ARISE Seminar Series

University of Kansas

November 13, 2023, 3:30-4:30 p.m. CST

Strengthening Social Infrastructure: Ethics and Approaches for Interdisciplinary Collaborations

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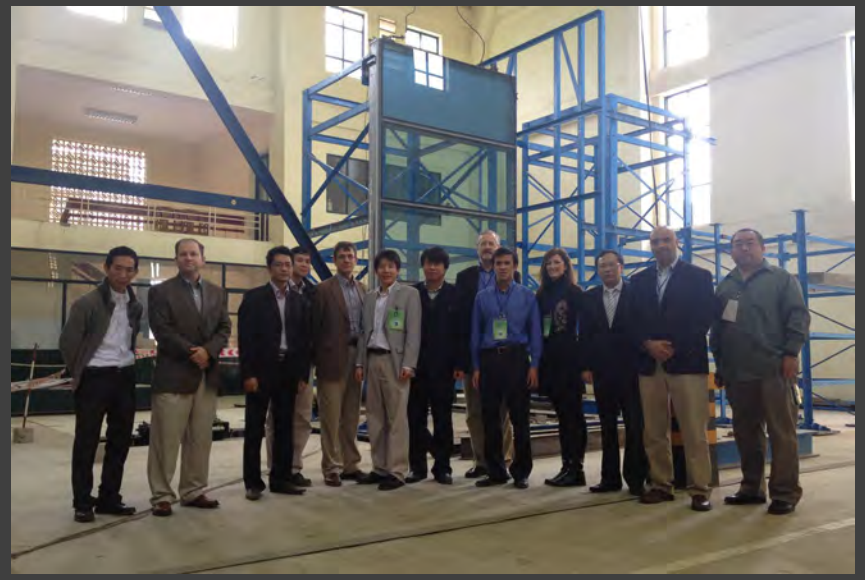
Director, Natural Hazards Center and Principal Investigator, CONVERGE

University of Colorado Boulder

University of Colorado Boulder

NSF CONVERGE NHERI

NATURAL HAZARDS CENTER



Building Strong *Social Infrastructure*

"The physical [and virtual] **places** and **organizations** that **shape the way people interact [and learn]**…. The **networks** and **taken-for-granted systems** that support—or in some cases, undermine—all variety of **collective life**." -Klinenberg, 2018, *Palaces for the People*

Question:

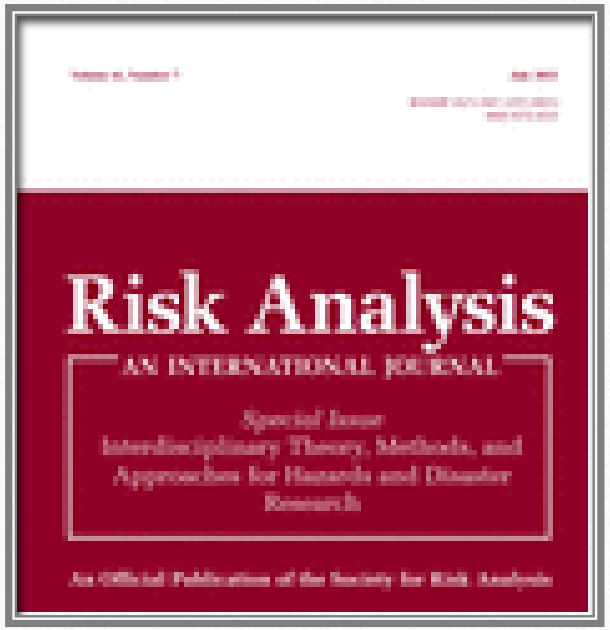
Any tips on big-team, cross-disciplinary collaboration?

(Especially when Zoom fatigue is ever so real, and thus adding more meetings doesn't feel like the ideal solution.)

Risk Analysis

Volume 41, Issue 7

https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/15396924/2021/41/7



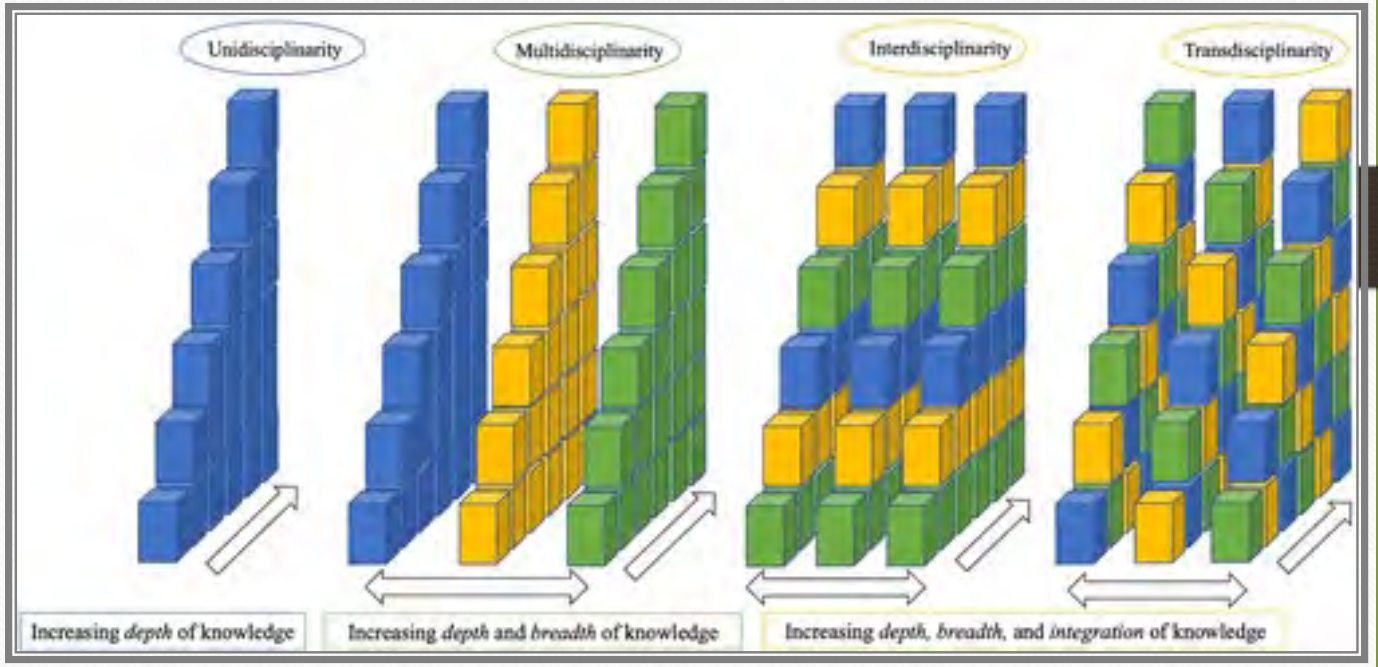
Special Issue: Interdisciplinary Theory, Methods, and Approaches for Hazards and Disaster Research

I. Theory
II. Methods
III. Approaches
IV. Projects

NSF CMMI Award #Award #1649879 and #1650202

Lessons

- It is **difficult** to work in large teams.
- Team-building takes leadership, care, time, trust, and resources.
- Emphasize *quality* over *quantity*. (Why have a monthly all-team meeting, if no one is engaging? Instead, consider investing in smaller task-focused meetings and then semi-annual in-person meetings.)
- *Process* and *product* should be given equal weight.
- Common language is key.
- Make the taken-for-granted or implicit aspects of research *explicit*. Stories can help.



What if we used the stories that researchers tell each other as tools to advance ethical practices and interdisciplinary disaster research?

Experience Stories

- "We define **experience stories** as stories that individuals tell about something that happened during the research process, generally combining descriptive observation, some level of interpretation, and embellishment… These types of stories often do not make their way into formal published research accounts; however, because they can—and do—inform the trajectory of interdisciplinary research projects, we take their **power** and **potential** seriously" (Moezzi and Peek, 2019, 1).

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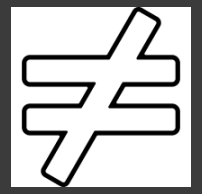
Experience Stories



Gossip or Critique

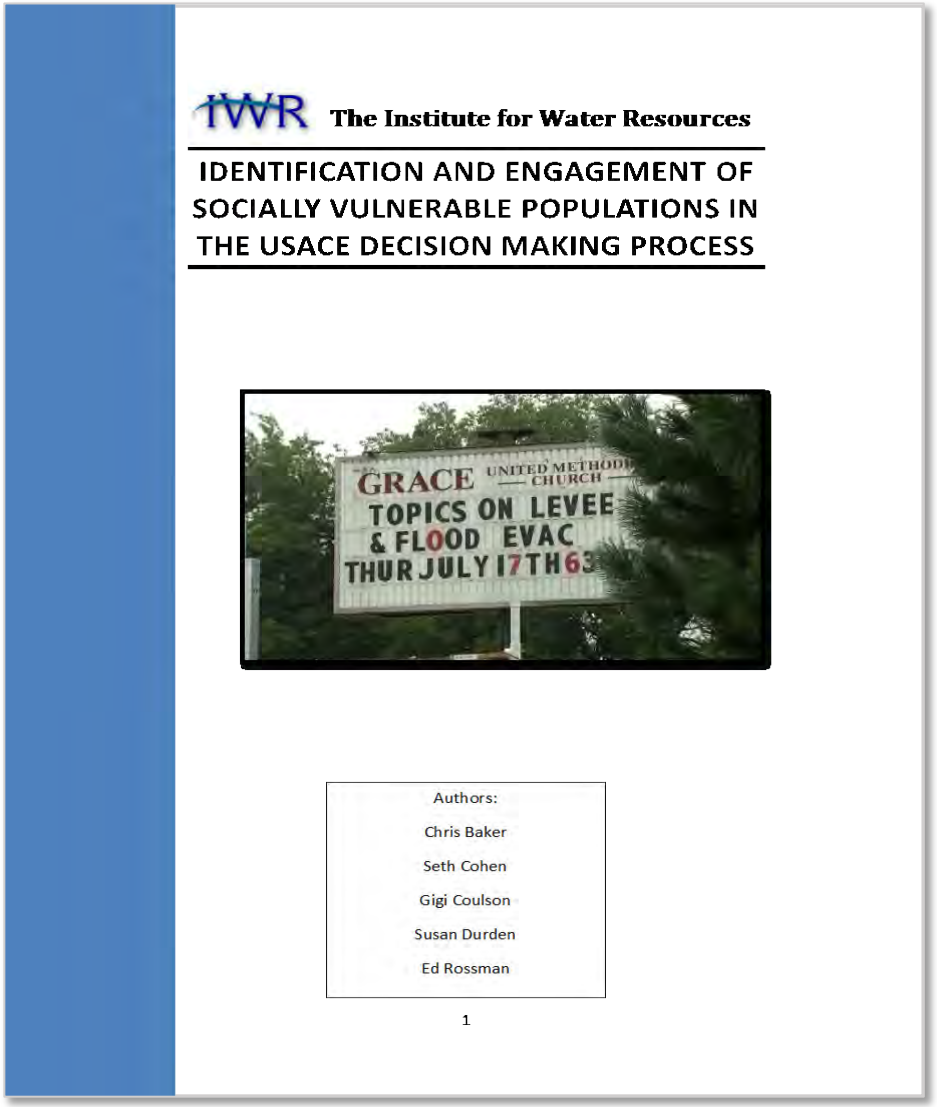
- Experience stories are grounded in the research process itself and involve descriptive observation of what was **seen, heard,** or otherwise **experienced** as part of the project. These stories can serve as a compact and engaging shared platform for **interdisciplinary debate** and for the **discovery** of **patterns and issues** that can be missed in **discipline-specific reasoning and data collection methods.**
- *Risks:* stories can be personal and painful and lead to disappointment and distrust.
- *Requirements:* time, trust, and a willingness to honor people's stories and listen to different disciplinary perspectives.
- *Possibilities:* More effective **cross-disciplinary collaboration** and a chance to advance **ethical practice** and **scientific rigor** in disaster research.

Approaches to Damage Assessments w/ a Social Science Sampling Lens

- Population
- Probability Sampling (simple random, systematic, stratified, cluster, etc.)
- Non-Probability Sampling (convenience, snowball, quota, purposive, expert, etc.)

Question:

When we select communities to work with, study, or engage, whose permission must we first seek to say ‘we’re working in/studying this community’?



Why engage communities and community partners?

It is the required thing to do.

It is the right thing to do – scientifically *and* ethically.

"A primary reason to engage the public in [research] and the … planning process is **to develop a better understanding of problems and opportunities** so that better plans can be developed.

With increased knowledge gained through the public involvement process, [researchers] and planners **can tell a better "story" of the overall need** and thus **help decision makers to better understand the significant issues**."

https://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/Portals/70/docs/iwrreports/Identifying_and_Engaging_Socially_Vulnerable_Populations_%20IWRv2_08_01_2016.pdf?ver=2016-08-11-125141-427

Flooding Disproportionately Harms Black Neighborhoods

The impacts of floods can exacerbate existing racial and social inequality

By Thomas Frank, E&E News on June 2, 2020

KQED

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SCIENCE

Queer Communities Often Left Out of Disaster Planning, Research Shows

LISTEN

By Ezra David Romero Feb 14

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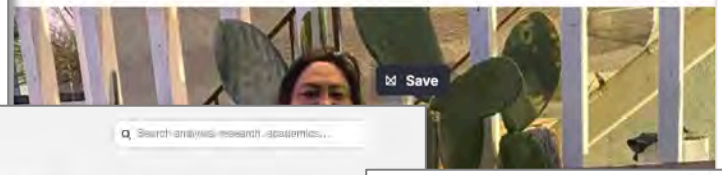
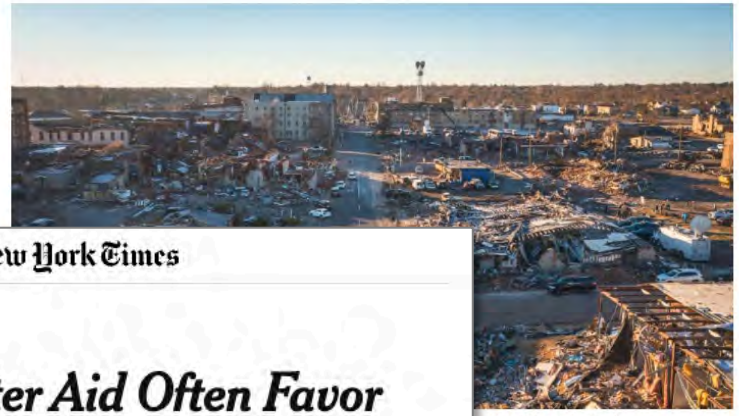


02-12-22

Natural disasters can wipe out affordable housing for years

And when communities lose affordable housing, it's harder for businesses—and the entire economy—to recover from those disasters.



her Paul/Getty Images]

E READ

THE CONVERSATION

Academic rigor, journalistic flair

COVID-19 Arts + Culture Economy + Business Education Environment + Energy Ethics + Religion Health Politics + Society Science + Technology

New flood maps show US damage rising 26% in next 30 years due to climate change alone, and the inequity is stark

Published: January 31, 2022 11.00am EST

Coastal cities like Port Arthur, Texas, are at increasing risk from flooding during storms. Joe Raedle/Getty Images

Email Twitter 49 Facebook 320 LinkedIn Print

Climate change is raising flood risks in neighborhoods across the U.S. much faster than many people realize. Over the next three decades, the cost of flood damage is on pace to rise 26% due to climate change alone, an analysis of our new flood risk maps shows.

That's only part of the risk. Despite recent devastating floods, people are still

Authors

Oliver Wing
Research Fellow, University of Bristol

Carolyn Kousky
Executive Director, Wharton Risk Center, University of Pennsylvania

The New York Times

Why Does Disaster Aid Often Favor White People?

The federal government often gives less help to Black disaster survivors than their white neighbors. That's a challenge for President Biden, who has vowed to fight both inequality and climate change.

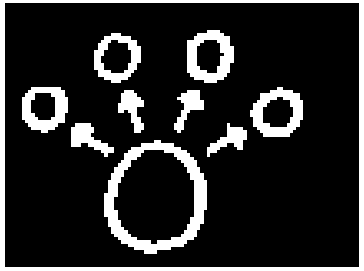
94

By Christopher Flavelle

Published June 7, 2021 Updated Oct. 27, 2021

Developing Sincere and Sustainable Community Connections

Spectrum of Public Participation

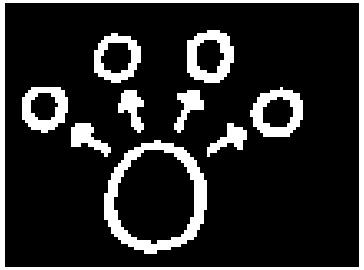


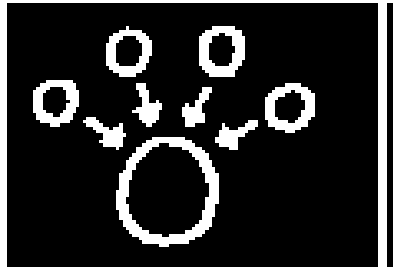
INFORM

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.

[International Association of Public Participation]

Spectrum of Public Participation





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PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

[International Association of Public Participation]

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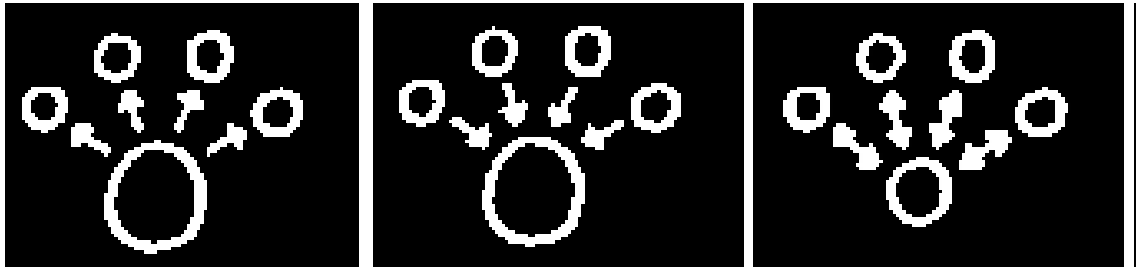

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PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

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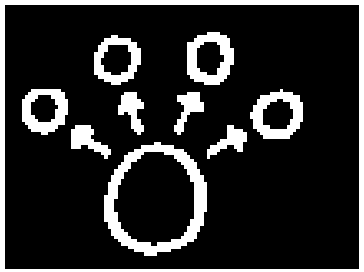
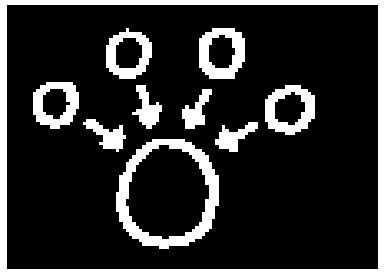
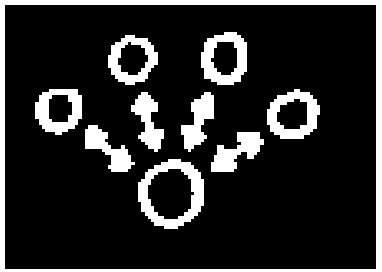
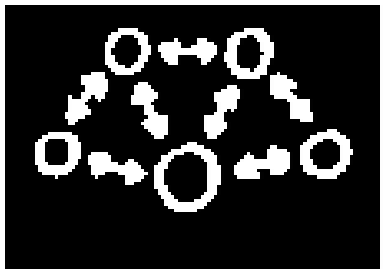

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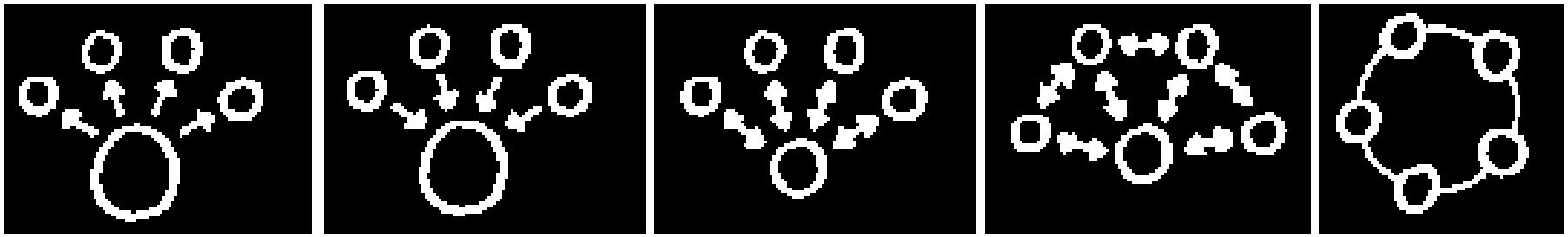

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INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

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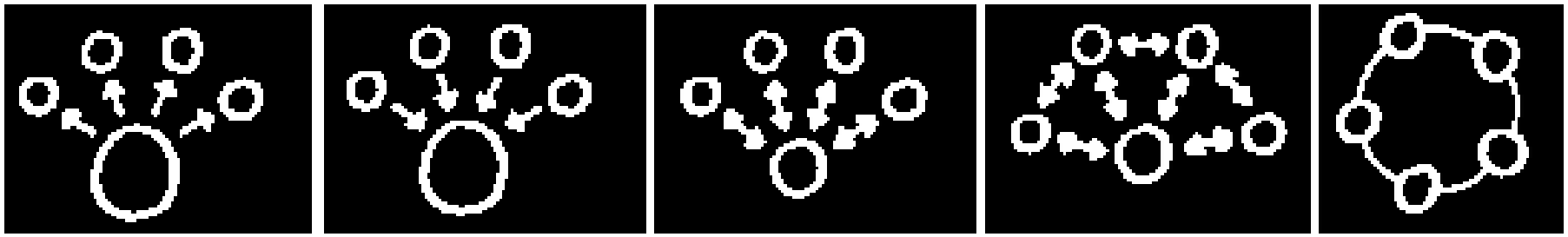
[International Association of Public Participation]

Equity is practiced when **those most impacted by structural inequities are meaningfully involved** in creation and the implementation of practices and policies that affects their lives.

-Andrews et al., 2019

How to Embed a Racial Equity Perspective in Research: Practical Guidance for Research process

Spectrum of Public Participation



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[International Association of Public Participation]

Question:

When we select communities to work with, study, or engage, whose permission must we first seek to say ‘we’re working in/studying this community’?

Cultural Humility

- A constructive process of self-critique and awareness
- Includes a constant questioning of biases, assumptions, and your role as ‘objective’ or ‘neutral’
- Goes along with active efforts to address power imbalances between officials and individuals

*Slide content source: Asking Different Questions, UC Davis

Positionality

- *Positionality* refers to one's multiple intersecting identities and how social roles, power, and privilege influence one's perceptions and experiences in research.

Definition: Evans, Adams, and Peek (2024)

Images: Pollock, Meagan (2021 March 24). What is positionality?. Engineer Inclusion. https://engineerinclusion.com/what-is-positionality/

Why are cultural humility and positionality important?

"Understanding the broader structural context of a community (historical, political, social, economic factors) before entering the field can help prevent researchers and practitioners from inadvertently causing further harm…. An understanding of positionality – and a commitment to cultural humility, reflexivity, and reciprocity – can also help us to develop stronger relationships in the field."

Adapted from the CONVERGE Training Module: Positionality in Hazards and Disaster Research and Practice

https://converge.colorado.edu/resources/training-modules/

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CONVERGE Training Modules

Welcome to the CONVERGE Training Modules!

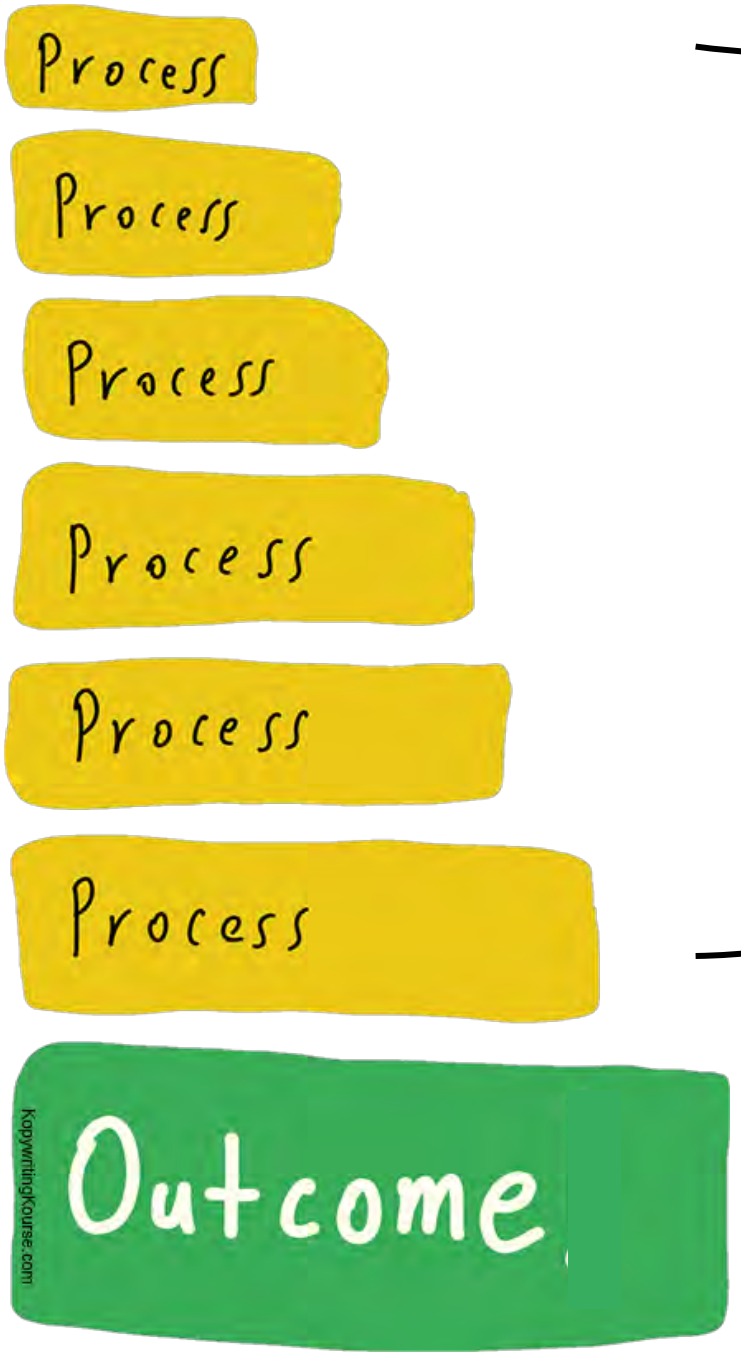
Each module takes 30-60 minutes to complete and features specific learning objectives and detailed lesson plans along with resources for further reading, analysis, and exploration. At the close of the module, you will have the opportunity to take a 10-question quiz. If you get 8 out of 10 questions correct, you will receive a Certificate of Completion for each module. Each completed CONVERGE Training Module is worth one contact hour of general management training through the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) certification program.

https://converge-training.colorado.edu/modules/

- Broader Ethical Considerations for Hazards and Disaster Researchers
- Collecting and Sharing Perishable Data
- Conducting Emotionally Challenging Research
- Cultural Competence in Hazards and Disaster Research
- Disaster Mental Health
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Procedures and Extreme Events Research
- Public Health Implications of Hazards and Disaster Research
- Reciprocity in Hazards and Disaster Research
- Social Vulnerability and Disasters
- Understanding and Ending Gender-Based Violence in Fieldwork

Questions:

- How can we make sure we are integrating equity in both ***process* and *product***, including within our team, with the communities we are engaging, and with the research products we're producing?
- What are good examples of **evaluating or measuring equity** – a very complex topic - particularly as it applies in community and/or infrastructure resilience



Equity is both a <u>process</u> and an <u>outcome</u>

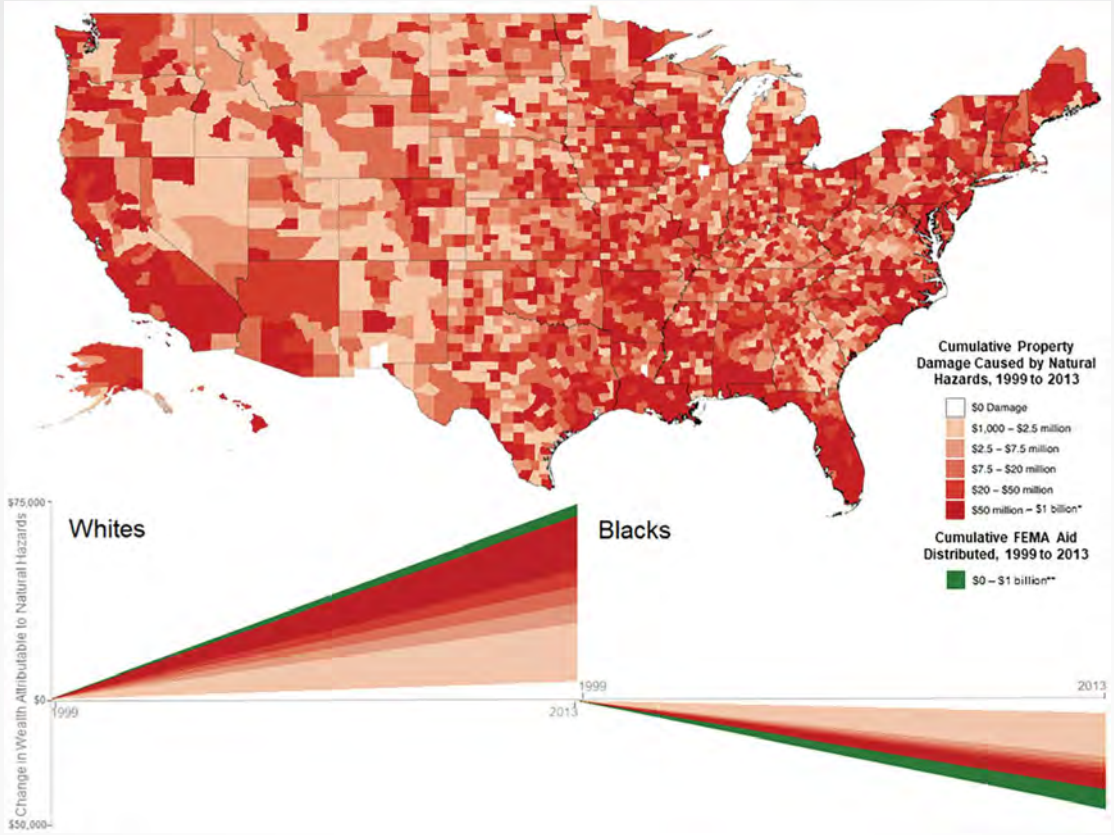
Equity is **practiced** when those most impacted by structural inequities are meaningfully involved in creation and the implementation of practices and policies that affects their lives.

-Andrews et al., 2019
How to Embed a Racial Equity Perspective in Research: Practical Guidance for Research process

"Equity is **achieved** when outcomes are not predicted based on someone's identities or characteristics (e.g., race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability status, etc.)."

-Creative Reaction Lab
Equity Centered Design Field Guide

We are much more advanced at measuring social vulnerability and unequal impacts in the hazards and disaster field. We have few case examples or indicators that would help us to measure *equitable* processes or outcomes.



Disasters exacerbate wealth inequality whereas Whites in disaster affected counties see a cumulative gain in wealth and blacks experience a loss of wealth (Howell and Elliott, 2018).

Black and Latino disaster victims apply more often for aid, but are disproportionately denied (Raker, 2023).

Sources: Howell and Elliott (2018), "As Disaster Costs Rise, So Does Inequality." *Socius*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023118816795
Raker (2023), "Stratifying Disaster: State Aid, Institutional Processes, and Inequality in American Communities, *Social Forces,* https://academic.oup.com/sf/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/sf/soad050/7111727?redirectedFrom=fulltext.

“Equity – as a process and outcome – is *not* simply the opposite of social vulnerability. But most of the indicators and tools currently being used in the equity space are demographic measures of social vulnerability.”

Please sign up for updates and information for the Natural Hazards Center and CONVERGE:

hazards.colorado.edu/signup

converge.colorado.edu/signup

The Natural Hazards Center and CONVERGE are funded by the National Science Foundation (Award #1635593 and #1841338). Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSF