

Advancing Racial Justice in the HIV Response

Venita Ray, Co-Executive Director
Positive Women's Network – USA
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The only national organization in the US led by and for women and trans people living with HIV
Founded in 2008 by 28 diverse women living with HIV, including women of trans experience

Our mission: To *prepare and involve* women and people of trans experience living with HIV in all levels of policy and decision-making.

Our work is grounded in racial justice, gender justice and economic justice.



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Agenda

- **Welcome, introduction, goals, agreements**
 - **Put name, pronouns, and agency in the chat**
 - **Welcome comments and questions in chat**
- **HIV is a racial justice issue - framing and questions**
- **Definitions**
- **Examples of what others are doing**
- **Closing thoughts**
- **Call to action**



Session Goals

- Develop shared understanding of key terms
- Learn how to think about HIV as a racial justice issue
- Understand how race and racism shape the HIV service delivery and advocacy infrastructure in the US
- Examine root cause analysis, SDH, intersectionality
- Learn the importance of integrating Racial Justice (RJ) principles into HIV work
- Learn what BIPOC led organizations are doing



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Agreements

- ✓ This is only one perspective -- there are many more
- ✓ These subjects may feel uncomfortable
- ✓ We all don't have to agree – no judgment
- ✓ Understand difference between intent and impact
- ✓ Practice deep listening
- ✓ Center those directly and disproportionately impacted by racism
- ✓ Accept and expect non-closure
- ✓ Practice inclusive thinking: it could be both/and
- ✓ This is not about you – Its about the work!
- ✓ There is no quick fix to using a racial justice lens in the work
- ✓ Use “I” statements; identify who “they” are; what “community” you are referring to



Framing Questions

- ❑ Why does HIV mainly impact Black and brown communities?
- ❑ If we have all the tools, why haven't we ended the epidemic?
- ❑ **Is HIV really 100% preventable?**
- ❑ Do issues of race, racism, equity impact your HIV work? If yes, how? If no, why not?



Why is racial justice relevant to HIV Policy and Service Delivery?

- ❑ **HIV is a racial justice issue** - disproportionately impacts black and brown communities – Why?
- ❑ Racism is a public health issue
- ❑ Social and structural drivers of the epidemic are rooted in racism, classism, discrimination, poverty, limited access to culturally competent healthcare – all roads lead back to race
- ❑ All policy, services and funding decisions have impact on all people (either negative, positive or “race neutral”) especially poor people and people of color



How this shows up in HIV work

- ✓ Prevalence
- ✓ Behavior shaming – EX: 50% BGM; Black WLHIV; fall out of care
- ✓ Micro-aggressions and implicit bias
- ✓ Disparities
- ✓ “I don’t see color” = refusal to account for systemic inequity
- ✓ Policies & practices: voter suppression, who’s in power, allocation of resources
- ✓ Leadership, decisionmakers and hiring
- ✓ Services not being designed by most impacted
- ✓ Funding
- ✓ What else?



Racism 101

Let's get some definitions out of the way



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Let's be clear: It's about Power



- **Power is the manifestation of our collective visions into coordinated action. Power is what happens when we build together.**
- **“To us power is, first of all, the ability to define phenomena, and secondly the ability to make these phenomena act in a desired manner.” – Huey P Newton**



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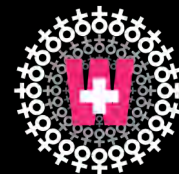
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What is Race?

- A powerful idea that has been used to separate people and/or make opportunities available to some based on their race, while keeping some opportunities out of reach for others
- Usually thought of as being tied to a person's skin color, eye shape, other physical traits and/or region of origin in the world
- As much a social category as a biological one
- Tries to explain differences in ways people live in society and how they are treated, based on how they look
- A social construct designed to benefit people who are white (or approximate whiteness)





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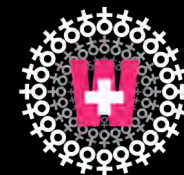
What is racism?

RACISM
=
PREJUDICE
+
POWER



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Four levels of racism (from Race Forward)

- **Internalized**
 - Within individuals. Private beliefs & biases about one's own culture.
- **Interpersonal**
 - Between individuals – eg racial slurs, hate crimes, racial violence. holding negative attitudes towards a different race or culture.
- **Institutional**
 - institutions, policies, and cultural practices that produce racially inequitable outcomes for people of color & advantages for white people.
- **Structural**
 - multiple institutions operate together to systematically privilege white people and disadvantage people of color. embedded into the norms of society





White supremacy & WSC

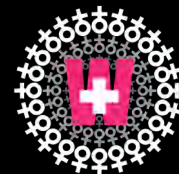
- **A system or set of systems that perpetuates and maintains the social, political, historical, and/or institutional domination by white people over people of color.**
- **a culture which positions white people and all that is associated with them (whiteness) as idea**





Anti-Blackness

- **anti-Blackness: being opposed to or hostile to Black people.**
- **Anti-Blackness is at the root of imperialism and other forms of racism, and structures racialization in all communities of color.**



Privilege? White Privilege?

..a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.

white skin privilege, is the societal privilege that benefits white people over non-white people...



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Implicit bias

- attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge.

Microaggressions aka *"I'm not racist"*

Equity

- Fairness, recognizes that the playing field is not equal



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HRJN defines racial justice as...

“...the collective practice of people of color and allies to identify, dismantle, and heal from the many external and internal harms of structural and institutional racism. This practice invites us to collaborate across communities of color in service of dismantling white supremacy and building power. Communities of color pitted against each other is one of many conditions on which white supremacy depends. “

We envision a movement premised on solidarity, collaboration, and in coalition.

Source: HIV Racial Justice Now!: Declaration of Liberation: Building a Racial Just and Strategic Domestic HIV Movement (2017)



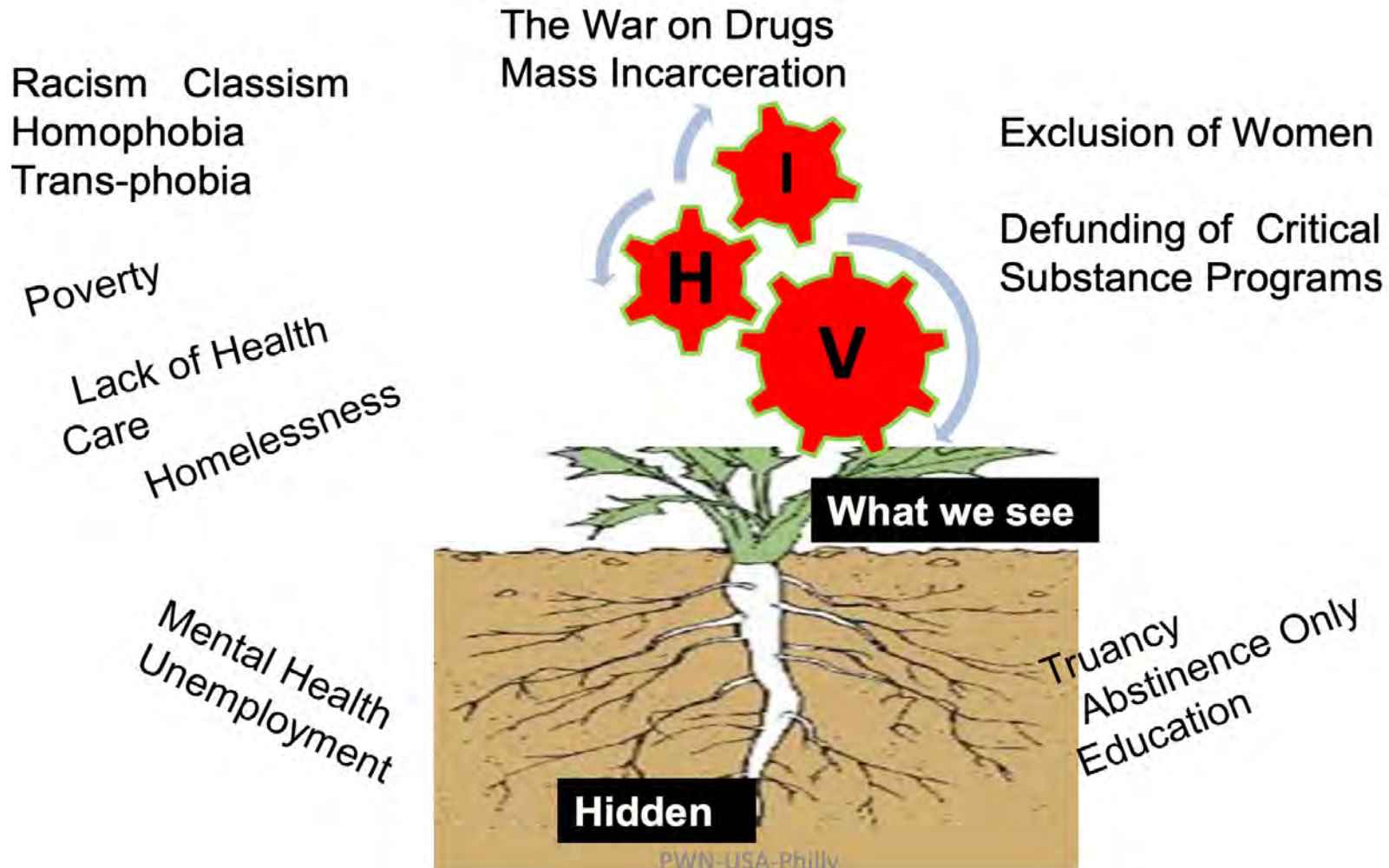
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The Root Cause Analysis

HIV is a symptom of larger problems

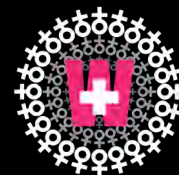




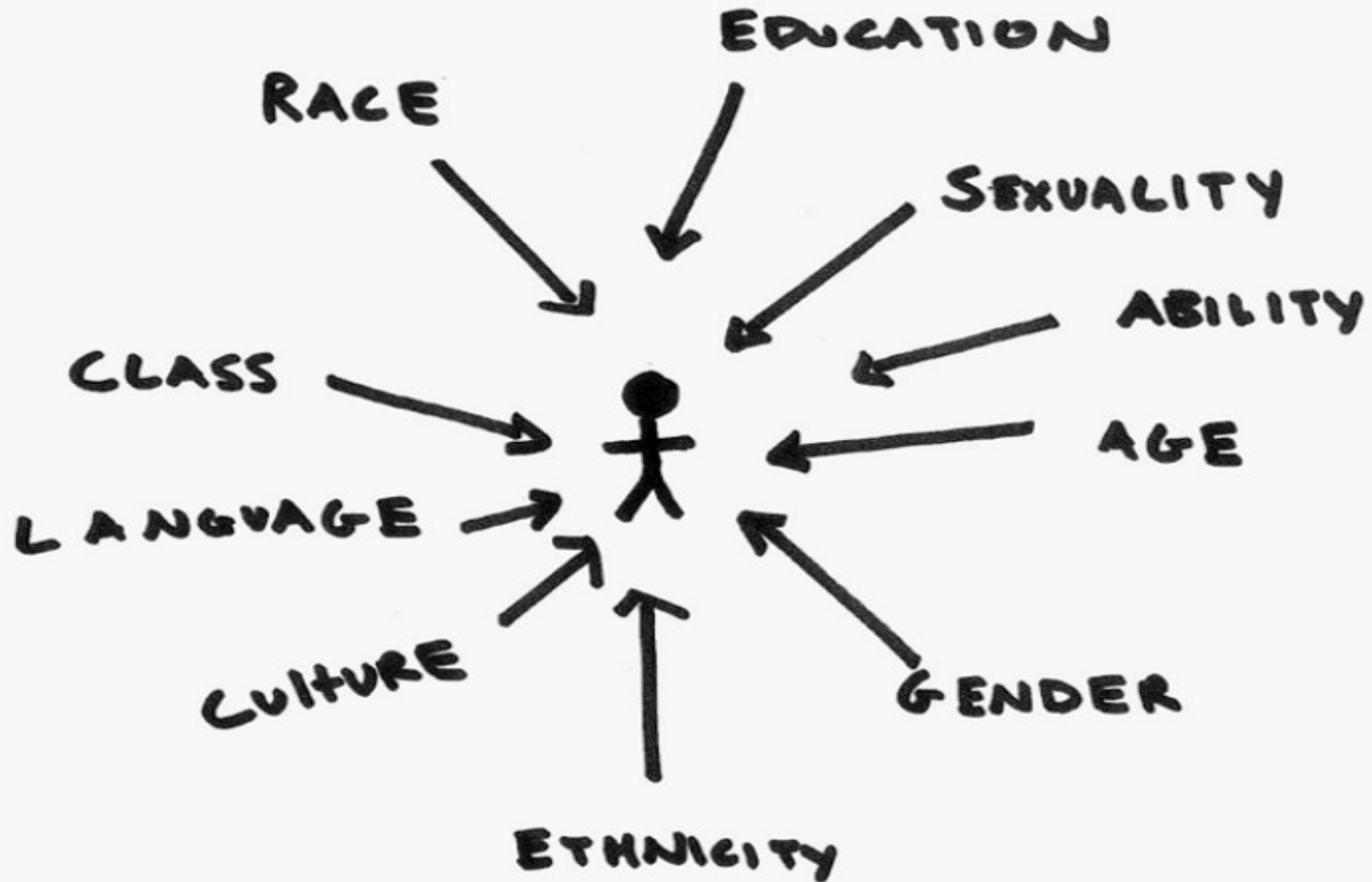
Social determinants of health



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Intersectionality





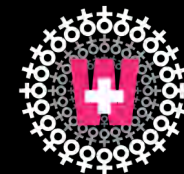
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What are folks doing?



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HIV Racial Justice Now!



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A Declaration of Liberation

Building a Racially Just and Strategic Domestic
HIV Movement

DOWNLOAD THE FRAMEWORK

ENGLISH

SPANISH

CONTACT US

hivracialjustice@gmail.com

*In this document we center race,
racial inequity, and racial justice.*

We are clear that racial injustice intersects with many different forms of oppression and marginalization.

How Do We Get There?

- **Integrate racial justice into our organizations and political strategies;**
- **Center those communities most impacted by the epidemic in leadership and decision-making;**
- **Root efforts to advance a racial justice lens in the HIV movement in accountability to the communities that we lead;**
- **Ensure equity around allocation of resources -- human, material, and financial;**
- **Work to transform and, where necessary, dismantle institutions that uphold white supremacy and compromise the wellbeing of communities of color.**

Source: HIV Racial Justice Now!: Declaration of Liberation: Building a Racial Just and Strategic Domestic HIV Movement (2017)



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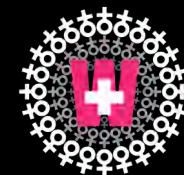
Funder's concerned about AIDS - RACIAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUP

The Black Lives Matter movement and the race-based health disparities laid bare by COVID-19 clearly highlight the need to not only advocate for additional resources, but also to urge philanthropy to increase transparency in racial justice efforts so that grant making can be adequately monitored and improved. To achieve these goals, FCAA formed a **Racial Justice Working Group launched in the fall of 2020. Read a recent data spotlight on [HIV philanthropy for BIPOC communities](#).**



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AIDS United Statement for NBHAAD 2021

HIV organizations announce Racial Justice Index to remedy disconnect between HIV leadership and community impact

The Racial Justice Index is part of a series of outcomes that emerged from more than two years of conversations led by leaders of color among the Public Policy Council and was made more urgent by the national outcry for racial justice



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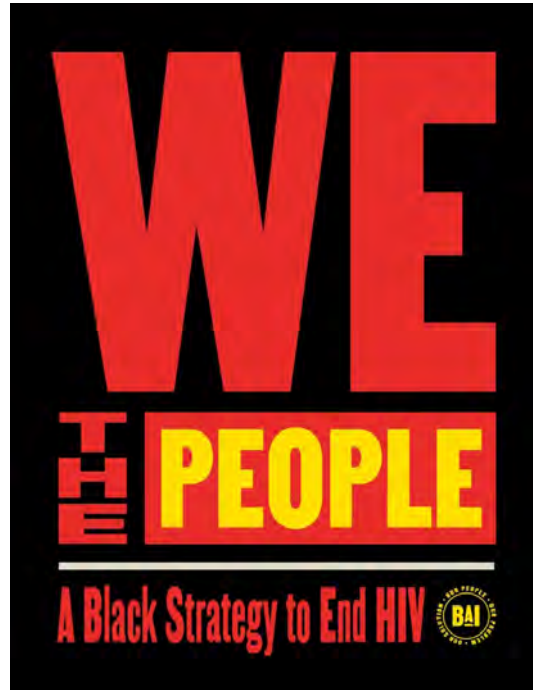
Black Women HJ Collective



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Black AIDS Institute



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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5m1Msmaual&t=203s>



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A Political Agenda for Advancing, Building, and Sustaining Black HIV Leadership in the South



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Closing thoughts...

- ❑ Be intentional – mission, vision, strategy screen, metrics
- ❑ Center most impacted in planning, design, and funding
- ❑ Include the **context** when reporting the data
- ❑ Examine who holds power and decision making – elevate non-white leadership
- ❑ Acknowledge/explore impact of systemic/structural barriers
- ❑ Be more accountable to communities we serve
- ❑ Understand that stigma is multi-layered if you mean racism, discrimination, let's say it
- ❑ Dismantle institutions, structures and practices that perpetuate injustice and inequity - even if they are our own



Closing thoughts (cont'd)

- ❑ Continue to examine how the “isms” impact services , programs and the people we serve
- ❑ Consider intersectionality, SDH and root cause analysis
- ❑ Develop racial justice priorities to guide EHE work
- ❑ Language justice is more than translation
- ❑ Consider the role of spirituality and healing in BIPOC communities
- ❑ Scarcity is not a strategy
- ❑ Fund orgs close to the ground from impacted communities



Our charge

- **EHE is biomedical driven – let's flip the script**
- **It's time for disruptive innovation – not the status quo**
- **All EHE pillars have RJ impacts**
- **Be accountable to community in everything we do**
- **Build EHE plan on foundation of MIPA, RJ, SDH and root cause analysis**
- **Use EHE plan to elevate BIPOC & PLHIV leadership**
- **Let's challenge ourselves to not just do what is easier – but what is needed**
- **Take critical look within orgs - power, decision making, funding, work force**



Thank you!

Venita Ray

Venita@pwn-usa.org



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