An Introduction to Microaggressions for Library Workers

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Land Acknowledgment

Most Indigenous peoples were dispossessed of their lands through deceptive processes and colonialism. It is important to express gratitude and appreciation for those whose territory we reside and work on.

You can acknowledge the Indigenous people of the territory that you are on by using the database: https://native-land.ca/. Support native orgs in your area by pledging resources of time, in-kind, or financial donations.
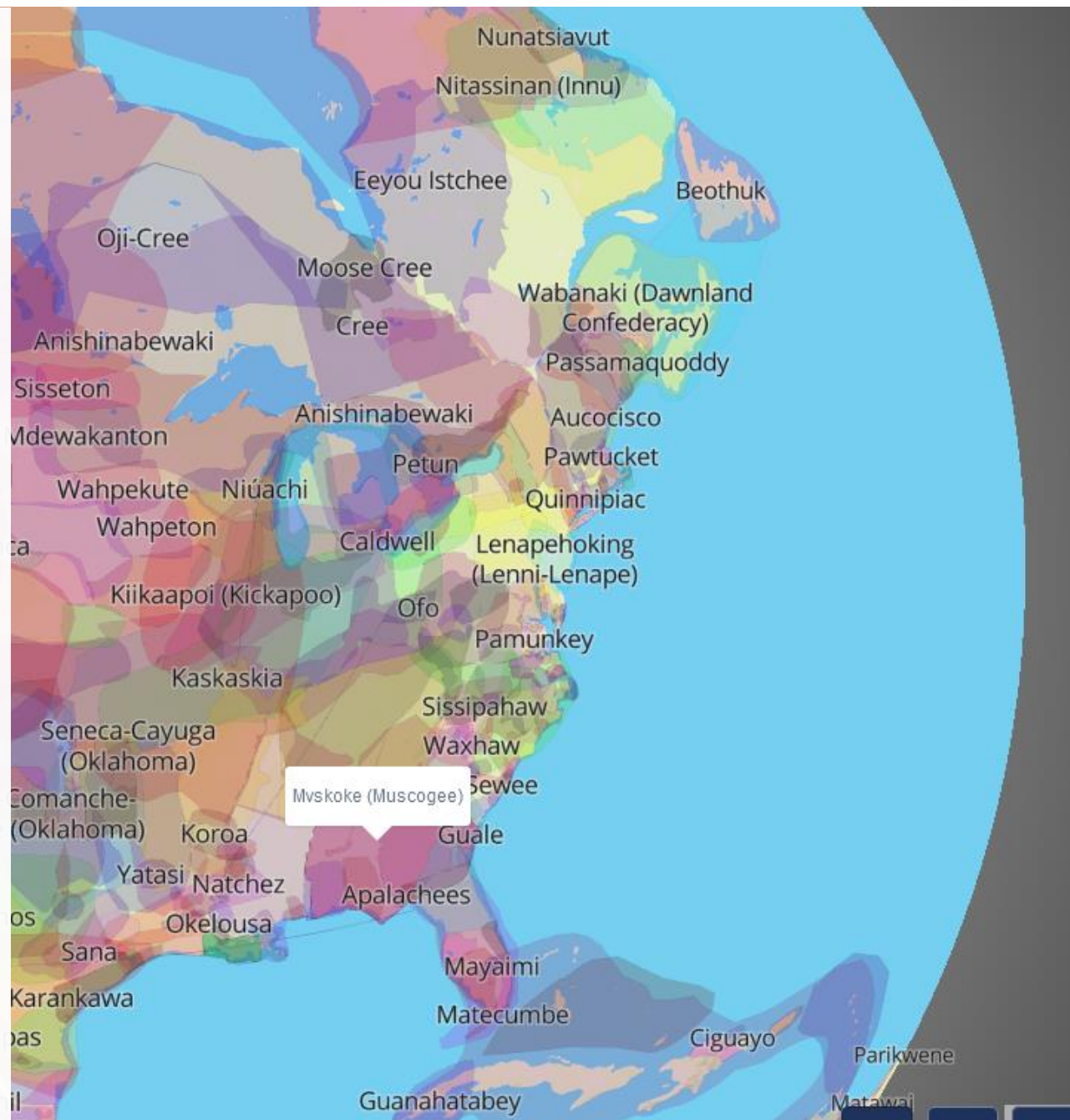
Webinar Goals

Understand

Better understand how personal biases may inadvertently lead to harmful microaggressions in the workplace, and take actions to be an anti-racist colleague.

Develop

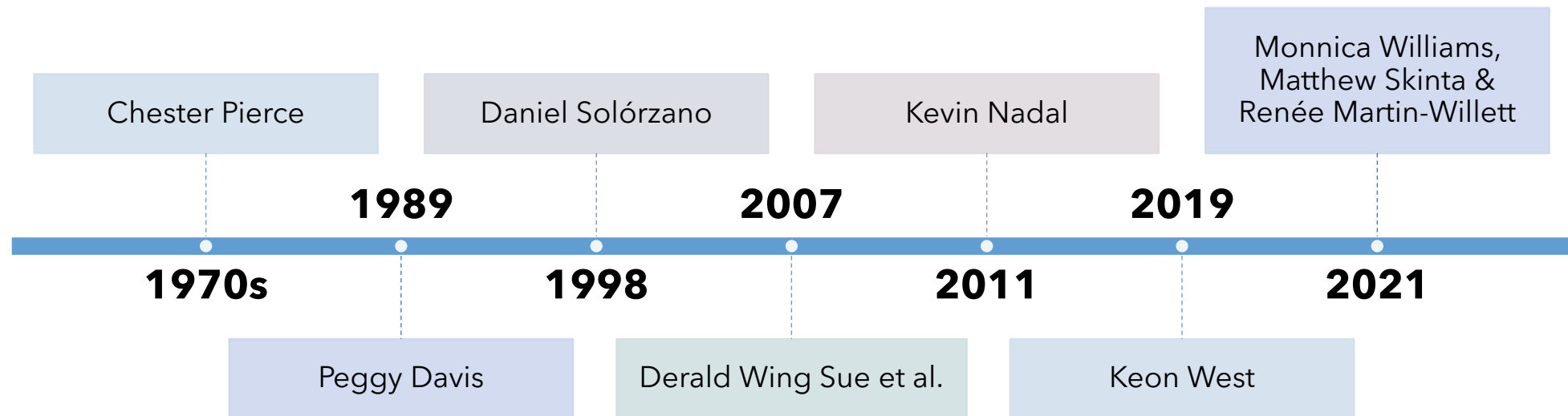Develop bystander intervention strategies against microaggressions

Identify

Identify techniques to combat microaggressions in the library as a workplace and within the profession
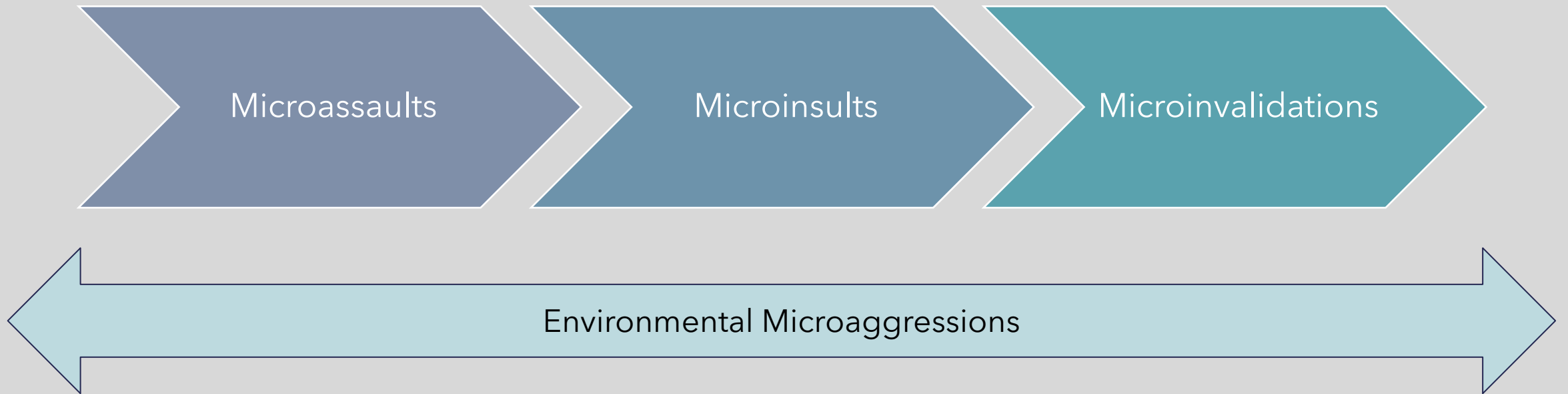
Microaggressions:
Definition

"Simply stated, microaggressions are **brief, everyday exchanges** that send **denigrating messages** to certain individuals because of their **group membership**"

(Sue, 2010, p. xvi)

Racial Microaggressions:
A Select Timeline

| Chester Pierce | Daniel Solórzano | Kevin Nadal | Monnica Williams, Matthew Skinta & Renée Martin-Willett |

1989   **2007**   **2019**

1970s   **1998**   **2011**   **2021**

| Peggy Davis | Derald Wing Sue et al. | Keon West |

Forms of Microaggressions

Microassaults → Microinsults → Microinvalidations

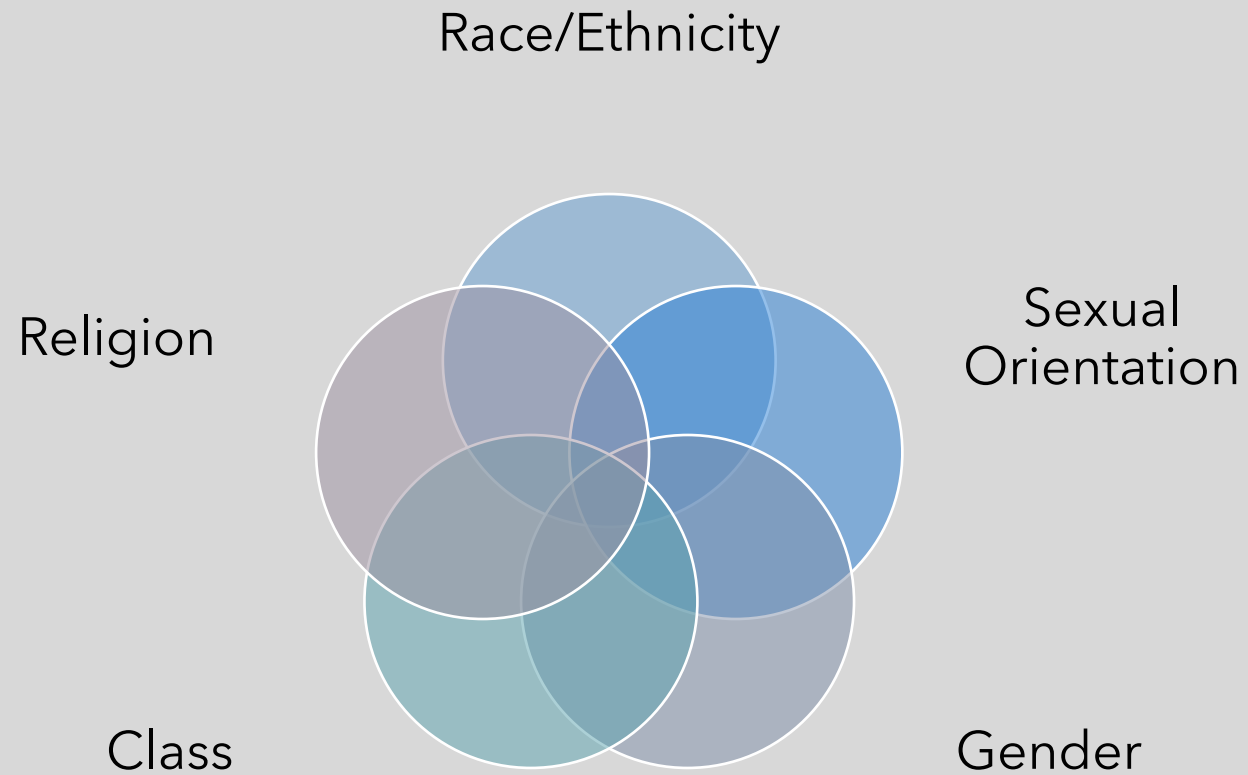← Environmental Microaggressions →

(Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin, 2007)

Not a true citizen	Reverse-racism hostility	Tokenism	Environmental exclusion
Racial categorization and sameness	Assumptions about intelligence, competence, or status	Pathologizing minority culture or appearance	Avoidance and distancing
Denial of individual racism	Myth of meritocracy/race is irrelevant for success	Second-class citizen/ignored and invisible	False color blindness/invalidating racial or ethnic identity
Exoticization or eroticization	Criminality or dangerousness	Connecting via stereotypes	Environmental attacks

Racial Microaggressions: | Expansion of Common Themes

(Williams, Skinta, & Martin-Willett, 2021)

Microaggressions & Intersectionality

Race/Ethnicity

Religion

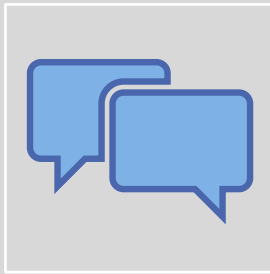Sexual Orientation

Class

Gender

Effects & Consequences

◦ Self-doubt

◦ Frustration

◦ Anger

◦ Exhaustion

◦ Isolation

◦ Decreased productivity

◦ Increased turnover

Responding to Microaggressions
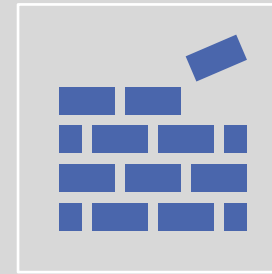
Principles & Strategies

For Perpetrators

Be open and receptive to feedback

Focus on impact, not intent

Seek restorative action

(Thurber & DiAngelo, 2018)

For Bystanders

Focus on what you'll lose by not speaking up

Determine your goal
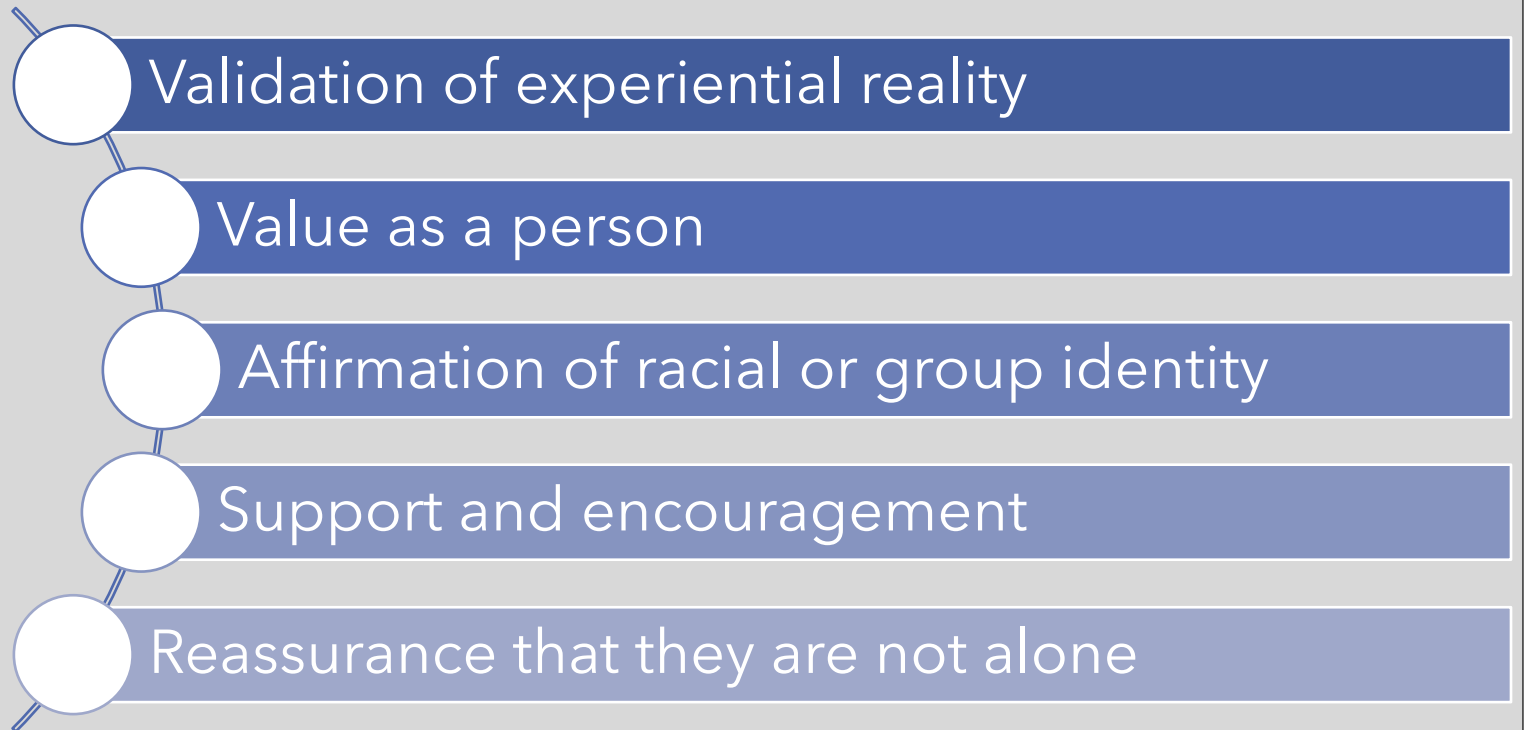
Ground your actions in care

(Thurber & DiAngelo, 2018)

For Targets

- First responsibility is to self

- Take time to re-center

- Identify what you want to see happen

- Reclaim your voice
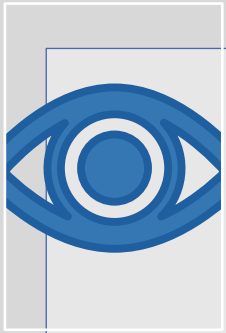
(Thurber & DiAngelo, 2018)

Microinterventions

Everyday words or deeds –

intentional or unintentional –
that communicate to targets
of microaggressions

- Validation of experiential reality
- Value as a person
- Affirmation of racial or group identity
- Support and encouragement
- Reassurance that they are not alone

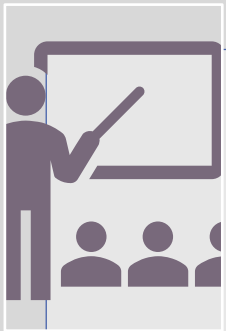(Sue, Alsaidi, Awad, Glaeser, Calle, & Mendez, 2019)

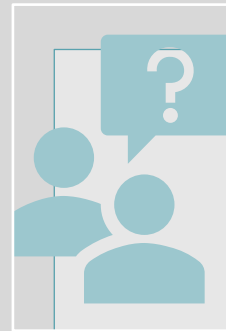# Goals and Tactics for Intervening

Make the invisible visible

Disarm the microaggression

Educate the offender

Seek external intervention

(Sue, Alsaidi, Awad, Glaeser, Calle, & Mendez, 2019)

Questions & Discussion

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