

Introduction to Dialogue

Maxwell, Kelly E. and Biren A. Nagda. "Deepening the Layers of Understanding and Connection." *Facilitating Intergroup Dialogues*, edited by Maxwell et al., Routledge, 2011, pp. 1-22.

This chapter serves as the introduction to *Facilitating Intergroup Dialogues*, and in doing so distinguishes "intergroup dialogue" from mere discussion and debate: fostering understanding *across* differences, as opposed to *in spite of* them (2). Nagda and Maxwell have a more specific understanding of how and when intergroup dialogue occurs (12-16 participants meeting weekly over a period of 10-14 weeks), and establish three major principles that inform the facilitation of such dialogue: guiding, not just teaching (9); empowering, not just being empowered (10); and attending to processes, not just procedures (12). In sum, intergroup dialogue is designed to encourage participants to observe and appreciate differences, to explore these differences within their contexts and within the experiences of specific individuals in a personalized manner and to foster a shared, collective understanding in order to identify sources of inequality across the development of ideologies and the maintenance of oppressive structures so that solutions to disrupt these institutions may be developed. In the process, facilitators of these dialogues bring their expertise to the table with an open mind and an intention to learn jointly with their students.

Muller, Joel T., and Joseph R. Miles. "[Intergroup Dialogue in Undergraduate Multicultural Psychology Education](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0040042): Group Climate Development and Outcomes." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2017, pp. 52–71, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0040042>.

Upon examining the group climate and outcomes of 19 intergroup dialogues (IGDs), Muller and Miles found that participants reported "significantly higher empathic perspective taking" and "less blindness to racial privilege" following their participation (61). This is preceded by a detailed account of the experiment's methodology and an overview of the researchers' quantitative data, results from surveys administered before, during and after the sum of sessions. In doing so, Muller and Miles address a gap in research regarding the "session-level *processes* involved in achieving [desirable IGD] outcomes" (62). In addition to confronting this gap, this source also demonstrates (and explains in-depth) an effective quantitative approach to a topic frequently approached qualitatively.

Schoem et al. "Intergroup Dialogue: Democracy at Work in Theory and Practice." *Intergroup Dialogue*, edited by David Schoem and Sylvia Hurtado, University of Michigan Press, 2001, pp. 1-17.

In the authors' words, this chapter introduces their framework for "thinking conceptually and pragmatically about intergroup dialogue by discussing intergroup dialogue as deliberative democracy, defining what is intergroup dialogue, and exploring its place in a just and diverse democracy" (2). Schoem et al. defines intergroup dialogue as "a form of democratic practice, engagement, problem solving, and education involving face-to-face, focused, facilitated, and confidential discussions occurring over time between two or more groups of people defined by their different social identities" (6), and then proceeds to delineate what dialogue is (and is not). Such dialogue must utilize an intersectional lens in order to promote learning about oneself and others and to produce more inclusive "comfort zones" (16). With this in mind, members of agent groups must be prepared to criticize and dismantle the institutions that keep them unjustly empowered.

Embracing difference

DiAngelo, Robin and Özlem Sensoy. *Is Everyone Really Equal?* Teachers College Press, 2017.

The first chapter, titled “How to Engage Constructively in Courses That Take a Critical Social Justice Approach”, begins by describing what it means to take a “critical stance”. Namely, this stance requires the incorporation of “the perspective that knowledge is socially constructed and that education is a political project embedded within a network of social institutions that reproduce inequality” (28); embracing this perspective enables us to challenge our worldviews and interrogate the ways in which we reproduce inequality. The authors then proceed to posit and explain a set of guidelines to “maximize [one’s] learning of social justice content”, such as: “Recognize how your own social *positionality* [...] informs your perspectives and reactions to your instructor and the individuals whose work you study in the course” (31). Finally, they conclude the chapter by discussing grading practices, recommending that educators and students focus on outcomes rather than “effort” (45).

Johnson, Allan G. *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Chapter two, titled “Privilege, Oppression, and Difference”, begins by stating that “the trouble that surrounds difference is really about privilege and power– the existence of privilege and the lopsided distribution of power that keeps it going” (12). In essence, power isn’t inherently malicious, an *imbalance* of power is. Johnson relates this to the commonly-held myth that people are afraid of what/who they don’t understand; this just serves as a justification for xenophobia, assimilation and othering, predicated upon attitudes taught from birth (as in, not innate). The chapter goes on to describe and discuss the social construction of “race” and the notion of privilege (as per Peggy McIntosh). Johnson concludes by explaining *privilege as paradox*: “One of the paradoxes of privilege is that although it is received *by* individuals, the granting of privilege has nothing to do with who those individuals are as peoples [...] In other words, male privilege is more about *male* people than it is about male *people* [...] This means that you don’t actually have to be male, for example, to receive the privilege attached to that category” (34).

Kaur, Valerie. *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*. One World, 2020.

Chapter one, titled “Wonder”, explains Kaur’s guiding philosophy: the act of wondering as a means of expanding one’s circles of familiarity and challenging the violence that emerges from a lack of empathy (11). She states that within a world in which we are born into delineation and fear, stereotypes and reductive ideologies position us against each other and ourselves; “We live in a culture that makes us strange to ourselves” (17). Humanizing others and viewing them as people allows us to wonder more about them and develop compassion and empathy for them, which then allows us to reify our own humanity: “We become what we practice. It is possible to train our eyes to see others differently– *to see no stranger*. Wondering about others helps us to wonder about ourselves” (27). The need to “see no stranger” is repeated in the fifth chapter, titled “Listen”, in which Kaur describes how to take on the labor of listening, even when it becomes difficult and/or uncomfortable.

Care and community

"How to think about rest as a form of resistance." *All Things Considered*, 27 Dec. 2022. Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A731377124/OVIC?u=umd_umbc&sid=summon&xid=ee3ce6f7. Accessed 16 Jan. 2025.

In this edition of NPR's *All Things Considered*, journalist Shereen Marisol Meraji interviews Tricia Hersey, poet, theologian and author of *Rest is Resistance*. The interview begins with an overview of Hersey's four tenets of The Nap Ministry, which posit the importance of rest as a means of resisting white supremacy and capitalism and reclaiming one's "dream space". Meraji and Hersey then engage in a discussion of the broader paradigm shift that Hersey's work encourages: one that seeks to reverse the "brainwashing" of productivity culture. This reversal is explicitly *not* for the sake of producing more effective, healthier employees; rather, in Hersey's words, "[w]e are resting simply because it is our divine and human right to do so."

Kaur, Valerie. *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*. One World, 2020.

Chapter seven, titled "Breathe", recounts Kaur's response to the 2012 Oak Creek Massacre, a shooting that took place at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin (214). There is a vivid, detailed account of the massacre, and the narrator then proceeds to describe the aftermath of the incident and the reactions it incurred: "In the days to come, elected leaders like Governor Walker and Representative Paul Ryan and other lawmakers would show up to offer condolences with words like 'love' on their lips— but they refused to support gun safety laws, curb hate crimes, or actively combat white nationalism [...] Sitting there in that cramped living room, watching the governor nod politely as community members desperately sought his help, knowing that he would do nothing, my fists clenched" (224). Kaur emphasizes the Sikhi response, namely the lack of retaliation or hatred toward the white nationalist who murdered their community members and desecrated their temple: "Behind the expressionless face that stalked these halls was a pained white man who, too, deserved peace" (231). Kaur concludes by stating that one mustn't make themselves "suffer in order to serve", as you "will not last if you are not breathing" (247).

Obear, Kathy. "Navigating Triggering Events: Critical Skills for Facilitating Difficult Dialogues." *The Diversity Factor*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2007.

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs/wp-content/uploads/sites/140/Navigating-Triggers.pdf>.

Obear discusses common (unproductive) responses to triggering events, describes the triggering event cycle and provides techniques for reacting effectively to triggering situations. After explaining the PAIRS method for reacting to triggers during dialogue, Obear elaborates upon the steps one can take to respond in order to promote mutual understanding, interpersonal sharing and reflection. The article is, on the whole, a very concise, actionable guide for facilitators of challenging dialogue, emphasizing the significance of humility and dignity, honesty, emotional (and self-) awareness and curiosity.

Social change

DiAngelo, Robin and Özlem Sensoy. *Is Everyone Really Equal?* Teachers College Press, 2017.

The second chapter, titled "Critical Thinking and Critical Theory", explicates "critical theory" and relates it to their social justice education approach. DiAngelo and Sensoy establish two dimensions of thinking

critically about knowledge: acquiring new knowledge that may challenge our common sense, and understanding the context within which knowledge originates (49). The text provides a brief overview of the creation and origins of critical theory (the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, scholars such as Marx and Weber, the many French philosophers in the field such as Derrida and Foucault, civil rights movements within North America in the '60s); that being said, "This broad-brush sketch of Critical Theory is not the whole story. Critical Theory neither begins in Europe nor ends in the United States and Canada. Critical Theory's analysis of how society works continues to expand and deepen as theorists from indigenous, postcolonial, racialized, and other marginalized perspectives add layers to our collective understanding" (50-51). DiAngelo and Sensoy conclude by defining *positionality* (54) and James Banks' five types of knowledge (55), and by delineating *opinions* versus *critical thinking* (57).

"Equity and Justice: Facilitating Groups Through Resistance." Due East Educational Equity Collaborative,

<https://dueeast.org/equity-and-justice-facilitating-groups-through-resistance/>. Accessed 18 December 2024.

The article talks through whether or not facilitators should engage with resistance, and then how they ought to do so. One *should* engage in dialogue when others seem to have the same concern; the resistor seems open to new ideas/genuinely confused; a resolution will heal the group and is thus a requisite; and/or the exchange will serve to model how to handle an inequitable situation (para 9). One *should not* engage when the resistor is acting with malintent; the comment is a direct attack towards others; the resistor seeks to monopolize time or "play Devil's Advocate"; and/or the comment is explicitly bigoted (para 10). The article then lists common forms of resistance (such as "*Where's the data?*") with recommendations for how to respond to them, concluding with a reminder that facilitators must maintain their energy by picking their battles strategically (para 22).

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. T.J. Press Ltd, 1991.

Freire begins by explaining how oppression dehumanizes both the oppressed and their oppressors, before introducing his solution: a *pedagogy of the oppressed* that serves to a) "unveil the world of oppression" b) become "a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation" (54). Such a pedagogy must reject "the 'educational' methods employed by the oppressor" (68), in which "education thus becomes an act of depositing [...] instead of communicating" (72). Freire then proceeds to discuss his response to this phenomenon of banking education: "problem-posing education", in which "no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught" as everyone engages in a mutual knowledge-sharing process (80). This process combats the *absolutizing of ignorance* (132) through the promotion of dialogical action (cooperation, unity for liberation, organization and cultural synthesis) and the rejection of antialogical action (conquest, divide and rule, manipulation and cultural invasion).

Facilitation

Burson, Malcolm C. "Finding Clarity in the Midst of Conflict: Facilitating Dialogue and Skillful Discussion Using a Model from the Quaker Tradition." *Group Facilitation*, no. 4, 2002, pp. 23-29,
<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=84f2f73e268087afe2270aca5726d592887ce489#page=25>.

In his article, Burson "describes a method for assisting a group to move through conflict arising in the course of intense conversation" (23): this Quaker method is called the "Clearness Committee", which manifests as "a small group of wise and trustworthy persons" meeting in a closed room with the individual seeking assistance. This individual "poses the situation, usually in the form of a statement," after which members of the committee are responsible for one task: posing questions to the individual. According to Burson, "[t]hey may not offer advice or opinion, make judgments, or even 'follow up' on responses made to previous questions. Once the person seeking help has answered a question, group members ask another question to deepen everyone's understanding of the situation [...] *Clearness* is achieved when the person's own resources can be focused, and the light of understanding brought to bear." Burson then contextualizes the practice within established scholarship and discusses his (successful) implementation of the technique within a residential facility for "emotionally disturbed children" (26). He concludes with a call for facilitators to practice reflective/active listening and to hone their self-awareness skills (28).

Gregory, Maughn Rollins. "A Framework for Facilitating Classroom Dialogue." *Teaching Philosophy*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2007, pp. 59-84,
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maughn-Gregory/publication/272920476_A_Framework_for_Facilitating_Classroom_Dialogue/links/552e50990cf22d43716dfec0/A-Framework-for-Facilitating-Classroom-Dialogue.pdf.

Gregory presents his six-stage facilitation framework, intended as "an aid for conducting dialogue construed as systematic, collaborative inquiry" (59). He first provides a brief overview of the sites in which the framework is particularly useful and clarifies the role of a facilitator: "(1) to model and to call for good dialogue moves (cognitive and social), and (2) to help the participants keep track of how the dialogue progresses through the stages of the framework" (61). Gregory supplements his description of the steps of the framework with suggestions for staging effective dialogue. The steps themselves are designed to operate within a specific order, but "the dialogue can move back and forth between stages and even jump around among them, so long as the participants know where they are within the framework and which tasks have been accomplished." The explanation of each step offers a myriad useful questions for participants to consider when challenging unconscious biases and fallacious arguments, such as: "Would you qualify your categorical premise with 'all,' 'most,' or 'some'?" (70).

Ng, C. S. L., et al. "[Interaction in Asynchronous Discussion Forums](#): Peer Facilitation Techniques." *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2012, pp. 280–94, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2011.00454.x>.

Through a "cross-case comparison of two graduate-level blended courses," Ng et al. examines "the peer facilitation techniques that may influence student interaction in asynchronous online discussion forums" (280). As a result of interviewing participants of the two separate case studies, the researchers found that

specific peer facilitation techniques were thought to be more effective at increasing online participation than others: namely, “‘showing appreciation’, ‘considering others’ viewpoints’, ‘general invitation to contribute’, ‘questioning’, and ‘challenging others’ points’” (288). With that being said, further research found that techniques such as “showing appreciation” were more effective/came across as more genuine when combined with others, such as “considering others’ viewpoints” (290).

Accessibility

Bennett, Kristin C. “[How ‘Well’ Are We DEI-ing?](https://doi.org/10.55177/tc415335) Applying Technical and Professional Communication Theory and Disability Justice to Challenge Intersectional Ableism in Job Advertisements Through Coalitional Recruitment.” *Technical Communication (Washington)*, vol. 70, no. 3, 2023, pp. 77–96, <https://doi.org/10.55177/tc415335>.

Through critical discourse analysis and thematic coding of job advertisements, Bennett identifies and interrogates the circulation of ableist assumptions and problematizes the exclusion that results from these attitudes. In doing so, she evaluates “the intersectional implications of job advertisements to better understand how seemingly neutral language may marginalize specific populations and how normative assumptions may be founded in broader systems of ‘interlocking’ oppression” (82). While oriented towards a corporate audience, these takeaways are broadly applicable to anyone interested in facilitating intersectional coalition, as Bennett provides suggestions to produce more equitable/socially-just environments such as: “Decenter dominant rationality by validating embodied knowledge” (90) and “Center intersectional embodiment by exploring historical exclusion” (88). She concludes with a call to “prioritize intersectionality,” as “appreciation for diversity and inclusion is not enough to facilitate equitable workplace access” (92).

Gonzales, Laura, and Janine Butler. “[Working toward Social Justice through Multilingualism, Multimodality, and Accessibility in Writing Classrooms](#).” *Forum - Conference on College Composition and Communication*, vol. 44, 2020.

This article, co-authored by Laura Gonzales and Janine Butler, provides suggestions and justifications for incorporating multilingualism and multimodality into college writing classrooms (applicable in myriad educational settings). Upon defining the aforementioned approaches, the authors argue that their incorporation into writing pedagogies “expand[s] the possibilities for communication in writing classrooms, encouraging students to leverage their linguistic practices alongside and **through** multiple forms and genres of composing” (para 3). Such practices empower students to imagine and produce more socially-just and accessible futures, which Gonzales and Butler identify as a motivating factor for their work. They provide examples of their own praxis before concluding with a series of recommendations for educators interested in integrating “*multimodality as an intersectional and interdependent approach to social justice in the composition classroom*” (para 48).

Goulden, Ami, et al. “[Disability Is an Art. It’s an Ingenious Way to Live.](https://doi.org/10.1177/08861099231188733)’: Integrating Disability Justice Principles and Critical Feminisms in Social Work to Promote Inclusion and Anti-Ableism in Professional Praxis.” *Affilia*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2023, pp. 732–41, <https://doi.org/10.1177/08861099231188733>.

Goulden et al. reimagines disability justice as a form of critical feminism that allows the movements’ perspectives and approaches to work alongside each other for the betterment of all members of society. In explaining the significance of this move, the authors argue that by “decentering binaries within gender and disability justice frameworks, we create spaces to better understand and embrace the marginal in our knowledge production. Thus, through the lens of critical feminisms, we promote a re-imagining of categories, binaries, and spectrums to multi-dimensional conceptions of gender, sexuality, disability, and other identities that profoundly impact marginalization” (“Disability Justice as [...]”). While writing from a social work background, the authors’ research provides valuable interdisciplinary insights as they highlight interdependence as an essential tool for survival and resistance. The work concludes with a call to action: “One way through which we can enact our anti-ableist tenets is by moving gender and racially marginalized voices to the fore, prioritizing discussions that are grounded in gender, race, and class collectively” (“Conclusion”).

Watch

“Dialogue in Action.” *Michigan Online*, 22 October 2020,
<https://online.umich.edu/collections/racism-antiracism/short/dialogue-action/>.

“This video illuminates one strategy for working toward social justice: dialogue. Although the focus is on dialogue in education institutions and systems, the approach has broad applications.” Speakers Roger Fisher and Qiu Fogarty explain how they view dialogue (in relation to debate and discussion) and why it is important, such as for the “mutual investment” (2:20) it requires from its participants.

“Pa'lante Restorative Justice: Indigenous Circle Practice.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Pa'lante Restorative Justice, 21 March 2021,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCKuU8bLRkg>.

“Pa'lante is a youth-led transformative justice program at Holyoke High School working to build youth power and dismantle the school to prison pipeline. Student leaders use indigenous circle practice to support our school community to address harm, grieve, solve problems, heal from trauma and oppression, as well as to celebrate victories.

We have been very fortunate to develop our approach under the ongoing mentorship of Dr. Sayra Owens Pinto (www.restorecircles.love), who grounds her model in indigenous governance practices, the fields of organizational development, leadership development, Critical Race Theory, indigenous theories, Black Feminist Thought, and popular education.” The use of circles is a vital component of our Center’s dialogue work; this source attests to the method’s effectiveness and discusses its origins directly from Indigenous peoples and students’ mouths.

Smith, Clint. “The danger of silence.” *TED*, July 2014,
https://www.ted.com/talks/clint_smith_the_danger_of_silence?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare.

“‘We spend so much time listening to the things people are saying that we rarely pay attention to the things they don’t,’ says poet and teacher Clint Smith. A short, powerful piece from the heart, about finding the courage to speak up against ignorance and injustice.” In a short (approximately four minute) video, Smith provides a compelling, powerful argument in favor of speaking up against injustice (challenging our societal propensity for apathy and silence).

Listen

Adler-Bolton, Beatrice et al., hosts. “Covid Year Five.” *Death Panel*, 14 February 2024,
<https://soundcloud.com/deathpanel/covid-year-five-unlocked>.

“We present our 2024 year in review, taking a look back at the last year in the ongoing social and political consequences of normalizing the covid pandemic and rushing to bring the federal covid response to a close.” *Death Panel*’s description, per [its website](#): “The Death Panel is a twice weekly podcast about the political economy of health co-hosted by Beatrice Adler-Bolton, Artie Vierkant, Phil Rocco, and Jules Gill-Peterson.” With episodes touching on topics such as liberatory feminisms, the Lavender Scare and its

impact on contemporary politics and RFK's nomination to the Department of Health and Human Services, hosts Adler-Bolton and Vierkant apply critical, alternative lenses to modern political struggles and social justice issues.

Kendi, Ibram X, host. "Ableism & Racism: Roots of The Same Tree." *Be Antiracist with Ibram X. Kendi*, 8 June 2021,
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/ableism-racism-roots-of-the-same-tree/id1564144316?i=1000524608715>.

"Rebecca Cokley is one of the country's leading voices on disability rights, and centers race in her analysis and advocacy. She is the founding director of the Disability Justice Initiative at the Center for American Progress, and served in the Obama administration from 2009-2013. Dr. Kendi sat down with the California native for a frank conversation on the intersections of ableism and racism in America, the historic civil rights legislation governing both, and what we can all do to advocate for a better future for people with disabilities." *Be Antiracist with Ibram X. Kendi's* description, per [its website](#): "Be Antiracist imagines what an antiracist society might look like and how we all can play an active role in building one [...] Alongside notable guests, Dr. Kendi continues his journey towards building a just and equitable world and proposes how we can all help create it with him." Kendi's podcast provides another modality through which audiences interested in antiracism and its intersections can interact with his highly-acclaimed work.

Marshall, Sarah and Michael Hobbes, hosts. "The Jane Collective with Moira Donegan." *You're Wrong About*, 4 September 2024,
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-jane-collective-with-moira-donegan/id1380008439?i=1000668376216>.

"This week, Moira Donegan takes us back to Chicago in 1969, when an underground feminist collective got fed up with doctors, and started providing abortions themselves." *You're Wrong About's* description, per [its website](#): "Mike and Sarah are journalists obsessed with the past. Every week they reconsider an event, person or phenomenon that's been miscast in the public imagination." *You're Wrong About* covers a wide array of topics from "originalism" in the Supreme Court to the rise of the "tradwife" phenomena. In doing so, hosts Marshall and Hobbes pay special attention to challenging misinformation and misrepresentation, frequently humorously and in conversation with pop culture.

Tangalao, Gabriel Anthony and Estella Owoimaha-Church, hosts. "Continental Shifts: Anti Blackness in the PI Community." *APEX Express* by KPFA, 30 January 2025,
<https://kpfa.org/episode/apex-express-january-30-2025/>.

"In this vintage APEX episode, Host editor Swati Rayasam continues to highlight the podcast Continental Shifts created by bi-coastal educators Gabriel Anthony Tanglao and Estella Owoimaha-Church. They embark on a voyage in search of self, culture and the ancestors. Last time we featured the ConShifts podcast, Gabriel and Estella gave a quick introduction and talked about wayfinding in the context of their work. Tonight on the podcast they're talking about anti-blackness in the PI community with Courtney Savali Andrews and Jason Fennel." *APEX Express's* description: "A weekly magazine-style radio show featuring the voices and stories of Asians and Pacific Islanders from all corners of our community. The show is produced by a collective of media makers, deejays, and activists." *APEX Express* shines a light on typically-minoritized Asian and Pacific Islander communities in a manner that benefits audiences of all

backgrounds. It does so by incorporating the voices of a diverse cast of “media makers, deejays, and activists” who touch on topics ranging from Hindutva to pinkwashing.

KPFA hosts numerous other podcasts of potential interest to those passionate about social justice, such as [Against The Grain](#), hosted by Sasha Lilley and C. S. Soong: “Acclaimed program of ideas, in-depth analysis, and commentary on a variety of matters—political, economic, social, and cultural—important to progressive and radical thinking and activism.”