Tackling Racial Inequities in Boston
What’s BU Learning?

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Black-White Income Differences in the Very Long Run

*Figure 1*

**BLACK/WHITE INCOME RATIOS, 1870–2014**

*Source:* See Appendix B.
Black-White Income Differences in the Very Long Run

Figure 2
The Racial Gap in Years of Schooling at Age 35

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Table 1: 2012-2013 BPS Schools that have 0, 1, 2 or 3 or more Black Teachers Disaggregated by the Percentage of the Principal’s Race in Boston Public Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Black Male Teachers in School</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Principal’s Race</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Idea: BU Center for Evidence-based Policies and Practices Aimed at Closing the Opportunity Gap

Research:
• How are teacher preparation programs organized to support the unique needs of pre-service teachers of color?
• How do students and families perceive the “added-value” of teachers of color?
• How are the school-based experiences of Native American, Asian, Black and Latino teachers similar and different?

Policy:
• Include items on the School and Staffing Survey (SASS) that ask participants to report on school-based experiences related to race, gender, and sexuality
• States should make publicly available the racial/ethnic composition of faculty/students in preparation programs

Practice:
• Differentiating professional development to address the unique socio-emotional needs of pre and in service educators of color.
• Local and state convenings that deepen teachers of color content and pedagogical content knowledge, while also providing these teachers with strategies to navigate challenging work environments.
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Culturally relevant teachers:
- Place race at the center of their teaching and curriculum
- Focus on equity over tolerance
- Classroom practices look similar across racially diverse and segregated schools, but the teachers make direct connections to the racial/cultural backgrounds of their students

History/social studies teachers in Massachusetts:
- Teach about race regularly and increase focus on equity
- Less likely to teach regularly about the experiences of Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern, and indigenous people
- Have almost no teacher preparation or professional development on teaching race and multicultural education
IDEAS TO HELP ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY IN OUR REGION

- Increase professional development around teaching race for all teachers (state and federal funding)
- Redesign teacher preparation programs for all teachers (even math and science) to include courses on teaching race and multicultural education
- Revise the state’s K-12 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework to be more inclusive of the racial/ethnic diversity of the state; include more topics specific to race
- Require ethnic studies courses (or add components within traditional courses, such as history and civics) as a state graduation requirement
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Looking for **Causes**
...in all the **WRONG PLACES**

There’s an old joke about a man who late one night dropped his keys in the middle of a dark parking lot. He moves some distance over to the side of the lot and begins a fruitless search for them under a bright light. When asked why he was not looking where he actually dropped them, he replied, “because this is where the light is.”

*Network*, New England Research Institutes, Summer, 2002
Advancing Equity through Community and Youth-led Research

Center for Community Engaged Scholarship

- Community based participatory research partnerships
- Informal science education
- Workforce development
- College and career readiness
- Student research training (research-as-curriculum)

Boston University Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research
Harold Cox

Associate Dean for Public Health Practice, Associate Professor of Community Health Sciences, Director of the School of Public Health Activist Lab

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Partnership in Health & Housing
Boston Senior Oral Health Program
Judith G. Gonyea

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What do these trends mean for Boston?
*By 2030, almost 20% of Bostonians (Bs) will be 60+ years old. (The fast growing group is those age 80+)
*Currently, ~60% of Bs age 60+ are women; and 2/3s of Bs age 80+ are women.
*Boston’s older pop. will soon reflect its status as a majority-minority city. (Currently, 51% are White alone, 29% Black alone, 16% Latino, 12% Other race; and 8% Asian or NHPI alone).

QUESTION: What is our social responsibility in helping ALL older Bostonians achieve a secure and positive old age?

CORE COMPONENTS:
- An adequate (post-retirement) income
- Accessible quality health care
- Appropriate and affordable housing.
- Supportive relationships/Positive social connections
- Positive sense of self/Personal meaning

Ex. Partnership with TACC & a Boston CDC
Impetus: CDC-How can we better support the ability of older adults to continue to age-in-place in the subsidized housing complex?
(Older subsidized housing residents among the most vulnerable seniors in US—<income, >disability)

Partnered: Assets and Needs Assessment: of Tenants Age 55+
In-person English or Spanish language interviews were conducted with 216 tenants (72% response rate)-of which 50% self-identified as Black and 45% identified as Latino--to learn about personal and environmental factors impacting their quality of life.
Impact: Being used by CDC in several ways, including physical space re-design, service coordinator role revisions, and exploring formal linkages with local health and aging agencies.

Partnered: The Role of Loneliness in Depression in Older Urban Subsidized Housing Residents.
(BU IOC)
Less is known about the mental health of older subsidized housing tenants. We were interested in examining the prevalence of depression given its association with a number of negative health outcomes. Furthermore, as loneliness has increasingly been identified as a major public health concern—we interested in exploring
Approximately 1/4 met the criterion for clinical depression and > 1/3 reported strong feelings of loneliness. Importantly, after controlling for health vulnerability and stress factors, loneliness explained almost half of the 49% total variance in depression.
While a great deal of attention has been paid to interventions to change individuals’ health behaviors such as smoking, diet, and physical activity, less attention has been paid to social risk factors. Our findings suggest that strategies to increase social engagement (and reduce social isolation) may be equally important.

MY RESEARCH AGENDA IS DRIVEN BY THE INTERSECTION OF 3 TRENDS: WORLDWIDE URBANIZATION; GLOBAL POPULATION AGING; & AMERICA’S GROWING RACIAL DIVERSITY.
Leadership of BU (President → Provost → Deans) adopt “promotion of social justice locally and globally through teaching, research, and service” as a core priority of BU. Designate a key administrator and advisory board composed of BU and Boston community representatives to promote and guide activities throughout BU Community.

Example Possible initiatives:

**Year-Long, Monthly Series of Public Forums on Social Justice open to BU and Boston Community.** Each forum will have a national leader/keynote speaker as well as a BU and a Boston Community leader respondent. Forums’ themes and speakers will be proposed different BU Schools/Departments. A post-talk reception to foster informal exchange.

**BU Interdisciplinary Center on Urban Community Participatory Research (CPR):** The Centers’ overarching goal will be to provide leadership in the creation and/strengthening of research partnerships between BU and the community to bring about social justice and change. [CPR emphasizes community-based identification of social problems and solutions; it emphasizes equalizing power differences, building trust, and partners sharing control over the research process and outcomes. “A share sense of ownership” is inclusive of having control over decisions about how the research affects the community, including the generation of health and environmental priorities. The Center will become a focal point of CPR research and a resource for BU faculty, students and Boston community organizations.

**Annual Cohorts of 14-16 Undergraduate and Graduate Boston Social Justice Internships.** Interns will be placed in relevant Boston public agencies/nonprofit organizations to work on a racial equity issue/project for a minimum of 10 hours/week for an academic year. Interns will receive a stipend of $10,000 (undergrad) and $15,000 (graduate) The interdisciplinary cohort will meet monthly for a seminar and produce a video, public report and participate in a university-wide student forum (part of BU research day?)

**One Year BU (Paid) Visiting Professorships of Social Justice for Local Boston Community Leaders.** Community leaders often face multiple demands. In this Visiting Professorship, local Boston Community Leaders would be able to take a 1-year sabbatical from their agency/organization and partner with a single BU professor or a team of BU professors to focus on a Boston social justice/racial equity project. (Salary plus $25,000 project funds)

**Promotion of Research Measuring Racial Discrimination and Its Individual, Social and Public Costs: Seed Money for Grant Development and Pilot Projects.** Surveys, such as the Pew Research Center’s, continue to show that on views of race and equality Whites and Blacks are deeply divided—4 in 10 Blacks are doubtful the US will ever achieve racial equality. The development of measures of “racial discrimination” offer the opportunity for the documentation of the individual, social and public costs of racial discrimination and create impetus for social change.

What more could BU do to help advance racial equity in our region?
Jonathan Levy

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### TABLE 1—Representative Housing Variables Associated With Indoor Environmental Exposures, by Household Income: American Housing Survey, United States, 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Variable</th>
<th>&lt;$30 K/Year (n = 25,647)</th>
<th>$30&lt;$60 K/Year (n = 25,840)</th>
<th>$60&lt;$100 K/Year (n = 24,000)</th>
<th>≥$100 K/Year (n = 22,842)</th>
<th>Associated Exposures and Hazards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Built before 1980, %</td>
<td>71.56</td>
<td>65.82</td>
<td>57.77</td>
<td>48.63</td>
<td>Lead paint; structural integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of peeling paint larger than 8 x 11 in, %</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>Lead paint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any inside water leaks in past 12 mo, %</td>
<td>9.14</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>Mold and moisture; structural integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood with heavy street noise or traffic, %</td>
<td>28.19</td>
<td>25.42</td>
<td>21.95</td>
<td>16.69</td>
<td>Outdoor air sources—mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry or factory within half block, %</td>
<td>6.90</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>Outdoor air sources—stationary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit uncomfortably cold for ≥24 h, %</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>9.67</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>Supplemental heating; comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of rodents in unit, %</td>
<td>17.77</td>
<td>16.81</td>
<td>16.98</td>
<td>16.26</td>
<td>Allergen exposure; pesticide exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean floor area of unit, ft²</td>
<td>1524</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>2098</td>
<td>2853</td>
<td>Exposure to indoor air pollutants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean occupant density, no./1000 ft²</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>Indoor source strength—various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes with cracks in floor, wall, or ceiling, %</td>
<td>7.13</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>Allergen exposure (pests)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes with holes in floor, %</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>Allergen exposure (pests)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advancing racial equity (from an Environmental Health perspective)

- Green housing to reduce energy costs and improve indoor environment
  - Reduce indoor sources (smoking, lead paint, gas stoves, cockroaches)
  - Improve ventilation
  - Improve insulation
  - Eliminate “heat or eat”
- MassSave with a health component
- Pollution controls, access to green space, no food deserts/swamps
- Address community violence
  - Stress, indoor environmental exposures
Yvette Cozier

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Assistant Dean for Diversity & Inclusion
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Boston Neighborhoods

- **Maverick Square:**
  - 12% poverty
  - 4.4 premature deaths per 1,000

- **Dudley Square:**
  - 32% poverty
  - 5.7 premature deaths per 1,000

- **Mattapan Square:**
  - 16% poverty
  - 4.4 premature deaths per 1,000

- **Arlington Street:**
  - 4% poverty
  - 2.6 premature deaths per 1,000

- **Fenway:**
  - 14% poverty
  - 4.3 premature deaths per 1,000

Adapted from S. Galea: https://www.bu.edu/sph/2015/03/29/health-of-a-city-health-inequalities-in-boston-by-t-stops-a-pictorial-essay/
• Recognition that neighborhood of residence is an important risk factor for health outcomes
• Update policy, approach
  – Neighborhood redevelopment initiatives must include local redevelopment authorities, urban planning boards, public health, medicine, education, finance, etc.
  – “Redevelop and Remain” vs. Redevelop and Gentrify
• Support all schools in all neighborhoods
  – **ALL** BPS elementary schools should be pipelines to Boston Latin School (BLS)
  – Expand the BLS model
  – Expand the Vo-tech model
Nancy R. Kressin

Professor, School of Medicine
Director, Health/care Disparities Research Program
Associate Professor, School of Public Health
Understanding racial inequities in Boston

- Bostonians from different racial groups have differing access to, beliefs about, experiences with, and outcomes of health and healthcare.

- Many health inequities derive from one’s social context, not clinical care. Yet, BU physicians want to help address SDOH to improve health outcomes.

- It is very difficult to pinpoint how/where racism works in the provision of health care and to identify where to best intervene to address it (system/provider/patient?).
Ideas for the Future

- Activities to increase understanding of how racism operates, through interpersonal interactions and sharing of stories (e.g., across racial groups, Boston neighborhoods)

- Document and share experiences of racism and discrimination by people of color as they live in Boston and obtain health care

- Increase racial and cross-cultural competence of Boston public school leaders, teachers, and students
Research on Tap | Tackling Racial Inequities in Boston: What’s BU Learning?

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Boston University Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research
Prison Admissions in Greater Boston, 2009 to 2014
Alternatives to Excess Punishment

Policy Reform for Counties and the Commonwealth
• End imprisonment for fines, fees and bail
• Limit use of prison for pre-trial detainment

A Proposal for a BU Collaboration
• A partnership with public health, social work and the social sciences
• Goal: identify key policy and research areas to respond to the conditions of mass imprisonment in Boston neighborhoods
• Research that informs criminal justice through a social justice and public health lens
Shea W. Cronin

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Metropolitan College
Tackling Racial Inequities: Implications of What BU is Learning?

1. Political leadership change has implications for distribution of arrest practices across neighborhoods

2. Neighborhood political power can reduce association between activity and racial composition

3. Compstat does not improve the association between measures of crime and police activity levels

4. NIJ funded project led by SPH Profs. Siegel & Rothman will examine differential impact of gun legislation
Tackling Racial Inequities: What more can BU do?

1. Demonstrate the value and use of data-driven management and supervision responses to address disparities in police contacts & post-contact decisions

2. Understand variation in procedural justice practices & methods of institutionalizing practices within law enforcement agencies

3. Develop multidisciplinary, experiential learning course around diversity, justice policy and practice

Boston University Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research
In 2010, I accepted the invitation to become MLK Professor of Boston University and I began the Martin Luther King, Jr. Initiative on the Development of Ethical Leadership (MLK-IDEAL).

Since 1990, my teaching, research and writings have been devoted to two prominent figures of racial justice: MLK and Howard Thurman; Educating Ethical Leaders for Diversity & Inclusion; Global Citizenship; Black Churches and Social Action; MOOC: Ethical Leadership Character, Civility and Community.

During my sabbatical year (2016-2017), I propose to further develop the MLK-IDEAL and to launch the first phase of its programs upon my return (2017-2020).

www.edx.org/course/ethical-leadership-character-civility-bux-leadership
Martin Luther King, Jr. Initiative for the Development of Ethical Leadership (MLK-IDEAL)

The MLK-IDEAL will become a center of education, research, service and training in ethical leadership theory and practice serving Boston University (BU) and local, national and global communities.

Through its programs, the MLK-IDEAL will be responsive to the increasing need for diverse, ethical leadership in a broad range of academic, civil, community, governmental, religious/theological and business contexts.

One of the programs, “Ethical Leadership in Local Communities” would provide a T-T-T Model for addressing racial equities and racial healing in BU and local Boston communities.
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Understanding Racial Inequities in Boston in the Context of National Movements

Research:
Who: African American Women in the Black Power Movement


Where: Nationwide

Why: I examine how African American women used political writings and images to reimagine their role in bringing about race, class, and gender equality.

My Research:

1. Helps us understand how major issues in the civil rights and black power movements played out in Boston.

2: Helps us understand how we have fallen short of the dreams for racial and gender equality that past local activists imagined.
Ideas: Advancing Racial Equity in the Region

• Recreate some of the programs designed by the Black Panther Party
  • Free Food Cooperative
  • Free Health Clinic
  • Legal Aid and Education Program

• Create a “Civil Rights in Boston” Service Learning Course at BU
  • Students would:
    • Learn history of Civil Rights Movement in Boston
    • Spend part of course working in a Boston-based civil rights group
    • Play an active role in reshaping the racial landscape of the city
Email us your ideas: IOC@bu.edu

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