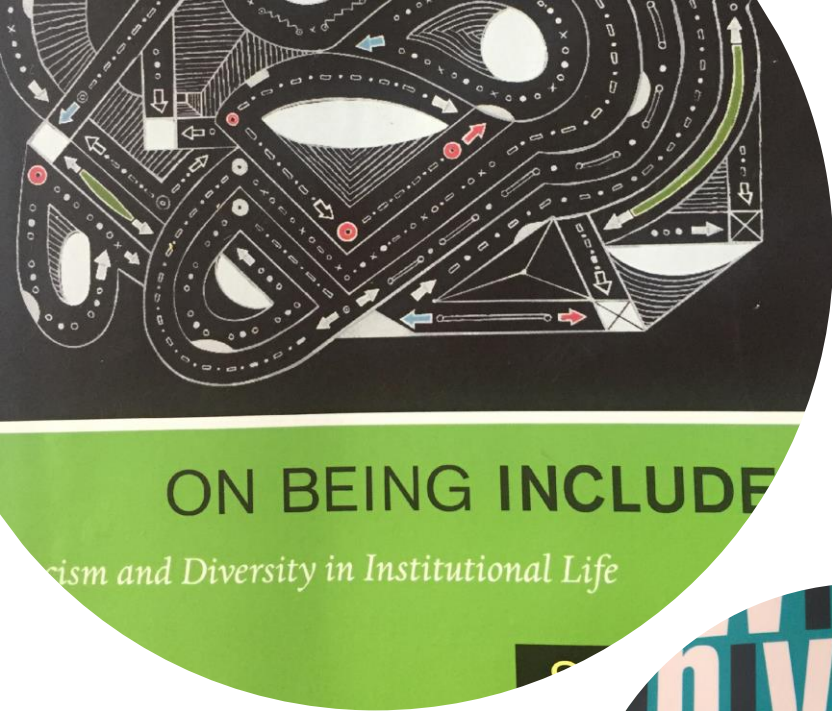# Class, Race and Gender Pathologisation:
avoiding a 'them and us' approach

Dr Tamsin Bowers-Brown
Director of the Office for Institutional Equity

Moral dilemmas

" The deficit model of curriculum has continued where first-generation black students are positioned as "problems", "disadvantaged" "underprepared" for university. Instead of institutional adaptation, the advantaged middle class white student has remained the norm, the curriculum's imaginary student. Student protests have attempted to interrupt this episteme"

(Luckett, Morreira,Baijnath, 2019, p 70).

DOMINANCE

"The dominant group's ideology, by virtue of being dominant, is powerful and pervasive" (Fanon, 1967).

Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skin, white masks*. New York: Grove Press.

The Importance of the right approach…

"When those in power create diversity and inclusion initiatives but do not possess an understanding of the ways in which white supremacy and racial hierarchy structure institutions of higher education policies and programs amount of cursory tactics that can be very harmful for Black students these initiatives can reinforce stereotypes, create unequal positions, and exacerbates of segregation" (Woodall, 2013).

Lewis, K. R., & Shah, P. P. (2021).

Education as a practice of freedom

"...the academy is not paradise. But learning is a place where paradise can be created. The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom."
bell hooks (p. 207)

Social Justice Education

- An emphasis on action…………
- "openness to different perspectives on complex social questions….. this approach lends itself to pedagogic approaches that are ' interactive and experiential… shared experiences, mutual perspective taking and dialogic interactions are key elements of learning' (Adams, 2010,p.63).

A Social Justice Framework

- Connectivity

- Collaboration

- Courage