New Politics and New Polities: Equity-Oriented, Race-Conscious Social Movement Mobilization in California Communities

This project seeks to engage activists and scholars in critical dialogues about theories and strategies of organizing, leadership and organizational models, and structural and personal obstacles in social movement development.

We bring together six equity-oriented, race-conscious California groups and scholars from UCSB and UCSD through one-on-one discussions and a two-day symposium featuring a public panel discussion and a closed-door dialogue session. Drawing from engaged scholarship studies, the Black radical tradition, and feminist standpoint theory, we promote a methodology centering on the co-production of knowledge among activists and scholars about social movement change.

We seek to draw on and create new archives and imaginaries to examine the challenges of developing goals, strategies, and campaigns in the face of neoliberalism; the ways victories can lead to defeats in other areas of organizing and the ways defeats can turn into victories; how the study of history and knowledge about past social movements affect current organizing; and the creative defiance and challenges to the overwhelming structural inequalities in the lives of activists that impedes social justice work. We advocate a process of community-scholar interactions that involve horizontal, egalitarian collaborations in planning and executing dialogues. This project will result in the submission of one or more extramural funding proposals and publications about knowledges and methodologies emerging from these meetings.

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