



Themes

The narrative panel colors correspond with themes from the original In|Dignity exhibition (Cal State San Bernardino Anthropology Museum, January – December 2018). Your school may or may not choose to arrange the 42 narrative panels by color. Either way, you can utilize these themes as part of your curriculum unit, and/or as a way to organize groups of students as they visit the exhibition.

Red: Petrified

When organic materials are transformed into stony concretions, we say that they have become petrified. Our ideas about groups of people can undergo a similar process, metaphorically, as stereotypes become so ingrained that they seem like absolute truth. In this section, community members share personal stories that can help to soften preconceived notions about groups and individuals who our social upbringing often tells us to fear, to disparage, and to avoid.

Brown: Embodied

What we look like is, in many ways, who we are. Our bodies can determine how others perceive us, the groups that we belong to, and our opportunities in life. Identities can also inscribe themselves on our bodies, transforming physical appearances to match self-perceptions. In this section, community members consider how our bodies can bind us and free us, and how outward appearances can reveal and conceal what is inside of us.

Purple: Color | Lines

The way that an object reflects or emits light determines its color. The resultant spectrum can be measured scientifically, using wavelengths. But the meanings of pigmentations, hues, and shades are socially determined. In this section, community members illuminate the significance of color in their lives – including how color can be used to divide, to unite, and to celebrate humanity.

Green: Invisible

For some individuals, being visibly marked as “other” results in marginalization, disregard, and other daily affronts to their humanity. For others, the same challenges arise because they are not seen. While often dreamt of as a superpower, being invisible can feel profoundly disempowering. In this section, community members reflect on how being ignored, hidden, or muted has impacted their identities and lived experiences.

Orange: Stones May Rot

The title for this section comes from the Samoan proverb “Stones may rot, but words do not.” The saying forces attention to the impact of words, which can seep into our souls, etch themselves upon our hearts, and scar our psyches for years – lifetimes – beyond the original utterance. In this section, community members share how words have impacted their self-perceptions, and propelled their life decisions, in the moment and over time.

Pink: I Raise Up My Voice

Feminism is the pursuit of political, economic, and social equality of the sexes. Because it is so often women who are marginalized – underpaid, relegated to procreative and service roles, denied political representation, and excluded from educational opportunities – feminism is often synonymous with women’s rights. In this section, community members consider the societal expectation of women, and share their experiences breaking the mold and crafting opportunities for empowerment, self-definition, and advancement.

Blue: Empowered

Those who perceive the negative impacts of discrimination, prejudice, and other forms of bias are often moved to do something about it. By staying informed through self-education, becoming an ally, and supporting the individuals who are doing the difficult and sometimes dangerous work of representing their communities, you too can play a role in social justice. In this section, community members share their experiences, wisdom, and requests for your support.