota, October 2014, <http://www.wfmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014RETourPolicyReport.pdf>.
6. Sylvia Ann Hewlett, "What's Holding Women Back in Science and Technology Industries," *Harvard Business Review*, March 2014, <https://hbr.org/2014/03/whats-holding-women-back-in-science-and-technology-industries/>.

the "leaky pipeline" that halts girls from pursuing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields when they reach middle school, when even girls who were good at STEM and reported liking STEM courses start dropping out.

For decades, the field has addressed barriers ranging from parental attitudes, the lack of role models and "chilly" classroom climates, all while ignoring feminine norms.

As part of a project for the Motorola Solutions Foundation, my organization convened young Black and Hispanic women and asked them whether they could be both smart at science and math and feminine and popular with boys. They laughingly replied, "Yes ... but not in junior high." They went on to explain that in middle school, they had to "dumb it down" and focus more on being attractive for their boyfriends.

The problem goes beyond middle school. Corporate foundations at a host of tech companies are investing millions to combat the lack of women in Silicon Valley. It's no secret that part of the problem is the aggressive jock-nerd culture of many tech environments, which favor young white and Asian males while repelling women as well as LGBTQ workers and those who are Black or Hispan-

ic. A recent *Harvard Business Review* report noted that extreme pressure and the hostile work culture are among the most frequently cited reasons for why women leave high-tech jobs.⁶

Major Silicon Valley foundations and corporations are investing millions to recruit and retain more women. But they're unlikely to be effective until they challenge the masculine norms at the center of the problem.

The tide may be shifting. The Women's Foundation of Minnesota and the Women's Fund of Central Ohio are among the first U.S. donors to integrate gender norms into their funding priorities and strategic plans. The Women's Funding Network and Women Moving Millions have both issued white paper reports recommending that the field adopt a gender transformative approach.

This is pioneering work. Other funders, such as The California Endowment, Ford Foundation, Heinz Endowments, Jewish Women's Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago and Overbrook Foundation, also have moved forward important grants with a strong gender norms focus.

Isn't it time other U.S. funders started doing likewise? ■

A More Progressive Approach: Recognizing the Role of Implicit Bias in Institutional Racism

By DeAngelo Bester

In the past year, the tragic deaths of unarmed Black males such as Mike Brown, Eric Garner, John Crawford and Tamir Rice have helped to spark a robust dialogue around race in America. Many people have argued that none of these deaths were racially motivated. Others have argued that race had everything to do with them. I would argue that both sides are right.

Many people in this country only see racism as individual acts of bias against people of color: Someone painting a swastika on the side of someone's house or burning a cross on someone's front yard, or a group of inebriated college kids using the N-word during a song about their fraternity. But there is an entirely different group of people, self-identified as liberal, progressive or radical, that sees racism in institutions and structures. For us, the images we associate with racism are a school that is majority white, but the majority of the students who get suspended are of color, or an upscale restaurant that only has white staff working as hosts and servers and chefs, while all the staff of color work the lower paying jobs. It's an entire country that is two-thirds white but has a prison population that is two-thirds people of color. For us, this is what racism in the 21st century looks like.

So the question remains, what is racism? Is it individual acts of hatred against individuals of color? Or is it state- and corporate-sanctioned discrimination and violence against entire communities of color? Of course,

it's both. This simple answer is only the start of understanding how the killings of the unarmed Black men I referred to earlier can have everything to do with race, but may not have been acts of racism in the way that many people understand them.

Instances in our recent past have sparked discussions about race in America. The Rodney King beating and following LA uprisings, the case of the Jena 6 and the election of President Obama all have brought race into the public discourse. What's different now is that more people are beginning to talk about the role implicit bias has played in maintaining a power structure that continuously disadvantages people of color.

Implicit bias is bias that is buried deep in people's unconscious, so deep

they often are not even aware of it. Some of us may have a harmless bias toward a particular color, city, animal (cat people versus dog people). The one thing to know is that we all have biases. Our brains are designed to categorize people and things, and to create preferences, anxieties, animosity and fear about specific things. This includes creating preferences or animosity toward people of different races or ethnicities. In fact, implicit bias can, and often does, affect conscious decision-making. Institutional philanthropy and those making decisions about grant-making strategy are no exception.

I wholeheartedly believe that implicit bias played a major role in the police killings of Mike Brown, Eric Garner, John Crawford and Tamir Rice. Maybe it's the



#BlackLivesMatter protest in Rochester, MN. CC image courtesy of Rose Colored Photo.

New and Renewing Members

Annie E. Casey Foundation

Arcus Foundation

Brooklyn Community Foundation

Bush Foundation

The California Endowment

California Wellness Foundation

Carnegie Corporation of New York

Center for Community Change

Center for Popular Democracy

Citi Foundation

Consumer Health Foundation

Deaconess Foundation

Discount Foundation

Dyson Foundation

Fund for New Jersey

Grantmakers in the Arts

Hagedorn Foundation

Heinz Endowments

Insight Center for Community
Economic Development

Kansas Health Foundation

Lloyd A. Fry Foundation

Marin Community Foundation

Melville Charitable Trust

North Star Fund

Northwest Area Foundation

Polk Brothers Foundation

Rappaport Family Foundation

Resource Generation

Rockefeller Foundation

Saint Luke's Foundation
of Cleveland, Ohio

Skillman Foundation

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

optimist in me, or my desire to believe in the basic goodness of all people, but I don't think the police officers who killed these young men did so with hatred in their hearts. I think our society has marginalized, criminalized and demonized Black people for hundreds of years, and the result has been the development of a collective fear and hatred of us. For many years, that hatred and fear was explicit, but our society has evolved. Unfortunately our unconscious brains have not evolved as quickly. I think the police officers in most of these cases were greatly influenced by their own unconscious minds, which didn't see young Black men in the prime of their lives, or young Black men with limitless amounts of potential. They saw violent criminals who would do them physical harm if they didn't respond with deadly force.

Our public discourse around race has finally begun to move away from individual acts of prejudice and bias and address institutional and structural racialization. But even this bigger-picture conversation is incomplete. We must include implicit bias and how it affects people's conscious decision-making in our discussions on race. But these discussions must go beyond some of us on the left trying to educate moderates and conservatives. Unfortunately, many of our allies on the left, including foundation staff and trustees, have just as high or even higher levels of implicit bias toward Black people and Black-led organizations as conservatives do.

While not as explicit as the well-documented underrepresentation in sectors such as the corporate sector,¹ and even organized labor unions,² I would argue that there is a high level of implicit bias toward Black people within the world of community organizing and social justice philanthropy.

To be clear, I'm not asserting that social justice philanthropy has the high levels of implicit bias that many of our

police departments do. But I have noticed a pattern among some foundations where Black-led organizations, primarily organizing Black people, are excluded from funding. I come to these conclusions based on my observations of who and what foundations typically fund, and also from anecdotal stories from Black executive directors I've had conversations with. (Over the course of about four years, I did more than 250 one-on-ones with grassroots Black leaders, organizers and executive directors.)³

I'm sure many people may wonder how I could even think that the world of social justice philanthropy is biased against Black people, given all the initiatives over the years that have focused on Black males or boys and men of color. To that, I would say that if one looks closely, many of the initiatives for Black males or boys and men of color have tended to provide resources to organizations and programs that either focus on direct services or changing individual behaviors – not on changing systems through organizing, movement building and structural reforms.

"They offered to give us money to tell Black men to pull up their pants, and teach them how to dress and speak properly so they can get a job," said one Black executive director of an organizing group from the Bay Area, whose organization turned down money from one of these philanthropic initiatives.

Also, when it comes to the initiatives focused specifically on Black males or males of color, a significant number of the organizations that received money had no Black leadership. So, while it seems that funders were willing to give money to help Black people, they just weren't willing to give money directly to Black people. "They're willing to fund our liberation, just so long as we're not in charge of the money or have a say in how liberation happens," said one Black executive director from Chicago.

Speaking about a particular funder, a Black female executive director from a New York nonprofit noted, “The work we do is aligned perfectly with their priorities, but I can never get anyone over there to return my call or respond to my emails, even though they’ve publicly praised our work.” When I asked her why she thought that was, she at first said that it seemed like the funder in question didn’t like Black people, but then quickly dismissed that idea. After all, one of its core priorities was to fund work that advances racial justice.

Black people have the highest rate of unemployment, highest rate of low-wage work and highest interactions with the criminal justice system. Yet, several foundations that have criminal justice reform and worker rights as core priority areas don’t fund any or very few Black-led groups that are doing great work in these areas. One reform-focused foundation I investigated funded exactly one Black-led group doing criminal justice reform work over a three-year period. Given the social justice priorities of many foundations, the dismal lack of funding given to organizations led by people of color adds to the case that implicit bias plays a role in their grantmaking.

Admittedly, there could be any number of reasons why this is happening – maybe these organizations submitted poorly-done proposals, or maybe the foundations would only fund groups with a certain level of capacity. Maybe some of the directors I’ve spoken to are just overly-sensitive. I don’t have definitive proof for why Black-led organizations are so often passed over. What I do know is that if we’re going to take conversations about race to the next level, then implicit bias must be at the heart of those conversations.

Here are a couple of ways the social justice philanthropy sector can proceed:

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- **Make program staff take the Implicit Association Test (IAT):** The knowledge of knowing that one has an elevated level of implicit bias toward a particular racial group can be a motivator to work toward reducing it. My organization has an objective of getting police officers to take the IAT. We believe that doing so can go a long way toward helping to reduce bias within their ranks. The same can be said for staff at social justice foundations.

- **Invest in internal political education and training around implicit bias:** Progressive allies in philanthropy and the larger organizing community must develop a strong understanding of implicit bias, along with strategies to temper bias from these organizations. Progressives naively think that racism and racialization occur only within conservative circles, and not within their institutions. This cannot be further from the truth. It is a mistake to think that implicit bias does not play a significant role in the lack of capacity on the part of many Black organizations.

If we’re ever going to move the thinking and actions of Middle America, and maybe even conservatives, about race and implicit bias, then we on the left must also have the conversations ourselves. The world of social justice philanthropy is the perfect place to begin having these discussions. ■

DeAngelo Bester is executive director of the Workers Center for Racial Justice.

Notes

1. Ben Walsh, “Corporate America’s Diversity Problem On Display at Deal-Book Conference,” *The Huffington Post*, December 2014, www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/12/corporate-diversity-lack_n_6315664.html.
2. George Eaton Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, *Racial and Cultural Minorities: An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination*, Springer Science & Business Media, 1985.
3. Confidential interviews conducted by DeAngelo Bester from 2010-2014.

Implicit Bias and Its Role in Philanthropy and Grantmaking

(continued from page 1)

still matters in the United States. This lack of improvement exists simultaneously with a general decline in overtly negative racial attitudes. Faced with this contradiction, many simply ignore that conditions haven't improved, or even blame the racial other for being a part of a "dysfunctional culture." There is inadequate attention to how negative racial conditions can be caused and reproduced by structures and unconscious processes.

Mind science can help us to better explain some of the contradictory dynamics between racial and gendered attitudes and conditions. Mind science looks at the intersection of various ways that we process, synthesize and internalize information. Like cognitive science, it is interdisciplinary and can include psychology, anthropology, sociology and neuroscience. Research about implicit bias helps us to better understand that disconnect between our society's ideal of fairness for all people and the continued reality of its absence. As explained in the

first volume of The Perception Institute's indispensable report series, *The Science of Equality*, implicit bias is a diagnosis of perceptual distortions.¹ Implicit bias confirms that race and gender matter – even among those who consider themselves nonracist and nonsexist. For example, the majority of whites consciously report that they do not think about race most of the time and race does not matter. Yet, at an unconscious level, to the majority of whites, race does matter and they exhibit racial bias.

Researchers have begun to recognize that most cognitive and emotional responses to our environment happen without our awareness. Psychologists have known for 100 years that only 10 percent of discrimination can be explained by the conscious mind.² Mind science tells us that most of what we believe and process consciously may be directly contradicted by what we experience unconsciously – allowing for socially constructed and unconsciously internalized implicit biases

to underpin our actions. This phenomenon is particularly likely to occur in the context of race and gender.

Implicit or unconscious biases affect not only our perceptions, but also our behavior, policies and institutional arrangements. As *The Science of Equality* says, "Implicit bias and perception are often seen as individual problems when, in fact, they are structural barriers to equality."³ Likewise, the power and efficacy of philanthropic work may be limited by subconscious processes that work to reinforce structural barriers to equality. Our unconscious beliefs simultaneously help to form and are formed by structures and the environment. Implicit biases therefore influence the types of outcomes we see across a variety of contexts: school, employment, housing, health, criminal justice system, research and so forth. These racialized outcomes subsequently reinforce the very stereotypes and prejudices that helped create the stratified outcomes and conditions.

Strategies to Reduce Bias

The philanthropic community can establish practices to prevent inherent bias from seeping into their work and the way funding is distributed.¹³

Doubt objectivity: Seeing yourself as objective actually tends to increase the role of implicit bias; teaching people about nonconscious thought processes ultimately allows us to guard against biased evaluations.

Increase motivation to be fair: Seeking fairness, rather than being driven by fear of external judgment, tends to decrease biased actions.

Improve conditions of decision-making: Implicit biases are a function of automaticity. Engaging in mindful, deliberate processing prevents our implicit biases from kicking in and determining our behaviors.

Count: Implicitly biased behavior is best detected by using data to determine whether certain patterns of behavior lead to racially disparate outcomes. Once one is aware of such a link, it is then possible to consider whether the outcomes are linked to bias.¹⁴

Monitor and improve the environment: Because your environment both primes and helps create bias associations, it is important to continuously monitor and improve it.

Collect data and monitor outcomes: Because implicit bias cannot be reliably self-reported, it is important to set goals and collect data to see if they are being met.

Involve a cross-section of decision-makers: Research shows that including a critical mass of underrepresented groups in the decision-making process reduces bias.

Create institutional mechanisms to reduce bias: In the context of school suspension, having very clear and objective criteria reduces bias.

Affirmatively state and pursue inclusive outcomes: Focus on changing outcomes.

As important as these interventions are, we will not completely end implicit bias and that should not be our aim. The goal is not to end all bias but to change behavior and outcomes. We must continue to look for better interventions and engage the structure and social context where decisions are being made.

HOW IMPLICIT BIAS IS REFLECTED IN GRANTMAKING AND PHILANTHROPY

The influence of implicit biases in grantmaking and philanthropic work is of critical concern. Gender bias has been the most frequently investigated of the varying types of biases discussed in connection with grantmaking peer review.⁴ A frequently cited study found that female postdoctoral fellowship applicants “had to be [two-and-a-half] times more productive than the average male applicant to receive the same competence score.”⁵ A paper to be published in *Academic Medicine* used automated text analysis to show that there are gender biases in reviewers’ critiques of R01 grant applications.⁶

In terms of race, recent findings have shown that white researchers receive National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants at nearly twice the rate Black researchers do.⁷ This stark statistic stirred NIH Director of the Center for Scientific Review, Richard Nakamura, to consider the role of unconscious prejudice in grant reviews. Nakamura, while not considering himself racially biased, found that he harbored a slight unconscious bias against minorities after taking a race association test.⁸ This prompted his hypothesis that grant reviewers may be similarly or more deeply affected by implicit biases. Even small bias can have a large consequence in the world.

There is also an allocation bias in terms of philanthropic funding. Women’s groups are among those that continue to be underfunded, and only a small percentage of philanthropic monies go to organizations led by racial minorities, despite the high needs in these communities. According to a Greenlining Institute report, less than 5 percent of the charitable donations from more than 72,000 U.S. foundations are granted to communities of color.⁹ Research also has found that funding pertaining to Native American causes

and concerns remains among the lowest, amounting to less than 1 percent of total giving.¹⁰

Further, “relatively few nonprofit institutions serve the poor as a primary clientele.”¹¹ Smaller and midsized nonprofits – those more likely to serve the poor – continuously lack access to reliable funding sources to help them cover their full operating costs. For smaller nonprofits, the restrictions that come with grant money spending is often prohibitive.

Implicit bias in philanthropy affects not just which groups get funded but also who sits on the boards of philanthropic organizations (mostly white

males), how grantmaking foundations set priorities, how decisions are made, who makes those decisions and even who gets hired.

In 2008, a Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) study found “a pronounced disconnect between the ways in which grantmakers are supporting nonprofits and what nonprofits say could contribute to their success.”¹² The philanthropic community must ensure that implicit biases do not betray the conscious values at the root of philanthropic work. Achieving true transformative change requires people from diverse backgrounds to come together as a community, manage difficulties and undertake complex inquiries. This necessitates building mutual trust and respect among the researchers, members and stakeholders of the philanthropic community itself and the communities it serves. Accordingly, the philanthropic community must combat inequity by taking into account both inherent bias and a historical analysis of long-standing structural barriers.

We can gain a better understanding of the dynamics that produce and exacerbate inequity – as well as learn how to overcome them – by applying the insights of mind science to race, gender and other areas subject to implicit bias. By recognizing and addressing the role of implicit bias in its work, the philanthropic community will be better able to understand the past; engage, appraise and transform the present; and more effectively influence the future. ■

John A. Powell is director of the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and professor of law and professor of African American Studies and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

Notes

1. Rachel D. Godsil, et al., *The Science of Equality, Vol. 1: Addressing Implicit*

Achieving true
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR FOUNDATIONS INTERESTED IN ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS

PERCEPTION INSTITUTE

www.perception.org

In November 2014, the Perception Institute released *The Science of Equality, Volume 1: Addressing Implicit Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat in Education and Health Care*. This landmark report synthesizes hundreds of studies, providing a comprehensive picture of the role of implicit bias in discrimination.

KIRWAN INSTITUTE

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/>

The Kirwan Institute has released a new *State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review* (<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-review/>) every year for the past two years. The original 2013 report applies the implications of implicit bias to education, health and criminal justice. The 2014 report builds on this by delving into employment and housing.

RESEARCH BY JERRY KANG

<http://jerrykang.net/>

Jerry Kang is vice chancellor for equity, diversity and inclusion at UCLA. He has written extensively about the role of implicit bias in civil rights and race. See:

On discrimination in evaluation:

Seeing through Colorblindness: Implicit Bias and the Law (<http://jerrykang.net/research/2010-seeing-through-colorblindness/>)

On affirmative action and race consciousness:

Fair Measures: A Behavioral Realist Revision of Affirmative Action (<http://jerrykang.net/research/2006-fair-measures/>)

On media policy:

Trojan Horses of Race (<http://jerrykang.net/research/2005-trojan-horses-of-race/>)

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On personal responsibility and culture:

New Cultural Defense (<http://jerrykang.net/research/2011-new-cultural-defense/>)

On the science of automatic processing:

"TEDx – Immaculate Perception?" (<http://jerrykang.net/2013/12/11/tedx-immaculate-perception/>)

- Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat in Education and Healthcare*, Perception Institute, November 2014, http://diversity.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/ScienceofEquality_web.pdf.
- John A. Powell, *How Implicit Bias and Structural Racialization Can Move Us Toward Social and Personal Healing*, University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service & Center on Community Philanthropy, 2013, <http://clintonschool.uasys.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Clinton-School-Compendium-2013.pdf>; also see Walter Matthews, *Human life from many angles*, Goodwill Publishing Company, 1922.
- Id.*
- Lutz Bornmann, et al., "A multilevel meta-analysis of studies reporting correlations between the *h* index and 37 different *h* index variants," *Journal of Informetrics*, February 2011.
- Christine Wenneras and Agnes Wold, "Nepotism and Sexism in Peer Review," *Nature* 387, May 1997, <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v387/n6631/abs/387341a0.html>.
- Molly Carnes, et al., *Exploring the Science of Scientific Review*, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wisconsin, forthcoming.
- Sara Reardon, "NIH to probe racial disparity in grant awards," *Nature* 512, August 2014, <http://www.nature.com/news/nih-to-probe-racial-disparity-in-grant-awards-1.15740>.
- Id.*
- Avis Atkins and Orson Aguilar, *A Promise to Diverse Communities: Summary of the Foundation Coalitions Efforts*, Greenlining Institute, June 2012, <http://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/PDCreport.pdf>.
- Foundation Funding for Native American Issues and Peoples*, The Foundation Center, 2011, <http://www.nativephilanthropy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2011-Foundation-Funding-for-Native-American-Issues-and-Peoples.pdf>
- Charles Clotfelter, *Who Benefits From the Nonprofit Sector?*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, p. 22.
- Nancy Burd, *On the Money: The Key Financial Challenges Facing Nonprofits Today – and How Grantmakers Can Help*, 2009, http://www.socialimpactexchange.org/sites/www.socialimpactexchange.org/files/publications/On_the_Money_v2.pdf.
- This list was formulated by Jerry Kang and a group of researchers, detailed in *The Science of Equality*, in the context of judicial decision-making, but can be applied to the similar process of grant-making. See Godsil.
- Id.*

Asian Pacific Community in Action (APCA)

Phoenix, AZ

www.apcaaz.org

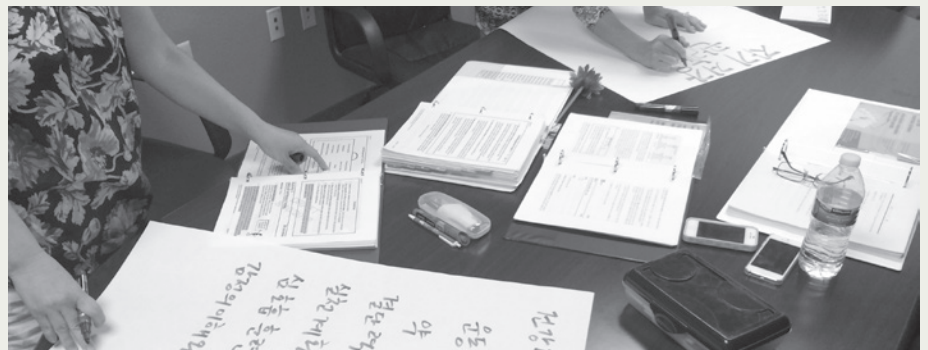


NCRP: If foundations could know one thing about APCA, what would it be?

APCA: Asian Pacific Community in Action (APCA) serves a very diverse and dispersed community. Founded in 2002 to serve the health needs of Asian Americans in Arizona, we now serve more than 30 language communities, including Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) and emerging communities. We provide culturally competent multilingual services to all who present, and feel a particular responsibility to smaller language communities that often are bypassed by mainstream health systems.

Like many Southwest communities, the greater Phoenix area spreads out; it has more than 9,224 square miles with a population of more than 4 million. It is a large urban area filled with dozens of sprawling cities and towns, and our communities are dispersed throughout. There are no Chinatowns, no Little Saigons or Koreatowns. We do not have ethnic enclaves like you would see on the coasts. This further reduces our visibility and challenges our service delivery.

AA and NHPI and emerging communities are the fastest growing segment in Arizona. Asian Pacific Community in Action is the only nonprofit with full-time staff that serves this diverse and dispersed community, and though we are primarily a community health organization, we find ourselves holding responsibility for a range of community needs. Clearly, more investment is needed to build the capacity of smaller AA and NHPI serving organizations to support this work in Arizona, as



APCA team members translate a chronic disease self-management workshop into Korean, one of the 30 language communities APCA serves. Photo courtesy of APCA.

well as investment by mainstream organizations to serve our communities.

NCRP: How do cultural and language barriers hinder access to health care, and how is APCA trying to address this challenge?

APCA: We invest our limited general funds in training bilingual community members to be professional medical interpreters or cultural brokers. This builds a culturally competent and multilingual workforce for Arizona and also provides economic opportunities for community members. Our goal is that all language communities receive equal access to health services and that community members create sustainable microenterprise. This empowers our community and advances our mission to increase meaningful access to culturally competent healthcare.

We are fluent in 30 of the languages regularly used in Arizona. Our professional medical interpreters receive specialized training and are qualified to provide interpretation for limited English proficient community members in medical settings. We serve all who present, not just Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities. The largest language community of our medical interpretation service is not an AA and NHPI language but Arabic.

APCA is a licensed site for Breaking Boundaries in Healthcare: A Medical Interpreter Training program. The curriculum is nationally endorsed by the International Medical Interpreters Association and provides qualified interpreters with the skills to deliver complete medical interpretation in health care settings, with an emphasis on cultural competency. Our commitment to quality and full access is driven by a lack of state licensure requirements and varied institutional practices. We invest in this work to build a culturally competent multilingual professional health workforce and raise the standards and practice of the profession. This is increasingly difficult in a state that passes English-only laws and is generally hostile to this effort.

NCRP: Arizona is known as having a challenging environment for progressive change. How has this affected your work?

APCA: There is a progressive space in Arizona but it has not yet achieved critical mass. We create our own spaces for this work and convene and facilitate our own cross-cultural collaborations so that issues faced by all communities are present in the work. It is a heavy lift to ensure that AA and NHPI and emerging communities are not bypassed and that our solutions are incorporated and prioritized. ■



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By Niki Jagpal and Ryan Schlegel

March 2015

This Smashing Silos in Philanthropy report examines the philanthropic sector's chronic underinvestment in leadership development – amounting to less than 1 percent of total grants between 2003-2012. It offers evidence for the importance of leadership development funding, as well as concrete recommendations for funders looking to increase their support of this high-impact strategy.

Walton Family Foundation – How Can This Market-Oriented Grantmaker Advance Community-Led Solutions for Greater Equity?

By Gita Gulati-Partee

May 2015

As part of Philamplify, NCRP assessed the Walton Family Foundation, a grantmaker primarily administrated by the relatives of Walmart founders Sam and Helen Walton. The foundation has disparate success in its environmental and educational portfolios, demonstrating the mixed results from its market-based approach.

visit: www.philamplify.org/foundation-assessments

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