

EIJC 2020 Reflections

“Once a situation of violence and oppression has been established, it engenders an entire way of life and behavior for those caught up in it—oppressors and oppressed alike.” -Paulo Freire

K MAY 13, 2020 03:46PM

EIJC Reflections

What matters most to you? What were your most impactful moments? What do you want to learn more about? What was missing from the EIJC this year? – K

A Rose in the Concrete

How have people or programs or institutions broken through structures of power and privilege? – K

Moved to Action

How can you, the EIJC and the CfA be moved to action? – K

Structures of Power and Privilege

it's difficult to separate the things we've learned in EIJC vs. outside EIJC. they're all very connected... learned more about the meaning and detailed ways that power/privilege/oppression manifest – K

I like this

Beautiful artwork. 10/10 should be in MoMA and MASS MoCA. – K

What matters most to you?

Regarding the talk on capitalism and racism - its structural. What are we doing in designing the CFA structure to avoid this? – K

Nancy suggested that Moved to Action seemed of particular importance, c.f. Jeena's presentation, re: what "new normal" we are going back to – K

Daniel suggested we discuss the themes, and which one seemed most important... – K

Rutu spoke about how most of the sessions this year seemed really important... – K

:-) – JAMILA PEGUES

Equitable opportunities + access to resources for people of all backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and walks of life. For all children and students to dream big, and then be given the resources they need to actually achieve those dreams. – JAMILA PEGUES

Equitable access to quality education, using education as a vector toward other sociological ends, and issues regarding LGBTQ+ and/or homeless youth. – K

Newly realized source of oppression?

Shared: what are ways that we communicate? Our dependence on technology (when we have access) has really changed how we communicate in this modern era... – K

Shared: not everyone has the same access to technology, income, and family. This pandemic has really highlighted the disparities in privilege between different groups... – K

This wasn't purely in terms of EIJC, but the session with the two psychology researchers brought up the issue of fatphobia/thin privilege, which has also been something I've been learning about outside of EIJC – K

it's hard to say we've learned "new" forms of oppression, but some of the talks (e.g., JJ) gave us perspective and new ways of thinking about how axes of oppression are interconnected – K

New? No. Pervasive oppression of the existing? Yes. The pressure against it isn't new but exciting to see new energy happening now at the EIJC. – K

I've admittedly watched more shows/movies with my family during this pandemic. They've helped me see more deeply how much colorism plays into standards/stereotypes of U.S. American beauty. – JAMILA PEGUES

Newly realized source of privilege?

Shared: it's important to remember and reflect upon how marginalized groups have felt and stayed empowered even in the face of oppression... – K

Access to education – K

Genderism! – K

I don't think I had any major revelations about my own privileges, but I learned a lot of new details/facets of ways that I'm privileged – K

That is spans all aspects of life. Financial, health, access... – K

Erika talked about privileges regarding education and affiliation to educational institutions – K

Christine talked about intersectionality and how some of these presentations really made her reflect on intersections of privilege – K

DC and genderism – K

This pandemic has really highlighted for me the many privileges I have in my home life. For example, I have been able to keep working (and keep getting paid) as a grad student from home, which is most certainly a heavy privilege in the midst of this pandemic. – JAMILA PEGUES

This isn't necessarily a result of exact discussions from the EIJC this semester, but I think the mindset I'm in as a result of co-facilitating this has led me to think about things with a different lens. And now, I find myself realizing how many of the things I take for granted in my daily routine could not be accomplished by someone with a disability. I have never been more aware of my able-bodied-ness than I am right now. – K

What was one of the most impactful moments for you? Why?

The resilience that people of color bring to the research community can not be understated. – K

The interview w/ Charles was incredibly impactful. I found it valuable to hear the perspective of CfA leadership, even if that information wasn't necessarily what I wanted to hear. – K

Erika mentioned that the conversation with Charles was particularly impactful, regarding his view of the CfA and how that differs/is similar to the rest of the CfA population – K

Probably when Jeena Hah spoke to us about imagining/reimagining a new, "better" normal. I want to adopt this framework as a new way of thinking and acting, because it provides a very positive, forward-thinking outlook on the future. It encourages me to think in terms of the proactive "what should I do", rather than the more limiting and less dynamic "what could I do". – JAMILA PEGUES

The most impactful moment for me was when my mom came to Dr. Robinson-Wood's discussion. She was so moved that she wrote a letter of thanks to the speaker. It was a really special moment for both of us. – K

What do you want to learn more about? What more do you want to learn?

We think the discussion with Charles Alcock was particularly impactful, as it highlighted concrete ways that we can move forward as a community at the CfA. – K

I enjoyed learning about telescopes on indigenous lands, but I would like to learn more about racism and its impacts on indigenous peoples. I think this is a group that often gets left behind when we talk about equity. – K

Native Americans – K

I'd love to learn more about community organizing for multi-generational and multi-cultural communities. E.g., during crises, how do we surpass differences of power, perspective, and privilege and work together as a community? – JAMILA PEGUES

I want to learn more about how "diversity"/equitable STEM programs and the CfA can *also* serve the underrepresented and underserved minorities that are often overlooked (e.g., U.S. indigenous peoples, people from the Pacific Islands, ...). – JAMILA PEGUES

We lightly touched on it this semester, but I think we should spend more time talking about moving beyond allyship and toward something that implies action, accountability, and shared responsibility (comradeship). – K

I would love to learn about accountability measures for institutions (and their employees). And maybe more generally: what does it mean to hold a person or institution accountable for a certain set of principles? – K

Can you think of examples of this from your own life?

My mom and dad both have really large extended families, with members across the U.S. and in the Caribbean. For the first time ever, we did a virtual call for each side of the family. This brought us all together in a completely new way, despite all the space between us. :-)

— JAMILA PEGUES

What are 3 examples you learned during EIJC 2020 of people who have overcome difficulties or structures of power and privilege?

Jeena Hah told us about how the Asian CDC was working to reclaim a wall (if I remember correctly) for resident artists... except that the resident artists were all actual residents in the community. Instead of hiring a temporary/external artist to put in what they *thought* reflected the ideas of the community, the community was able to put up their ideas on the wall themselves. This completely flips power and perspective dynamics! — JAMILA PEGUES

The Asian CDC is helping the people of Chinatown reclaim some parts of the community so they can continue to be a refuge for immigrants. — K

What are 3 ways that you can imagine a new, "better" normal after this pandemic?

Shared: Look around! Emulate models/procedures/approaches that are working well! — K

Shared: "Give everyone the options that might help them" - e.g., teleworking as a permanent option — K

Shared: Also, transportation... maybe not everyone can go to work because public transportation is still closed — K

Shared: Also, not everyone can necessarily come back to work at the same time. E.g., workers with children when the schools/daycare have not reopened yet... — K

Shared: Be thoughtful about how we structure the community, moving forward. For example, think about how CfA workers with children may be having trouble working at home efficiently... — K

The data about the hardest hit communities is OBVIOUS. Can we use this latest data set (which is the same as data we have seen for decades) to have more conversations? — K

Come from a place of kindness to start, assume positive intent — K

e.g., generating an equity and inclusion committee at the CfA (APS-IDEA?) — K

have the humility to model yourself off of better examples. — K

Speaking of youth perspectives - I imagine STEM programs and the CfA, which have lots of power+impact+voice, outreaching to young kids of underrepresented/underserved minorities early on (e.g., elementary school?). I'm not an educator, but I think that seeing such potential futures early on, and having access to the resources to obtain those goals, is extremely important for shaping the dreams and goals of all children as they grow. — JAMILA PEGUES

Our last guest speaker, Jeena Hah, talked about how listening to the imagination and wisdom of children has been an incredible resource for her organizing. I think we're going to have to start taking youth perspectives more seriously. — K

I think this will be easier if we allow ourselves to look to organizations outside of academia/astronomy to help us model new HR systems and management structures that work for (and with) everyone. — K

What are 3 ways that you can apply something you've learned during EIJC 2020 in order to help a community? (Community can be the CfA community, your community, the astronomy community, STEM community, etc.)

we all can be afford to be a little more flexible. maybe all seminars should be remotely available. but also more flexible in our minds, people might have different needs or difficulties... be open to re-evaluating the things you take for granted — K

I want to/will be doing more mentoring of younger (e.g., high school) underrepresented/underserved minority students. I know from personal experience how important it is to have older role models who share/understand aspects of your identity/experiences, so I want to be more of a role model for others. — JAMILA PEGUES

I signed up to be a part of the group Students vs. Pandemics to engage more meaningfully with people who need help right now. I think that'll help me keep things in perspective, as my cabin fever escalates. — K

How do you think the EIJC can do this?

Get more people (i.e., faculty!) to join for EIJC! — K

Continue. Invite speakers for the topics we are most uncomfortable with. Lean in and learn. — K

I'd love for the number of EIJC attendants to continue to increase! I also wonder if we could "spread" the EIJC model to other Harvard departments... (And then hopefully other institutions would also copy the EIJC model?) — JAMILA PEGUES

I think the report that comes out of the EIJC this year has the potential to be really impactful. — K

How do you think the CfA can do this?

I second the APS-IDEA idea! – JAMILA PEGUES

Make themselves accountable – K

Shared: Part of job description for faculty to have outreach requirements (e.g., like teaching requirements which faculty usually have) – K

Shared: Having a part of job description of leadership to pay attention and at least "help" with Equity and Inclusion issues/actions – K

getting bogged down by adhering closely to rules. goes back to being flexible as an institution – K

move from prescriptive to best work environment applications. – K

covid return to work will lay a lot of these issues bare. how will we return while also protecting and keeping in mind those who live in crowded places, have children or elders to care for, etc. ? – K

Perhaps participate in APS-IDEA? That might put some external pressure on the administration to act on the EDI issues we have been discussing for the last 3 years. – K

EIJC 2020 Exit Survey

do it! take the survey!

do it! – K
