

On the urgency to disrupt essentializing frames

**Engaging disability intersections
in teacher education**



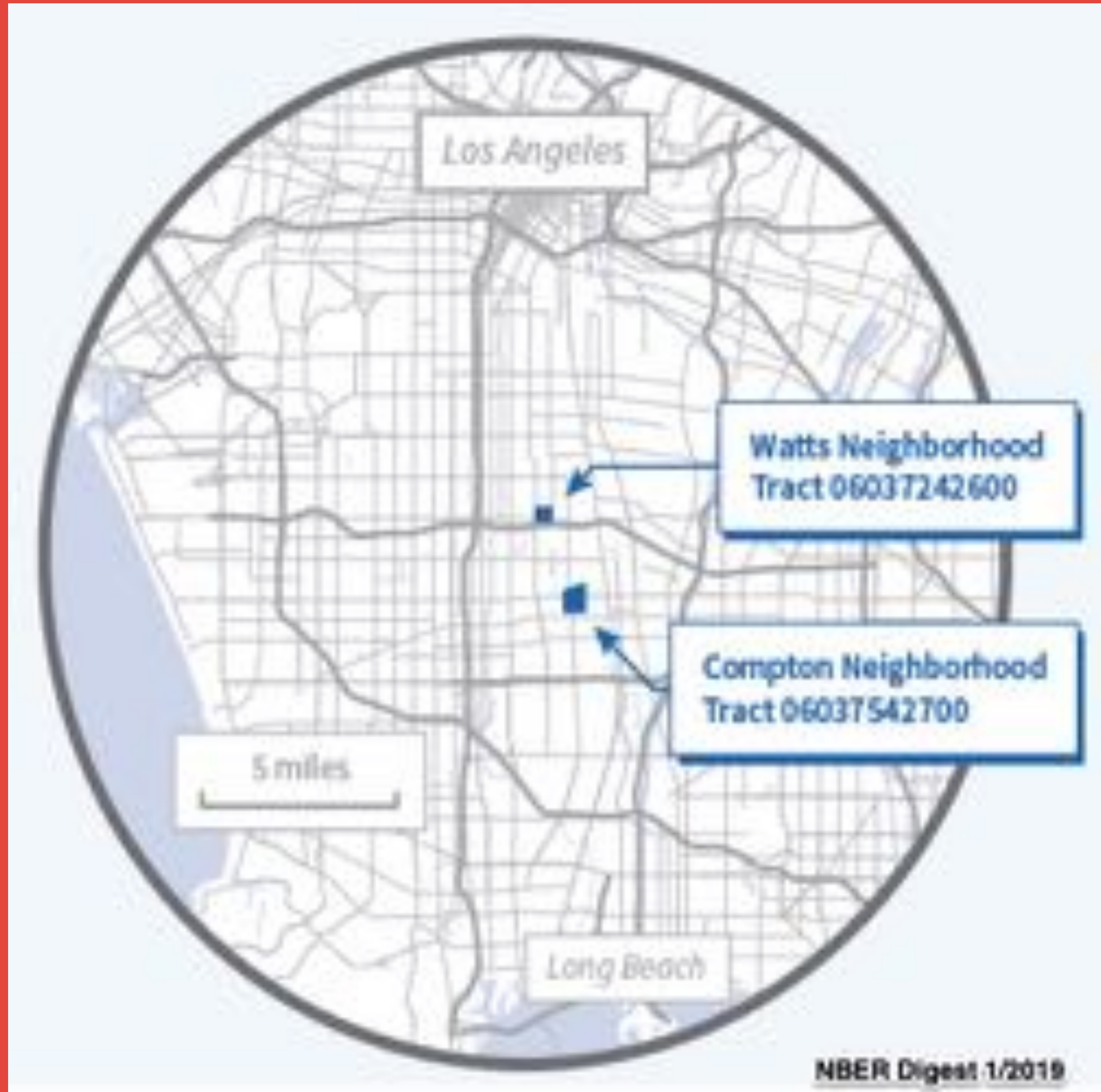
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- 1. TEACHER EDUCATION HAS OVERSIMPLIFIED AND PERPETUATED A-CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISABILITY**
 - 2. IT'S URGENT FUTURE EDUCATORS UNDERSTAND THE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL NUANCES OF DISABILITY**

Assumptions

Situated Approach

SHOW “HOW, BY WHOM,
UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS,
AND TO WHAT ENDS
SYMBOLIC CATEGORIES ARE
MADE REAL IN THE LIVES OF
INDIVIDUALS AND IN THE
WORKINGS OF
INSTITUTIONS ALIKE”

Benjamin (2014)



THE DUAL NATURE OF DISABILITY

... “disability has a dual nature, as a condition that veers people into life trajectories fraught with adversities and discrimination, while it is also an object of protection that recruits states’ and communities’ resources (e.g., educational and health programs and benefits) to compensate for the impact of impairments and to develop individuals’ potential for meaningful participation in society” (p. 778).

Artiles, Dorn, & Bal (2016)

PARADOXES OF JUSTICE

**HOW CAN SPED BECOME AN INDEX OF INEQUALITY
FOR OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS?**

In other words, how can we preserve and enhance the equity achievements for SWDs without undermining educational opportunities for other groups?

Urgent teacher learning needs

1. The persisting significance of race

1.1. Structural weight of “difference”

1.2. The power of colorblindness and deficit storylines

1.3. The aftermath of colorblindness

2. The fluid states of difference

3. Beyond the essential other



A person with dark hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and a patterned tie, is holding a pair of round goggles up to their eyes. Their mouth is open in a wide, surprised or intense expression. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

DISRUPTING THE VIEW FROM NOWHERE

1. THE PERSISTING SIGNIFICANCE OF RACE

1.1. The structural weight of “difference”

THE PUNISHING REACH OF RACISM

[HTTPS://WWW.NYTIMES.COM/INTERACTIVE/2018/03/19/UPSHOT/RACE-CLASS-WHITE-AND-BLACK-MEN.HTML](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/19/upshot/race-class-white-and-black-men.html)

The Equality of Opportunity Project, Raj Chetty

Inter-generational aggregation and compounding of economic and social disadvantages for people of color

“The white household living near the poverty line typically has about \$18,000 in wealth, while black households in similar economic straits typically have a median wealth near zero” (Darity et al., 2018, p. 2)

* Darity, Jr. W. et al. (2018). *What we get wrong about closing the racial wealth gap*. Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity.

* Brown et al. (2003). *Whitewashing race: The myth of a colorblind society*. University of California Press.

A MORAL IMPERATIVE

- Unprecedented diversity in schools**
- Deepening racial-ethnic and socio-economic inequities**
- Impact on educational opportunity**

1.2. Constructing Deficit Storylines

- ▶ **Colorblindness** = ideological **meta-frame** constituted by multiple **racial scripts** (Harris, 2006):

1. **Individual actors**: “Racism is reduced to intentional acts of bigoted individuals”

2. **Denial**: So few bigots now, racism has lost significance

3. **Scapegoats culture**: Inequality is the product of culturally deficient bodies.

- ▶ **Circuits**: Ideological assumptions forge damaged visions about the **nature** of students of color’s bodies

♦ “...racial inequality will only disappear when Black people are ‘fixed’ ” (Harris, '06, p. 912)

1.2. RACIAL STORYLINES (NASIR, SNYDER, SHAH & ROSS, 2012)

- * ARE PREVALENT IN OUR SOCIETY AND HAVE POWERFUL IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNERS
- * ARE A CRITICAL ASPECT OF LIFE IN SCHOOLS, WHICH SERVE THE PURPOSE OF RACIALLY AND ACADEMICALLY SOCIALIZING STUDENTS
- * AS THESE STORYLINES ARE INVOKED IN SCHOOL SETTINGS, CERTAIN IDENTITIES ARE MADE AVAILABLE, IMPOSED, OR CLOSED DOWN

Latinx immigrants in the South “face multifaceted racialization in the news media ... [This racialization] shares substantive similarities with African American racialization processes” (Brown, Jones & Becker, 2018, p. 118)

**Dominant negative characterization:
Perceived criminal tendencies**

THE RACIALIZATION OF ETHNICITY & LANGUAGE

“MANY STUDENTS SPOKE OF THE ‘LACKS’ THAT THEIR EDUCATION HAS INSTILLED IN THEM; AS IF THEY EMBODY THE INFERIORITY OF THEIR SCHOOLING” (P. 25)

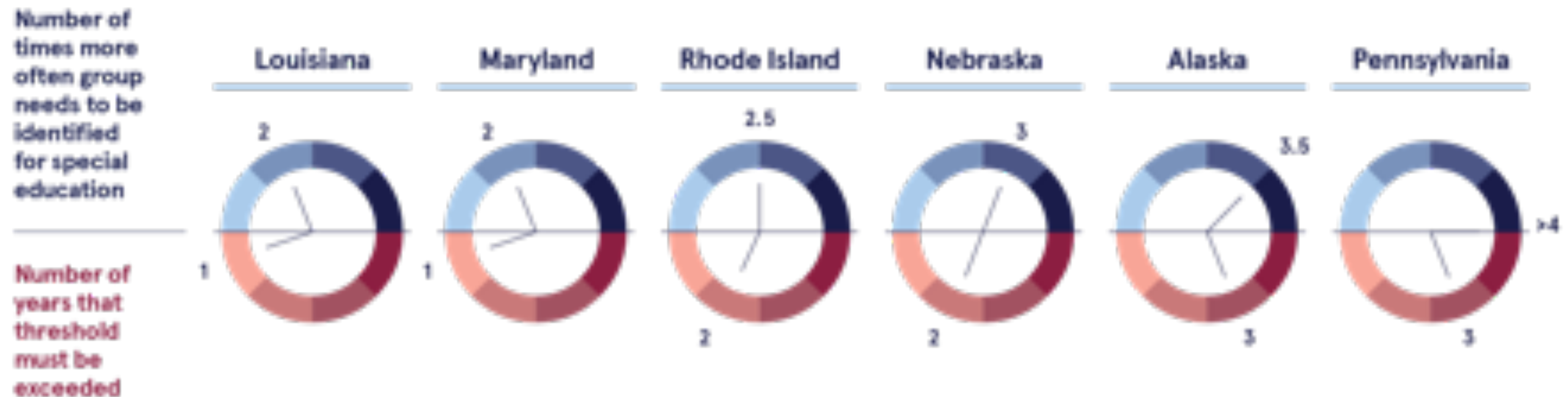
“...WHAT I DON’T LIKE ABOUT MY SCHOOL IS HOW THEY TEACH US LIKE ANIMALS, LIKE THEY CAGE US UP AND LIKE THEY KEEP PUTTING MORE GATES AND MORE LOCKS AND STUFF AND THEN THEY EXPECT US TO ACT LIKE HUMANS AND I FEEL LIKE IF YOU TREAT US LIKE ANIMALS THAT’S HOW WE GOING TO ACT...”
[JAMIE, 10TH GRADE]

1.3. The aftermath of colorblindness

- Resistance
- The color of knowledge

OF RESISTANCE & SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Differences in state definitions of significant disproportionality (Selected elements)



SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF RACIAL DISPARITIES IN DISCIPLINE

HISTORY OF RACIAL TENSIONS AND WHITE FLIGHT SHAPED EXPLANATIONS & RESPONSES TO DISPROPORTIONALITY CITATIONS

“Are people being prejudicial in the way they write people up? Is that subgroup just more likely to misbehave? I try not to focus on that to be honest with you. I handle [it] as a school disciplinarian. I’m charged with handling the referrals that are sent my way. I pride myself on handling all referrals that are sent my way and holding every student accountable to our code of conduct, but also treating every student as an individual” [Middle school administrator]

Center City & Lakeview

(Tefera, Artiles, Voulgarides, Aylward, Alvarado, Noguera, under review)

THE AFTERMATH OF COLORBLINDNESS:

THE COLOR OF KNOWLEDGE

➤ **Research on the nature of disability and interventions**

- NASEM reports; literature reviews in sped, psych, medicine.

➤ **IES NCSEER Grants** (2004-2015) (n = 336) (Artiles, Dorn & Bal, 2016)

- 12% focused/mentioned students of color (SoC)
- 2/3 intervention studies = 13% SoC
- Workforce grants = 5% SoC

IMPLICATIONS FOR **TEACHER EDUCATION**

... curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, clinical experiences

Future teachers

- ◎ must examine their own intersectional identities and grapple with the ways the structural weight of race, language and other differences shaped their educational trajectories
- ◎ need to be exposed to curricula that interrogate the moral imperatives that the structural weight of race imposes on schools and educators
- ◎ should learn that student needs must be examined in the context of opportunity gaps that perpetuate the miseducation of students of color
- ◎ must have opportunities in courses and field experiences to learn how to use tools and strategies that identify the work of colorblindness and disrupt the storylines about students of color as broken, lacking, dangerous, and/or disposable
- ◎ need to develop analytical skills to understand the role of colorblindness in promoting and maintaining the resistance to address inequalities at the intersection of disability, race and language
- ◎ should participate in routine critiques of the knowledge bases covered in coursework to understand the role of colorblindness in the knowledge they are expected to use.



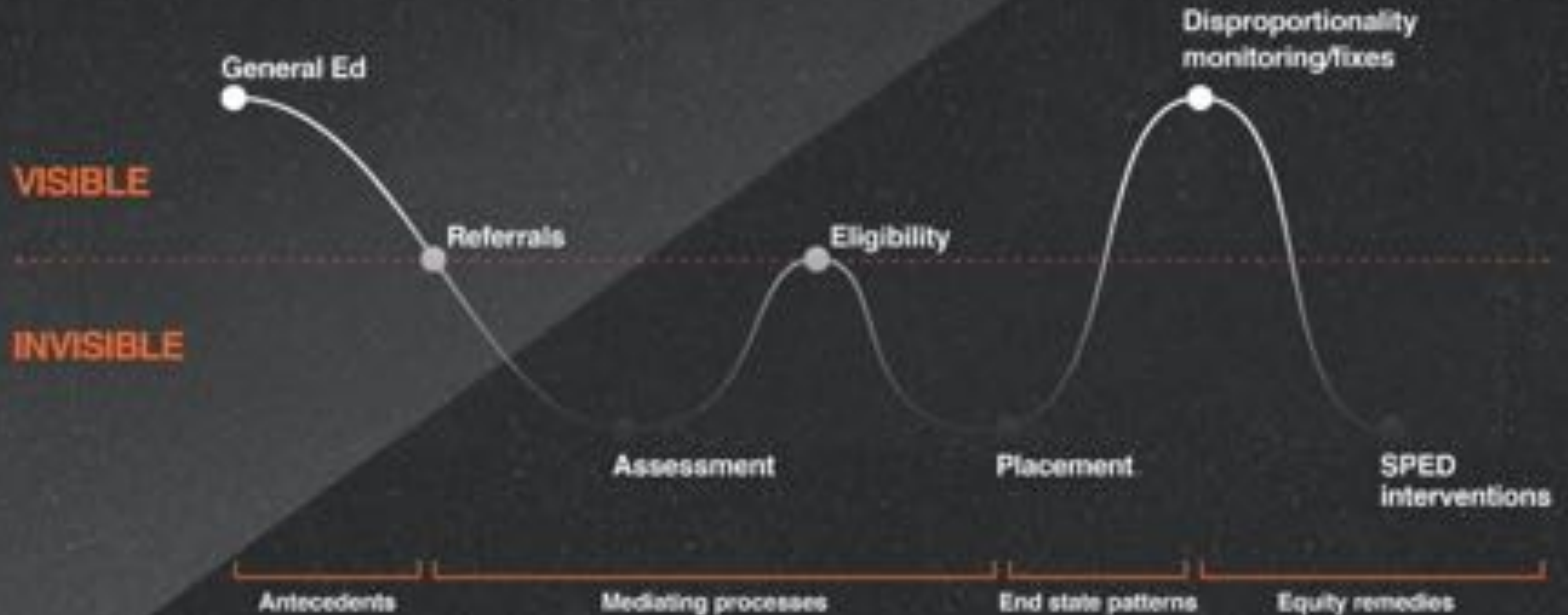
2.

THE FLUID STATES OF “DIFFERENCE”

AMBIGUITIES IN THE ERASURE OF MARKED CATEGORIES

- **DEFECTCRAFT:** DATA ARE RACE NEUTRAL V. BUT RACE MATTERS

Race is...



**Race
becomes
raceless**

IMPLICATIONS FOR **TEACHER EDUCATION**

... curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, clinical experiences

1. Faculty need to examine critically how race and disability are defined and engaged in their programs. Are they framed as traits? Are they situated in cultural historical contexts? In which program contexts are they covered?
2. Is there resistance to engage race-disability intersections in your program? What ideologies mediate this resistance? In what ways and for what purposes are “differences erased to reproduce differences” in your programs?
3. What experiences have you had engaging your school partners in ongoing critical conversations about racial storylines that make race-disability intersections visible AND invisible? How are those conversations used to improve school programs and teacher preparation?
4. What skills and experiences can we offer future teachers to cultivate the “professional vision” to “see” the fluid nature of race-disability intersections and the dual nature of disability?



3.

BEYOND THE ESSENTIAL “OTHER”

HISTORICAL ENTANGLEMENTS

DISABILITY AND RACE ENTANGLEMENTS

Ugly laws “repress[ed] the visibility of human diversity in social contexts associated with disability and poverty” (p. 3). The use of ugly laws peaked in the 1890s, just at the time when racial segregation was the law in the South, federal immigration law excluded people with mental and physical defects, and the eugenics movement was gaining strength (Schweik, 2009).

DISABILITY AND NATIONAL ORIGIN

1872: “restrictions on the entrance of any immigrant ‘lunatic, idiot, deaf, blind, cripple or infirm person’ who was not a member of an already resident family; the law was targeted against disabled Chinese people” (Schweik, 2009, p. 167)

19th century

DISABILITY, RACE & LANGUAGE

Oralists “associated sign language not with God and nature nor with gentility but with ‘inferior races’ and ‘lower animals’ ... a troubling link “between speech and gesture, on the one hand, and humanity and lower evolutionary forms on the other” (Baynton, 1996)

DISABILITY & ETHNICITY

(Baynton, 2005)

1924-Immigration “quota advocates warned certain nationalities were disproportionately prone to be mentally defective.”

“Slow-witted Slav;” “poor physique of Jews;” “the neurotic condition of our Jewish immigrants;” “the degenerate and psychopatic types, which are so conspicuous and numerous among the immigrants.”

1998: Dozens of Deaf Mexicans were virtually enslaved in NYC as part of a begging ring

DISABILITY & IMMIGRATION
(Schweik, 2009)

Intersectional entanglements

“This intertwining of discourses of bilingual education with conceptions of disability and deficiency illustrates how the implementation of educational language policies racializes particular populations by positioning them as languageless”

Rosa, 2016, p. 170

MISUNDERSTANDINGS: L2 AND DISABILITY

(NASEM, 2017)

- Children with disabilities get confused and overwhelmed by learning or being exposed to more than one language.
- Code switching (switching between languages in a single conversation) reflects the confusion and inability of children with disabilities to keep the two languages separate. Therefore, it is a sign or a cause of LI in DLLs/ELs.
- Exposure to two or more languages will worsen LI and other language learning deficits, as it causes cognitive “overload” that overwhelms an already impaired language learning capacity and reduces the affected children’s chances of learning English.
- The main goal should be to maximize opportunities to learn English. Parents should stop using the home language and speak to the child only in English (or other majority L2).

Disability Intersectional Entanglements

“not only has it been considered justifiable to treat disabled people unequally, but the concept of disability has been used to justify discrimination against other groups by attributing disability to them”
(Baynton, 2001, p. 33, emphasis in original).



IMPLICATIONS FOR **TEACHER EDUCATION**

... curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, clinical experiences

1. How do our courses, pedagogical and assessment practices and field experiences privilege essentialized views of disability, race and language? How can we promote intersectional frames that disrupt the troubling histories of these intersections?
2. What kinds of professional development do faculty need to design learning experiences that teach future teachers about the dual nature of disability and the complexities of intersections?
3. How do faculty in gen ed, sped and bilingual ed collaborate to align program curricula, pedagogies and clinical experiences so that future teachers graduate with an intersectional mindset.

THEMES

- 1. Create alternative representations**
- 2. Amplify a language of possibility**
- 3. Practice “epistemic reflexivity”**
- 4. Embrace a cultural-historical imagination**



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