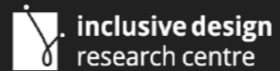


Inclusive Design in Education

architectural, experiential and interactional

@jesshmitchell



Abstract:

Remote participation, distance education, and the struggle to create participatory and inclusive environments. In this presentation I will discuss some of the challenges and opportunities for creating inclusive, remote, digital spaces. The conversation will cover ethical implications, the challenges, and present a feminist perspective for creating inclusive spaces.

Inclusive design is design that considers the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference.

Designing inclusively results in better experiences for everyone.

Inclusive Design Research Centre: <https://idrc.ocadu.ca>

This definition:

Inclusive design considers the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference.
Designing inclusively results in better experiences for everyone.

You might say, wait just a minute. You slipped a word in there. When did this become about design?

Do you make decisions?

Yes

You're a designer

When you make choices, especially those that have an impact on others, then you are a designer. You are declaring *this* and not anything else. You might have reasons (they might range from 'that's the way we always do it' to 'because I said so' to 'because research shows it's good for the majority' etc)

If you make decisions that effect another, then you are designing. You are a designer...

So, as a designer, how can you do this work of inclusion? It's a nice word — now, how can we do the action?

Inclusion

Questioning, reflecting, disrupting

How can we do this Inclusion thing then? I contend that we need to build skills around three things:

Questioning why are things the way they are? What is the history? Where did this come from?

Reflecting on the fairness of that? The justice? The ethics...

And **disrupting** to make changes in the ruts of the ways we do things...

In DEI, we're often encouraged to build "empathy." I find that building empathy is sometimes too big an ask. It still leaves questions — ok, I'll build empathy, how do I do that?!

We also often hear that inclusion means "bringing your full self." The only problem with that is that the wrong people get that message — the people who are already bringing too much:

If you talk all the time, it's too much

If you are more interested in your own ideas it's too much

If you're contributing to a toxic environment it's too much

I maintain, it all starts with curiosity, questioning; then it requires some reflection (on yourself, your actions, the actions of others, etc.); and finally it leads to change through action.

And so that doesn't leave you out in the middle of the ocean of uncertainty, I'm going to talk to you about at least 3 ways to be curious...

Form  Function

Architectural
Experiential
Interactional

Teaching and learning are situated in a space. It is an experience, and it is an interaction among people.

These things make up the context — they are where learning and teaching is situated.



We're going to start with the architectural

“We shape our buildings;
thereafter, our buildings
shape us.”

- Winston Churchill



Is this where learning happens? Was this designed? By whom? Why?

<https://unsplash.com/photos/3aVIWP-7bg8> people sitting in rows of chairs:
Photo by Mikael Kristenson on Unsplash

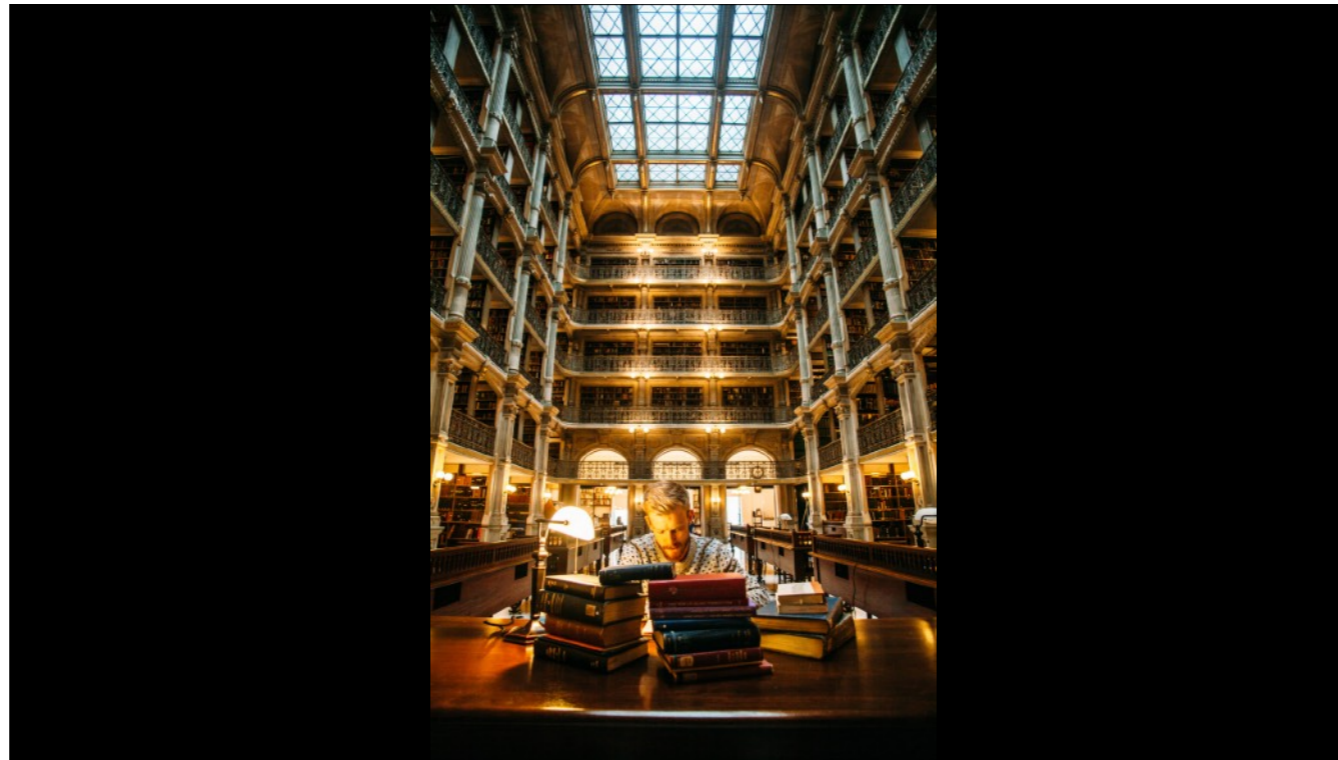


Is this learning or is this teaching? Or is it something else?

<https://unsplash.com/photos/5fNmWej4tAA>

Pencil near laptop

Photo by Helloquence on Unsplash



Is this a learning environment? According to whom? By what standard? Is it an objective standard?

<https://unsplash.com/photos/yLpbSjxMpCU>

Man sitting with books all around

Photo by Elijah Hail on Unsplash



What about here? Can learning happen here?

Woman on bench

Photo by Alex Blăjan on Unsplash

<https://unsplash.com/photos/KARheprvOUc>



Is this teaching and learning at the same time? How do we know?

<https://unsplash.com/photos/zFSo6bnZJTw>

Kids in chair, teacher in the front

Photo by NeONBRAND on Unsplash

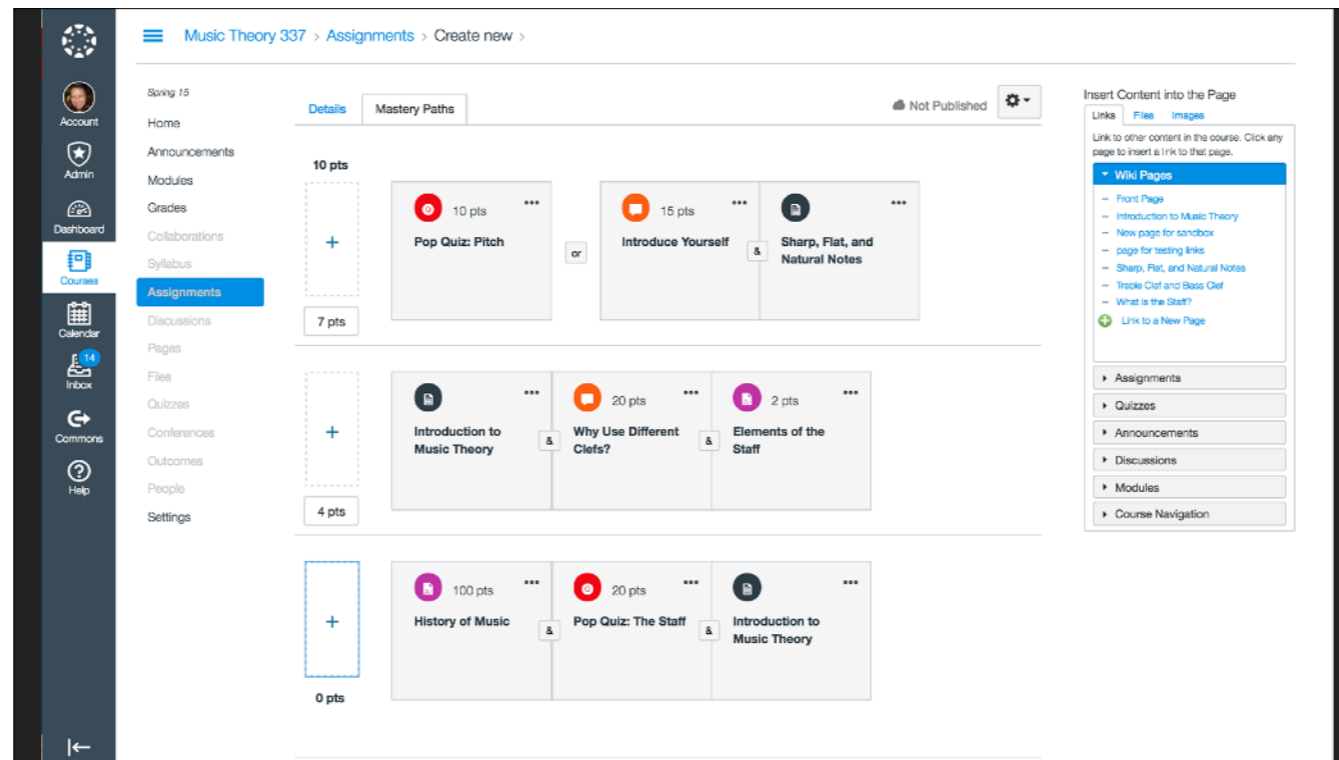


Is it possible that learning happens here?
And then, does that make it a learning environment?

https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2017/08/11/13/37/skate-park-2630925_960_720.jpg



Then there are spaces that leave no ambiguity.
This is a conference.
Sit, listen, be in awe of the neatly arranged seats.



<https://it.fiu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2018/10/canvas-lms.png>

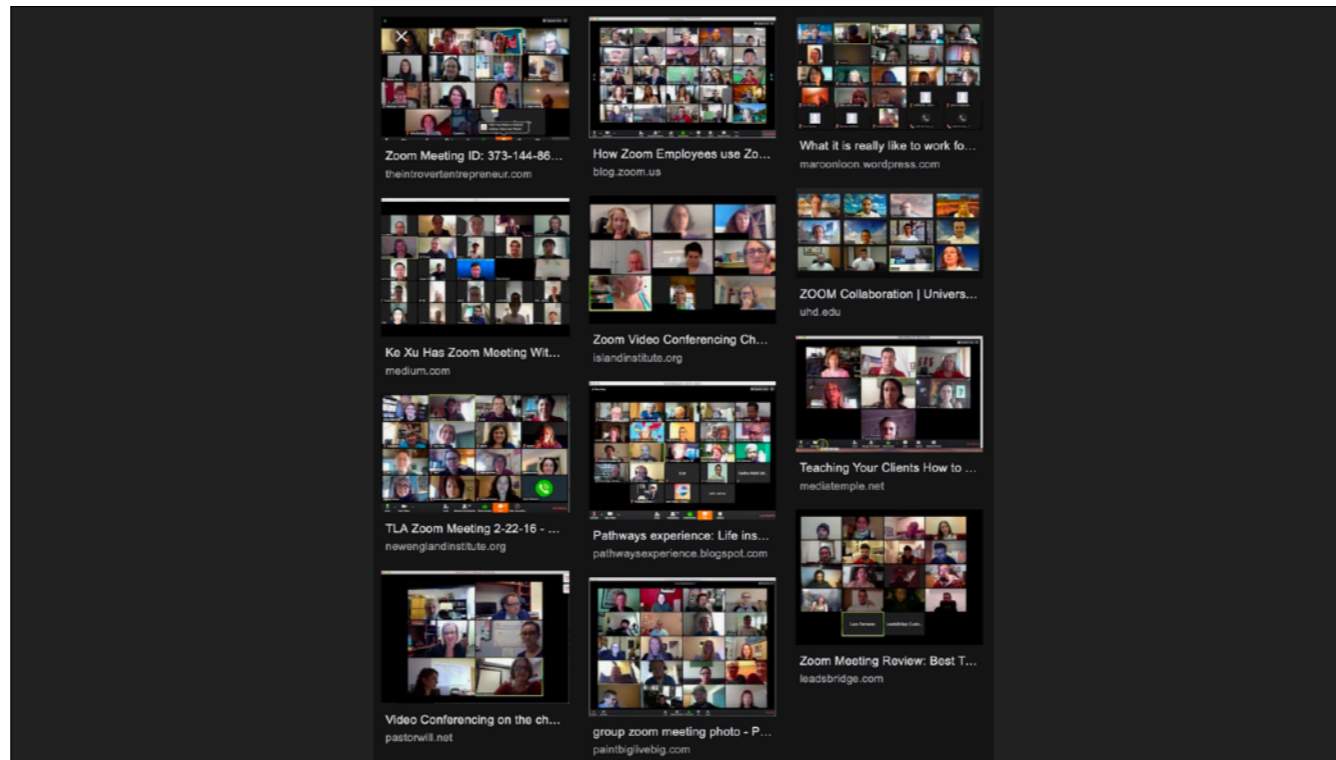
It's not different in the digital realm — these are situated spaces... someone made the procurement decision to invest in and maintain a certain LMS with certain features that work for certain individuals. The choice was made...

For whom does this work?

Who does this leave behind?

Courses — music theory and the history of music shall never meet...

Questioning, reflecting, disrupting



Google image search for zoom meeting

How can we question this space?

- what bandwidth does it require?
- Does it gracefully degrade to an audio experience?
- What do I lose in using this? — how do we do group work in a mixed classroom

Questioning, reflecting, disrupting

What about the circle?

What spaces have shaped you?

We've questioned — now let's take a moment to reflect.

Form  Function

Experiential

Today we will talk about...

At the end of this presentation you will be able to....

The course will consist of 3 essays; weekly quizzes, group work, class participation, and a pint of blood

What is the agenda?

What will the learning outcomes be?

This is how a keynote, a lecture, a didactic moment might begin. It's a well-known formula.

- I will tell you what we'll do (that's how I'll set your expectations, how I can make sure you aren't surprised too much by what comes next).
- I will tell you what the expectations are of you — you need to listen for these things because they are the learning outcomes you'll be expected to reproduce by the end. (that helps you laser focus on certain words. A kind of game of go-fish, matching keywords. You'll do emails or think about needing to mow the lawn or your mind will wander wherever it wants to go until you hear one of the keywords and then you'll perk up, tune in, be on high alert.)
- And then you KNOW you'll be able to perform — you can handle the assessment that comes with ease. You will have a really good chance of succeeding.

We shape our experiences, and
our experiences shape us



Do your experiences encourage you to question assumptions? Experiment? Fail and learn? Repeat? Regurgitate? Make mistakes and reflect and learn from them?



https://laist.com/2009/05/18/ucla_taser_incident_lawsuit_settled.php

Do your experiences make you feel vulnerable, singled out, unwelcome, unsafe? What is the impact of that feeling, in that place?

What happens when the very institution that is meant to protect young people betrays their trust? What then?

23-year-old senior Mostafa Tabatabainejad was studying in Powell Library when UC Police were making an 11 p.m. routine check of everyone. When Tabatabainejad was asked for his ID, he refused, later admitting he thought he was being singled out for his Middle Eastern appearance. When officers tried to escort him out, he went limp, which prompted officers to ask him to walk or be tasered. The latter happened multiple times.



And what rights are you giving up in particular experiences? Are you forgoing your right to make a choice?

This picture is of the founders of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903 Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage_in_the_United_Kingdom

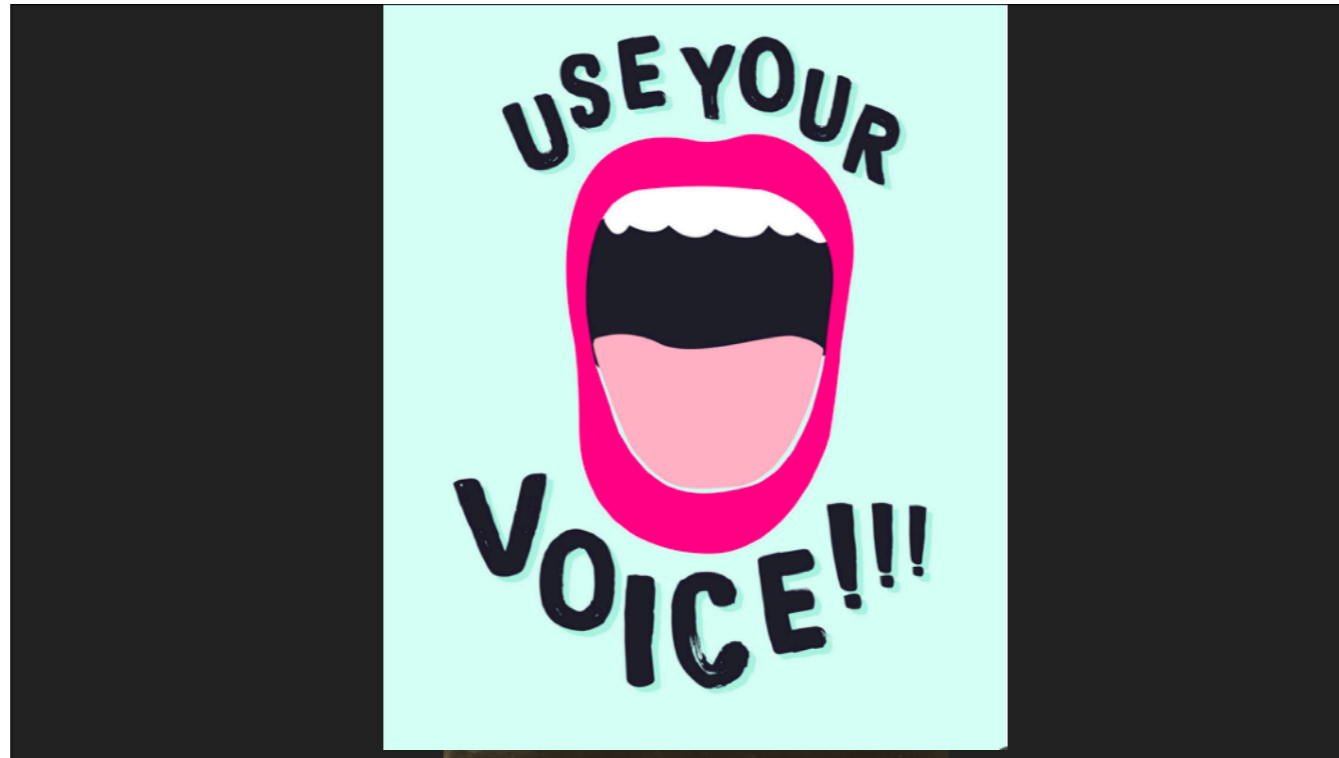
1928 in uk

Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act 1928



What about your right to participate?

https://www.google.com/search?q=feminist+history&client=firefox-b-d&sxsrf=ACYBGNS7Ecab4jWPv-nQZxDquhiyahSXig:1567988154604&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiM_t2Hu8LkAhWhUt8KHQtDAIEQ_AUIEigB&biw=1430&bih=803#imgsrc=ojp5GhhRM7XxxM:



Or what about your right to have a voice? When do you literally mute yourself? What environments require you to mute yourself?

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/98375573095587948/>

What experiences have shaped
you?

And what experiences are you designing for your students, your colleagues, etc.?

Form  Function

Interactional

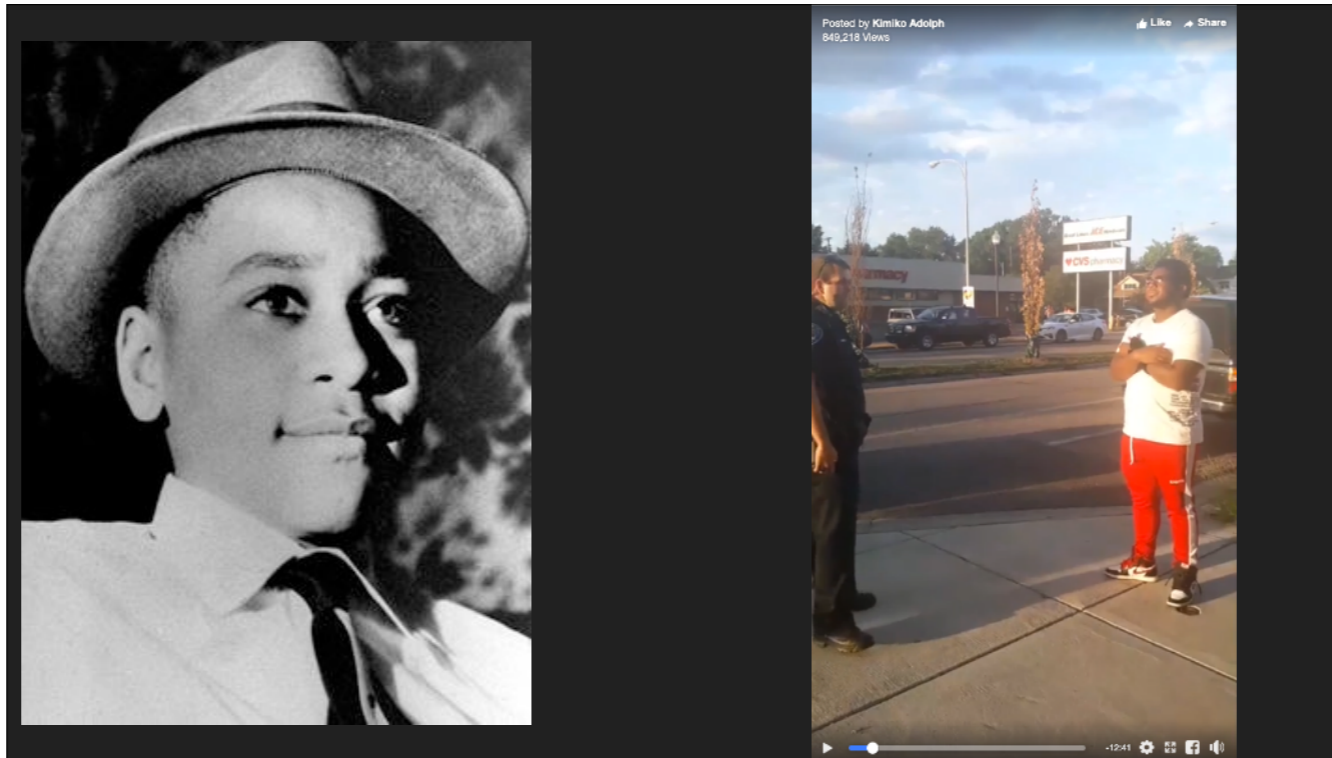
We shape our interactions,
and our interactions shape us



<https://cdn.cnn.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/180605150450-conductora-arabia-saudi-exlarge-169.jpg>

Interactions...

How many of you have some of your best conversations in the car?



Emmett Till - aug 28, 1955 lynched for apparently whistling at a white woman in her family's store in Mississippi.

By Source, Fair use, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3981740>

August 14, 2019 Royal Oak, Michigan — he looked at a white woman “suspiciously”

Devin Myers

<https://www.metrotimes.com/news-hits/archives/2019/08/14/royal-oak-police-stop-black-man-for-looking-suspiciously-at-white-woman>



I was looking online for an image that would capture the moment — the touching moment, where something happens to you that changes you. As you can imagine, finding an image of that moment is difficult. Many of the images involve animals as does this one — Here Jane Goodall reaches out as does a chimp to touch. In moments like these, both people change.

And we all had that one teacher — we remember their name, the class, the moment — when they reached out to us. They changed us forever in that moment. Those moments don't scale. Those moments aren't scripted. They are authentic human (and animal) connection.

What interactions have shaped you?

Someone who nurtured your love of reading?

Someone who noticed you were hungry, so they brought you a snack?

Someone who really saw you when you were convinced you were invisible?

How are you designing interactions with your students? Colleagues?

Know Your Assumptions

1. All learners are visual
2. Learners will speak up when asked a question
3. Learners are students

We all have biases and we all make assumptions

- Pace, Path, Content, Delivery Method
- text, visual, sonification, video...
- individual, group, didactic, participatory
- Motivation – external, internal, positive, negative
- Social support – peer, instructor, other
- Degree of structure

Pace, Path, Content, Delivery Method

text, visual, sonification, video...

individual, group, didactic, participatory

Motivation – external, internal, positive, negative

Social support – peer, instructor, other

Degree of structure

These are just some of the diverse needs or preferences for learning. How do these fit into your rubric? Does your syllabus flex to these? Advantage some? Disadvantage others? Is the preferred mode even available?

And what about instructors? This applies to them also.

Some of you might be wishing this was the most complex slide... that this work could be enumerated and checked off. But it never will be... so let's step out a tad to what we're really talking about...

Inclusive

- it isn't ever complete
- it's like bathing, you gotta keep doing it
- it's a value, never a checklist
- measure it by seeing how inextricable it is in everything you do

Florence Kennedy's, "Freedom is like taking a bath: You got to keep doing it every day."

- it isn't ever complete
- it's like bathing, you gotta keep doing it — derived from Florence Kennedy's, "Freedom is like taking a bath: You got to keep doing it every day."
- it's a value, never a checklist
- measure it by seeing how inextricable it is in everything you do

Your work begins now

...and it never ends...

Places to Question

- What decisions do I make?

Let's start by considering this

Places to Question

- Classroom setup / Tools
- Admissions decisions
- Cost
- Books
- Pedagogy
- Syllabus
- Access/Availability
- Assessment
- “Equivalents”
- Language

Do any of you make decisions about these?

What are you doing now to create an inclusive teaching and learning experience?

What more can you do?

And tell me, how will you measure success? Perhaps write that down.

You see, I just shifted the burden of responsibility for creating inclusion away from any team and onto all of us.



When the bumpersticker came out that said QUESTION EVERYTHING it sounded really good. I wanted to do it, but didn't know how.

Now I feel as though I know at least one way to do this—Question everything and ask, Is it Inclusive?

<https://flic.kr/p/iVLZt>

Photo by @Dunk

10:30 - 11:00