Three Truths and Three Tries: Facing and Overcoming Critical Social Justice Challenges at the Micro, Mezzo, and Macro Levels

February 16 and 18, 2021

Report prepared by Isaac JT Strong, PhD on March 1, 2021
Three Truths

1. Inclusivity requires re-engineering.
2. You know race doesn’t exist (I hope), yet you persistent in reification and racialization nonetheless.
3. “You don’t tug on Superman’s cape” – If we want people to speak truth to power, we have to empower them do so.

Meanings & Methods

Defining micro, mezzo, and macro.

- Micro – How you, as the unique intersectional individual you are, feel/think about the prompt.
  - “While we accept certain cultural values as appropriate, as important for our own course of becoming, it is equally true that we are all rebels, deviants, and individualists.” – Gordan Allport
- Mezzo – How you feel/think about the prompt in terms of your primary social community.
  - Here you might think of your lab group at UCSF.
- Macro – How you feel/think about the prompt in terms of the larger structure/institution/system you feel is most relevant for you.
  - Here you might think of UCSF as an institution situated within and, in important ways, inextricably connected to and interactive with greater macro-level historical, structural, institutional forces.

Participants will be asked to respond to prompts at the micro, mezzo, and macro level. Where “M3” appears in the schedule, it is simply an abbreviation for micro, mezzo, macro.

Sharing your reflective writing with Carlos

To maximize our ability to share our feelings, thoughts, questions, etc. please consider entering your responses to each reflective writing opportunity in this doc. Your entries will be completely anonymous and will be seen by only me.

Following the workshop I will provide a summary of response themes – being careful to not share any aspects of responses that might make them identifiable. I’ll provide this summary to Isaac, who will make it available to participants as soon as possible after the workshop. Being able to take in the breadth and depth of how different minds, situated in different social identities and social locations register the workshop prompts will provide a valuable dimension of insight of enrichment.
Workshop Registrations and Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registrations</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>75</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postdocs</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grad Students</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registrations per Workshop</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>74</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Overall Workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdocs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad Students</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>99</td>
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Workshop Evaluation Survey

Questions included in the survey

Likert Scale – 1 (strongly agree) - 5 (strongly disagree)

- This workshop was impactful.
- I feel like I learned something from this workshop that I can use in my day-to-day life.
- I would recommend this workshop to my peers.
- UCSF should continue to offer opportunities for facilitated conversations like this.

Free response

- When thinking back on the workshop, what did you find striking?
- Do you have any suggestions/comments that can help us improve future workshops like this one?
- Do you have any questions for Carlos?
52 workshop attendees completed the evaluation survey. Faculty represented the majority of respondents (31 total). More people that attended Thursday’s workshop responded to the survey than those who attended Tuesday’s workshop.

**Likert Scale Questions**

There was overwhelming agreement with the likert scale questions in our workshop evaluation survey, with at most two respondents indicating ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ to a question.

Of the four respondents that indicated ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ to at least one question, only two left comments in the free response questions that could provide extra context so better understanding these neutral responses is difficult. Two respondents indicated ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ to the statements, “This workshop
was impactful” and “I would recommend this workshop to my peers.” One of those respondents left the following remarks when asked what they found striking about the workshop:

“I think if this was among the first workshops of its kind I took, I would come away finding it very useful. Dr. Hoyt’s demeanor, approach and style and message are fantastic. I just feel a sense of diminishing returns having taken DEI champions training, and various other anti-racism trainings. Hence, I did not come away learning much that I found new. We may consider recommending only one a year or so of this type of training to keep learners engaged.”

Their remarks suggest that they derive value from learning new content, which is inconsistent with the value of interpersonal dialogue that most other respondents mentioned in their comments. We do not agree with their recommendation that we only offer “one a year or so of this type of training,” but it would be good for us to consider our communication strategies for our workshops/trainings to clearly state the importance of consistent engagement in diversity work at UCSF.

Two different respondents indicated ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ to the statement, “I feel like I learned something from this workshop that I can use in my day-to-day life.” Only one of these respondents left comments that could be used to better understand their response, telling us that they found the elephant and giraffe metaphor “cheesy and not that impactful.”

Of importance is that all four respondents that indicated ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ also strongly agreed with the statement “UCSF should continue to offer opportunities for facilitated conversations like this,” suggesting that they still found some value in this workshop.

**Free Response Questions**

Each question was analyzed for common themes, then each responses were coded based on themes mentioned in that response. Those themes with the highest frequency of mention were included in this report. Illustrative quotes for each theme were also selected.

From the first free response question, it was clear that the materials used in the workshop resonated well with a good portion of respondents. Respondents also appreciated learning new terminology and language to use for these conversations, which supports the endeavors of the graduate division dean’s office to create a
shared language to support the diversity work needed at UCSF.

When asked for suggestions or comments that can help us improve similar workshops in the future, a majority of respondents provided feedback that suggested they found the workshop well designed as is, and really liked the structure it provided to have these conversations with other members of our community. We know that time was short for both workshops and that the aspects focusing on accountability could have used more time for discussion, and that was also reflected in the comments left by respondents.

The last theme from the feedback suggested that participants would want to engage in dialogue with more people, or different people between rounds. We took this feedback from Tuesday’s workshop to switch up the small groups members for Thursday’s workshop. While we did not ask about that change directly, the fact that people mentioned finding value to talking with multiple people and the lack of comments about wanting to stay with the same people from round to round suggests that it was beneficial to switch up the groups each round.

We also asked people if they had any questions for Carlos. Most of these responses were statements of appreciation, but some did have some questions for Carlos. We are not surprised to see such strong support for the expertise and skillset that Carlos brings to these workshops. From the statements of appreciation and the depth of thought represented in the questions for Carlos, it is clear that our partnership with Carlos brings value to UCSF and to the members that participate in these workshops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have any suggestions/comments that can help us improve future workshops like this one?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.8% 14/38 Respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.4% 7/38 Respondents</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.6% 6/38 Respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.6% 6/38 Respondents</td>
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"This may be difficult to do, but increasing the opportunity for discussion with different colleagues (both in length of time and the number of people we talk to), I think what felt very impactful was being able to discuss these topics with other people and strengthen my connection to another member of the UCSF community."
### Statements of Appreciation

- I wanted to say thank you.
- Thank you for your work, Carlos!
- Carlos was wonderful! I so appreciate his time and personal experience and vulnerable sharing and valuable lessons and insights.
- I have no current questions. Thank you Carlos for a great workshop.
- Just gratitude and appreciation for Carlos and his work. Thank you.
- Just gratitude.
- Thank you Carlos. So appreciate you and your work.
- Many thanks for leading and sharing really thought provoking stories and readings and actions.
- Thank you so much for sharing your time and expertise with us at UCSF. It was a privilege to learn from you.
- Thank you!
- Just a big THANK YOU! I really appreciated how Carlos emphasized how given the role that science played in propagating these toxic ideologies, we scientists bear a responsibility to challenge these same ideologies.
- *Carlos, your presentation was excellent—clear, simple, and thought-provoking.
- **This was a really excellent and informative workshop, thank you!**

### Questions for Carlos

- Is there an easy sentence/paragraph/analogy/way of explaining that race is a social construct without genetic basis? Sometimes I think I understand, but then other times, I get confused and think I haven’t fully internalized it yet.
- What books would you recommend (i.e. the ones that you found the most powerful) and educational?
- Can you provide a reading list? I have read about 20 books on race and revisionist history and am always interested in learning about the books that really moved people or gave them a useful construct for dealing with this issue.
- Stuck on the idea of deconstructionism: we deconstruct race, but can we do away with it—how does Carlos see us moving past race and making meaningful changes, in other words, how do we measure diversity, equity, and inclusion without this “construct”?
- I am thinking of the police officer whose control was clearly lost in the George Floyd murder. How do we now prevent a backlash against all police officers, which is wrong, just like assigning one trait to all people who have similar physical features?
- *I would like to know more about correctness and how it is different from revisionism, with respect to racial categorization? To me, it seemed like correctness was a more consciously directed form of revisionism, perhaps with an emphasis on individual action.
- **I wonder if it would be possible to offer a modified version of this workshop for researchers working in health disparities and/or genetics? I struggle with how to frame and describe my research and its goals appropriately. For example, while I completely accept that race is a social construct, the way in which we measure disease burden still uses these categories (e.g.: “X condition is 2 times: more common in African Americans”) and this sometimes provides useful information. At the other end of the spectrum, genetic ancestry is a more fluid, quantitative metric that captures certain aspects of human diversity, and in some cases also tracks with health outcomes. However, I am weary of genetic ancestry being viewed as some objective/scientific “truth” and being misused for grouping people based on arbitrary cut-offs (X% West African and Y% East Asian ancestry—this doesn’t define who a person is). I realize I don’t have a specific question, but I feel like (and probably many others) need guidance for how to navigate these issues with sensitivity and ensure our research has a positive impact.**

### Uncategorized Statements of Importance

- I was trying to get his book but it’s quite expensive. I took it out on loan from the school library but know there is no way I will get through it in time.
- Dedicate a lot of your focus and work on kids in school is such a wonderful way to try and bypass a lot of the adult level nonsense that goes on. Investing in educating young people to grow a generation of considerate thinkers, learners and humans gives a truly terrific feeling.