

Speaking As White:

Learning about equity in conservation practice

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I've seen a lot of change, but...

Despite increasing racial diversity in the United States, the racial composition in environmental organizations and agencies has not broken the 12% to 16% “green ceiling” that has been in place for decades. (Taylor, 2014)

This time, it's personal

Where are the
POC?

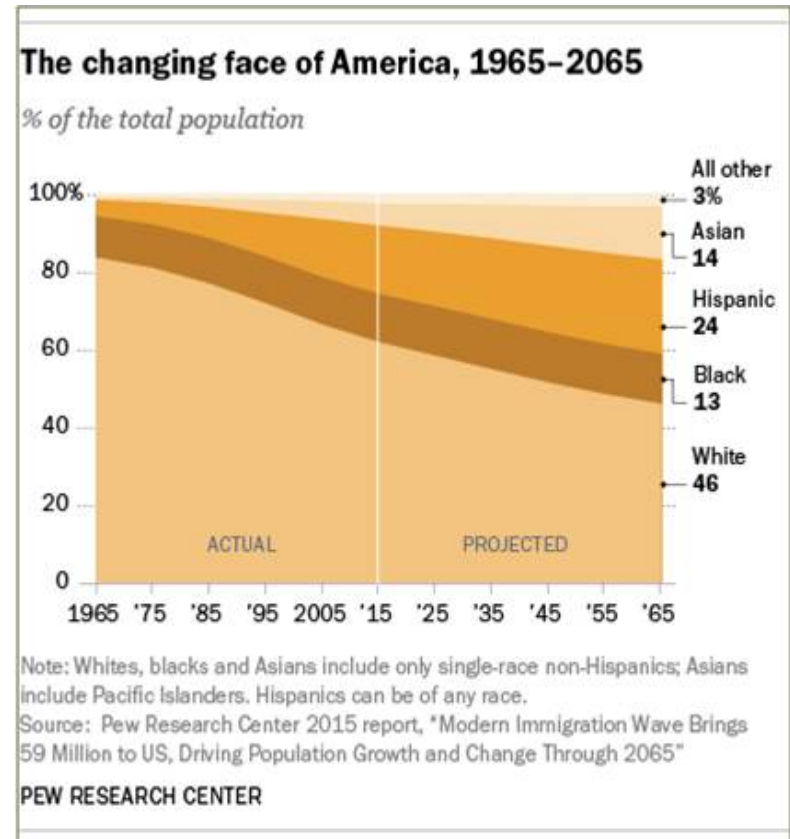
Why does this
not change?

What can I do?



The business arguments

- We are missing out
- How can majority white profession reach majority non-white population?
- Our work must survive



Two-pronged approach



The past is the present

- It's not over for everyone
- Use discomfort to teach yourself
- The history we learned is incomplete

Indigenous people

- Trails of tears
- Ceded lands
- Assimilation
- Extermination
- 562 recognized tribes, hundreds more not



Allotment: *"...a mighty pulverizing engine to break up the tribal mass."* (Theodore Roosevelt)

Words matter: Colonization

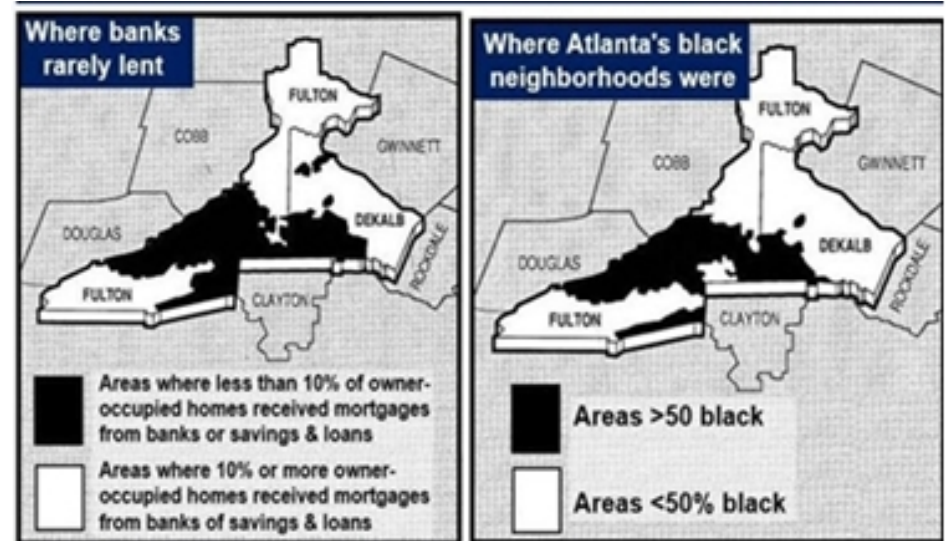
- ~~Settlers~~
- ~~Pioneers~~
- ~~European settlement~~



*Whites have
romanticized
this*

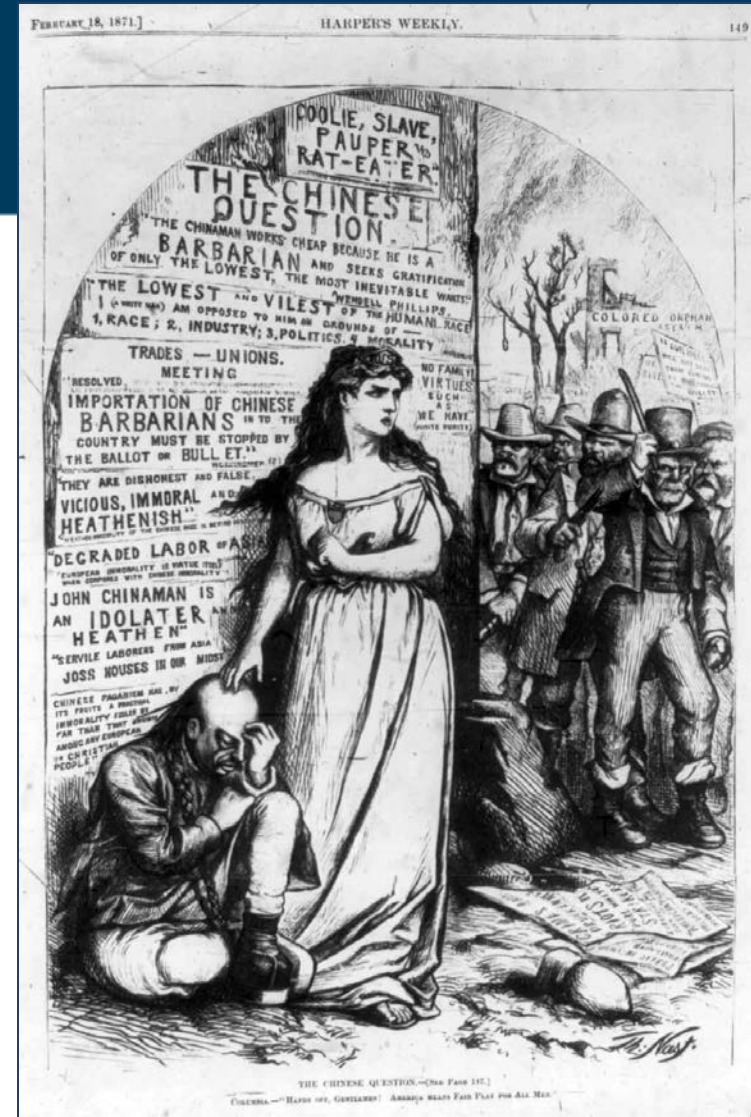
Black people

- Enslavement
- Jim Crow
- Redlining
- OR constitution



Chinese people

- Chinese Exclusion Act 1882
- National Origins Act 1929
- Immigration Act 1965
 - Allowed large-scale immigration



- Exclusion acts
- Nisei citizenship laws proposed
- Internment camps



Conservation's racist roots

“I don’t go so far as to think that the only good Indians are the dead Indians, but I believe nine out of every 10 are.”

John Muir: “Sambos”

Gifford Pinchot: Eugenics



White privilege

“I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious.”

Peggy MacIntosh, 1988



Green ceiling

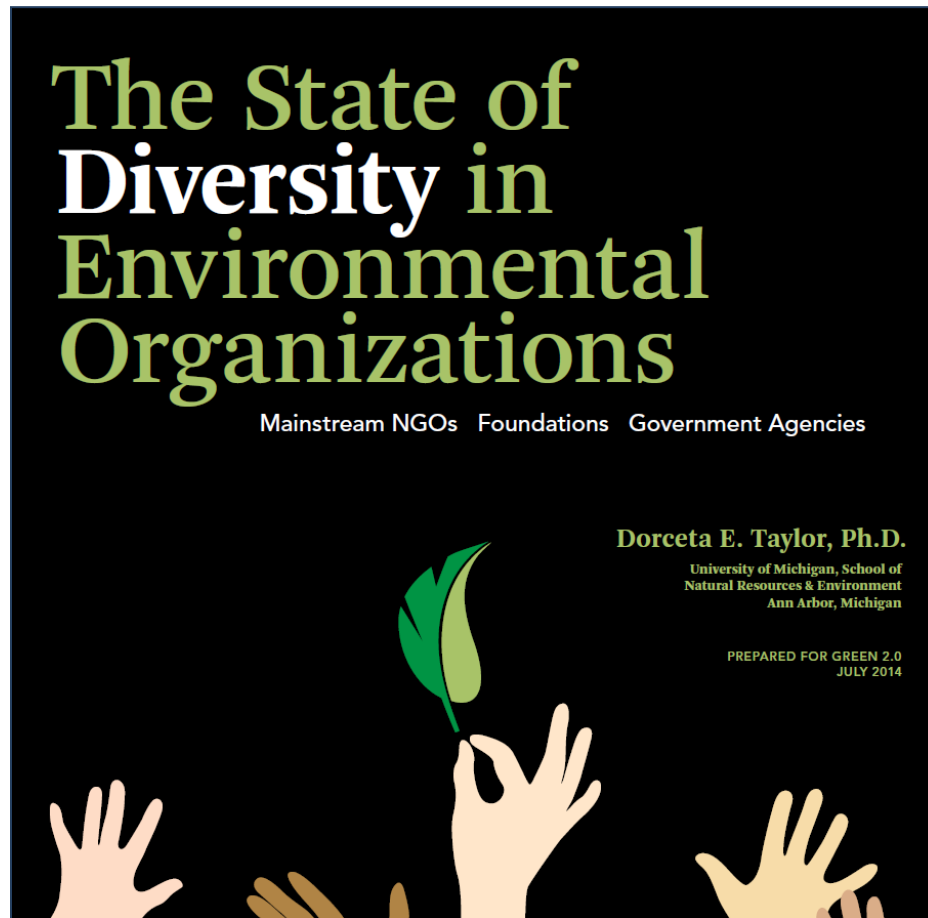
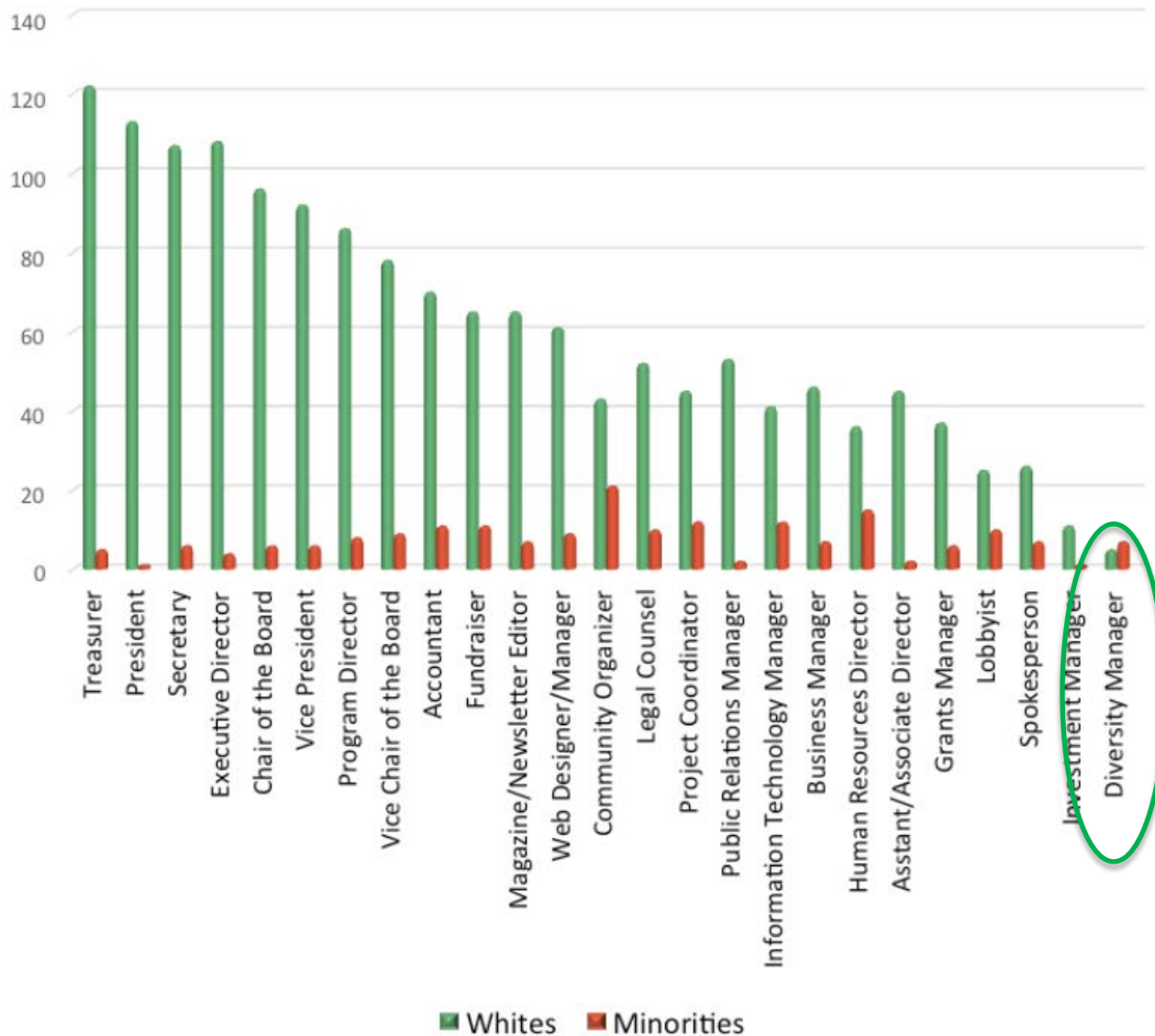


Figure 3.2. Number of Leadership Positions held by Whites and Minorities in Conservation and Preservation Organizations



Lack of minority applicants?

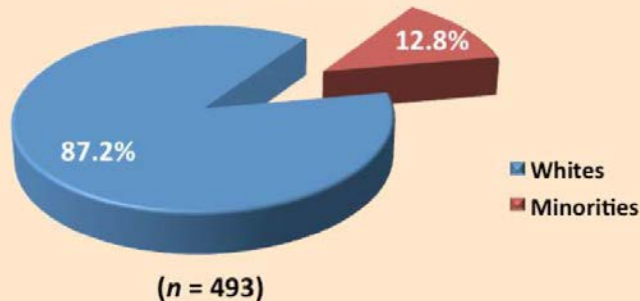
Table 6.5 Strategies Used by the Three Types of Institutions to Recruit New Staff

	Conservation/ Perservation	Government Agencies	Grantmaking Foundations
Techniques Used to Recruit New Staff	Mean	Mean	Mean
Post jobs on organization's website	3.07	4.00	3.60
Rely on word-of-mouth	3.06	2.67	4.00
Recruit in local community	3.04	3.16	3.64
Post jobs on other Internet sites	2.97	3.29	4.13
Recruit from amongst members & volunteers	2.76	2.37	0
Recruit from within own networks	2.75	2.93	3.93
Recruit from local colleges and universities	2.72	3.13	2.36
Recruit those recommend by current staff	2.63	2.71	3.43
Use Listservs	2.41	2.29	2.38
Recruit from other orgs. or agencies like ours	2.31	2.32	2.93

1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = most of the time, 5 = always

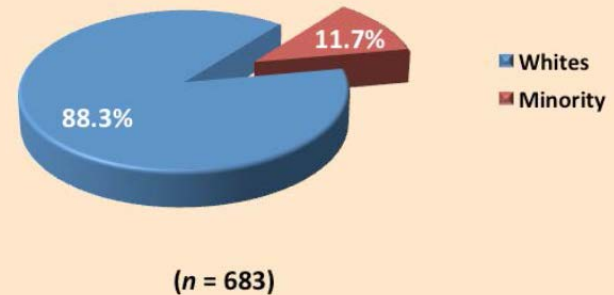
Same approach, same result

Figure 3.9. Percent of Whites and Minorities Hired in Conservation/Preservation Organizations in the Last Three Years



Lack of openings?
Perception vs. Reality

Figure 4.9. Percent of Whites and Minorities Hired in the Past Three Years in Government Environmental Agencies



Solutions

Table 4.9. Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future in the Region

Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future	Number of Orgs. Reporting			Number of Orgs. Reporting		
	Yes		Likely/Very Likely to Support it	Yes		Likely/Very Likely to Support it
	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage	
Develop a pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, or boards of organizations like yours	23	17	73.9	20	8	40.0
Develop training program for low-income and ethnic minority residents interested in working in or participating in activities in organizations like yours	23	16	69.6	21	9	42.9
Organize job fairs in ethnic minority and low-income communities	23	15	65.2	18	9	50.0
Hold diversity training for staff in organizations like yours	22	14	63.6	18	11	61.1

Solutions

- Focus recruitment better
- Develop a pipeline
- Advertise in minority publications
- Minority environmental professional working groups



Environmental
Professionals of Color
(EPOC)

Solutions

Collaboration
of EPOC,
Seattle and ELP
in March 2016

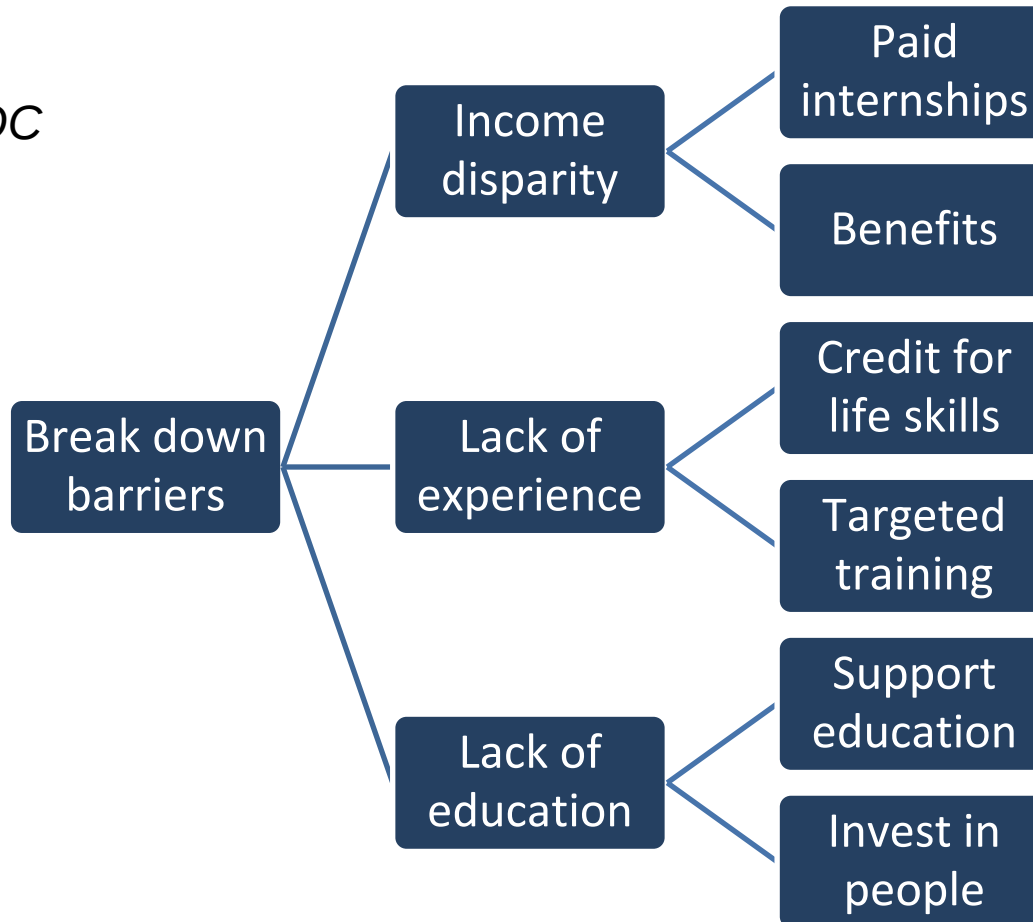


Breaking the Green Ceiling: Empowering
People of Color in the Environmental Sector

Prepared by Lylianna Allala

Solutions

*From EPOC
workshop*



Solutions

- Welcoming culture
 - Train current staff on:
 - Implicit bias
 - How to mentor
 - Micro-aggressions
 - Retain POC
 - Career paths, mentors
 - Input is valued

*From EPOC
workshop*

*"There aren't silos
in my life.
I want to bring
my whole self
to what I do"*

-Danya Shea

orlandoladyboss.com

Internal work

- Equity lens
- Support POC at work
- Surrender some authority
- Teach yourself
- Disrupt



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What we're trying (department)

Centro
Cultural
naturalist
training class
of 2017



What we're trying (department)

Africa House
program for
IRCO
(Immigrant and
Refugee
Community
Organization)



What we're trying (department)

Oak mapping with
interns from Native
American
community



What our scientists want – pipeline!

Build career pathways and remove barriers to participation in our workforce by POC.



Strategic plan to advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion

Equity work is an “inside job”



It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so.
-Mark Twain

References

Allala, L. 2016. Breaking the Green Ceiling: Empowering People of Color in the Environmental Sector. <https://elpnet.org/breaking-green-ceiling-empowering-people-color-environmental-sector>. Accessed February 2018.

Taylor, D. E. 2014. The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations and Government Agencies. https://orgs.law.harvard.edu/els/files/2014/02/FullReport_Green2.0_FINAL_ReducedSize.pdf. Accessed February 2018.

McIntosh, P. 1989. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" *Peace and Freedom Magazine*, July/August, 1989, pp. 10-12, a publication of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Philadelphia, PA.



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