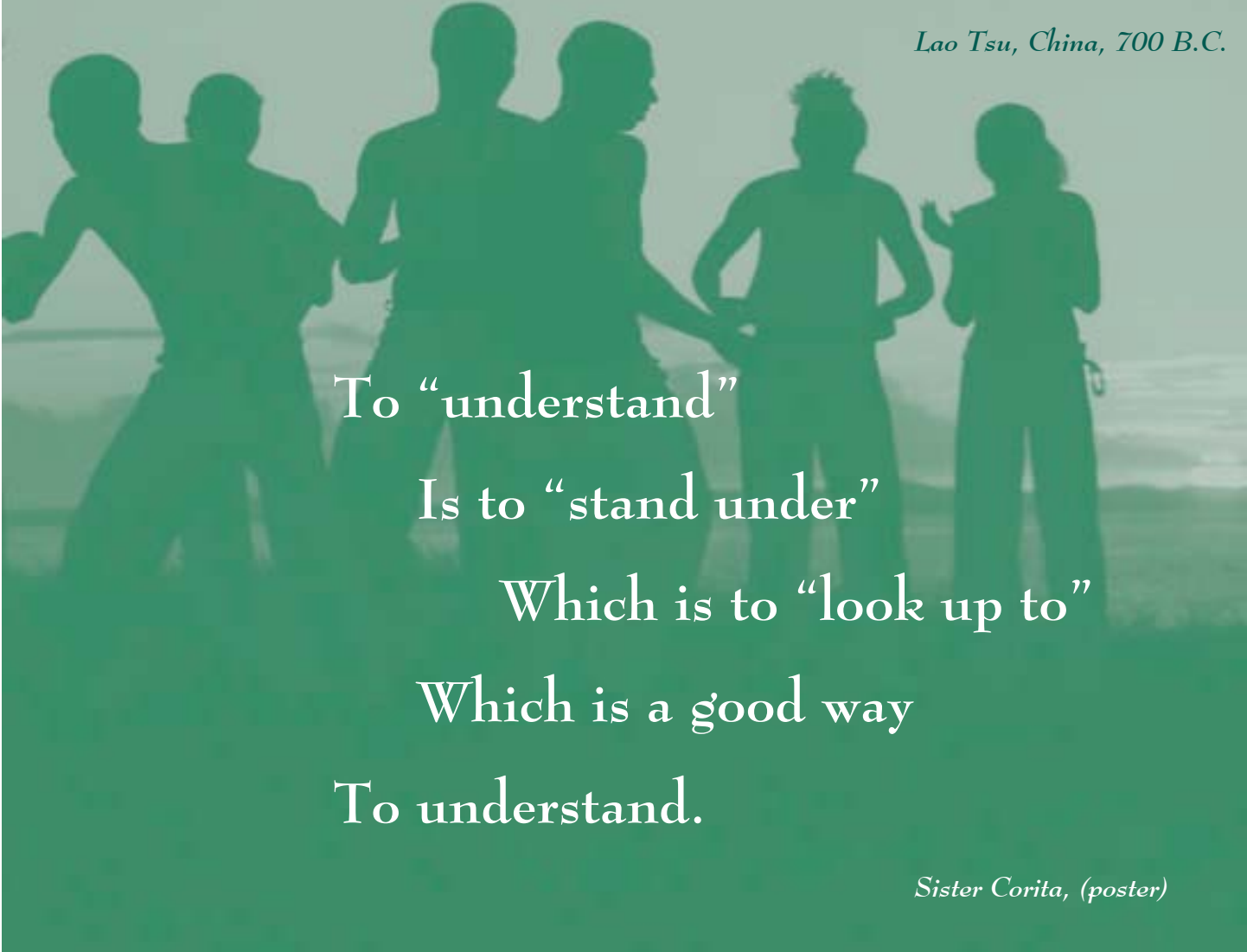


Go to the people.
Live with them,
Learn from them,
Love them.

Start with what they know,
Build with what they have.

But with the best leaders
When the work is done,
The task accomplished,
The people will say,
“We have done this ourselves.”

Lao Tsu, China, 700 B.C.



To “understand”
Is to “stand under”
Which is to “look up to”
Which is a good way
To understand.

Sister Corita, (poster)

Diversity Resources Packet

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DIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION, 2005-2010

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is the state's flagship research institution, a campus of choice for outstanding undergraduates, and a premier graduate institution. As a land-grant university, it is committed to excellence in learning, scholarship, and engagement with society. In all of its activities, the University aims to advance the frontiers of human knowledge and enrich and elevate society. The University intends that all members of its community promote the values and institutions of a representative democracy and lead lives of political integrity, civic engagement, and responsibility.

Therefore, the University holds intellectual curiosity and the thirst for knowledge to be among its core values and recognizes that intellectual and academic freedom and integrity are essential components of a campus atmosphere that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. The University further recognizes that the pursuit of knowledge and understanding is enriched by an environment in which people of diverse backgrounds learn together and from each other, and participate in free and genuine exchanges of views. It recognizes that all members of the University community benefit from diversity and that the quality of learning, research, scholarship and creative activities is enhanced by a campus climate of inclusion, understanding, and appreciation of differences and the full range of human experience. The University of Tennessee must prepare students to function successfully in a diverse society. A university diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities.

Consequently, the University aspires to be an institution that celebrates diversity by welcoming all students, staff, and faculty as respected and valued participants in the University's educational mission. In furtherance of these goals, the University welcomes people of different races, ethnicities, religions, creeds, national origin, genders, sexual orientations, physical abilities, age, veteran status, and social, economic, or educational backgrounds. The University is particularly committed to welcoming groups who have been historically underrepresented, discriminated against or excluded. The University also supports and encourages the promotion of diversity in its curricula, programs, faculty research, scholarship, and creative activities.

The Legacy of Discrimination and Segregation

During the past half century the United States has moved steadily to address issues related to equality of opportunity. Building on such earlier successes as the women's voting rights movement and the integration of the armed forces, equal rights movements have focused on legal and moral issues related to ethnicity, race, gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, and intellectual freedom. The result has been the elimination of many legal barriers to equality and the promotion of justice for historically under-represented groups.

Despite progress, however, the legacy of discrimination remains. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, thus reaffirms its intention to create a campus environment characterized by respect for diversity in all its forms. We begin by reviewing the impact of racial segregation upon the institution.

Public education in the state of Tennessee was segregated by law from 1870 to 1956. Although not legally segregated thereafter, de facto segregation continued. In 1968, Rita Sanders (now Rita Sanders Geier) filed suit against the state, alleging that segregation continued in violation of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The immediate occasion of the lawsuit was the University of Tennessee's decision to grant degrees and build a new facility for its Nashville campus. In 1968, the federal court ordered the state to develop plans to eliminate segregation in higher education. In 1977, UT-Nashville was merged with the historically black Tennessee State University, and in 1984 a Stipulation of Settlement was implemented with the intention of upgrading the Tennessee State campus and stimulating further integration of the historically white campuses. While the Stipulation of Settlement made progress toward these goals, more needed to be done. On January 5, 2001, the Court approved the Geier Consent Decree. The Decree sets out expectations for desegregation that if achieved within five years will relieve the state of the desegregation order. The state provides significant funding for the desegregation efforts, which have been progressing energetically since 2001. The possible termination of this lawsuit provides both an opportunity and a critical need to recommit to the value of a diverse University and to plan for the post-Geier University of Tennessee.

Consequently, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, asserts that diversity is integral to the stated mission, culture, and goals of the institution. Intercultural and international understanding enriches the quality of education for all students and provides them with the skills they need to cross multiple cultural boundaries and communities. We live in a global village where the interests and actions of diverse peoples impact daily on our lives.

The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees affirmed its commitment to this mission in 2001:

“The primary mission of The University of Tennessee is to provide quality educational opportunities for the people of this state. Essential components of a quality education include an outstanding and diverse faculty [staff and students], first-class facilities, and an environment conducive to learning. The Board of Trustees is committed to achieving each of these essential components at The University of Tennessee. The Board of Trustees expressly reaffirms the University's policy of nondiscrimination in all aspects of university life including financial aid,

extracurricular activities, hiring, promotion and retention of employees, and the recruitment, enrollment and retention of students.”

In many ways, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has become a more diverse institution in the past decade, striving for improved communication, addressing racial incidents forthrightly and openly, demanding respect for all individuals, accepting and celebrating differences as integral to institutional life and practice, and recruiting and retaining more diverse students, faculty and staff.

The following are examples of recent improvements:

Increasing ethnic and racial diversity

- In 2002-03, of the 4,536 regular UTK employees, 50% were females, and 13% were minorities (of whom 61.5% were African American). At the upper administrative level, 51% of persons in the executive/managerial/administrative ranks were female.
- The percentage of African American students in the entering freshman class continues to rise, from under 8% three years ago to nearly 10% in fall, 2004. This reflects the successful implementation of the African American Achievers and African American Incentive Grant programs under the Geier Consent Decree.
- Persons are filling higher administrative positions from historically under-represented populations, including six academic deans, a director of a school, two vice chancellors, two associate vice chancellors, three academic associate deans, and a dean of students.

Programmatic development

- The African and African-American Studies Program has a new director and enhanced quarters and operating funds.
- The revised General Education Program includes a specific requirement in intercultural studies.
- The Life of the Mind Program for entering freshmen introduces students to diverse cultural and ethnic perspectives through the reading of a book in common and supporting academic and public programs.
- The Africa Semester in Spring 2003 was a resounding success for both academic programming and student development.
- The Programs Abroad Office has expanded study abroad programs and greatly increased the number of students studying abroad.

Physical facilities

- The elegant new Black Cultural Center building, which opened in 2002, is fast becoming a

gathering place for peoples of all colors and creeds.

- The International House brings together international and domestic students in a wide variety of intercultural programs and activities.

Advocacy

- Religious diversity is well represented by numerous campus organizations.
- Advocates of diverse sexual orientations have generated broad campus support from faculty and students.
- As greater numbers of Hispanic/Latino students come to the University, a Hispanic/Latino Task Force, a Hispanic/Latino fraternity and sorority, and a Hispanic/Latino speaker series support them.
- The Chancellor's Commissions for Women and for Blacks are actively engaged in assessing the status of blacks and women and are advocating on their behalf.

The Imperative for Action

Even with these achievements, the University must work to ensure that the practice of discrimination does not continue. It is clear that the University needs to create a more inclusive community within the University and to reach out to the people of the surrounding community. Many groups still encounter barriers to the promise and achievement of equality, justice, and the unprejudiced quest for knowledge. A land-grant institution founded upon principles of access and opportunity, the University is still too often perceived as ineffectively serving a society that is daily growing more diverse. We must redouble our efforts to erase barriers based on differences in race, ethnicity, gender, religion, class, age, ability, and sexual orientation.

In April 2004, the Knoxville chancellor and vice chancellors announced plans for a comprehensive initiative based on a plan to enhance diversity, with the primary goal of creating a civil society that prepares students to function effectively in our increasingly complex global society. The campus leaders enunciated four fundamental perspectives:

- The University is committed to respecting diversity in all its forms: different ideas and perspectives, age, ability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political persuasions, and the socioeconomic and geographic composition of its faculty, staff and students.
- We approach cultural differences with an attitude of learning from others in order to enrich our own experiences, thus making progress toward creating a genuinely civil society in which all peoples are welcomed and honored.
- When our ideals fall short in daily practice, we will redouble our efforts to achieve a university community that reflects the pluralism of our society and of the world at large.
- As a free marketplace of ideas, the University believes that spirited discussion of diversity in all its manifold aspects and an acknowledgment of the complexity of the issues will lead to positive change.

Summary of the Action Plan's Goals

The University's Action Plan will focus on six broad goals, supported by more detailed plans advanced by departments, colleges, and administrative units. Accountability is the key to success and will be articulated at every level of the plan.

Goal One: Create and sustain a welcoming, supportive and inclusive campus climate.

The University aims to become a model academic community that promotes diversity and excellence and incorporates diverse perspectives in all its campus and community activities and communications.

Goal Two: Attract and retain greater numbers of individuals from under-represented populations into faculty, staff, and administrative positions (particularly department heads, directors, deans, and vice chancellors).

Increased success in recruiting and retaining diverse persons is critical. Success requires genuine commitment, persistence, and intentional planning on the part of the entire university community. An inclusive campus climate fosters retention.

Goal Three: Attract, retain, and graduate increasing numbers of students from historically under-represented populations and international students.

The University intends that its students will reflect the diversity of qualified students graduating from Tennessee high schools. The University will increase the retention and graduation rates of historically underrepresented students. The University will engage in increasing the recruitment and inclusion of international students into all facets of the university community.

Goal Four: Develop and strengthen partnerships with diverse communities in Tennessee and globally.

Alliances with civic, business, community, educational, and ethnic organizations will enable the University to strengthen its intercultural programs and will promote the productive exchange of ideas and resources. Because of its intimate linkages with global affairs, the University will seek to internationalize its programs and curricula to enhance both domestic and international cultural understanding.

Goal Five: Ensure that undergraduate curricular requirements include significant intercultural perspectives.

Because the world is made up of diverse peoples, the University academic curricula must ensure that all students study diversity. The University intends to strengthen academic

preparation of all students by infusing curricula with reputable scholarship and critical thinking skills regarding diversity. Courses incorporating diversity perspectives may be offered at any level, and will be incorporated in general education requirements as appropriate.

Goal Six: Prepare graduate students to become teacher, researchers, and professionals in a diverse world.

In today's world, learning communities and research groups are pluralist, heterogeneous entities typically characterized by high levels of diversity. The University intends that its graduate students leave the University well-equipped to serve as teachers, researchers, and professionals in environments and institutions that are increasingly diverse.

THE ACTION PLAN: A CAMPUS-WIDE FRAMEWORK

The following goals and objectives will guide the action plans to be advanced by departments, colleges, and administrative units. Each vice chancellor will coordinate the planning for his/her unit. A comprehensive University-wide plan including near- and longer-term strategies and responsibility for implementation and oversight will be in place by October 1, 2005.

The University seeks to ensure that genuine progress is made in intercultural and international understanding in all sectors of the institution. Successful implementation of the action plans requires individuals to take personal responsibility for improving diversity. To that end, all administrators will be held accountable for developing, implementing, and assessing diversity plans.

Goal One: Create a welcoming, supportive and inclusive campus.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement a campus-wide Quality Enhancement Plan focused on the enhancement of intercultural and international awareness.
- Ensure that the University's academic curricula prepare students to prosper in the pluralistic world of the 21st century.
- Develop strategies to oppose and eliminate all aspects of discrimination on campus.
- Foster professional development and advancement for all employees.
- Review and improve all elements of campus safety and security.
- Improve internal and external communication regarding diversity issues.
- Create and implement policies, and design physical facilities to support the family needs of faculty, staff, and students.
- Involve all campus constituencies – students, faculty, staff, and alumni – in promotion of diversity.

University strategies and benchmarks:

- Streamline and coordinate all African-American student support services.
- Develop support services for other historically under-represented populations.
- Support faculty efforts to infuse intercultural and international perspectives into courses across the curriculum.
- Appoint by nomination a campus-wide Council on Diversity to establish benchmarks, monitor, and update the action plan.
- Develop comprehensive procedures to assess and monitor annually the progress and effectiveness of diversity initiatives.
- Support student, campus, and community advisory groups working on diversity initiatives.
- Develop a diversity-training workshop for students, faculty, and staff.
- Protect the rights of all parties involved with allegations of discrimination.
- Develop procedures for reporting diversity-related incidents.

Goal Two: Attract and retain greater numbers of individuals from under-represented populations into faculty, staff, and administrative positions.

Objectives:

- Provide career advancement mentoring opportunities for faculty, staff, and administration.
- Increase the diversity of personnel at all levels.
- Ensure that University policies and procedures reflect and promote diversity.

University strategies and benchmarks:

- Require that all units conduct aggressive searches, including strategic hiring, and emphasize developing pools that include under-represented individuals.
- Require that each unit implement hiring plans that aggressively enhance the identification of diversity within their disciplines.
- Employ aggressive hiring, training, and promotion programs to increase the number of individuals of historically under-represented populations in all University positions.
- Develop a central revolving fund to support the strategic recruiting and hiring of diverse individuals.
- Annually evaluate administrators and hold them accountable for success in promoting diversity in their units.

Goal Three: Attract, retain and graduate increasing numbers of individuals from historically under-represented populations and international students.

Objectives:

- Develop need-based academic scholarships in order to increase student diversity.
- Prepare students to engage in the complex world of the 21st century.
- Through intensive recruitment, increase and retain the number of undergraduate and graduate ethnically and culturally diverse students, including international students.
- Bring the retention and graduation rates of diverse students to the same level as the University average.
- Provide career development mentoring opportunities for graduate, undergraduate, and professional students.

University strategies and benchmarks:

- Evaluate all existing minority recruitment and mentoring/retention programs, including Geier activities, to determine their effectiveness. Reallocate resources as necessary.
- Develop a plan and secure the funds needed to maintain progress after successfully meeting the Geier Consent Decree provisions.
- Ensure that classroom materials, methods, and climate reflect the imperatives of intercultural and international knowledge and awareness.
- Provide a wide range of cultural and intellectual programs that demonstrate a connection between academic and extra-curricular activities.

Goal Four: Develop and strengthen partnerships with diverse communities in Tennessee and globally.

Objectives:

- Identify and promote exchange of ideas and resources with civic, business, community, educational, and ethnic organizations devoted to intercultural awareness.
- Create a campus organizational structure to develop and support community linkages.
- Expand international agreements and relationships to increase opportunities for student, faculty, and staff engagement with global issues.

University strategies and benchmarks:

- Work with local and state communities to provide a cultural environment conducive to recruiting and retaining persons from diverse backgrounds.
- Create a Chancellor's Community Council to strengthen the relationship between the University and the communities it serves.
- Strengthen the University's minority procurement program to increase the participation of female- and minority-owned businesses contracting with the University.
- Strengthen and support faculty outreach to K-12 schools and post-secondary institutions serving historically under-represented populations.
- Develop a comprehensive communication and marketing program to promote diversity internally and externally, including a proactive media strategy.
- Collaborate with community groups in identifying and writing grants that support diversity initiatives.
- Support and recognize community activities of faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Make annual University awards to University employees whose leadership in diversity-related programs and services are outstanding and worthy of additional support.

Goal Five: Ensure that undergraduate curricular requirements include significant intercultural perspectives.

Because the world is made up of diverse peoples, the University academic curricula must ensure that all students study this reality. The University intends to strengthen academic preparation of all students by infusing curricula with reputable scholarship and critical thinking skills regarding diversity. Courses incorporating diversity perspectives may be housed in any discipline and may be offered at any level.

Objectives:

- Ensure that the University's academic curricula prepare students for the pluralistic world of the 21st century.
- Ensure that students from diverse orientations and underrepresented populations and backgrounds are recognized as essential participants in the life of the University and society.

University strategies and benchmarks:

- Assure that a wide range of undergraduate courses, including general education requirements, address one or more of the following subjects: races, ethnicities, religions, creeds, national origin, genders, sexual orientations, physical abilities, age, veteran status, and social, economic, or educational backgrounds.
- Develop, implement, and support professional development opportunities and programs to assist faculty and staff in transforming curricula to integrate diversity-related themes.
- Support, expand, and encourage interdisciplinary programs and partnerships that focus on diversity in their curricula.
- Encourage historically underrepresented students to participate in education abroad programs.
- Encourage and support the integration of study abroad into curricula.
- Ensure that faculty are equipped with tools and strategies to make their classrooms welcoming to diverse student populations.

Goal Six: Prepare graduate students to become teachers, researchers, and professionals in a diverse world.

In today's world, learning communities and research groups are heterogeneous entities typically characterized by high levels of diversity. The University intends that its graduate students will leave the University well-equipped to serve as teachers, researchers, and professionals in environments and institutions that are increasingly diverse.

Objectives:

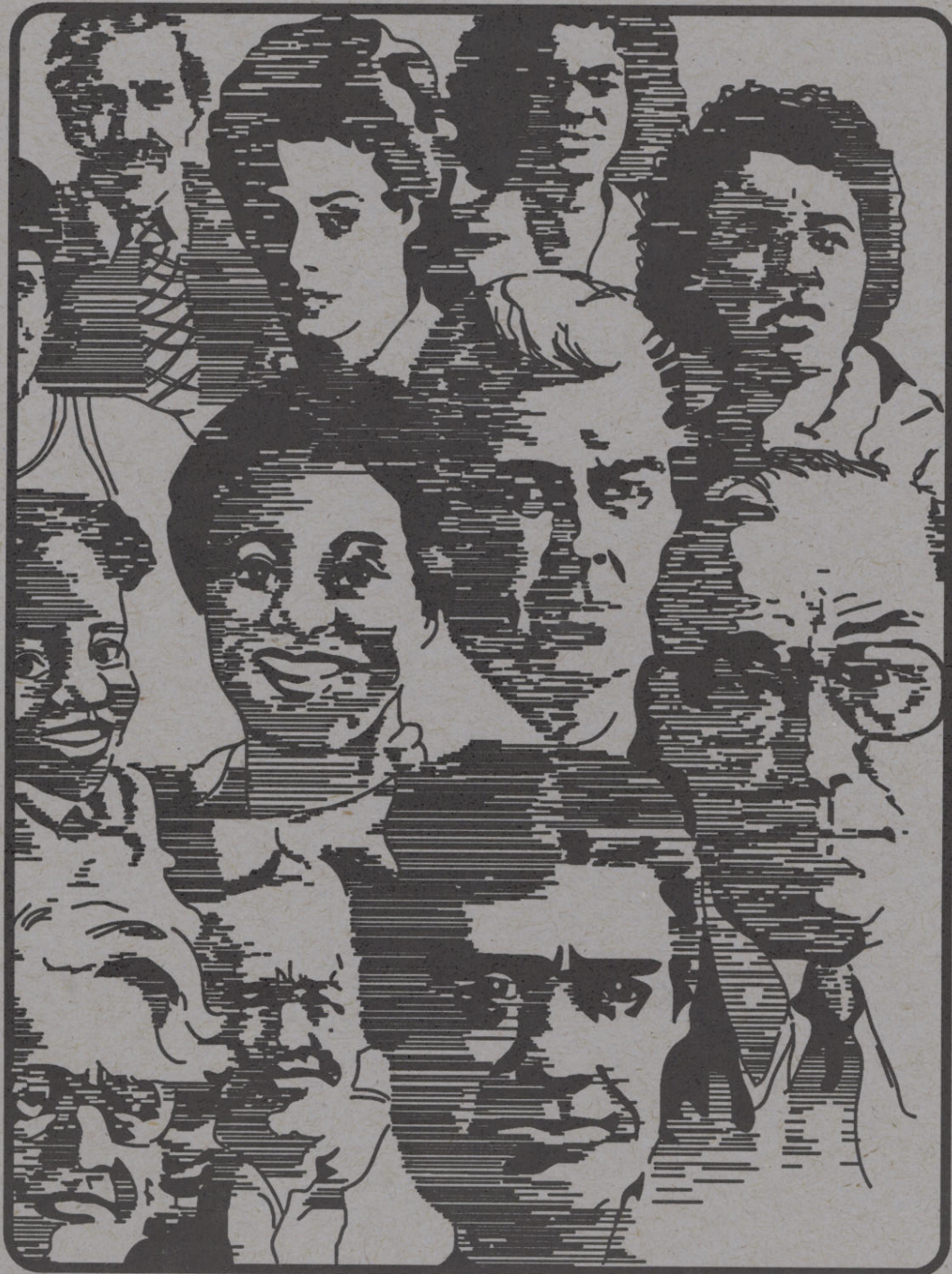
- Ensure that graduate students have the training necessary to participate fully in the pluralistic world of the 21st century.
- Ensure that graduate students with teaching responsibilities are acquainted with the diverse range of learning styles found in today's classrooms.

University strategies and benchmarks:

- Assure that a wide range of graduate courses address one or more of the following subjects: races, ethnicities, religions, creeds, national origin, genders, sexual orientations, physical abilities, age, veteran status, and social, economic, or educational backgrounds.
- Develop and encourage diversity-related training for units to use in graduate teaching orientation sessions.
- Develop continuing education opportunities to prepare graduate teaching assistants to teach effectively in diverse classrooms.

DIVERSITY

A Plan for Cultural Diversity in Tennessee Extension



September 1, 1992

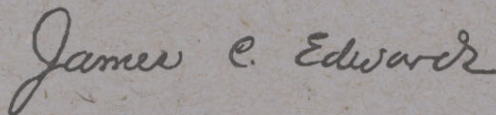
Dear Colleague:

Several months ago a committee was assembled to develop a plan for Cultural Diversity in Tennessee Extension and we commend this group for their efforts. The plan provides a vision for Extension in Tennessee as a diverse multicultural organization. The mission, vision and goals for achieving diversity and pluralism are outlined in the plan. They describe important work for Extension that is an integral part of our mission to address the needs and issues relevant to our audiences.

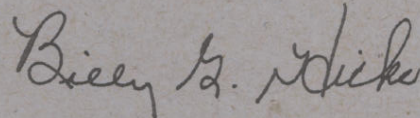
The plan is intentionally printed in a working format that is easily copied. We encourage Tennessee Extension staff at all levels to use this plan as a model and guide in developing action plans for achieving and sustaining diversity and pluralism in both state and county Extension programs and activities.

We invite you to review this plan and join us in embracing an organizational environment built on values of diversity, understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,



James C. Edwards
Director-1890 Extension Programs



Billy G. Hicks
Dean

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Acknowledgments

Tennessee Extension Diversity Committee members are:

Sudie Alston,

University of Tennessee (UT) Extension Agent, Shelby County;

Roy Bullock,

UT Associate Professor, Nashville;

Linda Byler,

UT Associate District Supervisor, Cookeville;

Laurie Byrne,

UT Assistant Communications Specialist, Knoxville;

Jane Gault,

UT Extension Agent, Davidson County;

Ella Ree Johnson,

UT Extension Agent, White County;

Herb Lester,

UT Associate District Supervisor, Nashville;

Ivory Lyles,

UT Associate District Supervisor, Chattanooga;

Angela Mayers,

Tennessee State University (TSU)
4-H and Youth Development Specialist, Nashville;

J.W. McGuire,

UT Associate Extension Agent, Wilson County;

Alice Ann Moore,

UT District Supervisor, Knoxville;

Charles Norman,

Committee Chair/UT Assistant Dean; Knoxville; and

Richard Powell,

UT Associate District Supervisor, Jackson.

DIVERSITY

A Plan for Cultural Diversity in Tennessee Extension

Introduction

Emphasis on Diversity

The goal of this plan is to achieve and sustain pluralism as an integral part of every aspect of Extension work, including work force, programs, audiences and relationships with other people, groups and organizations. Tennessee's Cultural Diversity Plan is designed to move the organization toward becoming a multicultural organization that values diversity and pluralism.

Diversity, as defined in this plan, recognizes and values differences among people based on age, education, gender, spiritual practice, race, family status, ethnicity, social and economic class, geographic location, physical and mental ability and other human differences.

Pluralism is defined as an organizational culture that incorporates mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity among people who are diverse.

Multicultural organizations are organizations that: (1) consider human differences to be an advantage; (2) value a pluralistic culture that reflects the interests, contributions and values of members of diverse groups; (3) encourage full and influential participation by all members of the organization in decisions and policies that shape the organization; and (4) eliminate discrimination throughout the organization.

The plan for diversity is not a renamed or repackaged version of Extension's Civil Rights programs. It goes beyond Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) to develop

an environment in which diversity is valued and pluralism is achieved. However, an effective Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action program forms an important part of the foundation for Tennessee Extension's plan for diversity. The diversity plan should in no way be viewed as a substitute for EEO/AA programs.

The distinguishing features between EEO/AA programs and Tennessee Extension's plan for diversity are:

- EEO/AA outlines specified legal requirements for "nondiscrimination," a complaints process to address discriminatory employment and program practices and a process to encourage work force and program representation of under-represented groups.
- The Cultural Diversity Plan includes activities beyond EEO/AA that are needed to achieve and sustain diversity and pluralism.
- Tennessee's Cultural Diversity Plan is Extension-initiated, emphasizes productivity and effectiveness, and is opportunity-focused, proactive and relevancy-driven.
- Tennessee Extension's plan for cultural diversity is self-imposed. It is a response to the changes taking place in the state and nation's work force and is designed to maintain an effective and productive work force in Extension as well as programs that are relevant to the people of the state. Tennessee Extension's Cultural Diversity Plan assumes pluralism and creates an environment in which human differences are valued.

Definitions

Cultural diversity: Differences among people based on age, education, gender, spiritual practice, race, family status, ethnicity, social and economic class, geographic location, physical and mental ability and other human differences.

Pluralism: Organizational culture that incorporates mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity among people who are diverse. Pluralism is a condition of society in which numerous distinct ethnic, religious and cultural groups coexist within one nation.

Multicultural organizations: Organizations that: (A) consider human differences to be an advantage; (B) value a pluralistic culture that reflects the interests, contributions and values of members of diverse groups; (C) encourage full and influential participation by all members of the organization in decisions and policies that shape the organization; and (D) eliminate discrimination throughout the organization.

Discrimination: Systematic, intended or unintended denial of recognition, power and privilege to certain people based on the groups to which they belong.

Affirmative Action: Action taken to provide equal opportunity, as in hiring, for members of previously disadvantaged groups, such as women and minorities.

Mission

of the Diversity Plan

Extension's audience has never been so diverse. A preliminary task in implementing a Cultural Diversity Plan is to identify people who need and want our educational programs. Who are they? Where do they live? What is their lifestyle, age, sex, race, level of education, income, religious belief, physical and mental ability?

How do cultural variables affect Extension's staff, volunteers, audiences and programs? Tennessee's three distinct geographic divisions have presented a long-time challenge in terms of programming within the state. Can we continue to successfully educate Tennesseans amid changing variables such as shifts in population, an increase in the elderly population, drastic changes in the structure of the family and poverty among one out of four of our children?

The answers to these questions and many more will hinge on our ability and willingness to incorporate cultural diversity in everything that we do, starting with our hiring practices and ending with the effectiveness with which we are able to address the many needs of the people in this state.

The overall mission of cultural diversity is to achieve and sustain pluralism as an integral part of every aspect of Extension. Defining who we are in pluralist terms will automatically increase our visibility and scope.

Although the initiative has been

taken to address the needs of non-traditional audiences by certain individual Extension staff members, we acknowledge the need for comprehensive in-service training organization-wide. Flexible and creative programs will only evolve from staff who are aware, motivated and committed to the concept of pluralism.

Vision

for the Future

The state committee on cultural diversity envisions Tennessee Extension as a catalyst for change. This will be created in an environment which fosters diversity at all levels of the organization by meeting audience needs through diverse programming. Extension will promote respect for self-worth and equality.

The delivery of diverse and innovative educational programs is expected to effectively meet the demands of traditional and non-traditional audiences. Our organizational values include:

- people who are aware of cultural differences;
- programs which respond to the needs of changing clientele;
- Extension personnel who use appropriate technology and research-based information in developing and delivering programs to diverse audiences;
- cooperation and networking with other organizations and agencies;
- multicultural training for staff at all levels;
- recognition of staff who are successfully implementing innovative programs designed for new, diverse audiences;
- educational materials which feature diversity among staff, audiences and programs.

Implementation

Goal I

Promote the importance of diversity as it relates to Tennessee Extension's mission.

Situation: Preliminary data from the 1990 census show an increasing racial diversity in the state. In addition, there is growing variety in family status, a shifting distribution by age and changes in many other demographic categories. An awareness and understanding of cultural diversity are important to the achievement of our mission, which is to improve the lives of Tennesseans by addressing selected needs and issues. Respect and appreciation for diversity in the state will affect staffing and staff development, as well as program development, promotion and delivery.

A. Action: Present the plan for cultural diversity and the issues of cultural diversity to all staff.

- Means:**
1. Present plan at annual conference to professional staff.
 2. Present plan at other staff gatherings.

When: Begin at Extension conference and follow up with other staff members.

Where: December 1992 Extension conference and at other staff gatherings during FY93.

B. Action: Increase awareness of cultural diversity issues through in-house publication articles.

- Means:** 1. Review available cultural diversity resources.
2. Showcase programs and activities that contribute to cultural diversity.

When: Begin December 1992.

Where: *New Directions, FYI, UT AGRICULTURE and Tennessee Alumnus* publications.

C. Action: Communicate to stakeholders the importance of cultural diversity as it relates to Extension's mission.

Means: Develop educational materials, including news releases, feature stories, videotapes and brochures, to be used in group presentations.

D. Action: Familiarize staff with demographic changes related to cultural diversity that are taking place in Tennessee and the U.S.

Means: Provide Census Data Center information along with annual report information regarding Tennessee's Extension audience.

Goal II

Recruit, hire and support an Extension staff that reflects the cultural diversity of Tennessee.

Situation: Tennessee's Extension staff is diverse in socioeconomic and family status, race, gender and age. The administration supports staff development through a variety of in-service training options. These are primarily subject matter and process skill sessions which do not include issues of diversity.

A. Action: Identify and actively recruit qualified individuals for employment who bring diversity to the organization.

Means: Attract potential employees by:

- a. Using referrals from current employees;
- b. Using targeted advertising and recruitment methods (publications, databases, colleges or universities which target under-represented groups);
- c. Providing job announcements;
- d. Providing information to placement offices;
- e. Providing career day displays and materials regarding careers in Extension which reflect diversity of all types (age, gender, disability, race, etc.); and
- f. Providing Extension career-related materials to high school counselors.

B. Action: Include awareness of the organization's commitment to diversity in new staff orientation.

- Means:** 1. Conduct presentation/discussion based on cultural diversity.
2. Distribute copies of the plan for cultural diversity to new staff.

C. Action: Provide training skills related to management of culturally diverse employees to those responsible for hiring.

- Means:** 1. Provide in-service training sessions.
2. Provide information to management about outside diversity-related seminars.

Goal III

Create and maintain an organizational environment that respects diversity among staff, volunteers and clientele.

Situation: Many Tennessee families no longer consist of an employee or self-employed individual, a non-working spouse and dependent children. Single parents head more and more of today's families. The male is not necessarily the primary bread-winner and many families include elderly parents who need care. Family relationships are diverse today.

A. Action: Support a balance between personal and professional responsibilities that respects the values of diverse employees.

Means:

1. Review current personnel policies and identify those which respect diverse value systems.
2. If need exists, develop personnel policies to meet diverse issues.

B. Action: Adapt performance review format to reflect expectations regarding cultural diversity.

1. Adapt individual performance appraisal format to include integration of diversity into programming.
2. Train all supervisors and revise performance review format.

Goal IV

Develop and expand programs that will meet the diverse needs of potential Tennessee Extension audiences.

Situation: Although selected programs, such as EFNEP and UT Next Door, target diverse audiences, many others do not plan for culturally diverse audiences. Current programs generally meet the needs of a small percentage of the total Tennessee population. Even in areas where racial and ethnic diversity exists, many programs attract primarily white, middle-class audiences.

A. Action: Identify issues and needs of culturally diverse audiences in keeping with the Extension mission.

Means:

1. Identify and/or develop assessment tools for use with advisory groups, agencies and organizations in identifying needs and issues of a culturally diverse clientele.
2. Conduct assessments of advisory groups, agencies and organizations regarding needs and issues.

B. Action: When planning, marketing and delivering programs, determine impact of delivery modes, accessibility, timing and cost (user fees) for participation. Revise these as necessary.

Means:

1. Provide in-service on learning/teaching styles and cross cultural dynamics of learning/teaching for county, area and state staff.

2. Develop checklist for evaluating program delivery methods, accessibility, timing, cost, etc., to integrate with various aspects of cultural diversity.

Goal V

Provide recognition to staff members for innovative program development and delivery for new, diverse audiences.

Situation: Presently Tennessee Extension does not have a means of recognition for innovative educational programs designed for diverse audiences. Recognition of faculty who conduct outstanding programs for diverse audiences would serve as an incentive for other faculty members.

Action: Incorporate diversity into guidelines of existing program recognition.

- Means:**
1. Include recognition for teams and individuals at all staffing levels.
 2. Include recognition for program adaptation or development of new programs to meet needs of more diverse audiences.

The goals of Tennessee Extension's plan for diversity will be reviewed and updated on a continuing basis. As needs change, the goals will be revised to reflect organizational changes as well as state demographic changes.

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A State Partner in the Cooperative Extension System

The Agricultural Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and county governments cooperating in furtherance of Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914. Agricultural Extension Service Billy G. Hicks, Dean

Seeing Systems: Unlocking the Mysteries of Organizational Life

Oshry, Barry. (1995). Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, p. 104-110

The Dominant Culture

The Dominants' culture
is invisible to them;
it is the water in which they swim,
the air they breathe.
To the Dominants,
how they speak
is the way one speaks,
how they dress
is the way one dresses,
their values
are *the* values,
their history
is *the* history.

To the Dominants,
the culture of the Dominated
is not merely different,
it is wrong —
wrong speech,
wrong dress,
wrong emotionally,
wrong spirituality,
wrong values.

The culture of the Dominated is seen
as strange,
sometimes comical,
usually lesser,
inferior.

The Survival of the Dominated

To the Dominated,
the culture of the Dominants
is oppressive —
there is no space for *their* voice,
their dress,
their values,
their history.

How to survive as a Dominated
within the Dominant culture?

Adopt.
We can suppress our culture

and adopt their culture,
become more like them;
white-ish Blacks,
man-ish women,
Gentile-ish Jews,
straight-ish gays.
We can walk like them,
talk like them,
dress like them,
think like them.
We can make our way
as best we can
as one of them
in their world.

Embrace.
We can accept our fate —
the Dominated within the Dominant.
This is our life;
we can choose it,
love it,
embrace it,
and make it our way
as best we can.

Separate.
We can separate from them —
from their businesses,
their schools,
their churches,
their government.
We can reject their ways
and elaborate our ways,
our culture;
create our own businesses,
churches,
schools,
government.
We can make our way
as best we can
without them.

Rebel.
We can attack the Dominant culture —
try to destroy it,
discredit it,
tear down its heroes,
revise its history

and ours,
paint ours as good
and theirs as evil.
We can try to dominate "Them,"
pass laws to constrain "Them."
We can try to make our way
the dominant way.

Drop Out.
We can withdraw from both
cultures —
into drugs, alcohol,
insanity,
Crime.
Since the Dominant culture is
unfair —
its rules are *their* rules,
its laws, *their* laws,
its opportunities, *their* opportunities -
we can take what we can,
we can steal,
cheat, lie.
We can break *their* laws,
which isn't crime,
only doing what is fair,
making our way
as best we can
in their culture.

Adopt.
Embrace.
Separate.
Rebel.
Drop Out.
Crime.
All struggling to survive
as the Dominated
among the Dominant.

-over

The Possibility of Transformation

Or we can choose to end the old dance —
first to see it,
then to end it —
to transform the culture
so that it embraces the cultures
of both the Dominant
and the Dominated;
the customs of each,
the speech,
the emotionality,
the history,
the spirituality,
of both the Dominant
and the Dominated.

The Dominants will resist —
powerfully.
They will wonder what the fuss is all about.
For them there is no problem,
nothing to solve,
nothing to fix.
Their culture is invisible to them;
it is the water in which they swim,
the air they breathe.

The Dominants are offended
when their culture is made visible,
when it becomes an option
rather than the way things are.
The Dominants will resist,
and if the Dominated persist,
there will be chaos;
A mess,
the disruption of the familiar energy pattern.
And in the chaos,
there is nothing but possibility:
The Dominant crushing the Dominated —
that's possible!
A settling back into the old comfortably uncomfortable
dance —
that's also possible.
A complete rupture of the relationship —
that, too, is possible.
And there is always the possibility of transforming the
culture into some new and unthinkable form.
(Remember when it was unthinkable that women and
Blacks would vote.)
There will be resistance,
but is resistance just resistance?
Or is it the sound of the old dance shaking?



here is no "We,"

There is no "Them,"

There is only You

and Me

and all of Us.

And then the Dance begins. (p. 120)

THE MILLWRIGHT DIED

My father is ninety-six years old. He is the founder of Herman Miller, and much of the value system and impounded energy of the company, a legacy still drawn on today, is a part of his contribution. In the furniture industry of the 1920's the machines of most factories were not run by electric motors, but by pulleys from a central drive shaft. The central drive shaft was run by the steam engine. The steam engine got its steam from the boiler. The boiler, in our case, got its fuel from the sawdust and other waste coming out of the machine room—a beautiful cycle.

The millwright was the person who oversaw that cycle and on whom the entire activity of the operation depended. He was a key person.

One day the millwright died.

My father, being a young manager at the time, did not particularly know what he should do when a key person died, but thought he ought to go visit the family. He went to the house and was invited to join the family in the living room. There was some awkward conversation—the kind with which many of us are familiar.

The widow asked my father if it would be all right if she read aloud some poetry. Naturally, he agreed. She went into

another room, came back with a bound book, and for many minutes read selected pieces of beautiful poetry. When she finished, my father commented on how beautiful the poetry was and asked who wrote it. She replied that her husband, the millwright, was the poet.

It is now nearly sixty years since the millwright died, and my father and many of us at Herman Miller continue to wonder: Was he a poet who did millwright's work, or was he a millwright who wrote poetry?

Understanding and accepting diversity enables us to see that each of us is needed. It also enables us to begin to think about being abandoned to the strengths of others, of admitting that we cannot *know* or *do* everything.

In our effort to understand corporate life, what is it we should learn from this story? In addition to all of the ratios and goals and parameters and bottom lines, it is fundamental that leaders endorse a concept of persons. This begins with an understanding of the

diversity of people's gifts and talents and skills.

Understanding and accepting diversity enables us to see that each of us is needed. It also enables us to begin to think about being abandoned to the strengths of others, of admitting that we cannot *know* or *do* everything.

The simple act of recognizing diversity in corporate life helps us to connect

the great variety of gifts that people bring to the work and service of the organization. Diversity allows each of us to contribute in a special way, to make our special gift a part of the corporate effort.

Recognizing diversity helps us to understand the need we have for opportunity, equity, and identity in the workplace. Recognizing diversity gives us the chance to provide meaning, fulfillment, and purpose, which are not to be relegated solely to private life any more than are such things as love, beauty, and joy. It also helps us to understand that for many of us there is a fundamental difference between goals and rewards.

In the end, diversity is not only real in our corporate groups but, as with the millwright, it frequently goes unrecognized. Or as another poet, Thomas Gray, put it, talent may go unnoticed and unused.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

When we think about leaders and the variety of gifts people bring to corporations and institutions, we see that the art of leadership lies in polishing and liberating and enabling those gifts.

Reference: DePree, Max. (1989). *Leadership is an Art*. Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., New York, p. 7-10.

Max DePree is chairman of the board of directors of Herman Miller, Inc., the primary innovator in the furniture business for sixty years and regularly included among the top twenty-five firms on Fortune's list of the most admired companies in the United States. He is the author of the bestseller *Leadership Jazz*. Max DePree was recently elected by *Fortune* magazine to the National Business Hall of Fame.

DIVERSITY

What Is Diversity?

Kathy Castania

Introduction

Despite all the talk about *cultural differences* and *diversity*, confusion remains. Behind these words still lie the basic underlying assumptions about the people who make up this nation, how they get along with each other, and how well they are living up to ideals of equality.

The words cultural differences and diversity conjure up different impressions depending on people's own past experiences. Some who feel historically excluded respond to the notion of diversity with the question, "Different from what?" Others question what the fuss is all about and want to quickly turn attention to similarities—with the good intention of easing interpersonal tension and strain. And some people have attended a workshop, talked to a friend, or read an article that made them think about differences in a new way.

The dynamics of these differences and how we have been taught to perceive them are what we will explore in this series of fact sheets to bring clarity to a complex subject. This clarity will allow us to work to eliminate discrimination from our personal and professional lives, learn to be in more authentic relationships with members of other groups, and ensure that we are inclusive, rather than exclusive, in all that we do. The first two fact sheets will explore some of the dimensions of diversity and later ones will discuss specific oppressions.

This fact sheet begins by acknowledging that most people think diversity means celebrating different international identities. But diversity also encompasses all the differences

among groups in the United States. Then it explains how all people have both individual and group identities which affect their perceptions and how they are treated. Following that is a discussion of how group prejudice combined with institutional power leads to social oppression.

Next is an explanation of how individuals take on the imposed roles of their group identities and how some people have tried to reject those roles—dominant groups taking on ally roles and excluded groups becoming empowered. Then the fact sheet describes the elements of oppression and how people can learn to overcome them, with the ultimate goal of all groups sharing power.

International Diversity

The idea of cultural differences has been connected primarily to ethnic cultures outside the United States and has focused on examining the values and belief systems of cultural groups from many countries. Experiences in other cultures are important because they can heighten people's awareness of differences and give them the experience of being outsiders in a group of people who look, behave, and think differently than they do. Some people in the United States have experiences with international cultural diversity when they travel to other countries to study or visit or when they have extensive interactions with newly arrived immigrant groups. But these experiences, if limited, can lead to the "tourist approach" to diversity, only examining different cultures from their most evident manifestations: food, celebrations, dance, etc. People can get the impres-

sion that everything that is different is also "exotic," apart from the norm.

Many white people in the United States were reared with television and film images of people in other countries, particularly Africa, that were shaped and framed from the white perspective only. Africans, in stories like *Tarzan*, were shown in inferior roles to white people. This approach negates genuine relationships and knowing the depth and substance of another culture. It can also lead people to avoid learning about differences within the domestic United States. Some people are more willing to go to another country than to bridge the divisions in their own communities.

Domestic Diversity

Domestic cultural diversity has evolved to mean not only differences among ethnic and racial groups within the United States but also differences among groups defined by gender, religion, age, abilities, sexual orientation, education, and class. The focus here is U.S. socialization—what we learned about differences growing up in our society. Although many of us are interested in and would like to know more about people from other countries, there is an urgency for a similar interest in domestic intercultural relations, yet sometimes it feels more uncomfortable and threatening to deal with differences so close to home. Despite this feeling, awareness of our domestic intercultural relations will improve our sensitivity to international cultures and give us a larger identity with which we can more accurately represent the United States.

Every country has a unique history of how minority and majority populations get along—some with similarities to us, but some also very different. Understanding our uniqueness in this regard is an important first step for people in the United States.

Many communities are composed of people who have been a part of this nation for generations and are still not considered part of mainstream U.S. culture. The United States mostly has maintained a system of separation between groups despite ongoing civil rights legislation for equality and integration.

Defining Diversity—Group and Individual Differences

Cooperative Extension gives a working definition of diversity in the document *Pathway to Diversity: a Strategic Plan for the Cooperative Extension System's Emphasis on Diversity*; it states: Diversity is defined as differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and other human differences.

Implicit in this definition is the awareness of our group identities as well as our individual differences. We are unique as individuals, while our group identities determine our historical inclusion or exclusion. We often see ourselves only as individuals, even though historically we have been treated based on our group identities.

For example, for a long time in schools, women have been guided into certain occupations that have been considered more acceptable for them, and men have been encouraged to feel and show some emotions and avoid others despite their individual differences and attributes.

When learning about racial and ethnic differences, we have been taught the common misconception that once we learn about each other's groups, our future relations will be harmonious. This may be true to some degree between individuals, but societal divisions based on our group identities have been maintained through legal, educational, religious, and other institutions. Therefore, in thinking about diversity, we also consider the historical power imbalance among groups, allowing us to move toward a view of diversity that values equality.

Perceptions and Attitudes

One common myth is that by talking about and examining our differences, we are encouraging divisions. Most people in excluded groups are aware that divisions have always existed and do not believe that talking about divisiveness encourages it but instead removes the veil and allows change to begin.

In my workshops, for example, participants are asked to discuss the treatment they get in their daily lives based on color differences. White people examine the privileges they are afforded in the society, and people of color look at their lack of privileges. Inevitably, people of color come up with long lists of privileges that they didn't get, while white people can only name a few that they got. Both groups operate in the same society but get and perceive different treatment.

So when we discuss differences, we need to consider not only how we are different but also how we are treated because of our differences. Clearly, differences themselves are not the only issue; the value we place on differences presents more challenges. These value judgments have consciously and unconsciously helped shaped our deep-seated attitudes and beliefs about others. Working on diversity issues involves attitudinal change as well as organizational change.

Group Prejudice + Institutional Power = Social Oppression

Because of a long history of separation of groups and domination by one, we now have institutionalized forms of exclusion. In their article "Social Oppression: an Operational Definition," Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson contend that ours is a system of domination with many interlocking parts that are mutually reinforcing. Discriminatory individual behavior is a part of this system as is a common ideology that asserts one group's superiority over another. For example, when current individual acts of racism are eliminated, then public policies intended to right the wrongs of the past can be dropped.

In one community, for example, there has been an effort to get jobs in school districts for more people of color. Superintendents were encouraged to assure equal access to employment by distributing job postings more widely in the community of color. In the past, jobs that became available were

quickly known to the people working within the system, who were predominately white and tended to socialize with other white people only. Therefore, the job openings inadvertently were known about faster and easier in the white community. There was no intended racism, but this example shows that a form of historic racism in modern institutions continues to exist. To change these systemic and institutional forms of racism, temporary public policies to bring these subtleties to light are needed as well as an approach to help individuals become aware of the daily harmful effects of their unconscious attitudes and actions.

Group Identities and Prescribed Roles

All of us have learned to play roles that perpetuate the power imbalance. These roles seem natural and normal to us because we were born into them and they were taught and reinforced through our families, schools, and other institutions. People in dominant groups (such as men, able-bodied, white, native-English speakers, adults, Christian, wealthy) assumed roles of superiority.

Much of our learning came in subtle forms and without language, so we often learned from nonverbal communication as well as media images. The lack of positive models left us without guidance about how to think and act toward others and how to think about ourselves.

Lillian Smith in *Killers of the Dream* writes, "This process of learning was as different for each child as were his (sic) parents' vocabulary and emotional needs. We cannot wisely forget this. And we learned far more from acts than words, more from a raised eyebrow, a joke, a shocked voice, a withdrawing movement of the body, a long silence, than from long sentences."

For example, white people were taught the hierarchy by witnessing acts of racism and negative images of people of color in the media. People who attended schools or lived in neighborhoods with no people of color may have felt it was normal to be separated from people who looked different from them. They assumed that the distorted view of history based only on the white perceptions and deeds was true, and this reinforced their learned assumptions about racial inferiority.

Many people deny this conditioning and its power and assume that because they also heard words of brotherhood and equality that they now only act from that perspective.

White people caught up in these contradictions often act from unconscious superiority. A white teacher may have lower expectations of the students of color and offer help to their families instead of looking for what they could teach him or her. The teacher may feel unconsciously that if only she or he could teach the students to be more white and/or middle class then they would be successful and the pain of their lives would stop. With the well-intentioned desire to see the injustice end, the teacher falls into the colorblind trap of denying differences to avoid dealing with the historic devaluing messages that he or she carries.

Most people have fallen into this trap at some time, even some people of color who want the devaluing to end and feel that a shortcut is to pretend that the differences don't exist, thus denying all the good things that cultural differences bring to us as individuals and a society. What we all want is for each of us not to receive mistreatment based on the lower status we have been given in the hierarchy, which is different from just acknowledging our group's uniqueness.

The following assumptions help us understand ourselves and how we learned our roles as members of groups:

- All people are born with an enormous capacity to be powerful, loving, caring, cooperative, creative, curious, and intelligent.
- We have learned the "isms" (all the forms of social oppression). We can't be blamed for having learned them because we got the information when we were young people.
- As adults we now have responsibility to change.
- The "isms" hurt all of us—the oppressor as well as the oppressed.
- We all have the experience of being in both dominant and excluded groups, so we have knowledge about both sides.
- We are taught not to see the ways we are in roles, so our behavior appears "normal" and "natural."
- We may learn to respond to differences with guilt and pity. Guilt leads to inaction, and pity doesn't allow us to see the strengths in other identities.

Changing from Agent to Ally

In our dominant roles, we can choose to act on the misinformation that we received and be an *agent* of the continued perpetuation of the system of inequality or we can be an *ally* and work to change the way we think and act. The process of moving from *agent* to *ally* is long. It requires commitment and conscious behavior. It means making mistakes and continuing to act in alliance with people in target groups.

The first meeting of a racial equality group provides an example. In attendance was a quiet and wise African American woman. When it was her time to talk, the white people there expected praise for helping to form such a group in her community. Instead, she looked at them with all the years of struggle and survival in her eyes and said, "Where have you been all these years?" Acting in an agent role, the white people would have felt guilty and ashamed, feeling that they should give up on what seemed like a hopeless endeavor, wallowing in their sense of powerlessness to make change. As emerging allies, though, they listened intently and without defense to her stories of exclusion and mistreatment. This deepened their level of commitment to overcome their fears and make changes in their community.

There have always been people who have acted to some degree outside of their agent role—abolitionists, white students involved in civil rights struggles, people who were part of the Underground Railroad, white people working with other white people to eliminate racism, men who supported and encouraged women in education, wealthy people who have financially supported publications by working class and poor people, to name a few. To become allies, people need to overcome their fears of rejection by members of their own group and their learned powerlessness in their excluded identities.

Changing from Victim to Empowered

In our excluded identities such as women, differently abled, African American, Asian, Latino(a), Native American, native speakers of other languages, poor, or working class, we assumed roles of inferiority. The degree to which we assumed inferior roles depends on our individual experiences. For example,

a working class, Italian woman might find it difficult to sort out which identity assumed the messages of inferiority. She could have internalized stereotypes about all her groups and the ability of people in them to think well and to take on positions of leadership.

When people act on their internalized oppression and believe they are not capable of achieving certain goals, they are choosing to act as victims instead of empowered. This journey from the role of victim to empowered is a long process, just as is the journey from agent to ally. It requires knowing our true nature outside the societal limitations placed on us. Much of our behaviors that limit our aspirations and the aspirations of other members of our group are *victim* behaviors often born out of our need to survive.

Teaching each other to stay in our "places" and be submissive has been necessary for many groups to protect themselves from battering or lynching. As empowered people, we see the difference between learned survival behaviors and behaviors that help us to thrive and grow. Being powerful in this way does not mean having power over others; although, because of its newness, this power may appear threatening to members of dominant groups who are acting as *agents* and who expect *victim* behaviors such as submission, passivity, and aggression.

An example from a Puerto Rican woman illustrates this journey. As a young girl she internalized symbols of beauty from the dominant culture: hairless women with small features and light skin, hair, and eyes. She felt invisible in the mainstream view of beauty with her hairy face and dark eyes and hair. As a teenager, she withdrew and developed behaviors that hid the hair on her face, ones that reflected low self-esteem and helped her assimilate. Through encounters in her twenties with both Puerto Rican and white people who challenged the negative notions she had adopted and who reflected to her a broader definition of beauty, she began to reclaim her own personal regard. She became more confident and readopted the symbols of her culture. She tells a heartfelt story about how at this empowered stage she encountered a white man who had been socialized to have a very narrow definition of beauty. At a party he explained that he was in an organization

that raised money for people in need of help. He offered to help her get money to have the hair removed from her face so that she could be beautiful. She hypothesizes that as a *victim* she might have slunk away with all the restimulated hurt from earlier experiences, or she might have released the stored anger she felt from previous insults. Instead, she thanked him for his offer and informed him that she was already beautiful and didn't need help. He stood stunned at first and then re-adjusted his lens to see her beauty.

Elements of Oppression

In our workshops on diversity and power with a variety of groups, some universal elements of oppression have been identified. Some of these are listed here:

- People in dominant groups
 - are given inaccurate information about people in the excluded groups.
 - discount people from excluded groups because of a lack of expectation and belief in their abilities.
 - can make change by working to eliminate prejudice among people in their own group.
 - can work more effectively on the oppressions of others when working on understanding our own oppression, i.e., as women, young people, working class, etc.
 - learn to mistreat others when young and feel powerless to change the system; therefore, adultism is important in instilling all other oppressions. (Adultism is the institutional power used by adults over young people, including anything from physical abuse to ongoing systemic disrespect for young people's thinking.)
 - can change the dominator system by changing their *agent* role to an *ally* role.
- People in excluded groups
- often take out their anger and powerless feeling on each other, within their groups, and between excluded groups.

Kathy Castania is a senior extension associate in the Cornell Migrant Program based in the Department of Human Development, New York State College of Human Ecology, Cornell University. She is a four-year member of the Personnel and Organizational Development Committee's National Subcommittee on Extension Diversity.

- feel that the closer they become to the dominant group, the safer they are.
- need to know how people in dominant groups think and act in order to survive.
- are hurt by subtle, covert forms of prejudice such as invisibility and invalidation just as they are by more overt behaviors.
- internalize misinformation about their own group and can use it to oppress members of the same group.
- can change the dominator system by changing their *victim* role to an *empowered* role.

Shared Power

The field of empowerment addresses not only paths to reclaiming individual power, but also ways institutions can empower all people. One aspect of this work is aimed at transforming our institutions into models for shared power—moving from “power-over” dominator models (aggressive) to “power-with” partnership models (assertive) which value individual and group differences, teamwork, and the development of all human potential. *Pathways to Diversity* defines pluralism as an organizational culture that incorporates mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork, and productivity among people who are diverse in human differences. This vision challenges us to build interpersonal relationships and institutions that are not structured on domination and subordination.

Sonia Nieto, a leader in the multicultural education field, suggests that it is time to go beyond tolerance and embrace acceptance, respect differences, and move toward genuine solidarity—which would lead to constructive conflict and critique of all our cultures. Elimination of destructive conflict among groups will allow the talents, creativity, and power of each individual to be realized, ultimately strengthening all of society.

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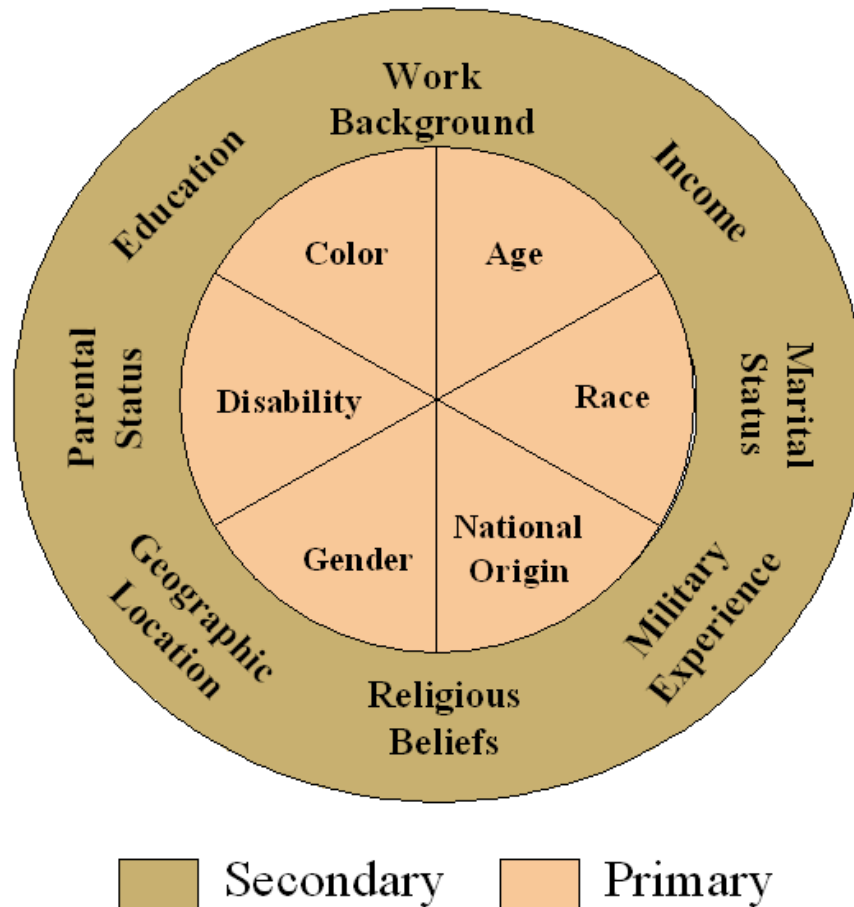
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Dimensions of Diversity



Every person is in many respects...

...like other people,

...like some other people,

...like no other people.

Source: Kluckhahn & Murry, (1948), *Personality in Nature, Culture and Society*.

KEY CONCEPTS AND BEHAVIOR PATTERNS IN DOMINANT & SUBORDINATED GROUPS*

DOMINANT GROUP MEMBERS

- See themselves as individuals
- See their behavior as normal
- See subordinated groups as substandard
- See subordinated members as a part of a group or carries negative judgements about them (*Projection*)
- See own group as superior or sees a “good one” as an exception to the subordinated group’s norm
- See incidents of discrimination as individual actions of other people that have nothing to do with them (*Splitting*)
- Subtly require other dominant members not to get too close to subordinated members (*Discretionary Power*)
- Encourages subordinates to develop behaviors pleasing to dominants
- Focuses on **one’s intent** rather than outcome

SUBORDINATED GROUP MEMBERS

- Are aware of their “groupness”
- See themselves as “outsider” or different from norm
- Internalize dominant group’s belief of their lack of worth (*Internalized Oppression*)
- Often know more about the dominant group’s than about self (*Survival*)
- Sometimes imitate dominant members and/or act destructively toward other subordinated group members
- See patterns of behavior quickly because repeated treatment happens over and over again (*Collective Impact*)
- Do not give direct and honest reaction to negative treatment, reactions are often expressed in indirect or covert ways (*Collusion*)
- Develop characteristics in an effort to please dominant group members
- **Focuses on the outcome** of behaviors

***These behaviors are linked...once evoked, Power is the issue.**

DYNAMICS OF THE DOMINATOR MODEL

- The Dominator Model dynamics have shaped every institution of our society.
- Institutions ask us as individuals to play the role of "agents" and "victims" of oppression.
- We are affected personally, institutionally and within the society. It confuses, isolates and divides us.
- Adultism is a key oppression because it is through being hurt as children that we learn to oppress others.
- To be an oppressor we need to have first experienced being oppressed. Then given the two choices, we are forced to pick the oppressor end of the oppression, because everyone hates to be the victim.
- We are taught to continually measure ourselves against others to determine our self-worth.
- Each oppression has features in common with all other oppressions (i.e. lack of respect).
- Each oppression is also unique and needs to be understood in its uniqueness.
- We are all on both sides of this chart - oppressor and oppressed.
- We are experts about how this works - we all know it and we are taught not to see it.
- People in excluded groups often take out their anger on each other, within their groups and between excluded groups -horizontal oppression.
- For survival people in excluded group learn to operate in the culture of the dominant group; people in dominant groups are often given inaccurate information about people in the excluded groups.
- One of the outcomes of oppression is mistrust and an inability to communicate with people who are different than us.
- The oppressed often take care of their oppressors by not showing their true feelings.
- We are so accustomed to power-over, so seeped in its language and its implicit threats, that we often become aware of its functioning only when we see its extreme manifestations (i.e. mistreatment by police, migrant farmworker communities, domestic violence victims etc.)

*Prepared by: Kathy Castania and Betty Garcia Mathewson
Cornell Migrant Program, P.O. Box 181, Alton, NY 14413*

DYNAMICS OF THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

- Initiate interactions which encourage and support the personal power of all people. On an interpersonal level the dynamic is "power with."
- Difference is neither judged nor measured but acknowledged and considered when solving problems, creating programs, managing people, teaching students, etc.
- Equivalent outcome is the goal, and different treatment based on individual and group differences may be necessary (i.e. language difference, communication with parents, literacy levels, building skills, etc.)
- Individual and institutional power is assertive and empowered.
- When problem solving only win-win thinking and strategies are employed.
- Negotiating the common ground becomes the operating process for collective action.
- Total society stresses opportunities for cooperation over competition.
- Respect and dignity are key values.
- Power is dependent on personal responsibility, and on our own creativity and daring.
- Major time investment up front results in a quicker implementation process.
- Consider different roles and responsibilities.
- This requires dedication and commitment.

*Prepared by: Kathy Castania and Betty Garcia Mathewson
Cornell Migrant Program, P.O. Box 181, Alton, NY 14413*

Hoopes Intercultural Learning Process

David S. Hoopes (1979) as adapted by John Leppo (1987)

Ethnocentrism		A human survival response that tells us our own culture is best. Individuals at this stage may exhibit intolerance and outright hostility or aggression towards other cultures. Individuals who do not move beyond this stage tend to feel their culture is superior and impose it on others. "isms"
TRANSITION STAGES	Awareness	A first step out of Ethnocentrism, this stage involves the acknowledgement that other cultures exist and the awareness that they have a culture. The individual at this stage becomes aware that differences are culturally based and that they are part of a given people's ways of thinking & acting.
	Understanding	This stage involves the acquiring of knowledge and information about other cultures on a rational, cognitive level. The individual begins to piece together the "puzzle" of the other culture from pieces of information about values, customs, etc. Occurs in a detached & separate way.
Acceptance/Respect (tolerance)		Individuals at this stage accept the validity of other cultures without comparing or judging them against one's own culture. A change in attitude of "It's OK for them" occurs, a relativistic approach. A "live and let live" attitude results and the value of other cultures is for others, not me.
TRANSITION STAGES	Appreciating/ Valuing	At this stage, one begins to understand that cultures have strengths and weaknesses; such an understanding leads to appreciation and valuing of specific aspects of other cultures. A change occurs from objectivity to subjectively considering cultural aspects in terms of one's own identity & values.
	Selective Adoption	The individual at this stage tries and adopts new attitudes and behaviors from other cultures which are believed to be useful and desirable to emulate. Aspects of another culture which have value & worth for me personally are integrated into my way of thinking, feeling, or acting.
Multiculturalism		An ideal state and an ongoing PROCESS where a person is able to feel comfortable in and communicate effectively with people from many cultures and in many situations. Identities, self concepts, outlooks, and value formation transcends cultural considerations. Very open to new experiences.

H es, David S. "Intercultural Communication Concepts and the Psychology of Intercultural Experience" in *Multicultural Education: A Cross Cultural Training Approach*. M.D. Pysch (ed.) LaGrange Park, IL: Intercultural Network Inc., 1979.

Attitudes Towards Differences: The Riddle Scale

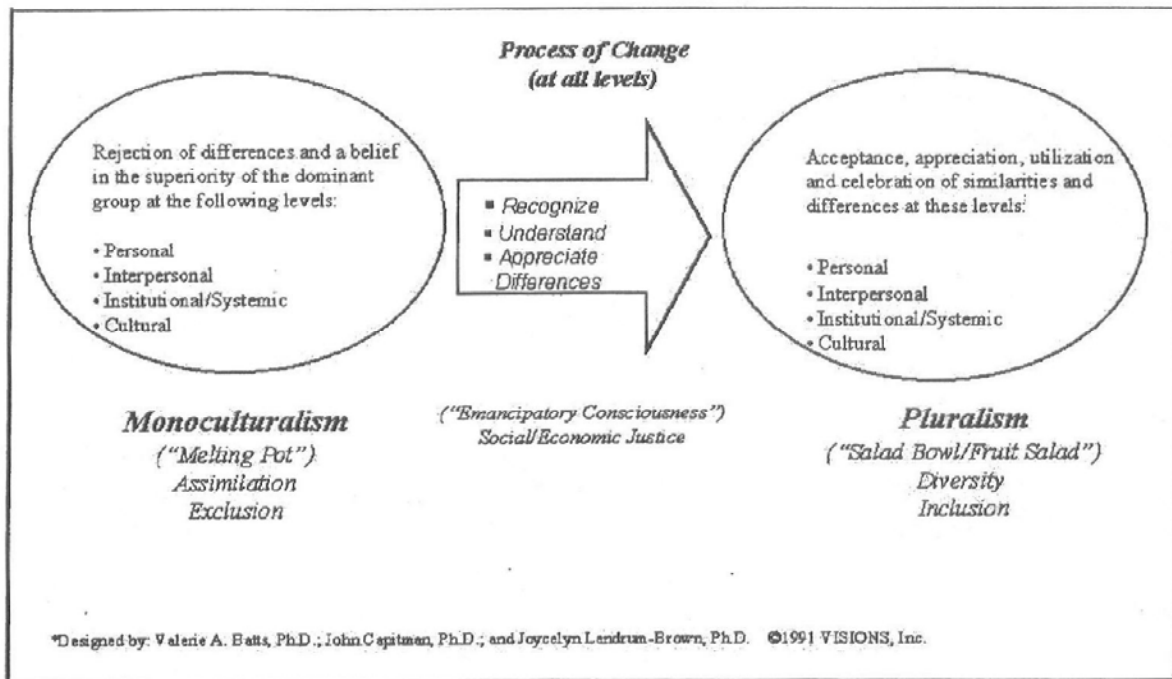
Negative Levels of Attitudes	Repulsion	People who are different are strange, sick, crazy, and aversive. Anything which will change them to be more normal or a part of the mainstream is justifiable.
	Pity	People who are different are somehow born that way and that is pitiful. Being different is definitely immature and less preferred. To help those poor individuals, one should reinforce normal behaviors.
	Tolerance	Being different is just a phase of development that people go through and most people "grow out of." Thus they should be protected and tolerated as one does a child who is still learning.
	Acceptance	Implies that one needs to make accommodations for another's differences and does not acknowledge that another's identity may be of the same value as their own.
Positive Levels of Attitudes	Support	Works to safeguard the rights of those who are different. Such people may be uncomfortable themselves but they are aware of the climate and the irrational unfairness in our society.
	Admiration	Acknowledges that being different in our society takes strength. Such people are willing to truly look at themselves and work on their own personal biases.
	Appreciation	Values the diversity of the people and is willing to confront insensitive attitudes.
	Nurturance	Assumes the differences in people are indispensable in society. They view differences with genuine affection and delight and are willing to be advocates of those differences.

ADAPTED from Dr. Dorothy Riddle's Scale of Homophobia for the following session: "Appreciation of Differences," presented by J. Ann Hower (Michigan State University), Marian Banks (University of California at Santa Barbara), and Sheari Crahen (California at Fresno). ACPA/NASPA Celebration, Chicago 1987.

FIGURE 1

VISIONS, Inc.
Assumptions and Definitions

MULTICULTURAL PROCESS OF CHANGE



Several social activists in recent history have described how this multicultural reconciliation process plays out in oppressed/oppressor contexts. Diane J. Goodman in, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups* refers to the dynamic as the “intertwined fate of the oppressor and the oppressed.”¹ She quotes from the work and experience of several critical leaders in this field:

According to Paulo Freire (1970), humanization is the vocation of human beings: ‘As oppressors dehumanize others and violate their (the oppressed’s) rights, they themselves also become dehumanized.’ Freire further states, ‘Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it, is a *distortion* of becoming more fully human.’²

Nelson Mandela, in his book, *Long Walk to Freedom*, adds:

I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man’s freedom is a prisoner of hatred, locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else’s freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken away from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.³

THE MASK

By: Maya Angelou

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It shades our cheeks and hides our eyes-
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but oh my God, our cries
To Thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world think otherwise,
We wear the mask!

When I think about myself
I almost laugh myself to death.
My life has been one great big joke
A dance that's walked, a song was spoke.
I laugh so hard I almost choke
When I think about myself.

Seventy years in these folks' world
The child I works for calls me 'girl.'
I say, "Yes ma'am," for workin' sake
I'm too proud to bend and too poor to break.
So I laugh until my stomach ache
When I think about myself.

My folks can make me split my side
I laugh so hard I nearly died
That tales they tell sound just like lyin'
They grow the fruit but eat the rind.
I laugh and then I start to cryin'
When I think about myself
And my folks and the little children.

My fathers sit on benches
Their flesh count every plank.
The slants leave dents of darkness
Deep in their withered flank.

And they nod like broken candles
All waxed and burnt profound.
They say, "But sugar, it was our submission
That made your world go 'round.'"

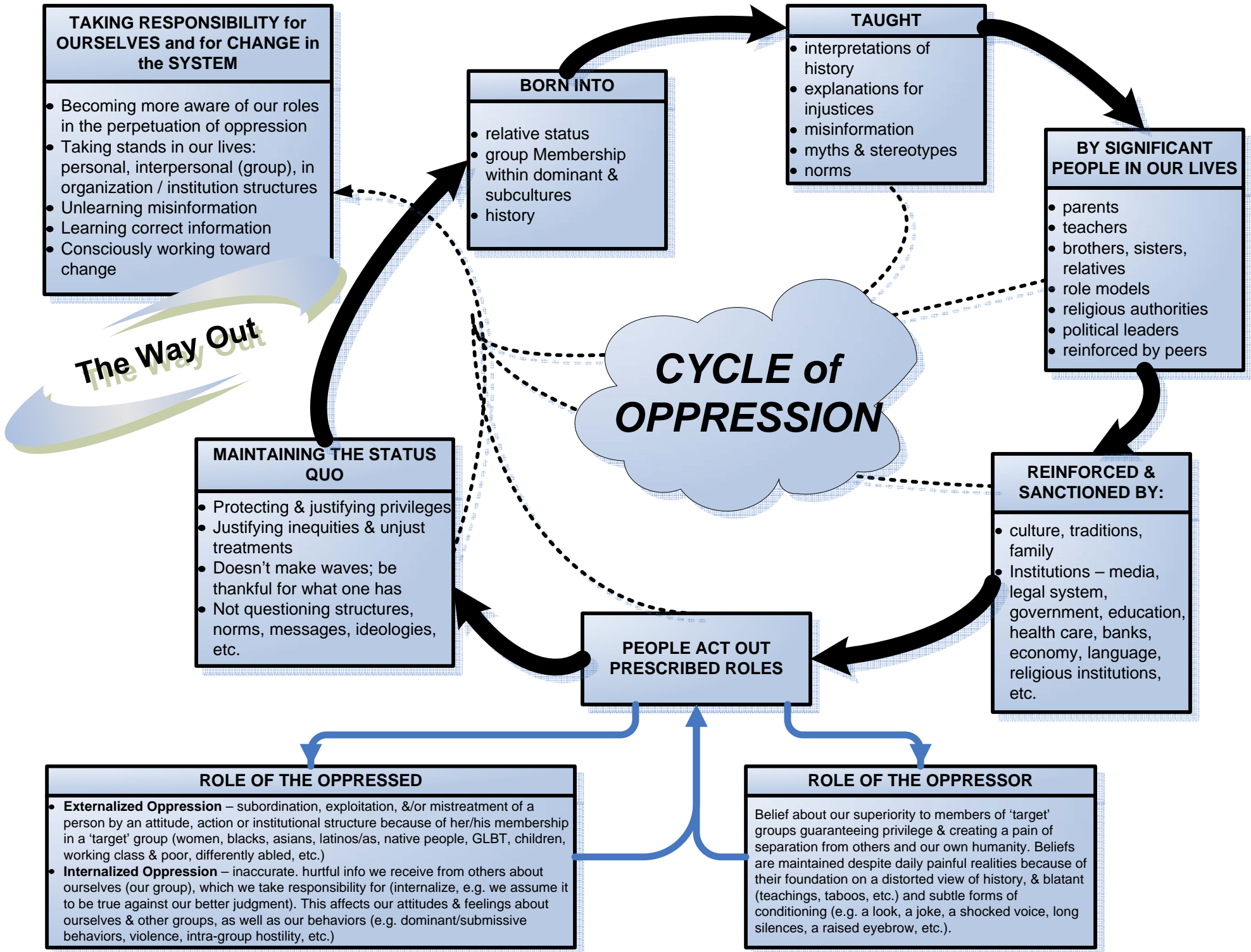
There in those pleated faces
I see the auction block.
The chains and slaveries' coffles,
The whip and lash and stock.

My fathers speak in voices
That shred my fat and sound
They say, "But sugar, it was our submission
And that made your world go 'round.'"

The laugh to shield their crying,
They shuffled through their dreams.
They step and fetch their country
And wrote the blues and screams.

I understand their meaning
It could and did derive,
From living on the ledge of death
They kept my race alive.

By wearing the mask.



Reflections on Oppression, Its Cause and Its Cure

by

Juan C. Moreno
Student Diversity Institute
University of Minnesota

"There are thousands hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the roots." - Thoreau

Among the many evils which confront humanity, oppression clearly holds a privileged position. Our desire and capacity to inflict physical, psychological or spiritual pain on others has to be recognized as a fundamental flaw in human nature. We must find, therefore, new strategies to help alleviate a human condition which has been allowed to persist largely unchallenged—due in no small measure to the fact that historically we have been treating the symptoms and not the cause of this grave character disorder.

Oppression, as defined here, embodies what appears to be an inherent human need to subjugate others in order to affirm our own place in the cosmos. It is as if, in order to build our personal or institutional sense of self-worth, we need to maintain ourselves in a superior position with respect to others.

Among the many manifestations of oppression are the well known "isms" which are at the forefront of human conflict, namely: racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, heterosexism, classism, etc. and other, lesser known relatives, such as: beauty, marital status, intelligence,

body weight, level of education, etc.

No matter what form oppression ultimately takes, the end result is always the same--dehumanization.

One of the most exciting new developments in the struggle against oppression is embedded in the concept of Multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is defined as the celebration and nurturance of differences. Multiculturalism assumes that difference or diversity is to be advocated and relished, that differences in people are to be viewed as indispensable to every society. But, Multiculturalism does not come naturally, unfortunately, ethnocentrism--the tendency to view difference with fear, repulsion, or pity--seems to be a more typical human tendency.

In a country as heterogeneous as the United States, the concept of Multiculturalism takes on a further dimension of urgency as we approach the 21st century. Given the predictable pressure of ethnic demographic change and the increasing global character of all enterprises, it is essential that we develop educational paradigms that will help prepare our population for the cross-cultural challenges that we will inevitably face, both domestically and internationally.

Since one of the loftiest purposes of the university in the "civilized" world is to create a home which challenges, inspires, liberates, and ultimately transforms the hearts, minds and actions of individuals from the prejudices which obscure the search for truth, it is appropriate that the university should be the place where Multiculturalism is allowed to flourish.

This, however, has not always been the case, considering that many students enter the university but, unfortunately, that which is truly "universal" about the "university" never seems to enter in them.

One model used experimentally within the Student Diversity Institute at the University of Minnesota, may shed some light on the future role of Multiculturalism in Higher Education. The philosophy behind this model has been deeply rooted in some basic, tried and time-tested principles and practices which can best be described as follows:

1. Human beings must come to a deeper realization that all of us, without exception, are active participants in the dynamics of oppression both as victims and as villains. An awareness of how a given society assigns privilege or prejudice to various forms of human difference and experience will, in all likelihood, foster a greater appreciation for the various roles we play individually and collectively in the maintenance of oppression. Furthermore, this process may also permit us to see ourselves as contributing to the solution or to the problem by revealing to us how the things we do and fail to do either destroy or maintain the systems that perpetuate human oppression and prevent us from embracing all of humanity. (We have drawn here from the writings of Nancy Schlossberg and others on Mattering and Marginality.)

2. The vast majority of the population of the United States has undergone a generational loss of culture caused primarily by a historical national tendency toward assimilation. It is therefore vitally important, for most of us, to finally come to terms with that gradual but significant loss in our lives--namely the loss of previous cultural roots, languages and traditions. Only then, will we be able to fully acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate the cultural traditions of others. (We are indebted here to the work of Kubler-Ross and others on death and dying.)

3. The United States, as a nation, possesses a unique culture which clearly sets it apart within the neighborhood of nations. The discovery of a common set of values shared by the majority of our population, can reveal to us the very essence of what makes us distinctively American. Integral to this discovery are elements of a rich variety of subcultures which make up the mosaic called American society. (We are indebted here to the literature on cross-cultural communication and anthropology.)

4. Given the nature and complexity of cultures and subcultures in

our society and in our world, it would be impossible for any of us ever to be able to transcend the limitations of our own culture and truly understand others were it not for the intuitive dimension of our being which permits us, in reality, to "see" the "unseen". It is therefore imperative that, in the development of universal communicators, we devote time to the discovery of right-brain function and holistic decision-making. We must be prepared not only to transcend the geographic boundaries of hemispheres, but also the hemispheric boundaries of our own mind. (The work of William Howell has been particularly valuable in our conceptualization of this area.)

5. Finally, human oppression cannot be alleviated simply by providing individuals with the opportunity to attend a series of events, anymore than addictions can be healed merely by showing a movie. Unlearning oppression, in its most basic elements of thoughts, feelings and actions, is a personal journey and a developmental process which should accompany us for a lifetime. In this regard, we have adopted dimensions of the "Twelve-step method" developed to deal with addictions.

In conclusion, it is our conviction that individuals who are willing to embark on the lifelong journey toward Multiculturalism are better able to shed behaviors that fuel oppression by moving away from ethnocentrism and toward universality. Ultimately, it may also offer us the opportunity to be transformed into culturally literate persons who can function effectively in the "world house".

DOC\JUAN\REFLOPPR.PAP

Victims of Prejudice

Victims	Feelings Toward and Why	Difficulties Faced by Them
Ethnic Groups		
The Poor		
The Disabled		
Homosexuals		
The Unattractive		
The Uneducated		
Parolees		

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Item 22: Victims of Prejudice Worksheet. For use August 17. *Life and Work Directions: Resource Kit*, Copyright 1997.
 The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. All rights reserved.

Behaviors of Prejudiced vs. Non-prejudiced People

Exclusion Behaviors- behaviors typically used by prejudiced people to exclude people who are different culturally, physically and socially.

- A. **Withdrawing-** the simple but sometimes subtle act of putting physical distance between oneself and the person or persons toward whom one feels negatively.
- B. **Criticizing-** expressing displeasure toward another person or group by verbally attacking the source of displeasure.
- C. **Ignoring-** a behavioral act where one does not extend the courtesy of recognizing the presence of another person or group.
- D. **Rejecting-** the act of expressing disapproval of a person or group. Ideas, beliefs, and everything the group symbolizes are rejected. This can be accomplished with a frown, a glare, or an expression of judgment.
- E. **Withholding-** a subtle type of rejection and exclusion behavior. It may manifest itself in the form of withholding rights, privileges, opportunity, praise, and maybe even love.

Inclusion Behaviors- behaviors typically used by people who are open to people who have physical, cultural, social, and religious different from their own.

- A. **Identifying-** behavior in which a person finds common experiences with another person regardless of ethnic differences. Identifying is essentially selecting and emphasizing what we have in common with another person.
- B. **Approving-** behavior in which a person actively seeks out ways to give approval by searching for bits of behavior or personal characteristics he/she likes about someone else.
- C. **Listening-** activity in which a person clearly shows concern and interest by actively paying attention to what another person is saying.
- D. **Accepting-** the expression of a non-judging behavior using words and actions.
- E. **Sharing-** a social, psychological, and/or physical experience that brings people closer together. The sharing process may involve one's lunch, one's ideas, one's time, or one's feelings.

Mattering and Marginality

Think of an experience with an individual or group in which you really mattered. What were some of the cues that you received that made you aware of your importance or worth? What messages did you get? What feelings did you have?

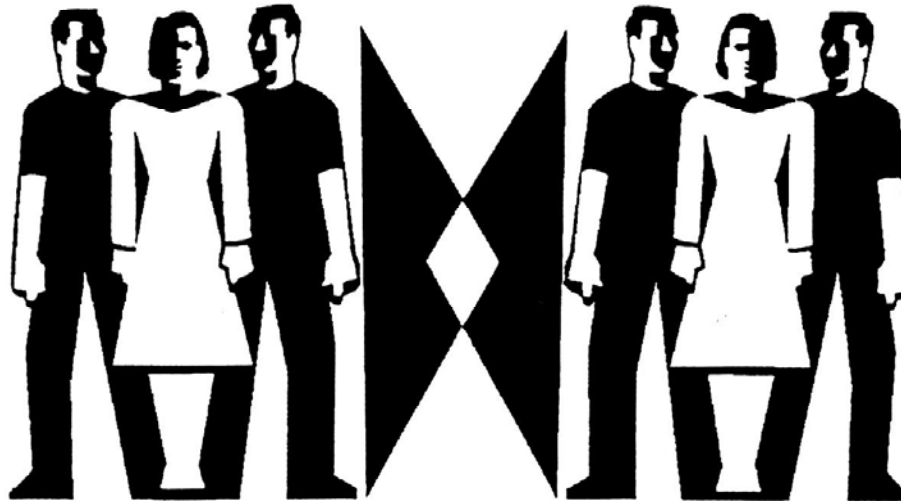
- Situation / Event:
- Cues and messages you received:
- Feelings you had:

Think of an experience with an individual or group in which you didn't matter or were marginal. What were some of the cues that you received that made you aware that you did not matter? What messages did you get? What feelings did you have?

- Situation / Event:
- Cues and messages you received:
- Feelings you had:

Recognizing Negative Gender Stereotypes

At one time, it was thought that women were too emotionally fragile to work in the business community. Old attitudes die hard. Most of us, male and female, carry around a few unconscious negative stereotypes. Which ones have you experienced?



NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES ABOUT WOMEN

Women fall apart easily.

Women are thin-skinned and can't take criticism.

Women are more interested in their families than their jobs.

Women will eventually quit their jobs to take care of their families.

Women are easily swayed.

Women's mood swings interfere with their ability to perform.

Women get what they want by flirting.

NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES ABOUT MEN

Men are cold and insensitive.

Men are tough enough to stand up to criticism.

Men are only interested in sex.

Men are more loyal to their companies.

Men make more rational decisions.

Men are rarely moody and even if they are, it doesn't interfere with their performance.

Men are better negotiators.

Look around. For every person who fits a negative stereotype there's another one who's just the opposite. The first step to overcoming prejudice is to recognize it, both in yourself and in others.

The Diversity Experience Workshops

Identifying Biases

Some examples of Cultural Biases

Please place an X in the box next to a bias you have been exposed to in your home, work or social life.

Positive Biases	Negative Biases	Guerilla Biases
Russians are good chess players	Southerners are slow, dumb, lazy	Jews are wealthy
Black are natural athletes	Arabs are terrorist	Indians live on reservations
Men are natural leaders	Women cannot handle jobs requiring strength	Latinos are hot tempered
Women prefer men who take charge	Germans are militaristic	Women go to pieces in a crisis
Blacks have a natural sense of rhythm	Southerners are bigots and rednecks	Children should be seen not heard
Blacks like watermelons	Women love to gossip	
Gentlemen prefer blondes	Asians cannot be trusted	
Frenchmen are good lovers	Blacks would rather live in their own part of town	
All Blacks like fried chicken	Girls are not good at math	
Girls are better readers than boys	Boys don't cry	
Boys are better at math than girls	Boys don't play with dolls	
	Girls don't take mechanics or technical training	
	Boys don't learn housekeeping or cooking	
	Girls	
	A women can never be president of the U.S.	

SOME EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL BIASES

- Russians are good chess players
- Southerners are slow, dumb, and lazy
- Jews are wealthy
- Arabs are terrorists
- Indians live on reservations
- Blacks are natural athletes
- Women cannot handle jobs requiring strength
- Men are natural leaders
- Latinos are hot tempered
- Women prefer men who take charge
- Blacks have a natural sense of rhythm and like watermelons
- Germans are militaristic
- Gentlemen prefer blondes
- Southerners are bigots and rednecks
- Women love to gossip
- Frenchmen are good lovers
- Asians cannot be trusted
- Women go to pieces in a crisis
- Blacks would rather live in their own part of town
- Girls are not good in math
- Boys don't play with dolls and don't cry
- Girls don't take shop
- Boys don't take Home Economics
- Girls do not fight and climb trees
- It is not good for girls to play with trucks
- Girls are better readers than boys
- Boys are better at math than girls
- A girl can never be president of the U.S.

Factors Which Influence Participation And Non-Participation Of Ethnic Minority Youth In Ohio 4-H Programs

Jamie Cano, Assistant Professor
Joanne Bankston, Graduate Associate
The Ohio State University

The 4-H program has been one of the largest educational efforts in the United States. Sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service through the United States Department of Agriculture, 4-H emphasizes youth development and leadership skills through educational projects and activities. Since program efforts are directed toward youth, it seems that all youth should be served. A closer look at the numbers of ethnic minority youth served by 4-H makes it uncertain whether or not efforts and strategies have been utilized to make 4-H programs accessible to all populations.

Problems related to serving minority youth were addressed in an Evaluation of Economic and Social Consequences of Cooperative Extension Programs published by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (1980). USDA found "the definition of the target population as 'all youth ages 9 to 19' ignores the differential effects of 4-H educational treatments" (p. 125). USDA also asserted that since 4-H had not learned how to relate the most effective dimensions of the 4-H experience to the needs of minorities and the disadvantaged, an unconscious institutional, economic and racial discrimination pattern had developed.

Reaching and serving minority populations will require greater consideration in the future. Emerging demographic trends impact the Cooperative Extension Service and its 4-H component. The organization will face the challenge of becoming responsive to an increasing ethnically diverse population. The Task Force on Diversity sponsored by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) recognized that "the ability of the Cooperative Extension Service to play a pivotal role in meeting educational needs in the future is dependent upon its ability to expand its programs to access both diverse and traditional audiences, and its capacity to reflect diversity at all levels of the system (ECOP, 1990, p.1)."

The increasing number of ethnic minority youth provide a significant pool of potential members for inclusion in Ohio 4-H programs. Minority youth comprise approximately one-third of the youth in America. The number of minority youth has increased at a faster rate than nonminority youth. In 1987, 17.8% of youth in American ages 5 to 17 were white, while 23.6 were African American (United States Bureau of Census, 1989).

Ohio 4-H served over 151,00 youth during 1988 (Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, 1989). Of this total, approximately 12 percent were African American (60 percent of which were located in two Ohio counties), .05 percent were Native Americans, .50 percent were Hispanic American, and .40 percent were Asian Americans (Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, 1989). The demographic data for Ohio indicates that the population is approximately 12 percent African American (18% in the two counties previously referred to as serving 60% of the African American 4-H youth), .50 percent Native American, 1.5 percent Hispanic American, and 2.3 percent Asian American (United States Bureau of Census, 1989). Although the evidence clearly indicates that Ohio 4-H is attempting to serve ethnic minority youth, there is also evidence that Ohio 4-H is not serving these youth proportionately throughout the state.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to explore factors associated with participation and nonparticipation of ethnic minority youth in the Ohio 4-H program. The study also sought to identify the perception of minority parents regarding their childrens' participation and nonparticipation in Ohio 4-H.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

Determine those factors which were perceived by ethnic minority youth as positive influences for participating in Ohio 4-H programs.

Determine those factors which were perceived by ethnic minority youth as barriers to participation in Ohio 4-H programs.

Determine those factors which were perceived by the parents of ethnic minority youth as positive influences for their childrens' participation in Ohio 4-H programs.

Determine those factors which were perceived by the parents of ethnic minority youth as barriers to their childrens' participation in Ohio 4-H programs.

Procedures

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of ethnic minority youth and the parents of the ethnic minority youth in ten purposefully selected counties. The counties selected were those in each of the five Ohio Extension districts which had the highest percentage of ethnic minority youth served and the lowest percentage of ethnic minority youth served. Data from 1988 Extension 4-H enrollment figures (Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, 1989) were utilized to select counties. The following counties (cities) were selected: Hamilton (Cincinnati), Clermont (Batavia), Scioto (Portsmouth), Highland (Hillsboro), Muskingum (Zanesville), Coshocton (Coshocton), Lucas (Toledo), Hancock (Findley), Cuyahoga (Cleveland) and Geauga (Burton).

Two of the selected counties (Clermont and Geauga) were unable to participate because there were no minority youth enrolled in the program at the time the data were collected. Parents and youth in eight counties were interviewed. Youth involved in this study (n = 59) were current and former members of the Ohio 4-H program. Parents of ethnic minority enrollees and former enrollees (members of an Ohio 4-H program) made up the parent population (n = 44). The population of ethnic minority youth and parents in each of the eight participating counties were contacted through lists produced by the respective county extension agents.

Instrumentation

Focus group interviews were conducted in the eight Ohio counties between February and May, 1990. Questions were developed for interviewing youth and parents. The questioning route for both youth and parents focused on influences and barriers to participation involving minority youth in the 4-H program. The questions were reviewed by a panel of experts consisting of teacher educators, state level extension personnel, county extension personnel, and minority leaders to determine appropriate content, structure, and face validity.

Data Collection

The researchers traveled to selected counties to conduct focus group interviews in locations designated by county 4-H agents. Youth and parents had been notified of the meeting through a personal letter and a personal phone call. All parent interviews were conducted by one of the researchers while another researcher interviewed all youth.

Analysis of Data

Focus group interviews were audio taped for the purpose of analysis. The data were transcribed and summarized based on the interview questions.

Results

Focus group sessions were conducted in eight Ohio counties which included both urban and rural areas. While the majority of the youth and parents at most locations were African American, other ethnic minorities were represented including Hispanic Americans, Phillipino Americans and Asian Americans. Both male and female youth participated in the sessions. The majority of adult participants were female, however, several males participated in some sessions.

A summary of focus group findings indicated several themes, issues and commonalities repeatedly discussed by both youth and parents at many of the sessions. The interview questions focused on the following issues; knowledge and perception of the 4-H program; factors that influenced youth to join; factors that encourage youth to remain in the program; projects and events that youth enjoy most; factors that youth and parents particularly dislike; instances of discrimination; and suggestions for advertising 4-H.

Youth Findings

In general, minority youth found 4-H to provide a positive experience. The youth indicated that many of the 4-H activities were meaningful and educational. The awards and recognition program helped to build self-confidence while making youth feel good about themselves. At the same time, projects provided an opportunity for youth to utilize their time constructively which kept them off the street. Youth responses to questions regarding the program included: "Well, I remember joining 4-H because I liked the things that they would do to help the community." "I think that 4-H not only helps you while you are in school, but later on in life." "I think 4-H offers a place for you to learn and do better in education." "I think 4-H gives you confidence and makes you feel good about yourself." "It keeps us off of the streets."

Youth reported that they were most often influenced to join through a parent; a relative who served as an agent, assistant, or leader; or a friend. "The thing that influenced me to join is my mother. She got a 4-H group started." "I got involved because of my Grandma." "We learned about it because my Aunt is a 4-H person." "The first time I learned about 4-H was when my friend invited me to a meeting to see if I liked it." "I got started by my Auntie Carla. She's the 4-H agent." Moreover they remained in the 4-H program because they enjoyed the projects, activities, and events. Some youth found 4-H to be a place to learn new things, have fun, and at the same time develop leadership skills. Others enjoyed camps, events, and the trips. And one Hispanic young man stated that he wanted to "Prove that a minority could excel in 4-H." When asked what is the number one reason why you stay in 4-H, youth responded: "The achievements." "The projects and activities." "Making new friends." "The thing I like about 4-H is the trips and when you go on trips you can learn about things you haven't learned before." "One thing that 4-H has offered me is leadership skills."

Projects and events most frequently discussed were food projects, sewing and style review, arts and crafts, 4-H speaking contests and demonstrations, and 4-H camp. Youth in one urban area were unusually interested in the speaking contests and demonstrations because of the leadership skills and self-confidence promoted by the events. "There are quite a few things I like about 4-H. One is 4-H camp and 4-H camp weekend." "This year I participated in clothing, speech, and cooking." "I like the arts and crafts." "The other reason besides the speaking skills, it is also a lot more than that when you get into a contest and you win and you get a ribbon or you just get recognized for what you do." Urban youth also expressed a desire to learn more about farming and farm animals which are inaccessible to them. "I have seen two farms since then and that was a big learning experience for us. In one 4-H project, we made a miniature farm and several of the kids studied up on it and that was a good learning experience." While a number of projects and events were discussed, it was evident that minority youth were unaware of all the opportunities available through the 4-H program -- dimensions of the program offering competition for national and international trips and awards.

Youth perceived several factors as barriers to participation. Occasional conflict with other activities was a problem cited. A general concern was noted regarding the inequity of judging activities exhibited through criteria and treatment during events. Urban youth were unable to participate in some activities that required farm animals unavailable to them because of residence. Yet, these activities were perceived as priority activities in judging events by minority youth. One young lady stated: "Another thing is a lot of minorities live in cities and a large part of 4-H are animal projects and things like that, and 4-H doesn't take into consideration that we don't have the farmland and the animals and the materials that we need to raise animals. We may enter into an event and get blown out by other 4-H clubs who have animals and farms and things like that." Some minority youth expressed feelings of isolation experienced at the state fair and other events. They explained that very few minority youth were present at some events and they had limited interaction with whites. "There are not a lot of minority groups. So a lot of times a member will enter into a certain project or event and be the only minority and feel uncomfortable."

Youth felt that more extensive, targeted efforts to advertise 4-H would make more minority kids aware of 4-H. One young man suggested advertising 4-H in conjunction with activities involving music and concerts. "Music is a big thing. If you could get someone to come to some kind of music concert that involved 4-H and stuff, and display things that 4-H'ers have done and share with others how much fun and what you could learn, I mean you could probably get more people involved." Other suggestions included holding meetings in neighborhoods where minority youth live, displaying projects that 4-H'ers have made and displaying posters advertising 4-H in schools and community centers. "Make posters and have more meetings close to where black people live -- like this center right here. Hang them up and have meetings here and learn about it."

Adult Findings

Parents expressed strong interest in the educational opportunities and activities provided through the 4-H program. Parents were pleased with the leadership skills developed by their children through 4-H. In addition, parents perceived that 4-H activities helped their children to develop a sense of responsibility and self-worth while offering opportunities for youth to interact with people of other cultures. Overall, 4-H was viewed as an organization that provided beneficial educational activities that encouraged youth development while assisting them in making constructive use of their time. As a result, 4-H kept youth off the streets and out of trouble. Parents repeatedly expressed benefits derived from the 4-H program. "I think probably the most important thing for me when my kids started was the fact that it was to learn responsibility and to carry through with something once it was started." "What I thought that they could get out of it was the

speaking skills, and to be able to write." "It gives children a feeling of self-worth. It keeps a lot of kids out of trouble.." "My daughter is a result of 4-H. She used to be very shy." "I knew 4-H had quite a few leadership programs. With leadership comes responsibility."

Prior to being approached by an agent or leader, most minority parents had limited knowledge of the 4-H program. Many parents viewed the program as something for rural white kids that involved farm animals. "I first heard about 4-H when I was in high school. They had a Future Farmer Association. What I understood at that point twenty years ago, was that 4-H was for kids who lived in the country, because they raised pigs and rabbits and things like that." "I have known about 4-H for a long time and I grew up on a farm. At that time, all the 4-H I was involved with had to do with farm animals and if you didn't have livestock, you didn't belong. We didn't have livestock, so I didn't belong." "The first time I ever heard about 4-H was in high school, but it never applied to us. It was a white organization so we never thought much about it."

While some parents had heard of the 4-H organization while growing up, most became involved in the program through personal contact. "I heard about it through one of the members at church, Jean. She asked me if I would be a 4-H leader, and I was scared to death. And after she explained some of the things to me, it's been a lot of fun. I've been in it for 10 years." "I first heard of it from one of my neighbors. Eventually I got involved in a community service club working with the children and that gave me the opportunity to get into 4-H with one of the agents here. Carla gave me an overview of what 4-H was about and our primary objective."

Lack of advertising was cited as a barrier to participation. Furthermore, the parents concluded that the advertisements depicting 4-H programs did not generally include minority youth, nor were they written so that urban parents could understand program offerings. "I think most blacks just don't know about 4-H. There is a lack of advertisement." "As far as the publicity, I see the commercial on TV. When you see it, it's the white kids you see in a commercial. They are on animals and black kids feel it has to do with farming, and no one is going to try for animals." "Public or community center workshops is another way to promote, and the material you use should be comics. It should not be complex, that way you can get the kids and the parents."

Parents suggested several methods of advertising 4-H to other minority parents and youth to increase participation. Suggested methods included; having speakers explain 4-H in minority churches; having public or community center workshops for youth and parents in areas where minorities live; advertising on public broadcasting TV stations; advertising on minority radio stations (there are several in Ohio) or on white radio stations that minorities most frequently listen to; promoting 4-H in black newspapers through articles and photos of minority youth participating in events; and having mall shows and booths that demonstrate 4-H activities and events. "The churches are one way. The community leaders there and the ministry are ways to reach minorities." "Most minorities go to church. Have a speaker to make the different churches and explain 4-H." "For minorities, use Black newspapers. Then you would want to touch on Hispanics -- maybe radio stations -- Black, and Hispanic radio stations, etc." "Even the radio stations can promote it, not just the Black stations, but white radio stations can promote it also. Blacks listen to white radio stations too." "I don't know how much free advertising you could get out of it, but if you had something like they do in the malls where each group could have a booth on public speaking or whatever."

Another significant barrier to participation cited by parents was the lack of minority adult role models involved in 4-H (agents, assistants and leaders). These role models helped to involve parents and youth in the program. Following involvement, once parents learned about all of the opportunities provided by 4-H, many were disappointed

that they themselves were unable to participate as youth. "If you really want to know how to get minorities, then you have minorities for yourself to get in these communities and get these children." "I think I would like to see more black involvement. Carla is the only person we have. She's really been involved with 4-H and she has been very helpful. In fact, if it wouldn't have been for Carla, we probably wouldn't have got involved."

Finally, parents cited that participation was further limited by an inability to get enough parents interested and involved. There was a critical concern regarding 4-H enrollees lack of funds for supporting projects and events. This economic factor prohibited full participation. "The only thing I can think of is the lack of participation from the parents. I found that to be involved in everything, not just 4-H." "Some kinds' parents in the urban area don't have the money to buy material." "We are working with a set income for minorities. One year Carla was promoting camp for 4-H which was not bad, just that the set income the people are on. it's impossible to send their kids to camp."

Parents also reported discrepancies in judging at events. Parents at several focus group sessions discussed inconsistencies in judging at the state fair; inequitable treatment by other parents and leaders at the state fair; and lack of interaction between minorities and whites at events. "I've never seen a black kid win at the state fair." "I will take my daughter there and help her get what she wants, but I won't be involved that much anymore, because of some of the inconsistencies in judging and the way people handle things during the fair." "We took some children to the state fair last year for demonstrations, and they were told by a lady in another 4-H group that they weren't going to win before they did the demonstrations."

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

Baaed on themes and commonalities reported in the study, ethnic minority youth and parents found several positive influences for participation. The experiences, activities and opportunities for youth development were cited as positive influences for participation. The Cooperative Extension Service should continue to emphasize the aspects of youth development in its effort to recruit and retain minority youth.

Youth and parents cited the lack of role models as a barrier to participation. The presence of minority agents, assistants, and leaders served as a catalyst for getting youth involved and retaining them in the program. The Cooperative Extension Service should make a conscious effort to recruit minority agents and leaders in an effort to fulfill a void of necessary minority role models for minority youth. The recruitment of minority agents and leaders is especially critical in urban areas where a higher percentage of minority children reside.

Since many minority parents and youth were unaware of the 4-H program, increased advertising through nontraditional methods would assist in better recruitment efforts. Advertising on minority radio stations, in minority newspapers, and perhaps through minority churches would make more youth and parents aware of the program. Advertising should adequately describe the dimensions of the program including the activities, events and projects. Furthermore, advertisements should include minority youth in photos and TV ads. Certainly the most effective advertising tool is the "personal touch" promotion through agents, youth, and leaders already involved in the program.

Since youth in some counties were involved in the EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) designed for limited resource families, the nature of the program may limit the subject matter, projects and potential for experiencing many dimensions of 4-H. The Cooperative Extension Service should make every effort to involve youth beyond the EFNEP program in counties where EFNEP activities are the predominate vehicle for enrolling minority youth.

Youth and parents perceived 4-H as an organization for rural white youth with farm animals since many of the competitive events at the fair involved animals. It is recommended that 4-H review project offerings and provide equal opportunities for nonfarm youth in the high consequence areas (areas involving competitive events and awards) with projects other than those involving animals.

Since the cost of participation (funds for project supplies, refreshments for meetings, camps, and traveling to events) was another factor of concern, methods and potential funding sources should be explored. Perhaps programs could be devised whereby youth could perform community work in exchange for funding for projects and activities.

It should be recognized that in some urban areas, the materials and activities must be adapted and in some instances, new material might be developed to address concerns and social circumstances of urban youth. Perhaps funding provided by the state legislature for urban 4-H assistants can incorporate monetary resources for material and equipment.

Methods of equalization for recognition in judging events should be reviewed. The limited tenure, involvement and resources of some minority youth limit their level of sophistication in competitive events.

Concern was noted by both youth and parents in the lack of equitable treatment and criteria for judging activities. Urban minority youth discussed the inability to participate in some special projects (animal judging) that were geared specifically for rural youth. The Cooperative Extension Service should make a critical analysis of the project judging procedures and guidelines for training judges to sensitize them toward fairness to all. White youth and parents must also become sensitized to the fact that the 4-H program is open to all individuals regardless of race or color. As more minority youth and leaders become involved, this transition may take place.

Certainly the Cooperative Extension Service should become aware of exposing minority youth to all dimensions of 4-H. Informing and encouraging youth to take necessary steps for competition for national and international trips and awards would move toward promoting full participation.

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DIVERSITY

The Evolving Language of Diversity

Kathy Castania

“Language not only expresses ideas and concepts but actually shapes thought.”

Robert B. Moore in *Racism in the English Language*¹

This fact sheet explores the evolving language used to describe and define people as members of groups. We all know that there are still people who intentionally express bias and prejudice when speaking about members of groups; however, we can assume that most people want to use the most respectful terms. Since we have inherited a system that routinely perpetuates prejudicial attitudes and beliefs about groups, we often hear well-intentioned people unconsciously reinforcing those beliefs through their use of words. At a recent workshop that I was facilitating, I heard several participants who saw themselves as enlightened on issues of difference still using terms like “girl” when describing a woman in a support staff position in their agency. At a meeting of change agents working on organizational change, I heard the term “sexual preference” used when referring to a gay man. The more we take responsibility for unlearning misinformation we learned about others, the more our language will reveal this change in attitude.

Although we know that the cycle of oppression is universal, for simplification the discussion and examples in this fact sheet are based only within a U. S. context. In addition, it can be assumed that we all have more to learn about language and that we all will ultimately benefit from the change. In the past, the discussion of diversity in the United States often focused on only one or two identities—mostly gender and race. This left people seeing themselves as either completely dominant

or completely excluded. By looking broader—thus, at multiple identities that include age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and immigrant status—we come to see ourselves in many identities and recognize that all of us have identities that are both dominant and excluded. For example, I am a white heterosexual woman, raised in a working class family with Italian ancestry. In my white, heterosexual dominant identities, I can learn to use language that empowers people of color and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people as they also work to empower me in my ethnic, gender, and class identities.

Because language is evolving, speaking in a respectful way about groups in the United States can be as unnatural as learning to drive a standard shift car with a clutch. At first it feels cumbersome and exhausting in the amount of mental energy it takes to think about each motion needed to prevent the car from jerking and stalling. After years of driving a stick shift, this effort becomes almost invisible. No one was born knowing how to drive and no one was born knowing how to name every group and the process for figuring it out. Therefore, any blame or guilt associated with not knowing needs to be avoided. We learned to speak in the context of a society that has been divided for a very long time. To break divisions and create a more harmonious future, we are being asked to unlearn and relearn all the time. It is work for all of us, but with time, the process will feel as natural as driving a standard shift car: we will feel more at ease trying new terms, asking questions comfortably, and not letting mistakes interfere with our willingness to build relationships across differences.

After years of working on issues of difference, I have learned that one consistent way for facilitating change is to encourage and create safe spaces for the conversations about difference to occur. This requires language and word “tools.” We need to know how to name what is all around us and to do it in ways that will keep everyone involved. Having an understanding of the overall dynamics of a dominant society with a history of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, adultism, etc. allows us to engage each other in what to do about it. Using words that describe groups more accurately is a part of this process. The biggest challenge is how to bring members of dominant groups into the conversation and the solution.² Our tendency is to be “swallowed up in a sea of guilt and blame or rush into denial and angry self defense.”³ Instead, I challenge the reader to stay present and breathe deeply and know that if the people who came before us had this knowledge, they would have used it, and we would have less unlearning to do. What a gift we can give to the next generation.

This fact sheet is not intended to cover the breadth of terms that are in current use and evolving. It instead presents a foundational way of thinking about language with some examples from some group identities. Early in the fact sheet there is an extensive section on race/ethnicity and origin with illustrations that can be applied in a broad sense to the section on other identities that is less extensive. There is ample literature on terminology for each of these groups that goes into greater depth, and I invite the reader to investigate further as your curiosity is sparked by something you read here. It is a good tool for use by those who are

eager to create relationships across differences, are conscious about the importance of the words used, and want a quick introduction into a vast topic.

Don't get too comfortable

All language evolves. Language changes with time to reflect society, and the language of diversity must also evolve. Therefore, the language of diversity is dynamic—it changes as groups who have been excluded learn to reject rejection and act from an empowered place of self-determination. For example, terms to describe people of African descent in the United States have been colored, Negro, black, Afro-American, and African American. Some of these terms reflect this evolutionary process of naming and renaming. The word “black” had been chosen by some members of the community in the '50s and '60s in resistance to the historical negative stereotypes that were associated with other words. It was a word that implied a reclaimed pride in group identity stating, “Black is beautiful.” In the '80s further steps in reclaiming pride brought an understanding that “black” was not a precise term—implying only color or racial differences rather than a cultural and geographic base. Claiming this more accurate identity in the term African American then can be viewed as another step in the path toward full empowerment. The evolution of terms and their use by members of other groups acknowledges this development, the historical injustices of the past, and the forced separation from a land of origin.

One must also be mindful that people of any group do not think or feel the same way about identity words. There is a variety of preferences and opinions about words and the meanings that they hold. For some people of African descent, their association with all things “African” long depicted by Europeans as the “dark continent where savages swung from trees” feels negative and demeaning. Still others prefer the term “black” because its use holds claim to its association with civil rights, desegregation, and resistance. Only by honest association, sincere inquiry, and a willingness to take risks will we be able to transcend the historical oppression imbedded in our language. It is important in this process to acknowledge that the cumbersome changes are not the fault of the group doing the renaming, but instead

the result of centuries of domination with all of its assumptions about the right of some to define others. Recognizing evolution of the language of diversity as natural and the outcome of a divided society leads us to regularly seek new knowledge about members of other groups, be aggressive listeners, act on our good intentions, and be willing to change our language accordingly.

Language of Race, Ethnicity, and Origin

Sonia Nieto in her book *Affirming Diversity* recommends that we base our choice of terms on two major criteria:⁴

1. What do the people in question want to be called?
2. What is the most precise term?

People of Color and White People: The term “people of color” has been created by groups who experience present day and historical racial exclusion and refers to any people who have “other than white” European ancestry: African Americans/Blacks, Hispanics/Latinos(as), Asian Americans, Native Americans/American Indians, Middle Eastern people, and people of “mixed” ancestry (ancestry from any of the named groups plus white European). “People of color” is a generic descriptor often preferred in lieu of the term “minority.”⁵ It is a political term and is thus limited in its ability to define a group completely. It also causes confusion because it is often taken literally in a genetic sense of color (amount of melanin in one's skin). However, this is not the case. For example, people who look white but are members of the groups listed above are still people of color. At the same time, dark-skinned Europeans, like southern Italians or Greeks, are not people of color. Genetic reality has nothing to do with this term. Since we cannot truly categorize people based on race, all designations have been created for political reasons only.

This history of whiteness and its fluidity is very much a history of power and its disposition.⁶ The term “white people” to mean people of European ancestry is a political term and therefore limiting in defining the varied cultural groups that it encompasses. The term “European-American” defines people from Europe through an ethnic identity with a geographic base like the term “African American.” The term “white” first came into usage in the 1600s to

describe English people and then later all Europeans in opposition to black Africans. “In the United States after about 1680, taking the colonies as a whole, a new term of self-identification appeared—white.”⁷ Lately, some people have readopted the term “Caucasian” to mean white people. This term is not equivalent to white and yet has a long history of usage in the United States connected to being designated “white.”⁸ This is an outmoded term and is not recommended.⁹ In the mid-20th century, in the context of a growing eugenics movement in the United States, immigrants from Europe with questionable racial categorization like Celts, Hebrews, Slavs, and Mediterraneans became “Caucasian.” This process of defining groups greatly affects every immigrant group that enters the United States and they are then given their status based on a set of fluid rules. Jacobsen, in *Whiteness of a Different Color*, states that “The European immigrants’ experience was decisively shaped by their entering an arena where Europeaness—that is to say, whiteness—was among the most important possessions one could lay claim to.”¹⁰ “A color line was drawn around Europe rather than within it.”¹¹ Our confusion about race and words to name what we are is understandable with this history. Just look at the emotional response people have to any census or data collecting forms that ask us to identify ourselves. The clumsy language on these forms insults people and their sense of self.

That said, both of these terms, “people of color” and “white people,” have usefulness in that they allow us to acknowledge, speak about, and deal with the outcomes of racial and color divisions of the past and present, while moving toward a more genuine partnership in the future, where political terms don't define us.

We should always remember that we are never only one thing, but instead members of many groups. For example, by claiming my whiteness and my Italian ethnicity, I can both acknowledge the white privileges that I and my ancestors have gotten as well as lay claim to pride in the hard work of my immigrant grandparents that also helped



me to succeed. I have noticed in some white people reluctance to accept the term “white” as a descriptor of our group. This may in part be due to not liking to think about us as belonging to a group at all. White has been shown as the “norm” and everyone else as the “different other.” So naming our group forces us to think of ourselves as one among many groups.¹²

It is always best when speaking about a specific group to refer to the ethnic name of that group. One caution here is to never guess at an ethnic identity or assume a place of birth. For example, it is insulting to ask a Puerto Rican who was born in the United States where they came from. It is also hurtful to make assumptions about a person by guessing their identity and potentially confusing them with a group with which there is a history of conflict; for example, asking a Chinese person if they are Japanese. The preferred way that I have learned to do that after many failed attempts and shocked and angry looks is to ask, “What ethnic group are you a part of?”

Latina(o), Hispanic, Chicano(a): Controversy and debate have surrounded the use of all of these terms, which illustrate how limited they are in accurately describing the culturally varied groups of people of Latin American and Caribbean heritage whose ethnic origin includes 26 countries. Members of this group prefer terms related to their specific national origin (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, etc.).¹³ However, when speaking of the group of people of different Latin American nationalities as a whole, Latino(a) is the preferred self-defining term.¹⁴ In the 1970s the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) created the term “Hispanic.” In the 1980 U.S. Census the term “Hispanic” was chosen by the government to describe people with Spanish surnames of Latin American descent.¹⁵ Hispanic, therefore, is a word created by the United States that does not recognize ethnic differences as well as countries of national origin. In the countries under that generic umbrella are still many combinations of ethnic identities: Spanish, African, and Native. For example, in countries like Puerto Rico, most people are a combination of Spanish, Native/Indigenous, and African; in countries like Mexico and Guatemala, many individuals are purely Native. The Spanish language and a history of Spanish colonialism

are the common denominators for those countries. The political term “Chicano” has been used to describe Mexican Americans in the United States. Length of time in the country—first or second generation—will also make a difference in self-defining terminology. The second generation will often use Mexican American, Colombian American, Cuban American, etc., while the first generation may simply use Mexican, Colombian, Cuban, etc.

Native American/Indian/American Indian/First Nation: All of these terms are in common usage among groups of people who were indigenous to the Americas. In the '60s it was felt that the adoption of the term Native American reflected people's determination to name themselves in opposition to the years of being identified by the term “Indian” which was a misnomer based on the miscalculations of Columbus. Many Native people still embrace the term Indian and/or American Indian. Some people use it because it was never abandoned and others use it in opposition to the term “Native” which is also used by some to mean a citizen of the United States whose ancestors came from Europe. It is often preferred to use the more accurate term of the specific nation or people when referring to this diverse group of indigenous people, i.e., Seneca, Iroquois, Aleut, Inuit, Cree, Cherokee, Navaho, Pueblo, Mayan. Currently, there is a movement among Native people to return to group names that were used prior to the coming of Europeans. These are newly emerging and the best practice is to ask.

Middle Eastern: This group includes people from the countries of Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Western Sahara, and Yemen. Many stereotypical assumptions are made about members of this varied group. One assumption is that all Middle Easterners are Arab—the countries of Iran, Israel, Turkey, and Cyprus are not Arab. Another is that all Arabs are Muslim. In fact, most Muslims live elsewhere—in Asia, Indonesia, Africa, and North America. Again, this term lumps together a tremendous number of diverse cultures, so it is always best to state the specific ethnic identity when addressing people from this area of the world.¹⁶

Asian American/Pacific

Islanders: This group includes people indigenous to Australia, Baluchistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Java, Malaysia, Nepal, New Guinea, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Tibet, Vietnam, and all the islands between the Asian continent and North and South America. The term “oriental” conjures up many negative stereotypes and therefore is rejected by people indigenous to the continent of Asia.¹⁷ As with many other groups, it is best to use the specific ethnic identity when addressing people from this part of the world.

Language of more “isms”

Gender: The English language has many mechanisms that reinforce an assumed male superiority. The generic (he) is the most common. Although it feels cumbersome at first, substituting he/she or they is the most obvious change needed for inclusion. The use of the word “girl” (as in “the girl at the desk will help you”) when talking about grown women is offensive. Try calling your male boss “boy” and see how well it goes over. This identity group has a wide body of literature that explores language and gender issues.

Class: Our assumption of a classless society makes any mention of class differences uncomfortable and clumsy. The most accurate terms to describe groups are simply: poor, working class, middle class, and owning class—never “lower class.”

Sexual Orientation: The word “homosexual” is loaded with stereotypes which feed homophobia, so the preferred terms are “gay” (men or women), “lesbian,” “transgender,” and “bisexual.” Terms like “queer,” “queen,” “dyke,” “fem,” and “butch” are examples of words presently used only inside the group to describe each other. There is a growing body of literature that explores the evolving language preferred by this group.

Abilities: The word “disability” can imply a negative connotation of not having abilities. The reality for people who think, move, speak, and listen differently is that they have a wealth of abilities; therefore, the term “differently abled” is a more accurate terminology. However, “disability” is still the word most commonly used in legal and health fields.

A general rule of thumb is to put the “person” first.

Say: person with a disability; not: victim, suffers from, deformed

Say: person who is differently abled; not: unfortunate, poor

Say: person with cerebral palsy or epilepsy; not: cerebral palsied or epileptic

Say: person with mobility impairment; not: crippled, invalid

Say: uses a wheelchair; not: wheelchair bound, confined to a wheelchair¹⁸

Age: Young people is a word that works to unite all people who are not adult age. It is preferable to “kids,” which seems to have a “less than” notion to it. “Older adults” and “elders” denote dignity and wisdom.

Religion: Only 30 percent of the world’s population is Christian, yet in the United States we often assume everyone is Christian, alienating those of different belief systems. The truth is that the United States is not a Christian country—there are millions of Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Wiccans, Native Spiritualists, and Traditionalists.¹⁹ Yet, in the yellow pages of our local phone book, Islamic and Buddhist places of worship are listed under the category “churches.” That is one small illustration of the way a dominant group defines others through their language. Learning about local faiths, proper addresses for faith leaders, and places of worship creates avenues for good communication. Some terms may be pejorative rather than descriptive in some contexts: *born-again*, *cult*, *evangelical*, *fundamentalist*, *sect*.²⁰ Reference to African, Native American, or Eastern religions as “superstition” or “myths” is disparaging.

Misused terms

American: People of the Caribbean, Central America, and South America question the usage of the term “American” to mean people within the United States, thus ignoring the geographic reality that much of this hemisphere is filled with Americans from the continents of Central and South America and the Caribbean nations. It is still awkward to find a word to mean the people of the United States—U.S.ers has been tried, or simply U.S. people. In some cases it will be difficult to substitute terms, so in this time of transition, “Americans” is still used sparingly and sensitively.

Anglo: This word describes people in the United States who have English heritage and is inaccurate in defining all white people in the United States. This term is often used to contrast English speakers from speakers of other languages and obviously leaves out other European American groups such as Irish, Italians, Germans, and others as well as African Americans.

Ethnic: Everyone has an ethnic culture. Because white Europeans have seen themselves as the “norm,” the term “ethnic” gets attached to only “other” groups

who are seen as more “exotic.” All white people have cultures grounded in the values, beliefs, and mores of Europe. No matter how many cultures people of European descent claim in their ancestry, they still retain an identity that is based in European traditions, celebrations, rituals, survival strategies, dance, and music.

Code words: Many unexamined, stereotypical words that have fallen into common use promote assumptions about a group’s skills, abilities, and attributes. For example, recently I heard people use terms like “culturally deprived,” “economically disadvantaged,” and “underclass.” These words still have a blame-the-victim overtone. Use of these terms reflects the ongoing contradictions that we live with—attempting to appear more sensitive while holding onto unconscious stereotypical assumptions about a group. These “loaded” words conjure up negative connotations and place responsibility for the condition on those being described. Perhaps “economically exploited” is more descriptive. They are hurtful euphemisms

for poor, unemployed people relegated to lives in the ghetto due to historic and present inequality and discrimination.

Terms that don’t work

We’re all American: One of the recent attempts at ethnic/racial harmony is to disavow our ethnic/racial differences and to group everyone living in the United States under the label “American.” This renewed attempt at the melting pot concept is offensive for groups who have never felt included under this term. It is felt to be ingenuous at this time to accept this inclusion without the work of creating the social, economic, and political justice to match it, and thereby ignoring the daily experiences of exclusion.²¹ The basic contradiction is captured in the words of W. E. B. DuBois from the turn of the century, yet is still relevant today:

“One ever feels his two-ness; an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”²²

Non-White: Terms that define a group as “other than the norm” are destructive to the identity of the “non” group. One way for white people to experience this concept of otherness is to think about how it would feel to be identified as non-black.

Minorities: This word has a wider implication than just numbers and connotes a value judgment of “less than.” It is also value-ridden in that it was never used to describe other ethnic minority groups in the United States such as Swedish Americans and Albanian Americans, but only used in reference to racial/ethnic minorities.²³ Finally, if we think in terms of the world’s people (and soon, in terms of the United States), the majority of the people in the world are people of color.

Illegal Alien: This term emphasizes a person’s “otherness” like an invader from outer space versus their humanness. It is more respectful to say “undocumented person or worker.”²⁴

Macho: This is a Spanish language term that is neutral in terms of value or power. But when used in English as an alternative to the word “sexist,” it tends to conjure up negative stereotypes of Latino men, leading to implications that somehow they are more sexist than men of other cultural/racial groups.²⁵

Words or phrases that will probably be met with anger

- The use of “those people” and “you people” when speaking to an individual about their identity group. Those phrases convey otherness, criticism, judgment, and worst of all an assumption that all people of a group think and behave alike.
- The terms “boy” and “girl” used in relation to African American men and women are hurtful and demeaning and have historically been used to devalue, undermine, and imply inferiority.
- Handicapped: a word that originates from “cap in hand” or someone who needs to beg. The term handicap may be used, however, to describe an imposed barrier that restricts a person.
- Gay or homosexual lifestyle: this term perpetuates the stereotype that there is a monolithic heterosexual lifestyle that is appropriate, natural, and normal; and that gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender lifestyles are significantly different from heterosexual ones.
- Sexual preference: used improperly as a synonym for “sexual orientation,” which implies that sexuality is something chosen rather than a crucial aspect of one’s identity.

Language is not neutral—it perpetuates stereotypes:

- Use of “jew” as an adjective
- Speaking of early white settler “victories” and Native people’s “massacres”²⁶
- Gyp (Gypsy) as to cheat or swindle
- Reference to clothing of various groups as “costumes”
- Fag—derived from a “bundle of branches bound together” that were used in the extermination burnings of homosexuals in Nazi Germany
- Whom do we call “freedom fighters” and whom do we call “terrorists”?
- Words such as “savage” or “primitive” when applied to groups are meant to dehumanize and imply a “less-than” status

Note about terminology

In closing, here are some things to keep in mind about terminology:

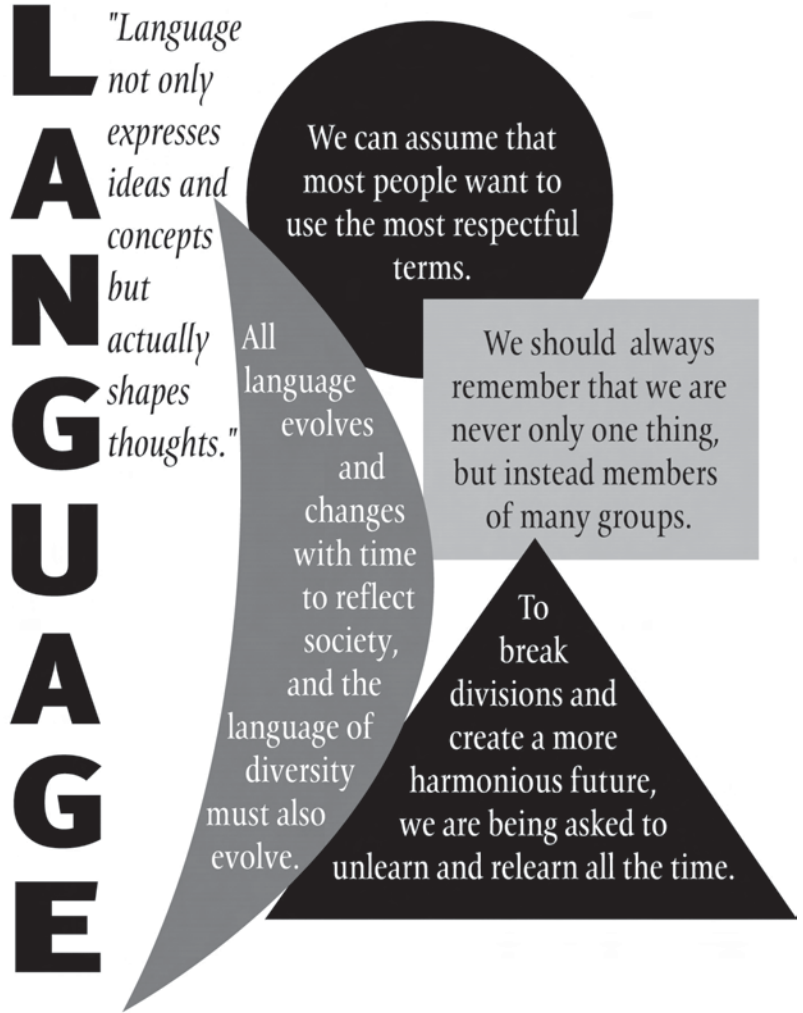
- We choose to use words that convey sensitivity and understanding not because we want to be “correct” but because how we use words affects people—their concept of themselves and members of their group and the ability to create and maintain authentic relationships across differences.
- Words we use affect how we think and perpetuate attitudes about groups, continuing a cycle of oppression.
- Terms will continue to evolve as groups re-define themselves. Making and staying in cross-cultural relationships is an important part of truly understanding each other.
- Assisting others to understand the power of words should always be done with respect and in ways that allow the person their full dignity. We have all learned the “isms.” Only in an atmosphere free of blame can we really unlearn them.
- Because all of us are influenced by the prevailing attitudes of the society and the power of the message, we need to recognize that even within our groups we have internalized the same misinformation and negative stereotypes about members of our groups. The dynamics of internalized oppression create people who choose to use words that continue the perpetuation of misinformation and disparaging attitudes about members of their own group.
- This list of terms and explanations is intended to help with the confusion that we experience as things change and evolve, not as a strict “do” and “don’t” list. We always have choices to create the kind of society that we want.

Endnotes

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Kathy Castania is a senior extension associate in the Cornell Migrant Program based in the Department of Human Development, New York State College of Human Ecology, Cornell University. She is a four-year member of the Personnel and Organizational Development Committee's National Subcommittee on Extension Diversity.

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TEACHING YOUNG CHILDREN TO RESIST BIAS: WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Louise Derman-Sparks, María Gutiérrez, Carol Brunson Phillips
National Association for the Education of Young Children

Building self-identity and skills for social interaction are two major tasks in early childhood. Gradually, young children begin to figure out how they are the same and different from other people, and how they feel about the differences. What children learn in the preschool years greatly influences whether they will grow up to value, accept, and comfortably interact with diverse people or whether they will succumb to the biases that result in, or help to justify, unfair treatment of an individual because of her or his identity.

Research tells us that between ages 2 and 5, children become aware of gender, race, ethnicity, and disabilities. They also become sensitive to both the positive attitudes and negative biases attached to these four key aspects of identity by their family and by society in general. Young children develop “pre-prejudice”: misconceptions, discomfort, fear, and rejection of differences that may develop into real prejudice if parents and teachers do not intervene.

“Girls aren’t strong.” “Boys can’t play house.”

“You’re a baby in that wheelchair; you can’t walk.”

“You can’t play with us, only light-skinned kids can.”

Many adults find it hard to accept that 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds actually make these kinds of comments. They would prefer to believe that young children are blissfully unaware of the differences between people upon which prejudice and discrimination are based. But young children not only recognize differences, they also absorb values about which differences are positive and which are not. How we as parents and teachers react to the ideas that young children express will greatly affect the feelings they will form. If we want children to like themselves and to value diversity, then we must learn how to help them resist the biases and prejudice that are still far too prevalent in our society.

How Bias Influences Children’s Development

Bias based on gender, race, handicap, or social class creates serious obstacles to all young children’s healthy development. When areas of experience are gender stereotyped and closed to children simply because of their sex, neither boys nor girls are fully prepared to deal intellectually or emotionally with the realities and demands of everyday life. “Handicapism” severely harms children with disabilities by limiting access to the educational experiences necessary for well-rounded development. It also prevents non-disabled children from knowing and comfortably interacting with different types of people and teaches a false and anxiety-inducing sense of superiority based on their not being disabled.

Racism attacks the very sense of self for children of color. It creates serious obstacles to their obtaining the best education, health care, and employment. Racism also teaches White children a false identity of superiority and distorts their perceptions of reality. Thus they are not equipped to fairly and productively interact with more than half of the world’s humanity.

The “isms” interfere as well with our ability as adults to effectively teach children about themselves and others. All of us have learned the negative values attached to gender, race, class, and handicapping conditions. And, to varying degrees, they affect our personal attitudes and behavior. At times, we hide such negative feelings from ourselves by denying the reality or significance of differences. We may hope to sidestep the impact of prejudice by saying, “People are all the same,” or teaching children it is impolite

to notice or ask about differences. However, avoidance doesn't give children the information they need. By selectively ignoring children's natural curiosity, we actually teach them that some differences are not acceptable. And by failing to attach positive value to certain specific differences, we leave children to absorb the biases of society. The more that we face our own prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes toward diversity and, where necessary, change them, the better prepared we will be to foster children's growth.

What Parents and Teachers Can Do

Recognize that, because we live in a racist and biased society, we must actively foster children's anti-bias development. Remember that in such an environment, we are all constantly and repeatedly exposed to messages that subtly reinforce biases. If we do nothing to counteract them, then we silently support these biases by virtue of our inaction.

Create an environment at home or at school that deliberately contrasts the prevailing biased messages of the wider society.

Provide books, dolls, toys, wall decorations (paintings, drawings, photographs), TV programs, and records that reflect diverse images that children may not likely see elsewhere in

- Gender roles (including men and women in nontraditional roles)
- Racial and cultural backgrounds (eg, people of color in leadership positions)
- Capabilities (people with disabilities doing activities familiar to children)
- Family lifestyles (varieties of family composition and activities)

Show that you value diversity in the friends you choose and in the people and firms you choose for various services (eg, doctor, dentist, car mechanic, teachers, stores). Remember that what you do is as important as what you say.

Make it a firm rule that a person's identity is never an acceptable reason for teasing or rejecting them. Immediately step in if you hear or see your child engage in such behavior. Make it clear that you disapprove, but do not make your child feel rejected. Support the child who has been hurt. Try to find out what underlies the biased behavior. If the reason is a conflict about another issue, help your child understand the real reason for the conflict and find a way to resolve it. If the underlying reason is discomfort with or fear or ignorance about the other child's differences, plan to initiate activities to help overcome negative feelings.

Initiate activities and discussions to build positive self-identity and to teach the value of differences among people. Educate yourself about common stereotypes in our society so that you can evaluate your selection of children's materials and experiences. Whenever possible, either remove those containing biased messages, or learn to use such material to teach children about the difference between "fair" and "true" images and those that are "unfair" and "untrue" and that hurt people's feelings.

Talk positively about each child's physical characteristics and cultural heritage. Tell stories about people from your ethnic group of whom you are especially proud. Include people who have stood up against bias and injustice. Encourage children to explore different kinds of materials and activities that go beyond traditional gender behaviors.

Help children learn the differences between feelings of superiority and feelings of self-esteem and pride in their heritage.

Provide opportunities for children to interact with other children who are racially/culturally different from themselves and with people who have various disabilities. If your neighborhood does not provide these opportunities, search for them in school, after-school activities, weekend programs, places of worship, and day camps. Visit museums and attend concerts and cultural events that reflect diverse heritages as well as your own.

Respectfully listen to and answer children's questions about themselves and others. Do not ignore questions, change the subject, sidestep, or admonish the child for asking a question. These responses suggest that what a child is asking is bad. However, do not over-respond. Answer all questions in a direct, matter-of-fact, and brief manner. Listen carefully to what children want to know and what they are feeling.

Teach children how to challenge biases about who they are. By the time children are 4 years old, they become aware of biases directed against aspects of their identity. This is especially true for children of color, children with disabilities, and children who don't fit stereotypic gender norms. Be sensitive to children's feelings about themselves and immediately respond when they indicate any signs of being affected by biases. Give your children tools to confront those who act biased against them.

Teach children to recognize stereotypes and caricatures of different groups. Young children can become adept at spotting "unfair" images of themselves and others if they are helped to think critically about what they see in books, movies, greeting cards, and comics and on TV.

Use accurate and fair images in contrast to stereotypic ones, and encourage children to talk about the differences. For example, at Thanksgiving time greeting cards that show animals dressed up as "Indians" and a stereotypic image of an "Indian" child with buckskins and feather headdress abound. Talk about how it is hurtful to people's feelings to show them looking like animals, or to show them portrayed inaccurately. Read good children's books to show the reality and the variety of Native American peoples. As children get older, you can also help them learn about how stereotypes are used to justify injustice, such as lower wages, poor housing, and education, etc.

Let children know that unjust things can be changed. Encourage children to challenge bias, and give them skills appropriate to their age level. First set an example by your own actions. Intervene when children engage in discriminatory behavior, support your children when they challenge bias directed against themselves and others, encourage children to identify and think critically about stereotypic images, and challenge adult-biased remarks and jokes - all methods of modeling anti-bias behavior.

Involve children in taking action on issues relevant to their lives.

- Talk to a toy store manager or owner about adding more toys that reflect diversity, such as dolls, books, and puzzles.
- Ask your local stationary store to sell greeting cards that show children of color.
- Take your child to a rally about getting more funding for child care centers.

As you involve children in this type of activity, be sure to discuss the issues with them, and talk about the reasons for taking action.

Summary

Keep in mind that developing a healthy identity and understanding of others is a long-term process. While the early years lay an essential foundation, learning continues throughout childhood and into adulthood and will take many different forms. Children will change their thinking and feelings many times. *Questions That Parents and Teachers Ask*

Q. My child never asks questions about race, disabilities, or gender. If I raise it myself, will I introduce her to ideas she wouldn't have thought of on her own?

A. Yes, you may, thereby expanding your child's awareness and knowledge. Your child may have had questions for which she didn't have words or didn't feel comfortable raising until you brought up the subject. Remember that children do not learn prejudice from poen, honest discussion of differences and the unfairness of bias. Rather, it is through these methods that children develop anti-bias sensitivity and behavior.

Q. I don't feel competent enough to deal with these issues; I don't know enough. What if I say the wrong thing?

A. Silence "speaks" louder than we realize, sending messages that are counter to the development of anti-bias attitudes. It is far better to respond, even if, upon hindsight, you wish you had handled the incident differently. You can always go back to your child and say, "Yesterday, when you asked me about why Susie uses a wheelchair, I didn't give you enough of an answer. I've thought about your question some more, and today I want to tell you..." If you really do not have the information to answer a questions, you can say, "That's a good question, but I don't know the answer right now. Let me think about it a little and I will tell you later." Or, "Let's go find some books to help us answer your question." Then be sure to follow through. Examine your own feelings about the subject raised by your child's questions or behaviors. Feelings of incompetence often come from discomfort rather than from a lack of knowledge. Talk over your feelings with a sympathetic family member or friend in order to be prepared the next time.

Q. I don't want my children to know about prejudice and discrimination until they have to. Won't it upset them to know about injustices?

A. It is natural to want to protect our children from painful subjects and situations. Moreover, adults may mask their own pain by choosing not to address issues of bias with their children. Avoiding issues that may be painful doesn't help children. Being unprepared to deal effectively with life's realities only leaves them more vulnerable and exposed to hurt. Silence about children's misconceptions and discriminatory behavior gives them permission to inflict pain on others. It is all right for children to sometimes feel sad or upset as long as they know that you are there to comfort and support them.

Common Questions Children Ask and Ways to Respond

1. "Why is that girl in a wheelchair?"

Inappropriate

"Shh, it's not nice to ask." (admonishing)

"I'll tell you another time." (sidestepping)

Acting as though you didn't hear the question (avoiding)

Appropriate "She is using a wheelchair because her leges are not strong enough to walk. The wheelchair helps her move around."

2. "Why is Jamal's skin so dark?"

Inappropriate

"His skin color doesn't matter. We are all the same underneath." (This response denies the child's question, changing the subject to one of similarity when the child is asking about a difference.)

Appropriate

“Jamal’s skin is dark brown because his mom and dad have dark brown skin.” (This is enough for 2- or 3-year-olds. As children get older you can add an explanation of melanin.) “We all have a special chemical in our skin called melanin. If you have a lot of melanin, your skin is dark. If you have only a little, your skin is light. How much melanin you have in your skin depends on how much your parents have in theirs.”

3. “Why am I called Black? I’m brown!”

Inappropriate “You are too Black!” (This response is not enough. It doesn’t address the child’s confusion between actual skin color and the name of the racial and/or ethnic group.)

Appropriate

“You’re right; your skin color is brown. We use the name Black to mean the group of people of whom our family is a part. Black people can have different skin colors. We are all one people because our great-great-grandparents once came from a place called Africa. That’s why many people call themselves Afro-Americans.”

4. “Will the brown wash off in the tub?”

(This is fairly common question because children are influenced by the racist equation of dirtiness and dark skin in our society.)

Inappropriate

Taking this as an example of “kids say the darndest things” and treating it as not serious.

Appropriate

“The color of José’s skin will never wash off. When he takes a bath the dirt on his skin washes off, just like when you take a bath. Whether we have light or dark skin, we all get dirty but our skin stays the same color after we wash it. Our skin is clean after we wash, no matter what color it is.”

5. “Why does Miyoko speak funny?”

Inappropriate

“Miyoko can’t help how she speaks. Let’s not say anything about it.” (This response implies agreement with the child’s comment that Miyoko’s speech is unacceptable, while also telling the child to “not notice,” and be polite.)

Appropriate

“Miyoko doesn’t speak funny, she speaks differently than you do. She speaks Japanese because that’s what her mom and dad speak. You speak English like your mom and dad. It’s okay to ask questions about what Miyoko is saying, but it is not okay to say that her speech sounds funny because that can hurt her feelings.”

6. “Why I do have to try out that dumb wheelchair?” (asks Julio who refuses to sit in a child-sized wheelchair in the children’s museum)

Inappropriate

“It is not dumb. All the children are trying it and I want you to.” (This response does not help uncover the feelings underlying Julio’s resistance and demands that he do something that is clearly uncomfortable for him.)

Appropriate

Putting his arm around Julio, his dad gently asks, “Why is it dumb?” Julio: “It will hurt my feet, just like Maria’s feet.” Dad: “Maria can’t walk because she was born with a condition called cerebral palsy. The wheelchair helps her move around. Nothing will happen to your legs if you try sitting and moving around in the wheelchair. It’s okay if you don’t want to, but if you do try it you’ll find that your legs will still be fine.”

From REACH Fall 1999

Program Development Strategies:

I. Incorporate Diverse Group Into Target Clientele

Key: Communication

- A. Involvement in planning communication with the diverse group
- B. Two-way communication approach
 - 1. Getting the word out
 - 2. Listening (who to listen to, and what to listen for)

II. Adapt Existing Programs With the Diverse Group

- A. Meet together to share existing program goals, directions, etc.
- B. Together work out how the program approach and curriculum/materials can be adapted to work for the situation.

III. Create New Programs With the Diverse Group

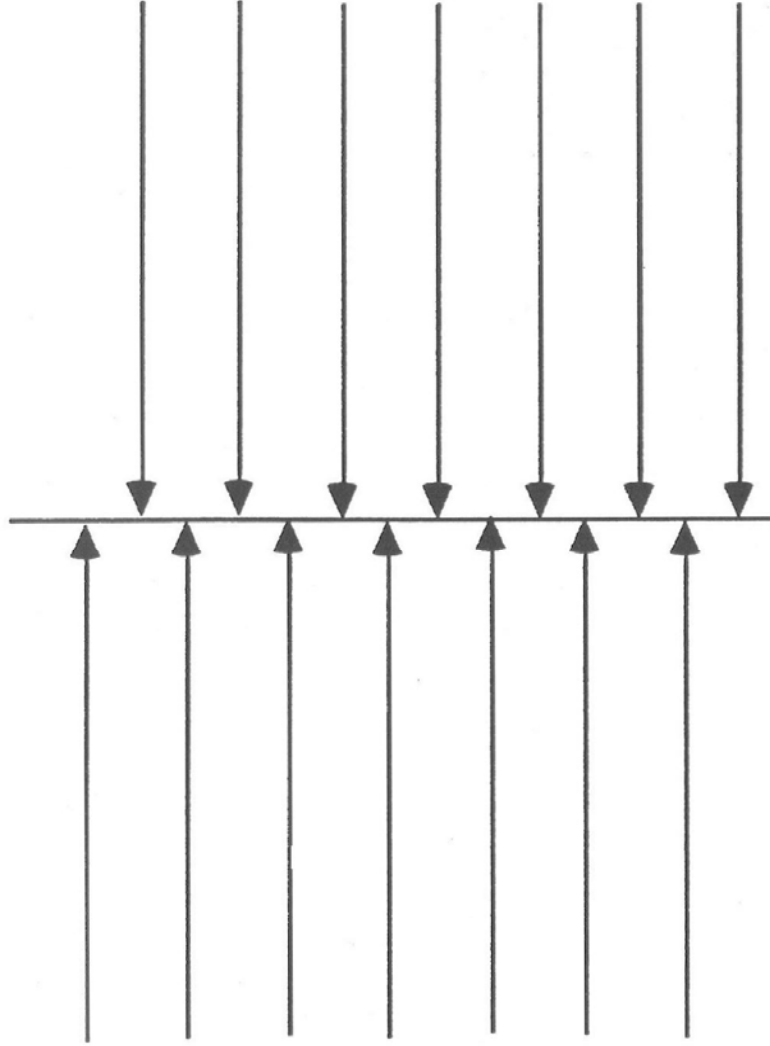
- A. Use the same type of priority-setting process with the diverse group as you do for the overall community, except focus your definition of community.

Exercise:
**Forces Affecting
Program Delivery**

Goal _____

1. Specify the goal you want to accomplish.
2. Identify "driving forces" (forces that can help the goal to be achieved).
3. Identify "opposing forces" (forces that can hinder or block goal achievement).
4. Analyze the "driving forces". Identify specific ways that these can be enhanced or multiplied.
5. Analyze the "opposing forces". Identify specific ways to circumvent or neutralize as many of these as possible.
6. Develop an action plan based on the ideas generated in 4 and 5 above.

Driving forces



Note: Programming with diverse audiences is not all that different than programming with your regular audiences. The primary difference is in you--your self awareness, your ongoing contact with members of the group, your comfort level with them, and your value orientation.

Overview

WHY IS THE DIVERSITY ISSUE SO IMPORTANT?

By Dr. Linda Earnst, PhD
Minneapolis, MN

WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY...

Stop for a minute and consider how many times each day we have some contact with other cultures than our own. We may be wearing clothing that was produced in other countries; we may be eating foods from other cultures; and we may be hearing or speaking languages other than our own first language. It is appropriate that this publication have a special section on diversity and issues surrounding diversity since it has become so important in our world today.

There are several reasons for this emerging emphasis and interest in diversity. First, the world is becoming a smaller place and Naisbitt and Aburdene (1990) say we are moving towards a more common international lifestyle. These authors say that in response to this growing homogenization, we all try to maintain our own identities which are reflected in our individual cultures, religions, or ethnic groups.

Secondly, knowing who we are and where we have come from is a healthy and necessary part of positive human development (McGoldrick, 1982). We see this evident in children who have been adopted cross-culturally. These children need to understand and appreciate *their* roots, as well as the roots of other family members.

Third, because so many of us each encounter so many different cultures on a daily basis we must learn how to deal with these differences to be effective in business, education, community, and family life. We will be better at what we do if we can work with and better serve those who are different from ourselves.

The above reasons sound so much like the "have to" aspects of our lives. In other words, these are things we should do or have to do in order to be better human beings, better employers, or better family members. I think understanding, being sensitive to, and nurturing diversity can also be seen as personally enriching and result in an enhanced environment. For example, to understand and nurture differences in a family education group can help all members understand and appreciate different ways of doing things, different ways of viewing life, and different ways of solving problems. This can enrich the lives of all the participants. Differences, therefore, are something to be celebrated!

People have varying concepts of diversity. Some would say diversity is dealing with women's issues and Black issues in the workplace. Others would say addressing differences with various ethnic groups is diversity. Still others would say diversity is when one recognizes differences in socioeconomic levels.

Probably the broadest concept is that there is diversity whenever two people get together. No two people are alike. They have different life experiences which results in seeing things in this world differently. Diversity, then, becomes an attitude—the attitude that we should never make assumptions about people based upon our own life experience filter. Rather, that we view any other person as being unique. Things that contribute to that uniqueness certainly can be culture, ethnic background, religious views, or language. The uniqueness, however, can also come from a life that was rural versus urban or a life that was filled with traumatic childhood experiences versus a fairly stable home environment. This attitude may include the view that however that

OTHER TERMS
WHICH ARE USED
IN DESCRIBING
DIVERSITY

FUTURE ARTICLES

References



person sitting next to me views life because of these differences in experiences, it is good, and I can learn something from that person.

A discussion of diversity can be very complex. Just deciding what terms to use can be a major research project in itself. The following discussion is a simple introduction to complexity of the issue of terminology.

The term "minority" is sometimes used to identify people from diverse populations. This term can mean "fewer than," or it can mean "inferior to." It can also mean different from the majority (Pugh & Donleavy, 1988). This term is often seen as offensive to diverse populations because of the "inferior to" connotation; it often instills.

Ethnicity or ethnic group is sometimes used in descriptions of diversity. An ethnic group is those who see themselves as having common beliefs, values, and understandings of surroundings. These beliefs, values, and understandings of surroundings help determine how we deal with daily events such as eating, working, relaxing, or how we feel about life (McGoldrick, 1982). Ethnicity can elicit feelings of "we" and "they" with "they" being something we cannot understand or something we make judgments about (Greeley, 1969).

The term "diversity" often implies variety, variance, medley, or assortment. Diversity can also mean different—and different can mean "not good."

So what terms should be used which are sensitive to people? Even with its shortcomings, diversity or difference seem to be preferred by most people. The basic issue, however, as described above, is the attitude people have about difference. Difference needs to be viewed as positive rather than negative.

Better understanding of individual cultures can be helpful in developing an understanding of diversity at all levels. The next four articles will look in-depth at four cultures: Asian-American culture; African-American culture; Hispanic American culture; and Native-American culture. Implications for family education will be included with each culture. A final article will include an overview of diversity issues pertaining to socioeconomic status, sexual preference, and gender.

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Key words: diversity, ethnicity, multi-cultural issues

The Asian-American Culture

By Dr. Linda Earnst, PhD
Minneapolis, MN

The view of the family

The view of time

The view of the basic nature of people

The view of education

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY...

This article will focus on the characteristics and values in the Asian-American culture as they relate to family education. It is difficult to generalize about Asian-Americans as a group because they come from so many uniquely different Asian countries. It is therefore important that any family educator verify with a particular group the characteristics outlined in this article.

In addition to diverse backgrounds, Asian-Americans have a variety of reasons for coming to America. For example, some may have come for business or personal reasons and expect to stay only a short time, while others come as refugees (Moriyasu, 1988). Some Asian-Americans have come voluntarily to find a better life, while others have been forced out of their country and hope someday to return. Some individuals have ancestors who have been in this country for several generations and others have come to America as an adult. All these factors enter into the degree to which a person or family is acculturated. With these caveats in mind, an effort will be made to identify some characteristics and values in the Asian culture in America as it differs from Anglo culture. Suzuki provides the following overview of the Asian-American values: "humanism, collectivity, self-discipline, order and hierarchy, wisdom of the elderly, moderation and harmony, and obligation" (1980, p. 79). These characteristics will be developed more fully in relation to view of the family, view of time, view of the basic nature of people, and view of education.

In the Asian culture the concept of family includes generations of that family from the beginning of time. The actions of family members, therefore have implications for the past as well as future generations (Shon & Ya, 1982). The father is the leader of the family and the men have the responsibility to provide for the economic welfare of the other members (Shon & Ya, 1982). The mother is the nurturant caretaker of the children and husband. The relationship between the mother and children is very strong. The sons are more highly valued than daughters, with the oldest son being the most important child. The focus is on the collective family rather than on the individuals within the family.

Because the family is seen as the product of previous generations, the past has the highest priority rather than the present or the future. Respect, honor, and obedience to elders is important (Olson & DeFrain, in press). Along with respect for elders goes a valuing of tradition and ritual.

Many Asian-Americans have been influenced by Confucianism and see human nature as good. There is an emphasis on developing a person's full potential through moral, virtuous, and benevolent actions, rather than through power, wealth or prestige (Suzuki, 1980).

There is a high value placed on education and the pursuit of knowledge. Knowledge is necessary for wisdom and goodness. The elderly are highly respected because they are resources of knowledge and wisdom. Success in school is a source of knowledge (Suzuki, 1980). Many Asians see a person as the cumulative result of efforts of many people such as family, teachers, and employers, and there is a sense of obligation to these people (Shon & Ya, 1982).

IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY EDUCATION

The following guidelines might be helpful in planning family education programs for Asian-Americans:

- The entire family must be acknowledged in any family education endeavor. Although the care of children is left primarily to women, men or elders may need to be involved in the decision regarding the educational program.
- How individuals are to be addressed should be considered and respected. Showing proper respect for roles of family members is important.
- Problems would typically be solved by going to family members. Because seeking help for problems outside the family is a sign of failure, problems may not be revealed openly, but rather may be indirectly discussed.
- Rather than assuming we can emphasize equality and democracy in families, we must consider the hierarchial family structure.
- Since self-control is encouraged, expression of emotions may not be appropriate.

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Key words: diversity, cultural differences, multi-cultural issues, Asian-American families

African-American Families

By Dr. Linda Earnst, PhD
Minneapolis, MN

The view of the family.

The view of time.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY...

The African-American culture has been influenced by the African tradition, American culture, and by African-American oppression in this country in this country (Pinderhughes, 1982). African-Americans came to the United States from many countries and came at various times in history. The African-American who came to this country five years ago has a very different cultural background than someone whose ancestors came to this country as slaves. This community, as others, has various terms which identify the population. Historically, names such as Negroes, Colored, Blacks, and African-Americans have been used. Presently African-American or Black are terms acceptable to most African-Americans, and many people use the terms interchangeable. Some prefer African-American because it a term chosen by the culture and it reflects the fact that, directly or indirectly, members of this community are of African descent (Wilkinson, 1990).

The characteristics and values of the African-American culture have been described in the following ways by a variety of researchers: strong kinship bonds; flexible family roles; high value placed on religion, education, and work; expressive patterns of language; highly value the group over the individual; and respect for elderly and the past (Hill, 1972; Pinderhughes, 1982; Wilson, 1986). In addition, African-Americans are a very formal people and terms to address each other indicate that respect. For example, the use of Mr. and Mrs are very appropriate until people know each other very well.

The African tradition has a history of close kinship and family ties. This closeness was disrupted by slavery when family members were sold (Hines & Boyd-Franklin, 1982). There is a strong kinship network which still exists in the African-American community which may not be based upon blood or legal relationships. Family can be anyone who "helped out" in hard times or who was "taken in" when they needed someone to care for them. This concept of family goes back to the time of slavery when blood relatives were sold or died and friends became caretakers and a source of refuge (Butts, 1981).

The African-American community as a whole may also be considered family by some (Wilson, 1986). We have a friend who has a cousin staying with him. He says he is family because they both came from the same country in Africa. It is also not appropriate to question the relationships. Family, then, is seen as a place where people are cared for in good times and in bad, a place where one can go when scorned by others (Butts, 1981).

Because of oppression in this country there has been a focus on the present rather than the past (Pinderhughes, 1982). Recently, however, African-Americans have looked to their roots in Africa as a way of getting in touch with their heritage. Therefore, the past is becoming very important in understanding the roots of the culture. My own teenage children, for example, have clothing and jewelry which is symbolic of African culture. The present is very important because it is what people are dealing with right now. "Telling it like it is" or talking about what is "real" is what is important (Wilson, 1986). The future is less important because it is uncertain or nonexistent. Children are valued because they are part of the future with the hope of something better.

The view of the basic nature of people.

How people are viewed in the African-American community can only be discussed within the historical context. In the African tradition people are one of the elements in the universe as are trees and water. People, therefore, are good. As slaves they were told they were evil or less than human and the slave masters were often cruel and dehumanizing. These experiences affected people's thinking about their own nature and the nature of others. Also, the Christian tradition in the United States which often stresses the concept of original sin affected the thinking of members of the African community. When looking at historical influences the African tradition of viewing people as basically good may have been affected by the view of people as bad or evil as a result of oppression and Christian teachings. Some African-Americans say they are trying to reclaim that sense of the basic nature of people as good as they explore their African heritage.

The view of education.

One of the most important issues in education for the African-American community is the ability to trust the source of educational information, the ability to trust that the information is in the best interest of the African-American community rather than the interest of the dominant community. Government officials, white institutions, and/or "the powers that be" have historically not treated members of the African-American population fairly. One of the most blatant examples of this poor treatment is the Tuskegee study which was initiated by the United States Public Health Service in 1932 and finally ended in 1972. This study looked at the effects of syphilis on Black males in Macon County, Alabama. Early in the study penicillin was identified as a treatment for syphilis, but was withheld from these men in order that the study could continue. Therefore, men were debilitated because of the disease and spread it to others when, in fact, they could have been treated. This illustration is one example of why the African-American community does not trust governmental institutions to give information which will be helpful in their lives. I give this example because as educators we need to understand this mistrust is deep and real, and affects all educational endeavors.

Education is highly valued in the African-American community and may not look like the education which is typical of educational institutions in the United States. Education in the African-American community is valued when it is direct and based on personal experience and common sense rather than being based on academic work (Wilson, 1986). The lessons of experience are passed from one generation to the next by the oral tradition and the stimulation of all the senses is important (Butts, 1981; Wilson, 1986). The African-American community sees interaction between the speaker and the listener as important in education. For example, the speaker may say something with the members of the groups responding with "amens, right-ons, or yes sirs" (Wilson, 1986).

IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY EDUCATION

The following guidelines might be helpful in planning family education programs involving the African-American community:

- Trust in the educational programming must be established. This can be done by involving members of the African-American community in the development and implementation of the programs and/or by ensuring involvement of the community as educators.
- Use information or statistics which have come from the African-American community or have been published by African-American organizations. Some examples include *Ebony* or *Essence* magazines, the Urban League, or African-American Universities such as Howard or Morehouse.

- Build in educator and learner interaction and discussion. Avoid lengthy lecture or one-way transmission of information.
- Respect must be shown for individuals in the African-American community to make decisions about what they need in their lives. It is improper for members of the White community to prescribe solutions when they have not had the same experiences.
- Provide information which is clear and simply stated without flowery or academic language. At the same time the information needs to touch the hearts and souls of the people in the educational program.

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Each culture in our society is very diverse within itself. However, we first must become aware of differences among cultures before we can become sensitive to differences within those cultures. It is hoped that the generalizations made in this article will be a beginning point, and from here each person will further explore the diversity within each culture.



Key words: African-American families, Black family issues, cultural diversity

CELEBRATING THE HISPANIC CULTURE

By Dr. Linda Ernst, PhD
Minneapolis, MN

The view of the family.

The view of time.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY...

The term Hispanic is usually used to describe people from Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin (Tilove, 1992). It needs to be understood, however, that this definition is not universally recognized, nor is the term Hispanic accepted universally. Hispanic does not refer to race, but rather it refers to people coming from a nation once controlled by Spain. Therefore, a history of a connection to the Spanish language is what is common to Hispanic people. Some people who are of Spanish origin see themselves as white Europeans. Some Hispanics prefer to be referenced by their country of origin, such as Mexican-American, or Cuban-American. Others prefer to be called latino or latina, referring to Latin American origin (Martinez, 1988). People in this country who are considered to be Hispanic are very diverse in that they may have come from many different countries, they came to the United States at different times in history (some predating the American Revolution), and from many different economic levels.

The use of the Spanish language is probably the most important issue to consider in the Hispanic culture. In many parts of the United States 75% of Hispanics speak Spanish at home and for social occasions (Strategy Research Corporation, 1989). It is easy to retain the Spanish language because of the proximity to Puerto Rico and Mexico. The use of the Spanish language is not just for communication but is also a mode of transmitting the culture to the younger generation (Martinez, 1988). However, if most of what is written and spoken by the dominant society is in English there can be real isolation from the Anglo community. This affects education and communication at all levels.

There is a strong pride, dignity, and honor of the Hispanic people and the culture. Very formal language reflects this respect when addressing each other (De la Cancela, 1989).

The nuclear and extended family are pivotal in the Hispanic culture. A household may include extended family members such as cousins, aunts, and uncles. The family takes precedence over individual members and family members are encouraged to be socially cooperative for the benefit of the family and enhancement of the culture (Martinez, 1988). If a person has a problem, help will more likely be sought from a family member than an unfamiliar professional (Gilad, 1988).

Authority and respect are highly valued in the Hispanic culture and children are thought to be ill-mannered and lack respect for the culture if they do not behave appropriately. Although traditionally males and elders have had positions of authority in the home, those roles are changing and are closer to the egalitarian roles in the mainstream society (Ybarra, 1982). In addition, children are highly valued and considerable time is spent nurturing children (Martinez, 1988).

Culture is so important in the Hispanic community, and culture emphasizes the past. The elders and adults are of greatest importance in passing on the understanding of culture to the younger generation. Because there is such emphasis on the family as it is today with aunts, uncles, cousins, etc., the present

The view of the basic nature of people.

The view of education.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY EDUCATION

is also important. Spending time with family *now* is stressed. The Anglo community is often criticized by Hispanics for worrying about and taking so much time to plan for the future. There is also a feeling that things just happen, and, therefore, there is not a lot of control when it comes to the future.

The basic nature of people. Religion is very important in the Hispanic community. People are often Catholic and original sin is a part of religious teachings. People are easily shamed when a family member does something wrong and many topics such as sexuality are not openly discussed. There are often concerns about evil spirits and superstition (Maduro, 1983). Therefore, there is definitely an awareness of evil forces in the world and these evil forces affect people. Religious practices are utilized to deal with these evil forces and the devil.

Although members of Hispanic families feel a strong need to socialize children regarding social behavior, they view the educational system as a place for the academic instruction. However, what happens in the home often takes precedence over what happens in school. Parents might be less concerned about developmental delays and more concerned that children be respectful and obedient (Falicov, 1982).

Some Hispanics feel that the educational system is discriminatory and does not address the needs of people in the Hispanic culture (Martinez, 1988). Because the Hispanic culture does not promote competitiveness which is stressed in mainstream society, children often do not succeed in school. This lack of success for students and lack of trust in the educational system may affect family education efforts.

Because Hispanics are deeply religious, the church is an important place for education and support. If there is a problem to be solved the priest or pastor may be sought out for guidance. The church, therefore, may be an important collaborator in educational endeavors.

Education focusing on family life would need to recognize the respect and authority promoted in Hispanic culture, and include elders and men in decisions about programming. Women are highly regarded as the caretaker of the family and should be included in structuring information in family education.

It is very important that dialogue be used in any educational setting in the Hispanic community. The respect for the views of adults means that people's experiences, feelings, and attitudes are valued and should be included in the learning process. The role of the leader would be to facilitate the group and a lecture format would not be appropriate.

The following guidelines might be helpful in planning family education programs involving the Hispanic community:

- Involve the family in promotion and implementation of the family education program. Decisions about whether members will participate may come from the elders. Women, especially, might be included in developing the program.
- Collaborate with institutions and organizations which serve the Hispanic community (such as churches). This will develop trust and encourage participation.

- Include Spanish-speaking facilitators or leaders. Also have materials or posters in Spanish as well as English.
- Show respect by asking how people would want to be addressed. It cannot be assumed that every group or every member of the group would feel the same.
- Use dialogue, story telling, and other means of interaction as educational strategies. Do not use lecture or one-way transmission of information.

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Key words: Hispanic families, cultural diversity

THE NATIVE-AMERICAN CULTURE

By Dr. Linda Ernst, PhD
Minneapolis, MN

The view of the family.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY...

The history of the relationship between the Native-American people and the United States government is an important issue when considering the Native-American culture. Treaties were made regarding where Native Americans could live and how they should live (in individual residence, rather than as a community), thus, affecting the communal, cooperative relationship among Native Americans that once existed. Children were required to attend off-reservations boarding schools, away from family, and were required to give up their native language and speak English. They were actually seen as wards of the federal government. The lack of control on the part of members of the Native-American community has resulted in feelings of disempowerment and futility. This has had major implications for the social and emotional problems in the Native-American community. This brief description gives one an idea of the extent to which the Native-American culture has been affected by the forced influence of the United States government.

There are somewhere between 400 and 600 different Native-American nations, tribes, or other groups in the United States, depending upon how the groups are defined and who recognizes the groups (Olson & DeFrain, in press; Stauss, 1988; Sue & Sue, 1990). This, of course, emphasizes the diversity which exists within the Native-American culture. Some Native Americans refer to themselves by their tribe or nation. Other terms used by members of this culture are Native, American Indian, or Indian. There is also a need to consider the different life experiences of Native Americans who live on reservations versus those who live off the reservations. Native Americans who live on reservations are more likely to live in poverty, have less education, and have a higher rate of female headed households than those living off the reservation (Stauss, 1988). Native Americans, however, do not place a high value on materialism and, instead, value culture, tradition, and being in harmony with nature. The reservation life, therefore, may allow for those values to be reinforced and may be considered preferable (Carson, Dail, Greeley & Kenote, 1990).

With the above caveat in mind about diversity within the Native-American community, several researchers have identified some characteristics and values of many members of the Native-American community. These values and characteristics have been described in the following ways: "a strong spiritual orientation to life and respect for all creation" (p. 388); interdependence among tribes and family members; commitment to the welfare of others; high valuing of children (Carson, et al., 1990); focus on the group rather than on the individual (Attneave, 1982); focus on sharing and cooperation; respect for elders and their wisdom and knowledge; and an attitude of noninterference with children's behavior and the actions of others (Sue & Sue, 1990).

Historically, Native Americans have had respect for elders in the community and have great allegiance to the family and the larger tribal community. The family and the tribal group have a higher priority than the individual family members and individuals draw strength from the larger group (Carson, et al., 1990). The extended family often extends to the second cousin and the care of children is often shared by the extended family network (Sue & Sue, 1990). Children are highly valued and much attention is given to their needs. They are included in most activities. Because noninterference by adults is valued,

The view of the family, con't.

children are often allowed to learn from mistakes through natural consequences rather than direction from adults. According to Attneave (1982), "Parental aspirations do not lend themselves as much to shaping and molding as to freeing the inner self of the child in order that it can become what it is destined to be" (p. 71). There is a real sense of equality in Native-American culture, and each person can make their own choices. Discipline is usually done by shame or embarrassment and praise is rarely given (Carson et al., 1990).

The view of time.

Native Americans are typically present oriented but drawing on the wisdom gained in the past (Attneave, 1982; Sue & Sue, 1990). Planning for the future can be viewed as self-serving. However, it should be noted that time in Native American culture is seen as cyclical rather than linear and is geared to personal and seasonal rhythms (Attneave, 1982). Because Native Americans see themselves as part of, and in harmony with nature, external mechanical clocks and calendars are less important than the natural cycles of the universe. The time to do something is when the time is right, rather than when the clock says it should be done (Mander, 1991).

The basic nature of people.

Generally the view of the basic nature of people is that they are good. When people do not do good things it is generally seen as a result of the person not developing to their fullest (Attneave, 1982). There is also a recognition of evil in the form of witchcraft and a person's ability to put spells on other people.

The difficulties evident in many Native-American families such as alcoholism, child abuse, or suicide are seen as a result of the loss of the Native-American culture which has come about because of White domination. These difficulties are typically not seen as Native Americans being bad.

The view of education.

Education in the Native-American culture involves passing on cultural values and beliefs from the elderly to the younger generation by oral tradition. The focus of education would be on the physical, social, and spiritual world (Carson et al., 1990). The focus on these aspects of the world are related to some basic beliefs. According to Mander (1991) there is a continued need to protect "Mother Earth." Mother Earth is the planet and all that is on the planet is nurtured at her breast. "We have germinated within her, we are part of her, we burst into life from her, and we dissolve back into her to become new life from her, and we dissolve back into her to become new life" (p. 212). Native people have resisted owning land and using land in disrespectful ways. This understanding that Mother Earth is integrated into each person as living human beings would naturally mean education is about, or certainly includes, this understanding that people need to be in harmony with all of creation.

When there is illness in Native-American people it is often considered to be the result of a lack of harmony among the spirit, mind, and body of a person (Carson, et al., 1990). Therefore, education about these three aspects of people is necessary for survival.

Because Native-American people are now having to live in a world which is controlled by the dominant culture, education in skills which will give Native Americans opportunities to compete in that world is certainly seen as beneficial. Education, therefore, would include those skills that are seen as valuable by the dominant culture, but taught in the way that Native Americans teach and in an atmosphere where the values of Native people are also included in the teaching.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY EDUCATION

The following guidelines might be helpful in planning family education programs involving the Native-American community:

- Involve the entire family in the educational programming. Because children are usually included in activities, they should be included. Because information should come from the elderly, they should be incorporated into the educational process.
- Rely heavily on oral tradition since this is how information is typically transmitted in Native-American culture. Storytelling is very important in Native communities.
- Cultural values such as sharing, cooperation, harmony, and respect for individual rights should be woven into any educational program.
- Because of the many tribes and nations included in what is considered Native-American culture, the values and traditions of the tribe or nation in your area should be explored.
- Native Americans should determine the goals or outcomes of any educational program. The Native-American community has been very assertive in "taking back" its culture in this country. That stand should be respected.

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Key words: Native-American families, cultural diversity

AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE

1. Expressiveness (in language, emotion, and gestures)
2. Strong kinship bonds, extended family networks, and connection to others in their ethnic group/community
3. Connection with heritage and history is strong
4. Informality, and flexibility to adjust to various conditions/situations
5. Collective orientation (value of group effort for the common interest)
6. Strong oral language tradition; humor and imagery in language
7. High-context communication (nonverbal cues, gestures, and expressions)
8. Religious, spiritual orientation; visible ties religious organizations
9. Extended family provides authoritarian child-rearing practices/guidance
10. Respect for the elderly and their role in the family
11. More oriented to situation than time; time is flexible
12. Use of Ebonics and use of slang in some subgroups
13. Ability to navigate between two cultures, high assimilation in some subgroups
14. Motion, body language, and touch are all valued
15. Education as a means to a better life
16. Value of African American colleges and universities
17. Direct eye contact when speaking, less eye contact when listening
18. Independent, competitive, and achievement oriented (pride in overcoming obstacles and barriers to success)
19. Importance of music (for communication, self expression, spirituality)
20. Communicating with passion, expression, spontaneity, and animation

Note: Cultural norms are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources include: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Pearson, M., 1995) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D. & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).

Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 1

ASIAN AMERICAN CULTURE

1. "We" over "I"--support for the group has higher value than the individual
2. Use of self-control, self-denial, and self-discipline
3. Cooperation, non-confrontation, and reconciliation are valued
4. Formality and rules of conduct
5. Direct physical contact (particularly between men and women) should be avoided; public displays of affection are not acceptable
6. Dedication to the extended family, one's company or work, and community
7. Honor/status given to position, gender, age, education, financial status
8. Achievement and goal oriented, diligent, and persistent
9. Spiritualistic, humanistic, and often believe in fate
10. Contemplative, circular thinking (never making decisions in haste)
11. Tradition and conformity to the group are valued
12. Family solidarity, responsibility, and harmony
13. Traditional hierarchical family roles, children are extension of parents
14. Parent provides authority, expects unquestioning obedience
15. Mutual interdependence within the family unit and community
16. Hierarchy, role rigidity, status defined by ascription (i.e. birthright inheritance, family name, age, sex)
17. Emotionally controlled, modest, and stoic
18. Indirect and nonverbal communication used, often implied meanings
19. May avoid eye contact as a mark of respect to authority figures
21. High value placed on education, reverence/status given to teachers

Note: Cultural norms are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources include: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Pearson, M., 1995) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D. & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).
Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 2

HISPANIC/LATINO CULTURE

1. Personal and interpersonal relationships highly valued and come first
2. Strong extended family system more pronounced than other ethnic groups
3. Commitment to the Spanish language
4. Direct physical contact expected, affectionate hugging and kissing on the cheek are acceptable for both the same sex and opposite sex
5. Relaxed with time
6. Strong religious beliefs (primarily Catholicism)
7. Value cooperation--not competition
8. Courtesy, sensitivity, and formality in relationships
9. Collective orientation, group identity
10. Interdependence of the group, and loyalty to the family
11. Saving face, use of indirect communication
12. Tendency toward more traditionally defined family structure (father as head of house) and more defined sex roles
13. May use both the father and mother's surname
14. More overt respect for the elderly
15. Subgroups of highly educated and very affluent
16. Subgroups of extremely poor (for example, migrant farmers)
17. Past orientation, listens to experience
18. Independence/development of early skills not pushed in young children
19. High-context (nonverbal communication, gestures, and expressions)
20. Females may have restricted freedom (chaperones, group dating, etc.)

Note: Cultural norms are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources include: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Pearson, M., 1995) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D. & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).
Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 3

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE

1. Individuality--approximately 550 tribes in the United States
2. Value cooperation--not competition
3. Avoidance of conflict, non-interference
4. Horizontal decision making, group consensus
5. Respect for nature and human's place within
6. Group life is primary, collective orientation
7. Respects elders, experts, and those with spiritual powers
8. Introverted, avoids ridicule or criticism of others if possible
9. Accepts "what is," holistic approach to life
10. Emphasizes responsibility for the family and tribal community
11. Seeks harmony and values privacy
12. Observes how others "behave," emphasis on how others "behave" and not on what they say
13. Incorporates supportive non-family or other helpers into family network
14. Native languages still used and taught in many tribal communities
15. Use nonverbal communication (gestures, expressions, body language)
16. Interconnectedness of all things, living and nonliving
17. Emphasis on preserving a natural balance, both in nature and life
18. Self-sufficient at an earlier age than other ethnic groups
19. Living in the here and now, time is flexible, actions are controlled and influenced by cultural traditions rather than linear time systems
20. Oral history, songs and dances, ceremonial activities, and reservation communities are all important aspects of Native American life

Note: Cultural norms are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources include: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Pearson, M., 1995) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D. & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990)

Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 4

AFRICAN AMERICAN LEARNING STYLES

- ⇒ Movement and kinesthetic abilities highly developed
- ⇒ Value imagination and humor
- ⇒ Ability to express feelings and emotions, both verbally and nonverbally; strong oral language tradition
- ⇒ Richness of imagery in informal language
- ⇒ Experience with independent action and self-sufficiency
- ⇒ Physical action orientation (learn by doing)
- ⇒ Learn quickly through hands-on experience, manipulative materials, and multiple stimuli
- ⇒ People oriented (focus on people rather than objects)
- ⇒ Resourcefulness, unique problem solving abilities
- ⇒ Tend to view things in their entirety--not in separate pieces
- ⇒ Preference for the oral mode of presentation in learning
- ⇒ Use of inferences, may approximate time/space/number
- ⇒ Alert, curious, good retention and use of ideas
- ⇒ Ability to navigate between two cultures, some subgroups have high assimilation to mainstream learning styles

Note: Cultural learning styles are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D., & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).

Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 5

ASIAN AMERICAN LEARNING STYLES

- ⇒ High achievement motivation
- ⇒ Use of intuition in learning and problem solving preferred
- ⇒ High degree of self-discipline, self-motivation, self-control
- ⇒ High level of concentration and persistence on academics
- ⇒ Possible language barriers in some subgroups
- ⇒ Disagreeing with, arguing with, or challenging the teacher is not an option; this has to do with respect
- ⇒ Attitude toward discipline as guidance
- ⇒ Modest, minimal body contact preferred
- ⇒ Respects others, ability to listen and follow directions
- ⇒ Excellent problem-solving ability (female Asians have higher math scores than any other female ethnic group)
- ⇒ Indirect and nonverbal communication used, attitudes unfavorable to participate in discussion groups
- ⇒ Keen awareness of environment
- ⇒ Strong valuing of conformity may inhibit creative thinking

Note: Cultural learning styles are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D., & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).

Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 6

HISPANIC/LATINO LEARNING STYLES

- ⇒ Large supportive extended family; the learning process benefits by involving the extended family often
- ⇒ Value cooperative group learning--not competitive learning
- ⇒ Most communicate fluently in native language (Spanish) within the family and ethnic community
- ⇒ If not bilingual, possible language barriers may arise without the assistance of a translator
- ⇒ Less independent and more modest
- ⇒ Children have unusual maturity/responsibility for their age
- ⇒ Youth initiate and maintain meaningful interaction and communication with adults (adults may also take the lead)
- ⇒ More affectionate and physically closer to others in class, conversation, asking questions, and all learning activities
- ⇒ Use intuitive reasoning (making inferences) naturally
- ⇒ Experience with giving advice and judgments in disputes
- ⇒ Eagerness to try out new ideas and work collaboratively
- ⇒ Value history, oral tradition, and visual/kinesthetic learning

Note: Cultural learning styles are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D., & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).

Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 7

NATIVE AMERICAN LEARNING STYLES

- ⇒ Oral traditions give value to creating stories, poems, and recalling legends; good at storytelling
- ⇒ Value cooperation--not competition; work well and communicate effectively in groups
- ⇒ Learn holistically; beginning with an overview or "big picture," and moving to the particulars
- ⇒ Trial-and-error learning by private (not public) experiences
- ⇒ Developed visual/spatial abilities, highly visual learners
- ⇒ Value life experiences in traditional learning
- ⇒ Value design and create symbols to communicate, often exhibit visual art talent
- ⇒ Often exhibit performing arts talent
- ⇒ Intuitive ability valued and well developed
- ⇒ Seeks harmony in nature and life, are good mediators
- ⇒ Excellent memory, long attention span, deductive thinkers
- ⇒ High use of nonverbal communication
- ⇒ Accept responsibility and discipline of leadership

Note: Cultural learning styles are intended as general guides--not absolutes for all members of an ethnic group. Sources: (Davis, G. & Rimm, S., 1997) (Dresser, N., 1996) (Education Alliance at Brown University, 2002) (Lynch, E. & Hanson M., 1997) (McPhatter, A., 1997) (Murphy, E. & Nesby, T., 2002) (Nash, K., 1999) (Robinson, L., 1998) (Sparks, S., 2000) (Srebalus, D., & Brown, D., 2001) (Ting-Toomey, S., 1999) (Vasquez, J., 1990).

Unit 2, Lesson 1, Attachment 8

5 Steps to Successful Social Marketing

Effective messages must be accurate, clear, and compelling. This implies selecting specific audience; working with them to develop strategies suited to their needs; testing materials and systems to ensure they work effectively; and revising materials to meet changing needs. These five steps will help to ensure that programs are accurate, clear, and compelling.

1. THINK LIKE YOUR AUDIENCE, USE

Their words
Their pictures
Their stories and music

2. BE CONVINCING

- Use spokespersons the audience admires and trusts.
- Talk about feelings as well as about facts.
- Give the audience reasons they understand.
- Give the audience a benefit they care about.

3. BE CLEAR AND BE HONEST

- Talk about behavior—tell people how to protect themselves.
- Tell people about consequences—*"what happens if . . ."*
- Dispel the myths and falsehoods.
- Confront people's anxieties directly.
- Only promote support services you can offer.
- Answer the audience's questions.

4. GET THE MESSAGE OUT

- Keep the message simple.
- Repeat is over and over.
- Use many channels of information simultaneously.
- Be consistent.

5. TEST MATERIALS

Find out if your audience. . . .

- Understands the idea.
- Believes the message.
- Thinks the message relates to them.
- Gets confused by or dislikes some part of it.
- Says they will follow the advice.

AED

Social Marketing means:

1. AUDIENCE CENTERED THINKING

Is your program built on what the audience understands and wants?

2. TARGETED OBJECTIVES

Is your *audience segmented* into reachable groups of people. . .and are your *objectives* narrow, behavioral, and important?

3. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Have you considered all the factors that influence behavior change, the behaviors themselves, the obstacles or costs the audience will face, the means to distribute information and products, and the means to inform, motivate, and teach the audience about the new behaviors?

4. INTEGRATED INTERVENTIONS

Are you using more than one delivery system; and do they interact to support each other?

5. DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING

Do you have data which supports and guides your basic decisions, or are you relying on experience, intuition, and anecdotes?

Ethnic Marketing to African Americans

Identify Group: The first group that we will examine is African Americans.

Identify Values: The backdrop, based on the reviewed literature:

It is often said that although the African American culture has its roots in Africa, most African Americans are unaware that their African roots have played a strong role in shaping contemporary behaviors and attitudes in African American culture. Due to the understated influence of the African tradition, the African American community is different from the mainstream culture in many ways. Following are some of the values found in the African-American community that may impact marketing:

- View the world from an “Afro-centric” standpoint; the basis of “Afrocentrism” is “authenticity” or “being real” (Early, 1995 in Tharp, 2001).
- Value qualities like “telling it like it is,” “seeing the good as well as the bad,” “assertiveness,” “speaking up” etc. (Tharp, 2001).
- Give importance to orally transmitted information.
- Like to be represented.
- Are receptive to organizations that “give something back to their community” (Tharp, 2001).
- Like to see a positive image of their culture.

For more in-depth information on this culture, review Unit 2.

Identify marketing strategies: Strategies, based on the backdrop, for developing personal marketing materials for African Americans:

- Be sensitive about the authenticity of your message. Have facts ready and be able to back them up. Have African American representatives talk to your target group.
- Encourage your African American audiences to ask questions about your programs. Do not mistake their assertiveness for aggression. Let them discuss the doubts they may have about your program. They will tell you whether they like or do not like something. Watch for nonverbal cues as well.

- Use personal marketing techniques, like making phone calls or having an opinion leader speak with the community.
- Have African Americans help you design the marketing materials.
- Show respect for African American family values. For example, a large household is a sign of collectivism. Explain how your program will help the entire household/family.
- Support African American “causes and events” that strengthen the community. Your program should be visible at such events in meaningful ways (Schreiber, 2001).
- Show positive images of the African American community in your advertisement materials. Give examples of successful African Americans.
- Do not try to come across as the person/organization that is going to “help” or “save” the group. Establish an equal relationship.
- Recognize the way in which your own ethnicity contributes to the group dynamics.

Ethnic Marketing to Asian Americans

Identify Group: The second group that we will examine is Asian Americans.

Identify Values: The backdrop, based on the reviewed literature:

Asian Americans are a mix of people who generally came from the Pacific Rim. The U.S Bureau of Census has identified sixteen categories in the Asian American community. The major groups are: East Indian, Pakistani, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Indonesian (Tharp, 2001). Tharp (2001) pointed out that although Asian American subgroups are diverse, they have some shared values. Following are some of the shared values of Asian Americans that may impact marketing:

- High-context culture where non-verbal communication (body language, use of silence) is very significant.
- Have a high level of education in some subgroups, like Japanese, East Indians and Chinese.
- Consider family very important.
- Believe in subordination of younger to elder; hierarchical family structure
- Value word-of-mouth messages from friends and relations.
- Are uneasy with strangers.
- Give importance to the quality of a product first, followed by price, service and convenience.

For more in-depth information on the culture, review Unit 2.

Identify Strategies: Strategies, based on the backdrop, for developing personal marketing materials for Asian Americans:

- Be subtle and polite when you try to send a message across.
- Please all the family members.
- Remember that the oldest male member of the family has the decision-making power. Also, give respect to the elders by being courteous.
- Have your message carried by the members of the community.
- Avoid those numbers and colors that are considered to bring ill luck (for example, the number 4 and the color black signify death in Chinese culture).

- Make multiple visits to build a better rapport. Be formal until you win the confidence of your audiences.
- Make sure to offer quality programs that will do good to the community. Show how the quality of your product outweighs the price or the inconvenience of participating in the program (see Lesson 1).

Ethnic Marketing to Hispanics/Latinos

Identify Group: The third group that we will examine is Hispanics/Latinos.

Identify Values: The backdrop, based on the reviewed literature:

There is no monolithic Hispanic/Latino market, as there are at least 14 Hispanic/Latino sub-cultures in the United States (Rossman, 1999). In general, the term Hispanic/Latino refers to people from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central or South America, or from other Spanish-speaking countries, such as those in the Caribbean. More specifically, Latinos are people who come from Latin American countries. However, according to the latest U.S Census of 2000, Mexicans (63%) are the largest subgroup among the Hispanic population in America. Schreiber (2000) maintains that Mexican Americans were always “here” (in America), as they ruled over Western America 150 years ago. In Tharp’s opinion, in general, American Hispanics/Latinos tend to acculturate instead of assimilating into the mainstream culture. It is important to note that while acculturation means adapting to the practices of another culture, assimilation means absorbing the traits of the dominant culture. However, members of this group have been active participants in American society; hence, they are easy to access through marketing (Schreiber, 2000). Following are some of the values of the Hispanic community that may impact marketing:

- According to the U.S. Census (2000), Hispanics/Latinos are predominantly younger, with a median age of 24 (Tharp, 2001).
- Identify themselves in both individual and situational context; for instance, at work, Hispanics may act more like mainstream Americans.
- Retained Spanish language. Spanish is a high-context, indirect language, with a lot of importance given to nonverbal communication. Choice of pronouns depends on the formality of a relationship.
- Give importance to family and the church (mostly Roman Catholic Church)
- Men and women play traditional roles in the family, with the husband enjoying the decision-making power.
- Value children and extended family (Zuniga, 2001).
- Prefer to be informed by friends or Hispanic/Latino associations.
- Are brand-loyal. If satisfied, Hispanics/Latinos stick to a particular brand of product or program forever (Rossman, 1999, Tharp, 2001).

- Are optimistic. One buzzword is “simpotia,” which means “keep everyone happy.”

For more in-depth information on the culture, review Unit 2.

Identify Strategies: Strategies, based on the backdrop, for developing personal marketing materials for the American Hispanics/Latinos:

- Use informal Spanish. Give detailed information and use visual images. Please note: just as not all English-speaking people have high literacy levels, not all Hispanics/Latinos have high Spanish literacy levels.
- Depending on the place or situation, speak in either English or Spanish or in both English and Spanish. Have a neutral accent and appearance.
- Be aware of the fact that Spanish is a high-context language. Be indirect and careful while using pronouns. Use humor and vignettes with Hispanic/Latino characters in them.
- Take your marketing to churches or family gatherings.
- Please the family. Remember that the man of the family is the key decision-maker. Also, have a marketing campaign that includes benefits for the entire family.
- Use testimonials from other Hispanics/Latinos who have benefited from your program.
- Apply extensive relationship marketing (see Lesson 3). Show how your program will make their lives even better.

Ethnic Marketing to Native Americans

Identify Group: The fourth group that we will examine is Native Americans.

Identify Values: The backdrop, based on the reviewed literature:

According to Woods (1995), Native Indians are the least-researched ethnic group due to their small size and scattered distribution. The Native American community is the most diverse ethnic community examined here, as there are five hundred federally recognized tribes and two hundred more tribes accepted by different states. The main complaint that Native Americans have about marketing involves the stereotyped images of their culture. Michael Grey, a Native American advertising agent, is of the opinion that “the Indian is always portrayed as a historical figure, not as if we’re alive today” (Advertising Age, 1999). Additionally, many people who belong to groups that we call “Native Americans” or “American India” do not claim that title as their own, rather it is a title given to them by the Europeans who arrives. Names such as First nation’s Peoples and Indigenous Peoples are generic names used to refer to the members of the various tribes (Yellow Bird, 2001). This section will try to compile a list of the values of the Native American community from the limited sources available to create more effective marketing strategies. Here are some Native American values that may impact marketing:

- Identity: label themselves in terms of the group (tribe).
- Spirituality: provides consciousness, meaning and wholeness (Yellow Bird, 2001)
- Accept the group (tribal) leaders as the key decision makers.
- Sharing and cooperation: family and the group take precedence over the individual (Sue & Sue, 1990).
- Harmony with nature, accept the environment and nature (Sue & Sue, 1990).
- Like visuals and oral communication.
- Think storytelling is an important tool to pass on information.
- Give importance to credibility and honesty.
- Want to get rid of stereotyped images of their culture.
- Like to be heard. Native Americans like to be given an opportunity to talk about their experiences, problems and suggestions.

For more in-depth information on the culture, review Unit 2.

Identify Strategies: Strategies for developing marketing materials for Native Americans:

- Identify the group (tribal) leader and seek his guidance.
- Please the group (tribe) by addressing and satisfying all the members of the group (tribe).
- Use bright and colorful visual images.
- Use stories/testimonials to drive home the point you want to make with your Native American audiences. For example, tell stories of how your program has helped other Native Americans.
- Provide facts to show how your program will benefit the community. Establish your credibility with facts and figures (Cultural Relevance and Diversity, 2001).
- Balance modern images with traditional images to avoid stereotyping.
- Ask for their participation. “Ask what they want, rather than being told what they need” (Cultural Relevance and Diversity, 2001).

Plan of Action Worksheet

The key actions I will take to launch ethnic marketing are:

The steps that will assist me to take the above-mentioned actions are:

The factors that will deter me from taking the above-mentioned actions are:

The steps I can take to confront the factors that will deter my actions are:

The intended outcome of these actions will be:

Adapted from O'Mara, J. (1994). Diversity activities and training designs. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

Valuing Differences Model

Key Principles

People work best when they feel valued.

People feel most valued when they believe that their individual and group differences have been taken into account.

The ability to learn from people regarded as different is the key to becoming fully empowered.

When people feel valued and empowered they are able to build relationships in which they work together interdependently and synergistically.

Diversity recognizes that each individual needs and requires a different kind of support to be successful.

Source: Barbara Walker, Digital Corporation

Valuing Process

Strip away stereotypes	(Identify one's filters)
Learn to listen and probe for differences in people's assumptions.	(Be a good listener, check assumptions)
Build significant relationships with people one regards as different	(overcome feelings of discomfort)
Enhance personal empowerment	(ability to put risks in perspective)
Explore and identify differences	(Seek to learn)

Source: Barbara Walker, Valuing Differences

F.A.I.R. Points to Remember

Feedback

- Do I give others adequate information?
- Do I have all the information I need?
- Am I open to feedback from others?
- When I give feedback, do I practice giving “good” feedback?

Assistance

- Do I provide the appropriate assistance and support?
- Do I need assistance or support?
- Have I asked for the assistance and support that I need?
- When I offer assistance, does my approach facilitate or hinder assistance?

Inclusion

- Do I take steps to ensure that everyone feels included?
- Do I behave in a way that causes people to feel included or excluded?
- Do I tolerate other people behaving in a way that causes people to feel excluded?

Respect

- Do I demonstrate appropriate respect and regard for others?
- Am I responsive to indications of disrespectful behavior or perceptions that people feel disrespected?
- Do I demonstrate my awareness that “respect” may mean different things to different people?

How Should Opposition To A Diversity Initiative Be Handled?

Whether you are selling the idea of developing and implementing a diversity initiative to executive management or to the entire staff, questions around the purpose of initiating such an endeavor will—in all likelihood—arise. If not dealt with promptly and effectively, these questions and concerns could be the catalyst for resistance and undermine your results. Oftentimes, proper communication throughout the process can address and sometimes help to avert opposition to such an initiative before it arises. For more information on communicating your diversity process, see Page 16 of this document. The responses to three commonly asked questions are below:

- 1) **Why are we doing this?** Explain the demographic changes in the workforce followed by additional information about the population shifts in your region and in your organization, is a start. You may wish to follow with a discussion of changes that employees have seen and are presently dealing with, in both the organization and the customer-base, and how those changes impact them daily on the job.
- 2) **What's diversity got to do with it?** This question may require an explanation of the business imperative related to diversity, showing that preserving the organization's long-term survival is the objective and pointing out the pragmatic benefits to the individual. For example, learning how to communicate across language barriers may be helpful to supervisors of employees who speak limited English or to customer contact staff who deal with a multicultural customer base. Also, developing strategies for resolving conflicts may be useful to managers with fractionalized teams. Or developing coaching skills may give managers the tools they need to mentor and nurture diverse staff members.
- 3) **Does this mean that we have to lower our standards?** Quality versus diversity perceptions are the root of this question. Resistance may arise among employees who think the emphasis on diversity is antithetical to quality. Dealing with this question may require a discussion of different ways to view the relationship between quality and diversity. The most important point to make regarding this question is that quality and diversity are not mutually exclusive and do occur in the same employee or individual.

Although challenging, such questions provide the opportunity to set the tone, teach about diversity, and demonstrate the organization's commitment to creating a truly inclusive, respectful work environment. Although effective responses can vary, the following are guidelines that may help you to frame responses without creating greater discomfort with the topic.

- 1) **Inquire.** Ask questions to understand, clarify, or get more information. Dig deeper to find out what the person means and what reasoning is behind the comment or question. Make sure your inquiry is a real search for information and not an off-putting accusation.

“What makes you say that?”

“Is that a problem that you are faced with?”

“Can you tell me more about that?”

“How does this impact your interactions with customers?”

- 2) Show empathy.** When powerful emotions are present, acknowledging and responding to the feelings expressed is an important first step in defusing the situation. Listen not just to the words, but to the underlying feelings. It is likely that you will be faced with frustrations similar to those faced by the individual with whom you are talking. Demonstrating understanding can help calm the upset individual so that further communication can take place.

“It is frustrating when you can’t understand someone.”

“It is difficult to help when you don’t know if you’re being understood.”

“That is irritating for me, too.”

“Dealing with situations like that is stressful.”

- 3) Educate.** Once emotions have calmed, use this time as an opportunity to debunk myths, give facts and explain. Share your reading and knowledge about stereotypes, cultural differences and civil rights.

“Did you know that the first civil rights law was passed right after the Civil War, more than 130 years ago?”

“The term ‘gyped’ comes from Gypsy.”

“Many gays and lesbians prefer the term ‘sexual orientation’ over ‘sexual preference’ as it expresses their sense that one’s sexuality is not a choice but is how someone is born.”

- 4) Express your feelings.** When it is your feelings that are involved, you have a right to let the other person know the impact of the comment. Use non-blaming “I” statements when explaining your reactions.

“I feel diminished when I’m referred to as a gal or girl.”

“I’m uncomfortable when us vs. them generalizations are made.”

- 5) State your needs or expectations.** If it is different behavior that you desire, let people know what you do and do not want.

“Let’s focus on creating an approach that we can both agree on.”

“Jokes about other religions or cultural groups are off limits with me.”

- 6) Avoid polarization.** Getting stuck in an either/or situation can be avoided by soliciting other options and points of view.

“What might be other reasons for this behavior?”

“How might someone of a different background see this?”

- 7) Use the silence of no response or delaying your response.** While silence can be interpreted as tacit approval, there are times when the silence of no response is deafening and sends a powerful message of disapproval. Not laughing at a joke or not responding to a sarcastic remark may serve as all the comment that is needed.

8) Avoid arguing and defending. Curb the impulse to debate, persuade, argue or defend your point of view. Doing so usually only strengthens the resistance and drives entrenched opinions deeper. One of the most difficult diversities of all to deal with may be that of differences in values. Acknowledging that we can have differences of opinion yet respect one another also demonstrates your ability to “walk the talk” of diversity.

MAKING MIXED TEAMS WORKS

Being hired by an organization or appointed to a work group does not mean that you will immediately be accepted as a colleague by the people in it. This is particularly true if you are the only minority (racial, gender, disabled, etc.). Below and on the next page are two checklists. Rate yourself on each item as follows:

3 I do this regularly and comfortably

2 I do this some of the time or with some discomfort

1 I rarely do this or do it with great discomfort.

CHECKLIST #1: When I am in the minority

- I ask other members (or past members) of the group, especially those who have been in the same minority position as I am, to help me understand and deal with specific problems.
- When asked for ideas, I do not presume to represent my minority group but speak my opinions as my own, honestly and directly.
- I insist on getting my perspectives and values heard, but do not try to impose them on the group.
- I realize that my addition to the group may cause discomfort. I make efforts to get to know and deal on an individual and personal basis with members of the group who are uncomfortable with me.
- I give others time to get used to me.
- I think and speak regularly in terms of "we" and "us" as a group, rather than dividing myself from them in terms of "me" and "them".
- I inform and support other members of my minority group on the team.
- I am willing to learn, respect and play by the rules before presuming to change them.
- Total**

MAKING MIXED TEAMS WORK (Continued)

CHECKLIST #2: When I am the majority

- I am personally responsive to a new member of the team and actively help him or her "to learn the ropes" and the unwritten rules of the group, without becoming overly protective.
- I am careful not to stereotype the minority person or make him or her into a token minority in the group.
- Though I value the perspectives which a minority brings to the group, I do not ask this person to speak for or represent his or her group.
- I see the addition of someone from a minority group as an opportunity to enrich the abilities of the team and broaden my own perspectives.
- I recognize my discomfort with someone different, and am willing to get to know that person on an individual and personal basis.
- I make myself think and speak in terms of "we" and "us" when dealing with the minority members of my group and avoid separating the minority from the majority in terms of "us" and "them".
- When inclined to make decisions (assignments, committee membership) on the basis of "chemistry" or my "comfort zone" with another, I am aware that my unfamiliarity or discomfort with someone may be an unfair criterion for deciding.
- I am able to look at a minority group member primarily in terms of her or his contribution, role, or function in the group rather than first the minority member.
- Total**

When you have completed either of these quizzes, total your score. A score of 16 or more on each indicates that you have above average sensitivity and skill in managing minority issues. But don't stop there. Get feedback from others. Does the way they see you square with your self-assessment? Plan how you will improve on the skills in which you got low scores.

Adapted from: *Men and Women, Partners at Work*. George F. Simons and G. Deborah Weissman. Crisp Publications, Inc., Los Altos, CA, 1990, pg. 55-56.

How to put diversity to work for you

When you're shopping for some high-impact piece of merchandise—a new car, a new computer, or a new suit—you don't go to only one store or dealer or look at only one brand. You want the widest possible choices as you take advantage of the very best that's available in the marketplace.

When it comes to "shopping" for employees, organizations have the same options. They can limit their search to one particular segment of the population—or they can embrace diversity and recruit job candidates from a deeper pool.

In the words of one company vice president, "If we don't have a diverse workforce, then we are only going to effectively hire out of some fraction of the population and, gradually, the quality of our workforce—relative to our competitors—is going to diminish."

Today, technology no longer is the distinguishing factor between similar companies. What separates sound companies from those that fail are the capabilities of their human resources.

Of course, implementing workplace diversity is not necessarily simple. In fact, incorporating race and gender diversity programs into the preexisting business structure often is a complex task. Many executives asked to create such programs are unsure of how to begin or even of what they hope to accomplish.

Why diversity is crucial

One key point to keep in mind is that diversity should be viewed as a *solution*, not as a problem. Diversity too often is associated with government-mandated quotas or controversial affirmative action plans. Such programs were created in response to the common corporate view of diversity as a dilemma to be dealt with rather than as a solution to be embraced. Consider that workplace diversity . . .

1. Provides businesses with a competitive edge unavailable to homogeneously staffed competitors. A diverse workforce possesses the extensive cultural know-how necessary to conduct business in today's expanding global market.

- 2. Brings together a collection of individuals with unique experiences, ideas, and opinions.** Diverse groups often are more efficient because employees exchange expertise in critical areas that do not overlap.
- 3. Encompasses a group of employees shaped, in part, by race and gender.** This group is capable of invaluable discussion that stimulates new concepts, bolsters creativity, and improves overall quality of the end product.

Learn the language of diversity

"Political correctness" is neither a fad nor a buzzword. The language used in your workforce is a conspicuous indicator of management's attitudes toward diversity. Even a seemingly harmless job title can land your organization in court. Follow these guidelines to lend credibility and consistency to your diversity program:

- Avoid gender-specific pronouns.** Most people are aware that it is inappropriate to refer to a mixed-sex group using only the masculine pronouns "him," "his," and "he." A common remedy is to substitute the plural "they." However, this can get awkward. Consider also using the singular "everyone." For example, "Everyone should open his or her portfolio."
- Stay clear of potentially offensive job descriptions.** Even supposedly gender-neutral job titles may include masculine terms (e.g., *chairman*). Problems arise because both men and women assume that the company using this

language is targeting men. It's best to avoid sex-specific ambiguities by substituting titles such as "courier" for "deliveryman."

- Double-check references to ethnicity.** "Latino" and "Hispanic" aren't interchangeable. "Latinos" are from countries in Latin America only; "Hispanic" refers to both European and American cultures. When referring to a person's cultural background, ask a person of that ethnicity what term he or she feels is most appropriate.
- Understand that people are people first.** Labels that identify an individual by placing an undue emphasis on a physical limitation are inappropriate. "Crippled person" and "AIDS victim" make a physical condition over which the individual has no control a distinguishing trait. Remember, the person you are referring to is a human being first, and the limiting factor should be referred to only as a secondary characteristic. Try "the employee in a wheelchair" or "person with AIDS."

Creating a diversity program

Implementing diversity will complement current business practices. An actionable diversity program specifies goals and carefully designs methods for attaining them. Some factors to consider:

- Search for meaning.** Management should ask itself why the company is interested in diversity. For a program to be effective, it's important that its goals are discussed and agreed upon. Try writing a workplace diversity mission statement. This statement should include perceived problems and specific actions that will rectify these problems should they occur and that will move toward company goals.
- Avoid myopic hiring practices.** Too often, companies interested in hiring employees from diverse backgrounds go to the other extreme and recruit only from specific underrepresented cultural groups. Instead of narrowing

the hiring focus, expand your search for job candidates. Accept résumés from people whose qualifications fall over a broad range of expertise.

- **Encourage diversity of thoughts and ideas.** Avoid falling victim to any preconceived notions of what kind of experience or degree qualifies a candidate for a position. Many top executives have B.A.s in English or History rather than Administration. Essentially, diversity is about bringing together individuals with different ideas and experiences. Hiring outside of the established norm is one way of ensuring that this diversity of ideas will exist.
- **Shatter the “glass ceiling.”** True workplace diversity takes place at all levels of the organization. Relegating cultural minorities and women to low-status jobs or employing them only in low-opportunity departments will create discontent—the exact opposite of the effect diversity should have. As companies rise to the challenge of making sure that equal opportunities are available to each individual, some are implementing mentor programs to encourage minority advancement. These programs ask a high-level executive to “adopt” a promising manager and work with him or her personally to oversee development.
- **Make diversity training work.** Workshops solely concerned with race and gender equality are relics of the '60s and '70s. In the '90s, diversity training extends beyond the divisive effects of workplace racism and sexism; it seeks to inform employees of the advantages of working in a multicultural business. The difference in these two attitudes lies in the fact that early diversity training was intended to propagate assimilation. Emphasizing the value of equality led to an assumption that differences were bad. However, the ultimate goal of diversity training has changed. It no longer requires an employee to lose his or her cultural identity in the interest of commonality. Current diversity training focuses on recognizing the value of unique cultural backgrounds and learning to work more effectively with those who are dissimilar.

Myths about workplace diversity

Controversy has swirled around workplace diversity in recent years based, at least in part, on some rudimentary misunderstandings about the subject. Here are some common myths on the subject—make sure you don't fall for them:

Myth #1

Diversity is based on a theory of proportional racial and gender representation as an end in itself. The nature of diversity cannot be reduced to simple math. Diversity is fundamentally a multicultural approach to conducting good business, not a system of quotas mandated by government.

Myth #2

Diversity requires programs that put the majority at a disadvantage, or programs that give undeserved advantages to minorities. Ultimately, diversity is a business decision made to increase profits as it improves the quality of the end product. The intention in creating a diverse workforce has always been to assemble the most capable group of people available based on their ability to do the work.

Myth #3

The purpose of a diversity program is to dispel current discrimination. Workplace diversity programs no longer are intended solely to combat existing racism and sexism. Current multiculturalism training programs focus on helping employees value cultures other than their own, and enhance their ability to cooperate with coworkers from these cultures.

- **Tap into employees' cultural understanding.** A diverse workforce allows a business to profit from a minority employee's unique experiences to access a culturally specific and economically viable market niche. For example, a regional sales director for Avon Cosmetics in San Francisco discovered a large influx of Asian immigrants in her area. She adapted to this potentially lucrative market by hiring sales representatives familiar with Asian cultures. This decision gave her salespeople a competitive advantage that translated into record sales volume over the next year.
- **Start from the inside out.** Avon's success stems from the regional manager's recognition of consumer needs. In short, diversity became a simple solution to a problem, rather than being a problem itself. The decision to incorporate diversity was conceived and carried out within the company. Difficulties arise when companies are forced by an outside source to begin a diversity program, or when upper-level executives

implement diversity policies and demand employee cooperation—period. Success hinges on management's ability to inform the workforce about organizational goals for the new policies and about how those policies will affect them personally.

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Black Women and the Other "N" Word

by [Aretha Marbley](#) – May 15, 2007

Triggered by Don Imus calling the Rutgers women's basketball team "nappy-headed hos" and the seemingly endless dialogue that ensued thereafter, the author shares her reflections of decades of her and other Black women being called the other "N" word: nappy-headed. She believes that, like skin color, this was yet another way of creating stratification among Black women, subjecting them to a socially constructed and White society's notions of beauty while deflecting from the real issues of health, welfare, education, and prison reform plaguing African American women.

Don Imus calling the Rutgers women's basketball team "nappy-headed hos" triggered painful childhood memories for me of growing up in the backwoods of Southern Arkansas from the mid 1950s through the mid 1970s, especially the self-esteem issues surrounding having my hair referred to as "nappy" by Black and White folks alike. Growing up back then, I had to endure my peers and even adults describing my beautiful coarse, thick hair as little bb balls and cucklebugs (cockleburrs).

With shame, I reflect back on my obsession with wanting a head full of "good" hair that was soft, wavy-hair like the bright (light) skinned Black folks had or long, soft bouncy straight hair like White women--instead of the naturally beautiful hair that I was born with. Even more shamefully, I remember strutting through the neighborhood with pride and feeling beautiful when my hair got pressed, believing this simple transformation into straight hair made me and others think that I was, now, beautiful—and it worked. Some of the emotions I felt are captured in the lyrics to India Arie's song, "I Am Not My Hair":

Little girl with the press and curl/ Age eight I got a Jheri curl/ Thirteen I got a relaxer/ I was a source of so much laughter/ At fifteen when it all broke off/ Eighteen and went all natural/ February two thousand and two/ I went and did/ What I had to do/ Because it was time to change my life/ To become/ the women that I am inside/ Ninety-seven dreadlocks all gone / I looked in the mirror / For the first time and saw that HEY..../I am not this skin.

Thankfully, when I was 10 years old, this mentality about my hair changed when my sister at age 23 (13 years my elder) came home in 1968 (straight from Cook County Hospital Mental Ward) with a new paradigm about Negro hair. I vividly remember, her, a cosmetologist (newly trained at a Black-owned and operated Beauty school on the West side of Chicago) assuring me that my hair was not nappy; rather I had tight curls, and she didn't want to ever hear me again refer to my hair as bad or nappy and insisting that I educate others on what beautiful hair really looked like. The chorus of India Arie's song goes: "I am not my hair/ I am not this skin/ I am not your expectations no no/ I am not my hair."

This was the late 1960s and early 1970s during the peak of the Black movement in the wake of Dr. King's assassination and a time when Black artists like James Brown used words like "Say it loud, I am Black and I am proud;" Black Muslims spread the news of Islam, and Black scholars (Hare, 1976; Staple, 1976; Stone, 1979) tried to change the negative image of being Black to let us know that we were beautiful--our thick lips and hips, dark skin, and hair texture and all.

Ironically, my sister and I had this conversation nine months following her mental breakdown; she endured massive shock treatments and received a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. Yet, here we are now, fast forwarded 23 years past my sister's death, 40 years past the riots of the 60s, the assassinations of Dr. King, Malcolm X, and John and Robert Kennedy, and the pain of integration and desegregation.

What I know to be true, having lived with nappy hair half a century, is that the words "nappy-headed hos" didn't emanate from, nor are they confined to, Don Imus, but rather a pervasive insidious mindset of "nappy hairness" that positions African American women as inferior to White women and further subjects us to White society's notion of beauty. As the lyrics of the song say, "Making me look like a slave."

To illustrate, a few months ago, I sat watching an episode of one of the reality makeover TV shows, where a little girl (with African ancestry and dark skin) whose White mom contacted the show because her little girl had bad, unruly, hair and as a result kids at school made cruel remarks about her hair. According to her mother, the little girl's self-esteem had suffered, and she felt ugly. The mom had tried everything to get her hair straight so that she would be "beautiful."

The show spotlighted the child and her hair in all the adversely negative situations that she had endured. The hair and its unruliness and ugliness were the focus of the entire show. The end result was they hired a hair designer who was able to chemically straighten her hair and make it look beautiful. The show ended with a debut of her transformation into a beautiful little girl with beautiful new straight hair. Miraculously, her new beautiful straight hair stopped the kids from

teasing her and gave her a lot of new friends: Great show! Ratings through the roof!!

What a frightening message to African American girls whose hair is much like the little girl's on the show. What an Imus-like nappy-head-calling message from the subconscious of the American society to me as an African American woman; a message praised and tolerated on national television. More insultingly, we are bombarded daily with similar messages from all the media and through daily conversations. It happens in school cafeterias, in hallways, on school playgrounds and on college campuses, yet no one has called for public schools and college campuses to be closed and teachers, administrators, and college presidents to be fired.

In this regard, as a Black woman, you silence my voice and insult my intelligence by making me think that you are fighting for my honor or changing my status in society with the simple act of firing Don Imus for using the other "N" word (perhaps with Ho) or insisting that Rap and Hip Hop artists remove the words like Bitch, Ho, and the two "N" words from their songs. Especially, when you insult us every day by, for example, relegating African American women to the bottom rung of the economic ladder, letting our young sons die on the streets or get carted off to prisons and jails, or sitting by idly and watching us become the fastest growing group of victims of HIV/AIDS, and we know that no one gets fired or called on the carpet for these gross injustices. Yet, the real solution to saving our honor put forth from groups such as politicians, educators, clergy, and scholars alike is to fire Imus for saying the other "N" word.

Hmm, what delicious irony, perhaps, poetic justice (or hypocrisy), of what it means to be a Black female in America. This brings me to where I am now in 2007. I am 50 rather than 10, a mental health therapist, a counselor educator, and a scholar who has written about Black women and feminism. Not only that, but I have a beautiful head full of naturally coiled, dangling hair twists that I know is beautiful, and at the same time, I am not my hair. Yet, courtesy of all the publicity regarding Don Imus' "nappy-headed hos," I have daily reminders of being called the other "N" word.

My charge, put forth over 40 years ago from a person with paranoid schizophrenia, is to educate people about the other "N" word. Unequivocally, as India Arie sings, I am not my hair. Now here is the educational part, maybe radical: you insult my natural beauty, my scholarly intellect, and my damn sensibilities as an African American woman when you expect me to thank you and pat you on the back for firing Don Imus.

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Encouraging Agitation: An African American Woman's Response To Words That Wound

by [Jeanine Staples](#) — May 23, 2007

This manuscript highlights the growing pervasiveness of racist and sexist language in public discourse and this language's intersection with education for social justice generally and English/Language Arts classrooms specifically. It contextualizes ways literacy educators can employ activities that highlight and criticize this language and advocates for the facilitation of what is called an Agitator identity trait among students - one that encompasses critical consciousness and socio-political action at the site of language inquiry. The manuscript is a call to action that suggests it is the responsibility of all teachers of language and literacy to defy widespread, unchecked use of language that wounds, rendering individuals, groups, and therefore, society, depreciated and filled with potentially killing rage.

INTRODUCTION

Hurtful words are frequently exerted in public discourse. Words that wound, characterizing individuals as inadequate and therefore less valuable than those considered normal and favorable, are used to subjugate. Words like *nappy headed hos*, *bitches*, *dykes*, *kikes*, and *niggers* come to mind. With a greater rate of recurrence, individuals who use these words openly or privately and can be considered power brokers because of their access to broad communication arenas in the public domain, wield the power of these words and wreak havoc on their listeners. Propagators of racist and sexist language incite disorder and the deconstruction of humanity for several reasons. First, they disregard the insidious nature of wounding words. This ignorance breeds delusions and contempt, which are the bedrocks of hate and violence. Secondly, they seem to have little understanding of the vigor of words in general. Invocations of spoken words affect change. This is true because they enact an interaction of intention and signification between and among speakers and listeners. Though it is possible to lace this interaction with kindness and respect it is more commonly laden with misinformation and fears. Neither acknowledgement nor denial can abstract this truth. Positionality also plays a role in the turmoil. The power brokers who use wounding words often represent some faction of the centralized majority. As a result, their words arguably indicate some undercurrent of viciousness in society at large. Missed opportunities to indict their usage incite complicity in potentially wide-spread hate-mongering.

Consequences of spoken words should be of great interest to English and Language Arts educators in particular because most students learn the impact of words and language under the tutelage of their teachers. Students' language learning yields another type of influence, one that can intercept aforementioned power brokers and their discord. Teaching students concrete ways that words wound can inspire empathy and active participation in social justice work. It can contribute to whole bodies of citizens reared in critical consciousness and able to counter word usage they understand as detrimental to individuals and society. Discussions about language diversity then—while commonly associated with second language acquisition and development—should also include attention to the multiplicity of meanings words convey and the weight those meanings have in relationship to the perceived significance of human beings. The meanings of wounding words and their negative impact on perceptions of human worth can be thought of as language *adversity*. Language adversity occurs when words are used to inflict or provoke hardship. It is what happens when hurtful words, with their barrage of meanings, are used to deduce people in ways that trivialize not only the individual, but also the group to which they identify.

THE AGITATOR IDENTITY TRAIT

As an African American woman literacy teacher and researcher I have thought about ways to attend to instances of language adversity in my classroom, particularly with regard to women. Based on years of work with "disengaged"¹ African American urban adolescent readers and writers both in and out of schools, I have found that several activities support awareness of language adversity. Activities that can be thought of as native to English/Language Arts classrooms—responsive discussions, free writing, round-robins, mapping, journaling and critical questioning—can all be used to couch thought on word meaning and usage. One can read or listen to Don Imus and Mike McGuirk's April 2007 comments about the Rutgers University women's basketball team and discuss the denotations of their words. One could read or listen to Snoop Dogg's "Break a Bitch Till I Die!" or "Can You Control Yo Hoe?" song lyrics highlight, and define each adverse word or phrase. A teacher might also decide to read, discuss, and write responsively to radio-talk show host Michael Savage's derogatory comments about Diane Sawyer as a "lying whore" or Barbara Walters as a "double-talking slut."

For an international perspective, one could engage and workshop excerpts from the October 2006 compilation report issued by the United Nations. It is a composite of many studies of bride burnings, honor killings, female infanticide, sex trafficking, mass rape as a weapon of war and other hideous forms of violence against women. Of course, the type of

language that makes this type of sadism possible is also discussed in the document. Another approach involves drawing students' attention to current newspaper articles that highlight the problem of language adversity and facilitating responsive discussions and journal writings about the phenomenon. A more specific example can be seen in the Rwandan massacres of the 1990s. With regard to the ways politically and socially powerful individuals can "exploit the power of social patterns" with language, Mark Buchanan (2007) of the *New York Times* writes that the word "subhuman" was used to describe the Tutsi tribe in the months prior to the Rwandan genocide. The implication was that this word, among others that wound, bore a direct correlation to compliance with hate mongering, war crimes, and a type of irrationally justified acquiescence to participation in torture and murder.

While reading, writing and discussion activities offer points of entry to conversations about language adversity, they frequently leave something to be desired. The kind of outrage and action that many English/Language Arts teachers long for within our classroom communities are often missing. Their absence is due to the fact that, usually, students do not know what to do with these words. Feeling shocked, uncomfortable, or even angry about them seems commonsensical. Determining that something should be done in protest is reasonable. However, an understanding of what that "something" is frequently remains underdeveloped and with it, the move to action. This is the case because English/Language Arts activities that center language adversity need an accompanying attitude, one that bears a framework for movement. My compounded identity has afforded me an attitude with this attribute. It is something I call the Agitator identity trait.

My Agitator identity developed while I was a teacher and doctoral candidate. It emerged in competition with an antithetical attitude, one that shies away from appropriating and interrogating wounding words because of intimidation or a wrongfully perceived helplessness. The complacent attitude is a consequence of the Koon identity trait. My reference to kooning emerges from Spike Lee's (2001) film *Bamboozled*. It is a satire of the African American presence in mass media. In the movie, Lee indicts the status quo for its tendency to require a degree of buffoonery from Black actors and actresses. He also indicts African Americans for their compliance with this expectation. Throughout the movie, Lee explores some historic and contemporary power structures that maintain the tenuous relationships between African Americans and European Americans. In addition, he portrays a series of common scenarios and language adversities African Americans face in industry settings. These scenarios depict the daunting choice one must make between the role of Koon and Agitator in relationship to language adversity and its social, political, and cultural consequences

A Koon is an individual who assists the perpetuation and standardization of a particular group as superior by forfeiting active resistances to wounding words and images, assuaging inflated egos, accommodating self-centered attempts at introspection, shunning self-reflexivity, and disregarding Afro-centric and other inclusive epistemologies and practices in one's personal, professional and academic lives. An Agitator is an individual who repels censorship of self and "others" by critically questioning wounding words, images and practices that are rendered valid by senses of superiority, twisted humor or titillation. An Agitator openly and frequently indicts the White social and capitalist establishment and other domineering structures in societies, political arenas and economies. This denunciation is accomplished by provoking critical consciousness and advocating social justice work in one's personal, professional and academic lives.

In the past, I used the word kooning to describe some of my behavior in graduate school and teacher preparation. I did so because at times I enacted the former trait over the latter in order to move through the system of academia and certification. I contend that all people of color (or otherwise marginalized individuals) who live or travel to any degree in white, middle class, heterosexist, mono-linguistic, male-centered America, koon at some time or another. My work now concentrates on processes that eliminate the kooning identity trait as it inevitably compromises intellectual work.² It also leads to a drastic, intergenerational erosion of character, loss of credible substances of being, and collusion in the degradation of all people. I excise kooning by encouraging agitation in English/Language Arts education and the upset of words that wound.

UPSETTING WORDS THAT WOUND

The Agitator identity trait moves individuals to act. Its presence supports the elimination of kooning and takes for granted that one will do something to affront and eliminate wounding words and intercept their web of deleterious social effects. Encouraging students to assume the role of Agitator assists thinking through English/Language Arts activities that begin to counter the results of adverse words. Agitators upset words that wound by:

- Assuming new words to describe the meaning and implications of demeaning ones
- Placing oneself inside of controversial scenarios and commentaries, making words personal, more effecting, and fueling empathy
- Generating critical "why" questions that explicate the insinuations of words and their impact on individuals and groups
- Drawing attention to the social, historical and political impetuses of depreciating words
- "Outing" the delusions and contempt that fester as a result of wounding words

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PRIVILEGE,
power, and
Difference

Allan G. Johnson



CHAPTER 7

*Privilege, Power,
Difference, and Us*

To do something about the trouble around difference, we have to talk about it, but most of the time we don't, because it feels too risky. This is true for just about everyone, but especially for members of privileged categories, for whites, for men, and for heterosexuals. As Paul Kivel writes, for example, "Rarely do we whites sit back and listen to people of color without interrupting, without being defensive, without trying to regain attention to ourselves, without criticizing or judging."¹

The discomfort, defensiveness, and fear come in part from not knowing how to talk about privilege without feeling vulnerable to anger and blame. They will continue until we find a way to reduce the risk of talking about privilege. The key to reducing the risk lies in understanding what makes talking about privilege *seem* so risky. I don't mean that risk is an illusion. There is no way to do this work without the possibility that people will feel uncomfortable or frightened or threatened. But the risk isn't nearly as big as it seems, for like the proverbial (and mythical)

human fear of the strange and unfamiliar, the problem begins with how people *think* about things and who they are in relation to them.

INDIVIDUALISM: OR, THE MYTH THAT EVERYTHING IS SOMEBODY'S FAULT

We live in a society that encourages us to think that the social world begins and ends with individuals. It's as if an organization or a society is just a collection of people, and everything that happens in it begins with what they each think, feel, and intend. If you understand people, the reasoning goes, then you also understand social life. It's an appealing way to think, because it's grounded in our experience as individuals, which is what we know best. But it's also misleading, because it boxes us into a narrow and distorted view of reality. In other words, it isn't true.

If we use individualism to explain sexism, for example, it's hard to avoid the idea that sexism exists simply because men *are* sexist—men have sexist feelings, beliefs, needs, and motivations that lead them to behave in sexist ways. If sexism produces evil consequences, it's because men *are* evil, hostile, and malevolent toward women. In short, everything bad in the world is seen as somebody's fault, which is why talk about privilege so often turns into a game of hot potato.

Individualistic thinking keeps us stuck in the trouble by making it almost impossible to talk seriously about it. It encourages women, for example, to blame and distrust men. It sets men up to feel personally attacked if anyone mentions gender issues, and to define those issues as a "women's problem." It also encourages men who don't think or behave in overtly sexist ways—the ones most likely to become part of the solution—to conclude that sexism has nothing to do with them, that it's just a problem for "bad" men. The result is a kind of paralysis: people either talk about sexism in the most superficial, unthreaten-

ing, trivializing, and even stupid way ("The Battle of the Sexes," *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*), or they don't talk about it at all.²

Breaking the paralysis begins with realizing that the social world consists of a lot more than individuals. We are always participating in something larger than ourselves—what sociologists call social systems—and systems are more than collections of people. A university, for example, is a social system, and people participate in it. But the people aren't the university and the university isn't the people. This means that to understand what happens in it, we have to look at both the university and how individual people participate in it. If patterns of racism exist in a society, for example, the reason is never just a matter of white people's personalities, feelings, or intentions. We also have to understand how they participate in particular kinds of social systems, how this participation shapes their behavior, and what consequences it produces.

INDIVIDUALS, SYSTEMS, AND PATHS OF LEAST RESISTANCE

To see the difference between a system and the people who participate in it, consider a game like Monopoly. I used to play Monopoly, but I don't anymore because I don't like the way I behave when I do. Like everyone else, as a Monopoly player I try to take everything from the other players—all their money, all their property—which then forces them out of the game. The point of the game is to ruin everyone else and be the only one left in the end. When you win, you feel good, because you're *supposed* to feel good. Except that one day I realized that I felt good about winning—about taking everything from everyone else—even when I played with my children, who were pretty young at the time. But there didn't seem to be much point to playing without trying to win, because winning is what the game

is *about*. Why land on a property and not buy it, or own a property and not improve it, or have other players land on your property and not collect the rent? So I stopped playing.

And it worked, because the fact is that I don't behave in such greedy ways when I'm not playing Monopoly, even though it's still me, Allan, in either case. So what's all this greedy behavior about? Do we behave in greedy ways simply because we *are* greedy? In a sense, the answer is yes in that greed is part of the human repertoire of possible motivations, just like compassion, altruism, or fear. But how, then, do I explain the absence of such behavior when I'm not playing Monopoly? Clearly, the answer has to include both me as an individual human being who's capable of making all kinds of choices *and* something about the social situation in which I make those choices. It's not one or the other; it's both in relation to each other.

If we think of Monopoly as a social system—as “something larger than ourselves that we participate in”—then we can see how people and systems come together in a dynamic relationship that produces the patterns of social life, including problems around difference and privilege. People are indisputably the ones who make social systems happen. If no one plays Monopoly, it's just a box full of stuff with writing inside the cover. When people open it up and identify themselves as players, however, Monopoly starts to *happen*. This makes people very important, but we shouldn't confuse that with Monopoly itself. We aren't Monopoly and Monopoly isn't us. I can describe the game and how it works without saying anything about the personal characteristics of all the people who play it or might play it.

People make Monopoly happen, but *how*? How do we know what to do? How do we choose from the millions of things that, as human beings, we *could* do at any given moment? The answer is the other half of the dynamic relation between individuals and systems. As we sit around the table, we make Monopoly happen from one minute to the next. But our participation in the

game also shapes how *we* happen as people—what we think and feel and do. This doesn't mean that systems control us in a rigid and predictable way. Instead, systems load the odds in certain directions by offering what I call “paths of least resistance” for us to follow.

In every social situation, we have an almost limitless number of choices we might make. Sitting in a movie theater, for example, we could go to sleep, sing, eat dinner, undress, dance, take out a flashlight and read the newspaper, carry on loud conversations, dribble a basketball up and down the aisles—these are just a handful of the millions of behaviors people are capable of. All of these possible paths vary in how much resistance we run into if we try to follow them. We discover this as soon as we choose paths we're not supposed to. Jump up and start singing, for example, and you'll quickly feel how much resistance the management and the rest of the audience offer up to discourage you from going any further. By comparison, the path of least resistance is far more appealing, which is why it's the one we're most likely to choose.

The odds are loaded toward a path of least resistance in several ways. We often choose a path because it's the only one we see. When I get on an elevator, for example, I turn and face front along with everyone else. It rarely occurs to me to do it another way, such as facing the rear. If I did, I'd soon feel how some paths have more resistance than others.

I once tested this idea by walking to the rear of an elevator and standing with my back toward the door. As the seconds ticked by, I could feel people looking at me, wondering what I was up to, and actually wanting me to turn around. I wasn't saying anything or doing anything to anyone. I was only standing there minding my own business. But that wasn't all that I was doing, for I was also violating a social norm that makes facing the door a path of least resistance. The path is there all the time—it's built in to riding the elevator as a social situation—but

the path wasn't clear until I stepped onto a different one and felt the greater resistance rise up around it.

Similar dynamics operate around issues of difference and privilege. In many corporations, for example, the only way to get promoted is to have a mentor or sponsor pick you out as a promising person and bring you along by teaching you what you need to know and acting as an advocate who opens doors and creates opportunities. In a society that separates and privileges people by gender and race, there aren't many opportunities to get comfortable with people across lines of difference. This means that senior managers will feel drawn to employees who resemble them, which usually means those who are white, straight, and male.

Managers who are white and/or male probably won't realize they're following a path of least resistance that shapes their choice until they're asked to mentor an African American woman or someone else they don't resemble. The greater resistance toward the path of mentoring across difference may result from something as subtle as feeling "uncomfortable" in the other person's presence. But that's all it takes to make the relationship ineffective or to ensure that it never happens in the first place.³ And as each manager follows the system's path to mentor and support those who most resemble them, the patterns of white dominance and male dominance in the system as a whole are perpetuated, regardless of what people consciously feel or intend.

In other cases, people know alternative paths exist, but they stick to the path of least resistance anyway, because they're afraid of what will happen if they don't. Resistance can take many forms, ranging from mild disapproval to being fired from a job, beaten up, run out of town, imprisoned, tortured, or killed. When managers are told to lay off large numbers of workers, for example, they may hate the assignment and feel a huge amount of distress. But the path of *least* resistance is to do

what they're told, because the alternative may be for them to lose their own jobs. To make it less unpleasant, they may use euphemisms like "downsizing" and "outplacement" to soften the painful reality of people losing their jobs. (Note in this example how the path of least resistance isn't necessarily an easy path to follow.)

In similar ways, a man may feel uncomfortable when he hears a friend tell a sexist joke, and feel compelled to object in some way. But the path of least resistance in that situation is to go along and avoid the risk of being ostracized or ridiculed for challenging his friend and making *him* feel uncomfortable. The path of least resistance is to smile or laugh or just remain silent.

What we experience as social life happens through a complex dynamic between all kinds of systems—families, schools, workplaces, communities, entire societies—and the choices people make as they participate in them and help make them happen. How we experience the world and ourselves, our sense of other people, and the ongoing reality of the systems themselves all arise, take shape, and happen through this dynamic. In this way, social life produces a variety of consequences, including privilege and oppression. To understand that and what we can do to change it, we have to see how systems are organized in ways that encourage people to follow paths of least resistance. The existence of those paths and the choice we make to follow them are keys to what creates and perpetuates all the forms that privilege and oppression can take in people's lives.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE INVOLVED IN PRIVILEGE AND OPPRESSION

Individuals and systems are connected to each other through a dynamic relationship. If we use this relationship as a model for thinking about the world and ourselves, it's easier to bring problems like racism, sexism, and heterosexism out into the open

and talk about them. In particular, it's easier to see the problems in relation to us, and to see ourselves in relation to them.

If we think the world is just made up of individuals, then a white woman who's told she's "involved" in racism is going to think you're telling her she's a racist person who harbors ill will toward people of color. She's using an individualistic model of the world that limits her to interpreting words like *racist* as personal characteristics, personality flaws. Individualism divides the world up into different kinds of people—good people and bad, racists and nonracists, "good guys" and sexist pigs. It encourages us to think of racism, sexism, and heterosexism as diseases that infect people and make them sick. And so we look for a "cure" that will turn diseased, flawed individuals into healthy, "good" ones, or at least isolate them so that they can't infect others. And if we can't cure them, then we can at least try to control their behavior.

But what about everyone else? How do we see *them* in relation to the trouble around difference? What about the vast majority of whites, for example, who tell survey interviewers that they aren't racist and don't hate or even dislike people of color? Or what about the majority of men who say they favor an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution? From an individualistic perspective, if you aren't consciously or openly prejudiced or hurtful, then you aren't part of the problem. You might show disapproval of "bad" people and even try to help out the people who are hurt by them. Beyond that, however, the trouble doesn't have anything to do with you so far as you can see. If your feelings and thoughts and outward behavior are good, then *you* are good, and that's all that matters.

Unfortunately, that isn't all that matters. There's more, because patterns of oppression and privilege are rooted in systems that we all participate in and make happen. Those patterns are built into paths of least resistance that people feel drawn to follow every day, regardless of whether they think

about where they lead or the consequences they produce. When male professors take more seriously students who look like themselves, for example, they don't have to be self-consciously sexist in order to help perpetuate patterns of gender privilege. They don't have to be bad people in order to play a "game" that produces oppressive consequences. It's the same as when people play Monopoly—it always ends with someone winning and everyone else losing, *because that's how the game is set up to work as a system*. The only way to change the outcome is to change how we see and play the game and, eventually, the *system itself* and its paths of least resistance. If we have a vision of what we want social life to look like, we have to create paths that lead in that direction.

Of course there are people in the world who have hatred in their hearts—such as neo-Nazi skinheads who make a sport of harassing and killing blacks or homosexuals—and it's important not to minimize the damage they do. Paradoxically, however, even though they cause a lot of trouble, they aren't the key to understanding privilege or to doing something about it. They are participating in something larger than themselves that, among other things, steers them toward certain targets for their rage. It's no accident that their hatred is rarely directed at privileged groups, but instead those who are culturally devalued and excluded. Hate-crime perpetrators may have personality disorders that bend them toward victimizing *someone*, but their choice of whom to victimize isn't part of a mental illness. That's something they have to learn, and culture is everyone's most powerful teacher. In choosing their targets, they follow paths of least resistance built into a society that everyone participates in, that everyone makes happen, regardless of how they feel or what they intend.

So if I notice that someone plays Monopoly in a ruthless way, it's a mistake to explain that simply in terms of their personality. I also have to ask how a system like Monopoly rewards

ruthless behavior more than other games we might play. I have to ask how it creates conditions that make such behavior appear to be the path of least resistance, normal and unremarkable. And since I'm playing the game, too, I'm one of the people who make it happen as a system, and its paths must affect me, too.

My first reaction might be to deny that I follow that path. I'm not a ruthless person or anything close to it. But this misses the key difference between systems and the people who participate in them: We don't have to be ruthless *people* in order to support or follow paths of least resistance that lead to behavior with ruthless *consequences*. After all, we're all trying to win, because that's the point of the game. However gentle and kind I am as I take your money when you land on my Boardwalk with its four houses, take it I will and gladly, too. "Thank you," I say in my most sincerely unruthless tone, or even "Sorry," as I drive you out of the game by taking your last dollar and your mortgaged properties. Me, ruthless? Not at all. I'm just playing the game the way it's supposed to be played. And even if I don't try hard to win, the mere fact that I play the game supports its existence and makes it possible, especially if I remain silent about the consequences it produces. Just my going along makes the game appear normal and acceptable, which reinforces the paths of least resistance for everyone else.

This is how most systems work and how most people participate in them. It's also how systems of privilege work. Good people with good intentions make systems happen that produce all kinds of injustice and suffering for people in culturally devalued and excluded groups. Most of the time, people don't even know the paths are there in the first place, and this is why it's important to raise awareness that everyone is always following them in one way or another. If you weren't following a path of least resistance, you'd certainly know it, because you'd be on an alternative path with greater resistance that would make itself felt.

In other words, if you're not going along with the system, it won't be long before people notice and let you know it. All you have to do is show up for work wearing "inappropriate" clothes to see how quickly resistance can form around alternative paths.

The trouble around difference is so pervasive, so long-standing, so huge in its consequences for so many millions of people that it can't be written off as the misguided doings of a small minority of people with personality problems. The people who get labeled as bigots, misogynists, or homophobes are all following racist, sexist, heterosexist paths of least resistance that are built into the entire society.

In a way, "bad people" are like ruthless Monopoly players who are doing just what the game calls for even if their "style" is a bit extreme. Such extremists may be the ones who grab the headlines, but they don't have enough power to create and sustain trouble of this magnitude. The trouble appears in the daily workings of every workplace, every school and university, every government agency, every community. It involves every major kind of social system, and since systems don't exist without the involvement of people, there's no way to escape being involved in the trouble that comes out of them. If we participate in systems the trouble comes out of, and if those systems exist only through our participation, then this is enough to involve us in the trouble itself.

Reminders of this reality are everywhere. I see it, for example, every time I look at the label in a piece of clothing. I just went upstairs to my closet and noted where each of my shirts was made. Although each carries a U.S. brand name, only three were made here; the rest were made in the Philippines, Thailand, Mexico, Taiwan, Macao, Singapore, or Hong Kong. And although each cost me twenty to forty dollars, it's a good bet that the people who actually made them—primarily women—were paid pennies for their labor performed under terrible

conditions that can sometimes be so extreme as to resemble slavery.

The only reason people exploit workers in such horrible ways is to make money in a capitalist system. To judge from the contents of my closet, that clearly includes *my* money. By itself, that fact doesn't make me a bad person, because I certainly don't intend that people suffer for the sake of my wardrobe. But it does mean that I'm involved in their suffering because I participate in a system that produces that suffering. As someone who helps make the system happen, however, I can also be a part of the solution.

But isn't the difference I could make a tiny one? The question makes me think of the devastating floods of 1993 along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. The news was full of powerful images of people from all walks of life working feverishly side by side to build dikes to hold back the raging waters that threatened their communities. Together, they filled and placed thousands of sandbags. When the waters receded, much had been lost, but a great deal had been saved as well. I wonder how it felt to be one of those people. I imagine they were proud of their effort and experienced a satisfying sense of solidarity with the people they'd worked with. The sandbags each individual personally contributed were the tiniest fraction of the total, but each felt part of the group effort and was proud to identify with the consequences it produced. They didn't have to make a big or even measurable difference to feel involved.

It works that way with the good things that come out of people pulling together in all the systems that make up social life. It also works that way with the bad things, with each sandbag adding to the problem instead of the solution. To perpetuate privilege and oppression, we don't even have to do anything consciously to support it. Just our silence is crucial for ensuring its future, for the simple fact is that no system of social oppression can continue to exist without most people choosing to

remain silent about it. If most whites spoke out about racism; if most men talked about sexism; if most heterosexuals came out of their closet of silence and stood openly against heterosexism, it would be a critical first step toward revolutionary change. But the vast majority of "good" people are silent on these issues, and it's easy for others to read their silence as support.

As long as we participate in social systems, we don't get to choose whether to be involved in the consequences they produce. We're involved simply through the fact that we're here. As such, we can only choose *how* to be involved, whether to be just part of the problem or also to be part of the solution. That's where our power lies, and also our responsibility.

In similar ways, men can tell themselves that women who say they're sexually harassed are hypersensitive, or had no business being where they were, or sent mixed signals, or "asked for it" in one way or another. If a woman fails to break through the glass ceiling, men can say she doesn't have the right stuff. If she allows herself to be openly emotional, men can point to that as a reason she hasn't reached the heights; if she *isn't* emotional and nurturing, they can criticize her for not being "womanly" enough, too much like a man. If she's friendly, men can say she wants to be approached sexually; if she isn't friendly, they can say she's stuck up, cold, a bitch even, and deserves what she gets.

Or lesbians and gay men may be told they're "asking for trouble" by "flaunting" their sexual orientation by, say, holding hands in public—in other words, by being as open about being gay or lesbian as heterosexuals are about being straight.

The result of such thinking is that oppression is blamed on the people who suffer most from it, while privilege and those who benefit remain invisible and relatively untouched. And off the hook.

CALL IT SOMETHING ELSE

A more subtle way to deny oppression and privilege is to call them something else, thereby creating the appearance of being in touch with reality without having to do something about it.

Gender inequality, for example, is often described as a charming "battle of the sexes," or as an anthropological curiosity based on the idea that males and females come from different cultures, if not different planets. Deborah Tannen tells us in her popular books on gender and language that the problem is primarily one of communication and misunderstanding. The two genders come from essentially different cultures, she writes, and they get into trouble because they don't know how to inter-

pret each other's talk. In fact, however, they grow up in the same culture. They live in the same families, attend the same schools, watch television and movies together, and play in the same neighborhoods and schoolyards.

And while gender differences in styles of talk do exist, they are more significant than the differences between, say, Japanese and U.S. styles of talk. The differences serve a purpose. They ensure male privilege and keep women in an inferior position. They reflect the male-dominated, male-centered, male-identified nature of society. Every time a man interrupts a woman, for example, and she defers by becoming silent, a pattern of male dominance and male centeredness is acted out once again, one of the endless tiny events through which social systems and gender privilege happen. There's nothing cute or charming about it, but acting as if there were is a way to avoid looking at what's really going on.

Avoiding the trouble by calling it something else is most highly developed in relation to gender inequality. A major reason is that women and men depend on one another in ways that other groups do not. Most whites don't particularly need people of color, for example, but relationships across gender lines are the backbone of most people's lives. This is especially true for heterosexuals, but no matter what your sexual orientation, everyone has parents and most have siblings or friendships that are cross-gender. So how do we live in such close quarters without confronting the reality—and the discomfort—of the trouble around gender? Patriarchal culture provides the answer: to see the world through a thick ideology of gender, a rich collection of images and ideas that mask the reality of gender inequality by turning it into something else in our minds.

Men find ways to make jokes, for example, about every aspect of gender inequality, from violence against women to sexuality to who gets stuck with cleaning the house or changing the diapers. They laugh about it in ways that would be unthinkable

if the subject were race or anti-Semitism. This isn't because gender oppression is less serious than other forms. In many ways just the opposite is true. Instead, it is because gender inequality runs so deep in our lives and has such serious consequences that men go to even greater lengths to make it appear normal and so avoid seeing it for what it is.

IT'S BETTER THIS WAY

The combination of denial and calling oppression and privilege something else often results in the claim that everyone actually prefers things the way they are. I often hear whites, for example, say with great confidence that blacks would rather live among other blacks, reflecting a supposedly natural human tendency to choose the company of "your own kind." In fact, however, research shows clearly that most blacks would prefer to live in integrated neighborhoods. If anyone wants to live "with their own kind," it is whites. It is whites who enforce the extreme level of residential segregation found in the United States and the devastating consequences that result.

Segregation is also portrayed as a matter of simple economics: blacks and other people of color don't live among whites because they can't afford to. But in fact, it is racism, not income, occupation, or education, that stands in the way of integrated living for most people of color, especially those in the middle class.⁴

The thick ideology around gender privilege includes all kinds of claims that the status quo is best. Patriarchal culture, for example, is full of messages that women prefer strong men who dominate them and make all the "big" decisions: When a woman says no to sex, she at least means maybe and probably means yes; women "ask" for all kinds of trouble, especially what's otherwise known as rape, sexual harassment, and being beaten by domestic partners; male superiority is a natural ar-

rangement dictated by genes and other biological imperatives; men are naturally breadwinners, and women are naturally best suited to having bread won for them and tending to children and keeping the house clean. It doesn't matter how much evidence is weighed against such notions. It doesn't matter how often women complain about male control or how often they insist that no means no. It doesn't matter that women have been major "breadwinners" for virtually all of human history and that staying home and being supported by men is a historical anomaly that doesn't apply to the vast majority of people in the world and never has.

The truth doesn't matter, however, because ideology isn't about truth or accuracy. Rather, its purpose is to get privileged people off the hook and preserve the status quo. It supports the all too human tendency to soothe yourself into thinking there's nothing unpleasant or challenging here to deal with, and certainly nothing to do with you. And when someone dares to challenge that comforting reality, it's easy to confuse the bearer of bad news with the bad news itself. When blacks call attention to the divisions caused by race privilege, for example, they're often accused of *creating* those divisions, as if racism isn't a problem unless you talk about it. Talking about privilege rather than privilege itself gets defined as the problem.

Being part of the solution to a trouble that already divides us begins with coming together around the simple truth that we're *all* in trouble and that pretending we aren't is a key to what keeps us apart.

IT DOESN'T COUNT IF YOU DON'T MEAN IT

Because our culture encourages us to use an individual-guilt model to explain just about everything that goes wrong, it's easy to confuse intentions with consequences. In other words, if

something bad happens, someone's conscious bad intentions must be behind it. A corollary is that if your intentions are good, then nothing bad can happen from them.

As we saw earlier, for example, racism is usually defined as a bad attitude toward people of color, as malicious intentions buttressed by negative cultural stereotypes. When whites are confronted with matters of race, they usually react as if the issue isn't patterns of inequality and unnecessary suffering, but their own personal feelings and views about race and the question of their individual guilt or innocence. They respond as if the challenge is to get themselves off the hook by showing themselves to be pure on the subject of race. They seem to think that if they don't *mean* it, then it didn't happen, as if their conscious intent is the only thing that connects them to the consequences of what they do or don't do.

"I didn't mean it" stops conversation before people can get to the reality that it doesn't matter whether they meant it or not. The consequence remains just the same. Take the case of a white female professor who calls on only whites in class. Since she has no conscious animosity toward people of color, she doesn't see herself as having anything to do with the continuing pattern of racial inequality that results from the choices she makes as she does her job. In other words, she doesn't see herself as part of the problem or, therefore, as part of the solution.

Or a man makes repeated sexual comments to a female colleague. When she gets angry and tells him to stop, he gets defensive. He says it was only a joke, or that he just finds her attractive and meant no harm by it. What he doesn't do is acknowledge that regardless of the intentions he's aware of, he *has* done her harm, and she's likely to be left to deal with it on her own. He acts as though a lack of conscious intent means a lack of effect, as if *saying* it was only a joke or only being *aware* of it as a joke is enough to *make* it just a joke.

Sometimes this insight can take us into unexpected places when we apply it to the mundane details of everyday life. A while ago, for example, there was a heated exchange in an Internet discussion over what seems at first glance to be a trivial topic: whether men should open doors for women. A middle-aged man at a talk I gave recently expressed his frustration and concern about whether to open doors for women. "The rules are changing," he said. "I always thought it was the polite thing to do, but now women get mad at me sometimes."

The online discussion began when a woman pointed out that she didn't like it when men rushed ahead or, worse, jockeyed with other men for the honor of opening a door for her to pass through without having to open it herself.

"I remember," she wrote, "when I first realized how stupid I felt sitting in a car while a man scurried around to open the door for me." She objected to this "door-opening ceremony" because "it seemed to do more for men than it did for women." She explained that it puts men in a position of control and independence (men can open doors for themselves) and leaves her waiting helplessly for men do what she could do for herself. Like all rituals, opening doors is symbolic, and it conveys a cultural message: Men are active, capable, and independent, while women are passive, incapable, and dependent—yet another way to keep men in control.

The men roared back in a defensive chorus. "We aren't *trying* to dominate anyone," wrote one. "We're just being *polite*."

"But," another woman objected, "there's more going on than the men admit." She pointed out that if this ritual were just performed out of politeness, *women* would also feel obliged to open doors for *men*, since being polite is something that runs both ways. Politeness, of course, can go in just one direction, as when subordinates defer to superiors.

"Well, maybe that's what door opening is," a man shot back. "Men are like servants waiting on women."

"But," came the swift reply, "if that were so, why is it so hard to get men to help us when we really need it? Why are we always stuck with the scut work at home and at work?"

It went on this way for quite a while, women objecting to *consequences* they didn't like and men defending against conscious *intentions* they didn't feel they had. The key to getting unstuck, I think, is to realize that consequences matter whether or not they're matched by intentions. "The road to hell," as the old saying goes, "is paved with good intentions." When men defend opening doors for women as just being polite, they assume it can't mean something they don't know about.

But what things mean isn't a private matter, because meaning comes from culture. Men can *think* they're just being nice guys, but that doesn't mean rushing ahead to open that door won't have social consequences beyond what they're aware of. In a patriarchal society, there's a good chance that the forms people follow—including being "polite"—are also patriarchal. In short, both sides of the argument can be right: Men may not consciously intend to put women down, and what men do often *does* put women down.

It's also worth noting that I didn't get the sense that the women in this conversation were trying to get the men to confess to some dark, malevolent motives. They weren't trying to make them feel bad about themselves or even apologize. What they were arguing for was for men to be conscious of what they were doing, to see how such patterns can produce bad consequences, and to do something to stop it.

Toward that end, it is generally useful to ask ourselves what we mean whenever we say, "I didn't mean it," because on some level, it's reasonable to assume that we mean everything we do and say. At a retirement party for a black manager, for example, a white colleague arranged a slide show that included pictures of black people happily eating watermelon. Blacks in the audience were shocked and angered, and when someone confronted the

white man later on, his reaction was, "I'm not racist. I didn't mean anything by it."

In effect, "I didn't mean it" often comes close to "I didn't say it" or "I didn't do it," which of course isn't true. What, then, do the words signify? Most of the time, the real message is this: "I did it; I said it; but I didn't think about it." In many social situations, that kind of response clearly won't work. If I steal someone's car, the judge is unlikely to go easy on me if I say, "I didn't mean anything by it; I just wanted the car and I didn't think much about it at the time," or "I didn't consider whether the owner would mind," or "Getting arrested didn't cross my mind." The judge would probably say, "You *should* have thought about all those things." In other words, I'm held responsible to act with an ongoing awareness of the consequences of what I do and don't do.

But privilege works against such awareness in all kinds of social situations. The manager should have been mindful of racial patterns in mentoring and promotion. The white colleague should have thought about the cultural message behind demeaning stereotypes that associate blacks with watermelon. The man who sexually harassed should have been aware of what it's like to be a woman on the receiving end of such behavior. But they weren't, and such patterns are the norm, not the exception. Why?

If we use an individualistic model of the world, the answer is that people are callous or uncaring or prejudiced or too busy to bother with paying attention to their actions—especially if they're white or heterosexual or male. Sometimes, of course, this is true, but more often the larger truth is that the luxury of obliviousness makes a lack of conscious intent a path of least resistance that's easy to follow without knowing it. The sense of entitlement and superiority that underlies most forms of privilege runs so deep and is so entrenched that people don't have to think about it in order to act from it. They can always say they

didn't mean it and, in a real sense, they're telling the truth. That's why "I didn't mean it" can be so disarming and such an effective way to defend privilege. They *weren't* thinking; they *weren't* mindful; they *weren't* aware—all the things that go into "meaning it." But this is precisely the problem with privilege and the damage that it does.

I'M ONE OF THE GOOD ONES

One way to acknowledge the problem of privilege and oppression and get off the hook at the same time is to make use of an illusion we looked at earlier: that bad things happen in social life simply because of bad people. Since I can make a good case that I'm not a bad person, then the trouble couldn't have anything to do with me.

"Racism still exists," I can say, "and it's a shame there are still bigots around like the Klan and the skinheads and neo-Nazis." Or "Unfortunately, some men still haven't gotten used to women in the workplace." Or "People who haven't worked through their homophobia make life difficult for gays and lesbians."

"And," I can hasten to add, if only to myself, "I don't belong to the Klan, I don't see color, I like women, and I have no 'problem' with gays and lesbians as far as I know."

Having set myself up as a good person with good intentions, I can feel disapproval or even compassion for all those bad, flawed, or sick people who supposedly make trouble happen all by themselves in spite of people like me. And I can sympathize with people who suffer as a result. But the issue of just where I am in all of this drops out of sight. Apparently I'm on the outside looking in as a concerned observer. I might even have moments when I count myself as a victim, since I feel bad whenever I think about it.

But the truth is that my silence, my inaction, and especially my passive acceptance of the everyday privilege that goes along

with group membership are all it takes to make me just as much a part of the problem as any member of the Klan.

It's a point that's easy to miss, because we want people to see and judge us as individuals, not as members of a social category.⁵ But when we insist on that, we're being naïve if not somewhat false, for the fact is that we *do* want people to treat us as members of social categories whenever it works to our advantage. When I go into a store, for example, I want to be waited on right away and treated with respect even though the clerks don't know a thing about me as an individual. I want them to accept my check or credit card and not treat me with suspicion and distrust. But all they know about me is the categories they think I belong to—a customer of a certain race, age, gender, and class—and all the things they think they know about people who belong to those categories. I want that to be enough. I don't want to have to prove over and over again that I'm someone who deserves to be trusted and taken seriously. I want them to *assume* all that, and the only way they can do that is to perceive me as belonging to the "right" social categories.

This is simply how social life works. By itself, it's not a problem. What many people resist seeing, however, is that on the other side of that same social process are all the people who get put into the "wrong" categories and ignored or followed around or treated with suspicion and disrespect regardless of who they are as individuals.

I can't have it both ways. If I'm going to welcome the way social categories work to my advantage, I also have to consider that when those same categories are used against others through no fault of their own, it then becomes *my* business because through that process *I* am being privileged at *their* expense.

In 1990, ABC News aired as a segment of *Prime Time* a documentary called *True Colors* that powerfully illustrates this dynamic. It focused on two men who were quite similar in every

observable characteristic except race: one was black and one was white. The crew used hidden cameras and microphones to record what happened in various situations: applying for a job, accidentally locking yourself out of your car, trying to rent an apartment, shopping for shoes, buying a car, and so on. Over and over again the two men were treated differently. In one instance, the white man wandered into a shoe store in a shopping mall. He was barely across the threshold when the white clerk approached him with a smile and an outstretched hand. He looked at some shoes, and then went on his way. Minutes later his black partner entered the store and from the outset was utterly ignored by the clerk, who stood only a few feet away. Nothing the black man did seemed to make a difference. He picked up and looked at shoes, he walked up and down the display aisles, he gazed thoughtfully at a particular style. After what seemed an eternity, he left.

When I show *True Colors* in my race class and at diversity training sessions, I ask whites if they identify with anyone in the video. Invariably they say no, because they don't see themselves in the black man's predicament or in the racist behavior of the whites. Somehow, the white partner who is on the receiving end of preferential treatment is invisible to them, and if I don't mention him, he rarely comes up. In other words, they don't say, "Yes, I see myself in the white guy receiving the benefits of white privilege."

The effect of this obliviousness is for *them* to become invisible as white people in everyday situations and unaware of how privilege happens to them, especially in relation to other whites. They don't see themselves as being involved in situations where privilege comes into play. They don't see, for example, that simply being white puts them in a particular relationship with someone like the shoe store clerk (whom they readily identify as "racist"), or how this relationship results in the way black customers are treated and how *they* are treated as whites.

The invisibility of whiteness illustrates how privilege can blind those who receive it to what's going on. As Ruth Frankenberg writes about a white woman she interviewed, "Beth was much more sharply aware of racial *oppression* shaping Black experience than of race *privilege* shaping her own life. Thus, Beth could be alert to the realities of economic discrimination against Black communities while still conceptualizing her own life as racially neutral—nonracialized, nonpolitical."⁶

A common form of this is that women and racial minorities are often described as being treated unequally, but men and whites are not. This, however, is logically impossible. *Unequal* simply means "not equal," which describes both those who receive less than their fair share *and* those who receive more. But there can't be a short end of the stick without a long end, because it's the longness of the long end that makes the short end short. To pretend otherwise makes privilege and those who receive it invisible.

So long as we participate in a society that transforms difference into privilege, there is no neutral ground to stand on. If I'm in a meeting where men pay more attention to what I and other men say than to women, for example, I'm on the receiving end of privilege. My mere acceptance of that privilege—whether conscious or not—is all that other men need from me in order to perpetuate it. Other men *need* my compliance in order for sexist privilege to work, even if my compliance is unconscious and passive. I know this because as soon as I put more resistance around that path by speaking out and merely calling attention to it, I can feel the defensive response rise up to meet me. In this sense, I don't have to be consciously hostile toward women in order to play an integral role in maintaining male privilege as a pattern in this society.

In the same way, whites need the compliance of other whites in order for race privilege to work. If I look around my workplace and see no people of color, my silence on this issue sends

the message to other whites that there is no issue. The shoe clerk's racist behavior depends on his being able to assume that other whites don't see a problem with preferential treatment for whites. That's what makes this path of racial preference a path of least resistance. And every white person either supports or challenges that assumption in choosing which path to follow. It is in the nature of social life that people continually look to one another to confirm or deny what they experience as reality. Given that, other people will interpret my going along with them down this path as my acceptance of that path unless I do something to make them think otherwise. Whether we know it or not, when someone discriminates by treating me better simply because I'm white, we walk down a path of racial privilege *together*.

There is no such thing as doing nothing. There is no such thing as being neutral or uninvolved. At every moment, social life involves each of us.

SICK AND TIRED

It's not unusual for whites to comment on how sick and tired they are of hearing about race. "It's always in your face," they say. I ask how often is "always," and what does "it" consist of? They become a bit vague. "Oh, it's in the news," they say, "all the time."

"Every day?" I ask.

"Well, it seems like it," they say.

"Every hour, every minute?"

"No, of course not," they say, and I can tell they're starting to get a little irritated with me. I realize they aren't trying to report an objective reality in the world. They're describing the feeling of being annoyed by something, put upon. When you're annoyed by something, it can seem as though it's everywhere, as if there's no escaping it. When it comes to the problem of privi-

lege and oppression, privileged groups don't want to hear about it at all because it disturbs the luxury of obliviousness that comes with privilege. This means you don't have to bring it up very much in order for them to feel put upon. "Always" turns out to be somewhere between never and every minute. In reality, "all the time" comes down to "enough to make me look at what I don't want to look at, enough to make me uncomfortable." And usually that doesn't take much.

A similar dynamic operates with most forms of privilege. The middle and upper classes say they're sick and tired of hearing about welfare and poverty. Heterosexuals are sick and tired of hearing about gay and lesbian issues. And it takes almost no criticism at all in order for men to feel "bashed," like it's "open season on men." In fact, just saying "male privilege" or "patriarchy" can start eyes rolling and evoke that exasperated sense of "Here we go *again*."

In fact, 99 percent of the time there is utter silence in this society on the subject of gender privilege. In a system that privileges maleness, the default is *never* to do anything that might make men feel challenged or uncomfortable as men. In the same way, because whiteness is privileged over color, the norm is to never call attention to whiteness itself in ways that make white people uncomfortable. It's expected, of course, to routinely draw attention to male and white and heterosexual *people*, since our society is centered on and identified with those groups. But that differs from drawing attention to "male," "heterosexual," or "white" as social categories that are problematic.

Another reason for the "sick and tired" complaint is that life is hard for everyone. "Don't bring us your troubles," privileged groups say to the rest, "we've got troubles of our own." Many white men, for example, especially those who lack class privilege, spend a lot of time worrying about losing their jobs. So why should they have to listen to women or people of color talk about their problems with work, especially when the talk

suggests that white men should be doing something more than they already are? When Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, says that it's "utterly exhausting being Black in America," many white people barely miss a beat in responding that they're tired, too.⁷

And of course, they are. They're exhausted from the pace of life that a competitive capitalist society imposes on everyone, and it's hard to hear about racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. But it's one thing to have to hear about such problems and another to have to live them every day. The quick white defensiveness runs right past the fact that whatever it is that exhausts white people, it isn't the fact of being white. It may be exhausting to be a parent, or a worker, or a spouse, or a student who works all day and studies all night, but it's not exhausting to be a white person or, for that matter, a heterosexual or a man.

By comparison, blacks, women, and homosexuals have to do all the things that also exhaust whites, men, and heterosexuals, from raising families to earning a living to getting older. But on top of that, they must also struggle with the accumulation of fine grinding grit that oppression loads onto people's lives simply because they're in the "wrong" social category.

"I'm sick and tired" is a defense. It allows privileged groups to claim the protected status of victims. It reminds me of those times when a person injures you in some way, and when you confront them about it, they get angry at *you* because you've made them feel guilty about what they did. "Look how bad you've made me feel," they say, as if you're supposed to apologize for bringing your injury to their attention. Children often use this defense because they're so self-centered that the idea of taking responsibility for what they've done doesn't occur to them. When confronted with their misbehavior they sulk and glower and act hurt and put upon, as if someone has just laid a heavy and undeserved weight on their shoulders.

Privilege similarly encourages people to be self-centered and unaccountable to others. It encourages whites and men and other advantaged groups to behave as less than adults. It makes avoiding responsibility for what they do and don't do a path of least resistance. And yet, at the same time, these are the groups in charge of social institutions. People in these groups are the ones who occupy positions of responsible adult authority. It's a combination guaranteed to keep the trouble going unless the cycle of denial and defense is broken. The challenge for whites and men and heterosexuals is to see how privilege keeps them from growing up, how it diminishes everyone—including them—and blocks their potential to be part of the solution.

GETTING OFF THE HOOK BY GETTING ON

If being on the hook for privilege and oppression means being perpetually vulnerable to guilt and blame, then we shouldn't be surprised that people do whatever they can to get off it. But according to my dictionary, *on the hook* also means being "committed," "obliged," and "involved."

In this sense, being on the hook is one of those things that distinguish adults from children—adults are and children aren't. When I'm on the hook, I feel called to use my power and authority as an adult to take responsibility, to act, to make things happen. Being "involved" makes me part of something larger, and I can't stand alone as an isolated individual. Being "obliged" means more than just being burdened, for it also connects me to people and makes me aware of how I affect them. And being "committed" to something focuses my potential to make a difference and bonds me to those who feel the same way.

Off the hook, I'm like a piece of wood floating with the current. On the hook, I have forward motion and a rudder to steer

by. Off the hook, I live in illusion and denial, as if I can choose whether to be involved in the life of our society and the consequences it produces. But involvement is something that comes with being alive in the world as a human being. On the hook is where I can live fully in the world as it really is.

Trying to live off the hook puts members of privileged groups inside a tight little circle that cuts them off from much of what it means to be alive. They have to work to distance themselves from most of humanity, because they can't get close to other people without touching the trouble around privilege and oppression. Men living off the hook distance and insulate themselves from women, whites from people of color, heterosexuals from lesbians and gay men, the middle and upper classes from the working and lower classes. And the more diverse and interconnected the world becomes, the harder it is to sustain the illusion and the denial day after day, the more it takes to maintain the distance and deny the connection. They become like the person who loses the ability to feel pain, and bleeds to death from a thousand tiny cuts that go unnoticed, untreated, and unhealed.

Sooner or later, whites, heterosexuals, and men need to embrace this hook they're on, not as some terrible affliction or occasion for guilt and shame, but as a challenge and an opportunity. It's where they've been, where they are, and where they're going.



CHAPTER 10

What Can We Do? Becoming Part of the Solution

The challenge we face is to change patterns of exclusion, rejection, privilege, harassment, discrimination, and violence that are everywhere in this society and have existed for hundreds (or, in the case of gender, thousands) of years. We have to begin by thinking about the trouble and the challenge in new and more productive ways as outlined in the preceding chapters. Here is a summary of the tools we have to start with.

Large numbers of people have sat on the sidelines and seen themselves as neither part of the problem nor the solution. Beyond this shared trait, however, they are far from homogeneous. Everyone is aware of the whites, heterosexuals, and men who intentionally act out in oppressive ways. But there is less attention to the millions of people who know inequities exist and want to be part of the solution. Their silence and invisibility allow the trouble to continue. Removing what silences them and stands in their way can tap an enormous potential of energy for change.



The Culture of Power

adapted from *Uprooting Racism:
How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*

by **Paul Kivel**

IF YOU ARE A WOMAN and you have ever walked into a men's meeting, or a person of color and have walked into a white organization, or a child who walked into the principal's office, or a Jew or Muslim who entered a Christian space, then you know what it is like to walk into a culture of power that is not your own. You may feel insecure, unsafe, disrespected, unseen or marginalized. You know you have to tread carefully.

Whenever one group of people accumulates more power than another group, the more powerful group creates an environment that places its members at the cultural center and other groups at the margins. People in the more powerful group (the "in-group") are accepted as the norm, so if you are in that group it can be very hard for you to see the benefits you receive. Since I'm male and I live in a culture in which men have more social, political, and economic power than women, I often don't notice that women are treated differently than I am. I'm inside a male culture of power. I expect to be treated with respect, to be listened to, and to have my opinions valued. I expect to be welcomed. I expect to see people like me in positions of authority. I expect to find books and newspapers that are written by people like me, that reflect my perspective, and that show me in central roles. I don't necessarily notice that the women around me are treated less respectfully, ignored, or silenced; that they are not visible in positions of authority nor welcomed in certain spaces; and that they are charged more for a variety of goods and services and are not always safe in situations where I feel perfectly comfortable.

Remember when you were a young person entering a space that reflected an adult culture of power — a classroom, store, or office where adults were in charge? What let you know that you were on adult turf, that adults were at the center of power?



Some of the things I remember are that adults were in control. They made the decisions. They might be considerate enough to ask me what I thought, but they did not have to take my concerns into account. I could be dismissed at any time, so I learned to be cautious. I could look around and see what was on the walls, what music was being played, what topics were being discussed, and most important, who made those decisions, and I knew that this was an adult culture of power.

I felt I was under scrutiny. I had to change my behavior — how I dressed (“pull up your pants”, “tuck in your shirt”), how I spoke (“speak up”, “don’t mumble”), even my posture (“Sit up, don’t slouch”, “look me in the eye when I’m talking to you”) – so that I would be accepted and heard. I couldn’t be as smart as I was or I’d be considered a smart aleck. I had to learn the adults’ code, talk about what they wanted to talk about, and find allies among them — adults who would speak up for my needs in my absence. Sometimes I had to cover up my family background and religion in order to be less at risk from adult disapproval. And if there was any disagreement or problem between an adult and myself, I had little credibility. The adult’s word was almost always believed over mine.

The effects on young people of an adult culture of power are similar to the effects on people of color of a white culture of power or the effects on women of a male culture of power. As an adult I rarely notice that I am surrounded by an adult culture of power, which often puts young people and their cultures at a severe disadvantage as they are judged, valued, and given credibility or not by adults on adult terms. Similarly, as a white person, when I’m driving on the freeway I am unlikely to notice that people of color are being pulled over based on skin color. Or when I am in a store I am unlikely to notice that people of color are being followed, not being served as well, or being charged more for the same items. I assume that everyone can vote as easily as I can and that everyone’s vote counts. I am never asked where I am from (and this would be true even if I had stepped off the boat yesterday). In a society that proclaims equal opportunity I may not even believe that other people are being paid less than I am for the same work, or being turned away from jobs and housing because of the color of their skin. When I am in public spaces, the music played in the background, the art on the walls, the language spoken, the layout of the space, the design of the buildings are all things I might not even notice because, as a white person, I am so



comfortable with them. If I did notice them I would probably consider them bland, culturally neutral items. Most of the time I am so much inside the white culture of power, it is so invisible to me, that I have to rely on people of color to point out to me what it looks like, what it feels like, and what impact it has on them.

We can learn to notice the culture of power around us. Recently I was giving a talk at a large Midwestern university and was shown to my room in the hotel run by the university's hotel management department. When I had put my suitcase down and hung up my clothes, I looked around the room. There were two pictures on the wall. One was of a university baseball team from many years ago — 22 white men wearing their team uniforms. The other picture was of a science lab class — 14 students, 13 white men and 1 white woman dressed in lab coats and working at lab benches. In total I had 35 white men and 1 white woman on the walls of my room. "This clearly tells me who's in charge at this university," I said to myself, and it would probably send an unwelcoming, cautionary message to many people of color and white women who stayed in that room that they could expect to be excluded from the culture of power in this institution. I mentioned the composition of the pictures to the hotel management and referred to it again in my talk the next day. A few years ago I would not have "seen" these pictures in terms of race and gender. The pictures themselves, of course, are only symbolic. But as I walked around the campus, talked with various officials, and heard about the racial issues being dealt with, I could see that these symbols were part of the construction of a culture of power from which people of color and most white women were mostly excluded. I have learned that noticing how the culture of power works in any situation provides a lot of information about who has power and privilege, and who is vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion, and this institution of higher education was no exception.

The problem with a culture of power is that it reinforces the prevailing hierarchy. When we are inside a culture of power we expect to have things our way, the way we are most comfortable with. We may go through life complacent in our monoculturalism, not even aware of the limits of our perspectives, the gaps in our knowledge, the inadequacy of our understanding. We remain unaware of the superior status and opportunities we have simply because we're white, or male, or able-bodied, or heterosexual. Of course a culture of power also dramatically limits the ability of



those on the margins to participate in an event, a situation, or an organization. They are only able to participate on unfavorable terms, at others' discretion, which puts them at a big disadvantage. They often have to give up or hide much of who they are to participate in the dominant culture. And if there are any problems it becomes very easy to identify the people on the margins as the source of those problems and blame or attack them rather than the problem itself.

Every organization has work to do to become more inclusive. I want to focus on some ways that groups often fail to include members of our country's most marginalized members—those marginalized by economic status, physical ability, and English language ability.

Often, when groups talk about diversity issues, they address those issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation that are most visible. Without an understanding of how class limits people's ability to participate in organizations a group may end up with a remarkably diverse group—of middle class participants. Those who are homeless, poor, single parents, working two jobs, or poorly educated (and many people fall into more than one of these categories) are unable to attend meetings or events because they cannot afford the time, the fees, the childcare, or the energy. When they do make it they may feel unwelcome because they have not been as able to participate previously, because they do not speak the language (or the jargon) of the organizers, or because they are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the middle class values and styles of the group.

People with disabilities can be similarly excluded when meetings are held in rooms and buildings which are not accessible, when signing is not provided, when accessible public transportation is not available, or when the pace and organization of the meeting does not allow them to participate.

People for whom English is not their primary language may face comparable barriers to finding out about meetings, attending events, becoming part of the leadership of an organization, or simply participating as a member when interpretation is not provided, when non-English media and communication networks are not utilized, or, again, when the pace and style of the group does not allow for the slower pace that a multi-lingual process calls for.

I am Jewish in a Christian culture. I am often aware of ways that the dominant culture of organizations I work with



exclude me. When I get together with other Jews in a group I can feel so relieved that we are all Jewish that I can fail to notice ways that parts of the Jewish community have been excluded. Because I am in the culture of power in terms of disability I can overlook the fact that we may all be Jews in the group, but we have scheduled a meeting or event in a place that is not accessible. We may all be Jewish, but we may have failed to do outreach into the Jewish lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. Or because we are predominantly middle class Jews during our discussions we may be unaware of how we are excluding Jews who are poor or working class.

We each have ways that we are in the culture of power (for me, for example, as a white male) and ways that we are marginalized (for me as a Jew). Although we may be good at recognizing how we have been excluded, we are probably less adept at realizing how we exclude others because it is not as much a survival issue for us. We have to look to people from those groups to provide leadership for us.

It is important that we learn to recognize the culture of power in our organizations so that we can challenge the hierarchy of power it represents and the confinement of some groups of people to its margins. Use the previous paragraphs and the questions below to guide you in thinking about the culture of power in your organization.

Assessing the culture of power

What does the culture of power look like in your organization? In your office or area where you work? In your school or classroom? In your living room or living space? In your congregation? Where you shop for clothes? In agencies whose services you use?

The following questions can be used to identify cultures of power based on gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, age, race, language, physical ability, immigrant status, or education.

1. Who is in authority?
2. Who has credibility (whose words and ideas are listened to with most attention and respect)?
3. Who is treated with full respect?
4. Whose experience is valued?
5. Whose voices are heard?
6. Who has access to or is given important information?



7. Who talks most at meetings?
8. Whose ideas are given importance?
9. Who is assigned to or expected to take on background roles?
6. How is the space designed? Who has physical access?
7. What is on the walls?
8. What language(s) are used? Which are acceptable?
9. What music and food is available? Who provides it?
10. How much are different people paid? How are prices determined?
11. Who cleans up?
12. Who decides?

Every person has the right to complete respect, equitable access, and full participation. Anything less limits the effectiveness of an organization by denying it the contributions—the experiences, insights and creative input—of those individuals and groups excluded or discriminated against.

Those inside the culture of power rarely notice it, while those excluded are often acutely sensitive to how they and others are being marginalized. Therefore leadership in efforts to eliminate the culture of power need to come from those in excluded or marginalized groups. Unless they are in leadership positions, with sufficient respect, status, and authority, the organization's efforts to change will be token, insufficient, and have limited effectiveness.

As they become better at identifying patterns of exclusion, people from within the culture of power can learn to take leadership in identifying marginalizing practices so that the organization doesn't have to rely as much on people at the margins to do this work for it. Although groups will always need to look to the insights of people at the margins to completely identify how systems of oppression are currently operating, there is an important role for those inside the culture of power to take leadership as allies to those excluded. They can challenge the status quo and can educate other "insiders" who are resistant to change. It is precisely because they have more credibility, status, and access that people on the inside make good allies. They can do this best not by speaking for or representing those marginalized, but by challenging the status quo and opening up opportunities for others to step forward and speak for themselves.

Every institution of higher education has a culture of power. And each department, division, school, program, and office



within it has its own subculture of power. These may not be consistent or overlapping. The university may have an educated white male administration while the women's studies department has a middle class white woman's culture of power which excludes poor and working class white women and women of color of all classes. To be in opposition to the prevailing culture of power does not preclude us from creating subcultures of power that, in turn, exclude others who are even more marginalized than we are.

We have a responsibility, as people who have had access to educational opportunities, not to let the fact of our being on the inside of a culture of power allow us to deny educational opportunity to those who are on the outside. We need to fight for equal opportunity and full access and inclusion not just for those groups that we are a part of, but also for those groups we are not. For most of us that means listening to those on the margins, acknowledging our insider status compared to some other groups, and acknowledging our access to power, our resources, and our privileges. Then we can work with others to use our power, resources, and privileges to open up the educational structures to those who continue to knock on the doors.

One of our goals should be to create organizations and institutions that embrace an internal culture of full inclusion and all of whose members are trained to think critically about how the culture of power operates. We each have a role to play, we each have much to contribute to creating such organizations and pushing every group we are a part of to move from a culture of power to a culture of inclusion.



Please send comments, feedback, resources, and suggestions for distribution to pkivel@mindspring.com.

Further resources are available at www.paulkivel.com.

A RABBIT ON THE SWIM TEAM

Once upon a time the animals decided they should do something meaningful to meet the problems of the new world. So they organized a school

The adopted an activity curriculum of running, climbing, swimming and flying. To make it easier to administer the curriculum, all the animals took all the subjects.

The duck was excellent in swimming; in fact, better than his instructor. But he made only passing grades in flying and was very poor in running. Since he was slow in running, he had to drop swimming and stay after school to practice running. This caused his web feet to be badly worn, so that he was only average in swimming. But average was quite acceptable, so nobody worried about that - except the duck.

The rabbit started at the top of his class in running, but developed a nervous twitch in his leg muscles because of so much make-up work in swimming.

The squirrel was excellent in climbing, but he encountered constant frustration in flying class because his teacher made him start from the ground up instead of from the treetop down. He developed "charlie horses" from overexertion, and so only got a C in climbing and A in running.

The eagle was a problem child and was severely disciplined for being a non-conformist. In climbing classes he beat all the others to the top of the tree, but insisted on using his own way to get there.

The obvious moral of the story is a simple one - each creature has its own set of capabilities in which it will naturally excel - unless it is expected or forced to fill a mold that doesn't fit. When that happens, frustration, discouragement, and even guilt bring overall mediocrity or complete defeat. A duck is a duck - and only a duck. It is built to swim, not to run or fly and certainly not to climb. A squirrel is a squirrel - and only that. To move it out of its forte, climbing, and then expect it to swim or fly will drive a squirrel nuts. Eagles are beautiful creatures in the air, but not in a foot race. The rabbit will win every time unless, of course, the eagle gets hungry.

Editorial note:

What is true of creatures in the forest is true of humans too. We are not all the same and we were never intended to be. We have unique differences, abilities, variations and areas of difficulty. Cultivate your own capabilities, your own style. When you do this, creativity and satisfaction will flow. When you are forced to meet someone else's expectations (beyond your capabilities), frustration, mediocrity, phoniness and total defeat is pretty predictable.

Rabbits don't fly, eagles don't swim, and ducks look funny trying to climb. Remember - there's plenty of room in the forest for everyone.

The Parable of Ups and Downs

What makes an up an up and a down a down is that an up can do more to a down than a down can to an up. That's what keeps an up up and a down down. The ups tend to talk to each other and study the downs, asking the downs about what's up, or what's coming down for that matter. The downs spend a lot of time taking the ups out to lunch, to dinner, to explain their downness. The ups listen attentively, often in amazement about the experiences of being a down. They contrast one down's experience with another down's experience and at times don't worry too much about what the downs experience and at times don't worry too much about what the downs are up to because the downs never get together. If they did, the ups would have to shape up.

After awhile, the downs weary of talking to the ups. They tire of explaining and justifying their downness. They think, "If I have to explain my downness one more time, I'll throw up." And so they form a process which they call "networking and support groups". This act makes the ups nervous. Three ups together is a board meeting; three downs, pre-revolutionary activity. Some ups hire downs, dress them ups, send them down to see what the downs are up to. We sometimes call this "personnel and affirmative action". This creates a serious problem for the down who is dressed up with no sure place to go. That down doesn't know whether he or she is up or down. That's why downs in the middle often burn out.

Sometimes what the ups do to smarten up is to ask the downs to come in to a program one at a time to explain their downness. The ups call this "human relations training". Of course the ups never have to explain their upness, that's why they're ups rather than downs.

There's good news and bad news in this parable. The good news is, we're all both ups and downs. There's no such thing as a perfect up or a perfect down. The bad news is that when we're up it often makes us stupid. We call that "dumb-upness". It's not because ups are not smart. It's that ups don't have to pay attention to downs the way downs have to pay attention to ups. Downs always have to figure out what ups are up to. The only time ups worry about down is when downs get uppity, at which time they're put down by the ups. The ups perception is that downs are overly sensitive; they have an attitude problem. It is never understood that ups are underly sensitive and have an attitude problem.

I used to think that when downs became ups they would carry over their insight from their downness to their upness. Not so. Smart down - dumb up.

- Bob Terry, University of MN
Reflective Leadership Program

The Cold Within

Six humans trapped by happenstance in bleak and bitter cold;
Each had a stick of wood, or so the story's told.

Their dying fire in need of logs, the first man held his back,
Four of the faces around the fire - he noticed one was black.

The next man looking cross the way, saw not one of his church,
And couldn't bring himself to give the fire his stick of birch.

The third one sat in tattered clothes; he gave his coat a hitch.
Why should his log be put to use to warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought of the wealth he had in store,
And how to keep what he had earned from the lazy shiftless poor.

The black man's face bespoke revenge as the fire passed from sight,
For all he saw in his stick of wood was a chance to spite the white.

The last of this forlorn group did nothing except for gain,
Giving only to those who gave to him was how he played the game.

Their logs held tight in death's still hands was proof of human sin,
They didn't die from the cold without, they died from the cold within.

Author Unknown

HEART SURGERY

You are a member of an advisory committee of citizens whose purpose is to make recommendations to a local hospital on organ transplants. You have been called to an emergency meeting because there is only 1 heart currently available and all of the following people are equally in need and equally capable of receiving the heart. With only the information below, your committee must decide who gets the heart and everyone on the committee must agree with the decision. You have 10 minutes to decide.

PATIENTS:

1. She is a famous brain surgeon at the height of her career, 31 years old single, black, and has no children.
2. She is a gifted concert musician, 12 years old, and Japanese-American.
3. He is a public school teacher, 40 years old, white, and has two children and a wife.
4. She is a high school student, 15 years old, white, unmarried, and pregnant with her first child.
5. He is a Roman Catholic priest 35 years old.
6. She is a waitress, 17 years old, white, who dropped out of school to work to help support her parents.
7. She is a scientist close to discovering a cure for AIDS, 38 years old, Chinese-American, no children, and lesbian.

"No individual can live alone, no nation can live alone, and anyone who feels that he can live alone is sleeping through a revolution. The world in which we live is geographically one. The challenge that we face today is to make it one in terms of brotherhood. We must all learn to live together as brothers, or we will all perish together as fools."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"The deliberate cultivation of the gift of putting yourself in another's place is the beginning of wisdom in human relations."

Arnold Bennett

"Never judge another man until you have walked a mile in his moccasins."

North American Indian saying

"Whoever seeks to set one race against another seeks to enslave all races."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

"A man bleeds, suffers, despairs not as an American or a Russian or a Chinese, but in his innermost being as a member of a single human race."

Adlai Stevenson

"Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency."

Mahatma Gandhi

"Communication is not easy. It is one of the most difficult things we ever accomplish. And the trouble is that it doesn't stop demanding something of us once we have broken through to the other - it requires constant effort. We ought to bear in mind always the alternative to communication - death. That's right. None of us is worth anything alone. We need other people. They are extensions of us. When we decide it isn't worth the trouble, we are saying we are not worth it. Marriages die. Corporations die. Individuals die."

John R. Killinger

"It is never too late to give up your prejudices."

Henry David Thoreau

"If we take people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat them as if they were what they ought to be, we help them to become what they are capable of becoming."

Goethe

The person next to me was created as a gift for me, and I as a gift for him (her). All things exist in a relationship of love: each to each. But in order to find the golden thread linking everything together, we must love.

Chiara Lubich

When unity with our neighbor becomes difficult, let us not break but bend... until love works the miracle of one heart and one mind.

Chiara Lubich

Unlike many other peoples, Americans are not bound together by a common religion or a common ethnicity. Our binding heritage is a democratic vision of liberty, equality, and justice.

Kenneth T. Jackson

Men and women are not only themselves; they are also the region in which they were born, the city, apartment or farm in which they learned to walk, the games they played as children, the old wives' tales they overheard, the food they ate, the schools they attended, the sports they followed, the poems they read, and the God they believed in.

W. Somerset Maugham

He has a right to criticize who has a heart to help.

Abraham Lincoln

The world is my country. All mankind are my brethren.

Thomas Paine

Beware, as long as you live, of judging people by appearances.

La Fontaine

Until you have become really in actual fact, a brother to everyone, brotherhood will not come to pass.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky

You must look into people as well as at them.

Lord Chesterfield

Valuing Diversity Self-Assessment—Worksheet

Rate yourself openly and honestly on a scale of 1 to 5 for each item.

	Rarely	Sometimes	Always		
1. I understand the company's diversity goals.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I regularly assess my strengths and weaknesses in the area of diversity, and I consciously try to improve myself.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I'm always asking questions. I'm curious about new things and people.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When I don't understand what someone says, I ask for clarification.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I'm committed to respecting all co-workers, customers, and vendors.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I work willingly and cooperatively with people different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I recognize how bonding with my own group may exclude, or be perceived as excluding others.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I can communicate with and influence people who are different from me in positive ways.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I'm interested in the ideas of people who don't think as I do, and I respect their opinions even when I disagree.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Some of my friends are different from me in age, race, background, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I recognize I'm a product of my background; my way isn't the only way.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I'm aware of my prejudices and consciously try to control my assumptions about people.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I try to help others understand my differences.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I work to make sure that people who are different from me are heard and are respected.	1	2	3	4	5

Valuing Diversity Self-Assessment—Worksheet (continued)

	Rarely	Sometimes	Always		
15. I help others succeed by sharing unwritten rules and showing them how to function better.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I apologize when I've offended someone.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I resist the temptation to make another group the scapegoat when something goes wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I think of the impact of my comments and actions before I speak or act.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I refrain from repeating rumors that reinforce prejudice or bias.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I recognize and avoid using language that reinforces stereotypes.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I include people different from me in informal networks and events.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I believe and convey that nontraditional employees are as skilled and competent as others.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I get to know people as individuals who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I turn over responsibility to people who are different from me as often as I do to people who are like me.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I disregard physical characteristics when interacting with others and when making decisions about competence or ability.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I avoid generalizing the behaviors or attitudes of one individual to an entire group. (e.g., "All men are . . .," "All Jewish people are . . .," etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
27. I say "I think that's inappropriate" when I think someone is making a derogatory comment or joke.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I recognize that others may stereotype me, and I try to overcome incorrect assumptions that they may make.	1	2	3	4	5

Total by column _____

Total score _____

Valuing Diversity Self-Assessment—Scoring

	Unaware 0-39	Traditional 40-69	Neutral 70-99	Change Agent 100-129	Rebel 130-140
Unaware (0 to 39)	Unaware people don't realize they exhibit biased behavior. They may offend others without being aware of it. They may accept stereotypes as facts. They may even unknowingly be committing illegal acts. An unaware person's scores can fall in any category because an unaware person might answer "always" or "frequently" when in reality he or she just does not comprehend biased behavior. Because unaware people "don't know what they don't know," the only accurate indicator is feedback from others.				
Traditional (40 to 69)	Traditionals are aware of their prejudices, and that their behavior may offend some people. Nevertheless, they continue with derogatory jokes, comments, and actions and act as though laws and the organization's values don't apply to them. If you fall in this category, not only is it likely that your behavior is damaging workplace productivity, but it could bring legal implications as well. People in this category often use bias in employment decisions and treatment of co-workers—which is illegal. Look at the questions you marked lowest. You might want to create goals which will help you break these habits.				
Neutral (70 to 99)	People in this category are aware of biases in themselves and others. They are working to overcome their own prejudices, but are reluctant to address inappropriate behavior by others. They avoid risk by saying nothing, and this behavior is often perceived as agreement. If you fall into this category, look at the questions that you marked the lowest. You may want to create goals to improve those areas. You can also work on ways to become more proactive with regard to others' biases.				
Change agent (100 to 129)	These people are aware of biases in themselves and others, and realize the negative impact of acting on those biases. They're willing to take action when they encounter inappropriate words, behaviors, or structures. They relate to people in a way that values diversity. If you scored in this category, your greatest contribution is to help others value diversity more fully.				
Rebel (130 to 140)	Rebels are acutely aware of any behavior that seems to be prejudiced. They may even go too far and become involved in reverse discrimination. They have played an important part in helping non-traditional employees, but they pay a price. They may get a reputation that causes people to discount their views. If your score falls in this category, you may be a change agent but should also examine whether you are coming across too strongly or overreacting. Asking other people for honest feedback may help.				

