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Confronting Racism to Advance Our Science

Peter Zeitler

Ana P. Barros

Thorsten W. Becker

Eric A. Davidson

Bethany L. Ehlmann

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

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EDITORIAL

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Special Section:

Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion in the Earth and
Space Sciences

Key Points:

- The editorial board wishes to enable their journal to represent the Earth and space sciences community in all its diversity
- The board recognizes that inequality is part of systems that have allowed them to prosper and pledges to support diversity and inclusion
- The board will commission and take contributions to an editorial series on the nature and impact of racism and other inequities in science

Correspondence to:

P. Zeitler,
peter.zeitler@lehigh.edu

















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Confronting Racism to Advance Our Science

Peter Zeitler¹ , Ana P. Barros² , Thorsten W. Becker³ , Eric A. Davidson⁴ , Bethany L. Ehlmann^{5,6} , Nicolas Gruber⁷ , Eileen E. Hofmann⁸ , Mary K. Hudson⁹, Tissa H. Illangasekare¹⁰, Sarah M. Kang¹¹ , Paola Malanotte-Rizzoli¹² , Margaret Moerchen¹³ , Francis Nimmo¹⁴ , Tom Parsons¹⁵ , Vincent J. M. Salters¹⁶ , Bjorn Stevens¹⁷ , Susan Trumbore^{18,19} , Donald J. Wuebbles²⁰ , and Tong Zhu²¹
¹Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, USA, ²Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Pratt School of Engineering, Duke University, Durham, NC, USA, ³Department of Geological Sciences and Institute for Geophysics, Jackson School of Geosciences, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, USA, ⁴Appalachian Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Frostburg, MD, USA, ⁵Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, CA, USA, ⁶Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA, USA, ⁷Department of Environmental Systems Science and Center for Climate Systems Modeling, ETH Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland, ⁸Center for Coastal Physical Oceanography, Department of Ocean and Earth Sciences, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA, USA, ⁹Department of Physics and Astronomy, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, USA, ¹⁰Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Center for the Experimental Study of Subsurface Environmental Processes, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO, USA, ¹¹Climate Dynamics Lab, Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology, Ulsan, South Korea, ¹²Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA, ¹³American Geophysical Union, Washington, DC, USA, ¹⁴Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, USA, ¹⁵United States Geological Survey, Menlo Park, CA, USA, ¹⁶Department of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Science and National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, USA, ¹⁷Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Hamburg, Germany, ¹⁸Max Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry, Jena, Germany, ¹⁹Biogeochemical Processes, University of California, Irvine, CA, USA, ²⁰Department of Atmospheric Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL, USA, ²¹College of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Peking University, Beijing, China

Abstract As individuals serving on the AGU Advances editorial board, we condemn racism, affirm that Black Lives Matter, and recognize that inequality is built into the systems that have allowed us to prosper. We aim to persistently foster discussion about racism, inequity, and the need to make our community more diverse and inclusive. This will help AGU Advances do a better job in publishing important science that inclusively reflects the ideas and contributions of all in our community.

These are challenging times. The context for the killing of George Floyd and too many others has compelled people across the world to confront the reality of the racism built into our institutions, including the science and education enterprise. For many, this is their lived experience. For others, thinking about this is uncomfortable: Even the most well-intentioned must come to grips with their role in perpetuating inequalities of access and opportunity.

We, as individuals serving on the editorial board, condemn racism, affirm that Black Lives Matter, and recognize that inequality is built into the systems that have allowed us to prosper. We pledge our commitment to support diversity and inclusion within the publishing process, the AGU community, and the Earth and space sciences community at large. We do not purport to speak for AGU as an organization nor for any of the global geosciences community, who have already made strong statements (e.g., <https://fromthepro.agu.org/agu-demands-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>, <https://www.change.org/p/geoscientists-call-for-a-robust-anti-racism-plan-for-the-geosciences>, and <https://notimeforsilence.org/>), but as editors of AGU Advances, AGU's new flagship journal, it is very much our concern that our journal represents our community in all its diversity. We realize that together with our reviewers, journal editors serve as important gatekeepers not only for who publishes what but also for the academic rewards associated with publication, including its impact on reputation, influence, promotion, and funding.

But our statements of condemnation or support are not enough. Concrete and continuous actions are required to confront structural racism. We are obligated to those who have suffered injustice to be willing to make changes and try new things, and we will be examining our policies and procedures. As a crucial

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first step, we must learn from our colleagues who have experienced bias and barriers and listen to their ideas of what kind of change is needed for the Earth and space sciences to function as a diverse and inclusive community.

To this end, we are commissioning an ongoing series of editorials on the nature and impacts of racism and other inequities built into the Earth and space sciences. We have begun by reaching out to a diverse group of scientists, and we are interested in hearing from anyone who feels impassioned to speak or who wishes to suggest an author other than themselves. Our hope is that these editorials will explore specific issues that need attention and/or propose effective ways to bring about change. Our goal in persistently highlighting discussion about racism, inequity, and the need for change is to help our community advance, to become more diverse and inclusive, and to help AGU Advances do a better job by publishing important science that inclusively reflects the ideas and contributions of all in our community.

Data Availability Statement

No new data are presented in this article.