

Tech Psych

A Newsletter for Friends and Alumni of Texas Tech University's
Department of Psychology

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- This special issue will focus on issues of diversity in psychology
- Student views regarding diversity in West Texas

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Changing with Changing Times	2
Contribution from Juan Muñoz, Ph.D.	4
Reflections on Teaching Ethnic Minority Psychology	8
Why 多様性 (Diversity) is Bonito (Beautiful) To Me in Any Language	9
Student Spotlight	11
Don't Ask, Don't Tell: Not Just A Policy.	12
Kvetching & Kvelling	14
From My Melting Pot	16
On Learning to Unlearn: Diversity Revisited	18
Department Updates	20



Diversity from the Chairperson's Perspective

Susan Hendrick, Ph.D.

It is a pleasure for me to welcome every reader to the Spring 2010 Psychology Department Newsletter – the only newsletter for academic year 2009-2010, which is the first of my two years as Chair of the Department. Diversity is in some ways in the eye of the beholder, for diversity is in each of us and around all of us. Each of us is both “self” and “other.” As a European American, I am “other” to someone who is Latino. As a woman, I am “other” to someone who is a man. If I am afraid of the “other,” then I am likely to be fearful much of the time or put an invisible but impermeable shield around myself in order to avoid the fear.

In my own case, I am fortunate to have been educated by my students over many years at Texas Tech, by my clients before that, and most recently

also by patients at the Southwest Cancer Treatment and Research Center. Race, ethnicity, gender, SES, religion, political affiliation – all can be forms of “otherness” or can simply be aspects of who we are within the human community. To be aware of and respectful of someone else’s “otherness,” while also experiencing the human connection between us is an ongoing life task for me – as it is for many.

I believe it is past time for the Department of Psychology to acknowledge and encourage its diversity, broadly construed. We have been doing this for years of course, but we are now kicking it up a notch! To that end, we have initiated an ongoing conversation about how we can proceed, beginning with Dr. Joaquin Borrego’s acceptance of the position of Director of Di-

versity Enhancement for the department. We have also initiated a consultative relationship with Dr. Reginaldo Garcia of Colorado; will explore similar consulting with other professionals, particularly Latino and African American psychologists; have dedicated this newsletter to diversity topics and will have a diversity highlight in every future departmental newsletter; have committed ourselves to an ongoing working relationship with Dr. Juan Munoz (Vice President for Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement); and will continue to recruit diverse graduate students and do our best to increase the faculty’s diversity.

If you have additional suggestions for how we might strengthen our diversity initiative, please email me at s.hendrick@ttu.edu.

Changing with Changing Times

Joaquín Borrego, Jr., Ph.D.



It is with great excitement that I

write this piece for **Tech Psych**.

Why am I excited?

The Department of Psychology is in the process of setting

in motion initiatives that focus on diversity. Under the leadership of our Department Chair, Dr. Susan Hendrick, several initiatives are being implemented that will be good for everyone who is involved with or comes in contact with the Psychology Department (administrators, faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduate stu-

dents, and the community).

The demographics of the United States, Texas, and our community are rapidly changing and it is our responsibility to be responsive to the changing needs of different groups. In addition, to be effective and competent professionals, we can no longer afford to just focus on what is going on in the United States.

Globalization is here to stay so we have to also be mindful of changes that occur in other parts of the world.

Psychology, as a discipline, has been a leader with regards to addressing issues

related to diversity. Given our history, a more concerted effort is being made in the Department to develop and maintain an environment that is inclusive and that actively recognizes and embraces diversity (in its broadest form). This is not a one-person mission; instead, this is a vision and value that is shared by many faculty, students, and staff.

Some of the initiatives that are currently in place or will be implemented fairly soon include:

- **This special issue of *Tech Psych* solely devoted to diversity.** Future issues of the

newsletter will also include a *Diversity Spotlight* section.

- ***Diversity in Psychological Science Research Award:*** This yearly award will recognize a graduate student who conducts high quality research on a topic related to diversity.

- ***Diversity Enhancement Committee:*** The committee composed of faculty and graduate students representing clinical, counseling, and experimental divisions will be in charge of developing, implementing, and evaluating diversity initiatives. The committee also will have one undergraduate stu-

dent representative on the committee.

- ***Diversity Web-page:*** This website will include diversity-related resources for faculty, students, and staff. In addition, the website will contain information



about department-led diversity initiatives and it will also highlight faculty, students, and those who do work

(research, teaching, and/or service) with a diversity focus.

Each of these diversity initiatives, by themselves, will have little impact but collectively they will contribute to the Department being more inclusive and engaging when it comes to diversity. More importantly, the Department's diversity initiatives and vision need to be sustained over time.

Many thanks to those who contributed to the newsletter: Dr. Susan Hendrick, Dr. Juan Muñoz, and the graduate stu-

dents. Finally, a big gracias to Kelly Katuls for her assistance and oversight of the newsletter this semester.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity & Community Engagement™

Juan Muñoz, Ph.D.



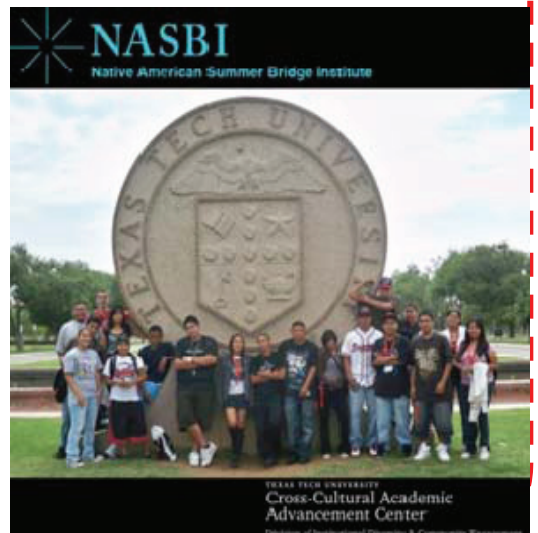
I am thrilled to contribute to the Department of Psychology newsletter by offering a few insights and updates regarding the activities of the Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement at Texas State University. The Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement was formed in February 2009 to provide structure and momentum to the academic, diversity, and community engagement goals of the university. The creation of the new division communicated to Texas Tech and the broader community that diversity, equity, and community engagement are high strategic priorities for the university and the Texas Tech University System.

Indeed, over the preceding academic year, the achievements of the Cross-Cultural Academic Advancement Center, Institute for the Development and Enrichment of Advanced Learners (IDEAL), TRIO Upward Bound, Office of Community Engagement and the newly developed Military and Veterans Programs have enjoyed significant attention from the University and surrounding community. Through a reorganization and incorporation of additional units into a divisional structure, Texas Tech is more effectively positioned to foster and maintain an environment of academic and inclusive excellence across the University.

importance of similarities and differences among people. As an institution of higher education, it is committed to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance, and respect in today's increasingly multicultural and global society.

For many undergraduates at Texas Tech, their exposure to

Texas Tech University recognizes and respects the



human cognition, learning theories and the underlying psychology/socio motives of human interaction are largely represented within psychology courses. As a former psychology undergraduate, I have a special affinity for the importance of comprehending how people think, interact and behave in an increasingly diverse and dynamic social milieu. Universities and college campuses across the nation are coordinating their long-standing commitment to educational quality through curriculum innovation, technology, diversity, civic engagement, and newly dynamic student learning outcomes.

At Texas Tech, this coordination is initially carried out through the **Cross Cultural Academic Advancement Center (CCAAC)**. Established in 2003, The Cross-Cultural Academic Advancement Center (CCAAC) supports the academic, cultural, and leadership development of Texas Tech students. Through partnerships with Texas Tech faculty, departments, and student groups, the Center offers dynamic cul-

tural programs, student leadership development, and academic enhancement activities. The CCAAC is Texas Tech's leading unit for education and implementation of university-wide diversity programming. In the last year, the Center administered The Greater Texas Foundation Generation Proud Leadership Program which provided \$1,000 scholarships to 25 first generation students. This summer the Center will host the Native American Summer Bridge Program (**NASBI**) which gathers over 30 Native American students at Texas Tech during the summer to prepare them for college life. Moreover, the CCAAC works with over 30 multicultural student organizations. Cultural programs in 2009-10 celebrated by the CCAAC include:

- Diez y Seis de Septiembre (El Grito)
- American Indian Event
- Dia de Los Muertos
- Lunar New Year
- Holi Festival of Colors
- West Texas Showdown Homecoming Step Show



- Women's History Month

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/ccaac>

The Cross-Cultural Academic Advancement Center (CCAAC) further supports the **Mentor Tech Program**. The Lauro Cavazos and Ophelia Malone-Powell Mentoring Program, also known as Mentor Tech, provides scholarships, workshops, social and cultural activities and resources for first-year students and provides mentors to support their academic goals through graduation.

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/mentortech/>

The Division brings together programs and units

that promote academic and inclusive excellence through activities that foster equity, outreach, academic preparation, and community engagement. From pre-college programs, to thematic hiring, to our Inclusive Excellence Initiative, our innovative work has achieved measurable progress on the campus and in the community. The following represent portraiture of these units and activities:

Institute for the Development and Enrichment of Advanced Learners (IDEAL)

The mission of the Institute for the Development and Enrichment of Advanced Learners (IDEAL) is to provide unique academic enrichment programs that promote academic excellence, citizenship/leadership, diversity, and an appreciation of the arts for children in grades K-12. Longstanding academic programs include Super Saturdays, Science: It's A Girl Thing, Shake

Hands with Your Future, Run on the Wind, and the Building a College-Going Community (BCGC) initiative.

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/Ideal>

Military and Veterans Program Center

Recently, the Texas Tech University Military and Veterans Programs Center was formed. The MVP Center will provide a welcoming environment for all who visit or seek services. The Center will have, or assist in locating information about veterans' services, military education benefits, financial resources, scholarships, veteran and family support activities, and other items of interest to

veterans, family members or community members.

www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/mvp

Upward Bound Programs

The Upward Bound Select Program and Upward Bound Math and Science Program are part of the Department of Education-sponsored TRiO Programs. Upward Bound Programs promote each student's learning experience by assuring that the least advantaged segments of the area's population have a realistic opportunity to enter and graduate from a postsecondary institution. Upward Bound is a dynamic college preparatory program designed to recruit and assist students from first generation families with limited financial resources. Upward Bound has a proven track record of program graduates succeeding in college. Students from thirty-eight different high schools and nine different counties



participate in the program each year.

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/upwardbound>

The Office of Community Engagement

The Office of Community Engagement cultivates diversity primarily through providing opportunities to diverse and often economically disadvantaged K-12 students. Its K-12 initiatives include programs such as Reality Check, Customized Red-Raider Tours, the Accounting Career Awareness Program, and the Back-to-School Fiesta. In Reality Check, each student is given the opportunity to buy child care, food, clothes, transportation, etc, on a budget depending on their chosen occupation.

During Reality Check, students also attend college-career programs to introduce them to the wide variety of academic pursuits

available to them. Customized Red Raider Tours are provided for students in grades 5-9. Each tour provides an educational, enrichment component that is cus-



tomized according to the teachers' and school's immediate curricular focus. The purpose of the Accounting Career Awareness Program (ACAP) is to recruit minority youth to a summer program that will provide them with educational enrichment experiences and introduce them to accounting professions. <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/communityengagement/>

So much is taking place at Texas Tech to make it the University of First Choice for students from all backgrounds.

The Department of Psychology is a vital partner in this exciting new momentum. The past year has witnessed remarkable success, but there is more work yet to be done. We invite you to join us in preserving and strengthening this university's greatest asset – its community of diverse people and ideas.

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/>

Warmly,

Juan S. Muñoz, Ph.D.
Vice President
Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity, & Community Engagement

Reflections on Teaching Ethnic Minority Psychology

Chikira H. Barker



“Luckily, I am a therapist and have mastered a great poker face.”

Along with my feeling of fright of teaching a new course (we have all had the experience of the workload associated with

a new course), there was a feeling of anxious anticipation in my assignment of teaching Ethnic Minority Psychology. Will I be viewed by students as being less competent because of my race? One of the few aspects of being a minority known, especially one that continues in higher education, is the responsibility that we place on ourselves in being able to successfully represent members of our ethnic group. I felt an added responsibility in teaching this course because it is a topic important to my ethnic group. Consequently, all of these thoughts led me believe that I must make this class a life-altering experience for the undergraduates.

When I asked students to tell me what made them take this course, I realized that most students just took the course because it was open. I permitted myself to take some of the pressure off.

So, I allowed myself to take a new view of the opportunity. Can I at least move the students about 10 steps closer to understanding the perspective and the psychological research on behalf of ethnic minorities? I knew that I came into this class with a lot of personal baggage. I spent my early childhood being called racially derogatory names. I was the adolescent that experienced poverty and all of the struggles in a society that views you very negatively. I have had the experience of the Ku Klux Klan marching down University Ave-

nue in front of my college campus. From these experiences, there was a lot of anger and hurt when it pertained to issues related to minorities, thus there was a fear in how I would respond to student resistance. Luckily, I am a therapist and have mastered a great poker face.

I should mention that it was rare that I faced student resistance to information discussed in class. Compared to other graduate students teaching similar courses, I found that my experience has been overwhelmingly positive. In my conscious effort to create an open and inviting classroom environment, students have been able to discuss issues that they view as largely taboo or uncomfortable. I have made it a point to play devil's advocate by

presenting strong arguments for both sides of a debate, regardless of my personal position.

Even if I am not able to change minds, I believe I have been successful in having students see issues from an opposing perspective.

Do I experience discomfort in teaching the material? Occasionally. I still experience discomfort when I discuss concepts such as white privilege and affirmative action. There is a fear that I will choose the wrong words or somehow offend someone in the class. Thankfully, I have found

that having an open classroom alleviates most of the discomfort in potentially uncomfortable situations, particularly when a student says “this is kinda awkward.” Overall, teaching this course has been a wonderful experience and one that I will continue to value in the future.

Why 多様性 (Diversity) is Bonito (Beautiful) To Me in Any Language

Valerie Hobson

Growing up, my parents did a wonderful job in exposing me to different cultures and ethnicities different than my own. My father and mother purposely enrolled me in schools where I was not exposed to the mainstream Caucasian group. This was probably because of my father’s upbringing. He spent most of his childhood living in England and Morocco. I distinctly remember all of my meals as a child being eaten on a placemat that taught me Arabic words and their English translations.

For most of my childhood, I attended a school in the north that was attended by many children from different countries, but primarily by those of Asian origin. I learned to speak some Japanese as a child and was often invited to attend Japanese cultural events and learned a lot of the culture

through interactions in the homes of friends. I was also chosen as an “American ambassador” from the children in my area who participated in an International Club. I remember enjoying this time because I was able to learn the customs and language of many different countries and cultures throughout the world. During middle school, my parents decided to move again, only this time we relocated to South Texas. I was immersed in the Latino culture and developed an appreciation for a culture other than my own and the Asian cultures I had encountered as a young child. Although I was exposed to different cultures and ethnicities as a child, I still knew that I was different because I had not suffered from racial or cultural discrimination like some of my Japanese and Hispanic friends.



“One of the ways that I got involved in diversity was through research in the department of Psychology”

Upon moving to Lubbock for college and graduate school I was disappointed by the seeming lack of cultural diversity. Therefore, I sought out several different ways to get involved on and off campus in programs and projects that involved cultural diversity. One of the ways that I got involved in diversity was through research in the department of Psychology. One of the first labs I worked in during college was Dr. Borrego's lab where I helped a graduate student collect data for her master's thesis which utilized a diverse population. From this, I began graduate school at Texas Tech University because I enjoyed my time in the department and felt that there were opportunities for research with diverse populations. During my second year, I began working in the Department of Neurology at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center conducting neuropsychological assessments. During this time I began working with Dr. Sid O'Bryant who had experience in multicultural assessment and working with diverse clientele. Prior to my assignment in Neurology, Dr. O'Bryant began working with a rural, Mexican-origin community in Cochran County conducting neuropsychological testing and obtained general health information. During my time in Neurology, Dr. O'Bryant had the opportunity to expand this line of work into a second rural community and expand the protocol to include a full physical exam,



blood biomarkers, neuropsychological testing, and health information. This project has grown to include individuals from several disciplines throughout Texas Tech University and Texas Tech University Health Sciences and is now called Project FRONTIER (Facing Rural Obstacles to healthcare Now Through Intervention, Education, and Research). When it came time to decide on a dissertation topic, I knew that

I wanted to use Project FRONTIER because of its access to a diverse population. This project will be one of the first to look at the relationships between healthcare, ethnicity, and rural-dwelling populations.

This summer I will begin an internship at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. I am excited to move to a new community where I will have the opportunity to have exposure to the large Native American population that resides in this area. There are numerous opportunities to get involved in the community and work with diverse populations. One such opportunity that I most looking forward to is attendance at the Red Earth Festival, which is one of the largest Native American Cultural Festivals which features more than 100 Native American tribes who gather to celebrate the richness and diversity of their heritage with the world.

Additionally, I will have the opportunity to use telemedicine to administer treatment and conduct assessment in rural Native American communities which will integrate my experience in working with diverse, rural populations.

I feel extremely thankful for the opportunities I have had in working with diverse populations in Lubbock and the exposure I had as a child in learning about cultures and customs different from my own. I hope to continue a line of research after internship that will continue to work with diverse populations.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Hello! My name is Janelle Newkirk. I am from Houston, TX and I am currently a junior at Texas Tech University for the 2009-2010 academic school year. Upon arriving at Texas Tech my freshman year, my main focus has consistently been three things: diversity relations, writing, and psychology. Immediately as I began my venture

into college life, I sought involvement into programs like Mentor Tech, Mentor Tech Student Organization (MTSO), and psychology club. As years passed, I have taken what I've learned from these organizations in order to pursue specifically what I wanted and desired for the future. Leadership has always been a passion of mine, so thus I make use of any opportunity to take the reins on a new project, assignment, or task. Whether the task is to improve what has already been done or accomplish something new, I remain confident and prayerful that anything is possible if I set my mind to it. Currently, I serve as president for Psi Chi: The Honor Society for Psychology, I am member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. where I hold the office as the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) representative. Within NPHC I am on the executive board as the Social Chair Coordinator. From my freshman year, I continue to be involved in Mentor Tech, where I serve on the Protégé Advisory Committee. Also, though NPHC and Mentor Tech, I have

been able to produce, direct, and write two black history plays that have been performed in Tech's Escondido Theater.

Nevertheless, regardless of the amount of accomplishments I have achieved here at Texas Tech, I realize that this is only the beginning. I was raised to believe that education is the key to success and though many individuals take different paths to success, the need for increased education in the desired area of interest is inevitable. My interest in minority and ethnic collegiate involvement is particularly high based on what I have seen among today's youth. It is easy to become a statistic and give in into societal pressures; however those who are determined to rise above will find that the hard work and efforts are worth the time, money, and sacrifice.

My post graduate plans are to attend graduate school as a student in a doctorate program for counseling psychology. My career aspirations include being a counseling psychologist in a hospital setting, being an advocate or mentor to minorities interested in psychology as a career, and maintaining my passion in writing, specifically fiction short stories and plays. God has indeed blessed me as a Red Raider, and my prayer is for Him to continue to allow me to flourish, be an asset to the various communities around me, and be a beacon of light to those who feel their desires or passions cannot take form or come true. I am a living testimony, that if I can successfully work towards reaching my goals, others certainly can too.

Don't Ask, Don't Tell: Not Just A Policy



For members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) community, the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy is a very sensitive topic.

DADT is a current U.S. law prohibiting lesbian and gay

individuals from serving openly in the military, based on the idea that an openly lesbian or gay service member would be harmful to group cohesion, group morale, and readiness for combat. Many LGBT service members are forced to hide their sexual orientation for fear of losing their career. Unfortunately, concealing an important part of one's self-identity has been proven difficult for many GLBT military personnel, resulting in 800 specialists, including more than 300 linguists (at least 60 were experts in Arabic) having been fired from the U.S. military under DADT.

Marshall Bewley

Additionally, more than 13,500 service members have been discharged under DADT since the law was enacted in 1993.

In 2005, 30% of all persons discharged as a result of the DADT policy were women, in spite of the fact that women represent only 14% of military personnel. Since its adoption, the DADT policy has cost the military between \$290 million to more than a half a billion dollars, since the military spends approximately \$22,000 to \$43,000 to replace each person discharged under DADT.

A decade after its enactment, the American Psychological Association (APA) began a leadership role, among other national organizations, in attempting to remove discrimination based on sexual orientation in and by the military. Unfortunately thus far, efforts have been futile, as DADT is still in place today, affecting many service members and families.

When I hear such messages from our nation's leaders and see such policies, I cannot help

but experience a level of internalized oppression. For me, DADT goes beyond the military, and is evident in a variety of areas in everyday life. As a third year counseling doctoral student, myself have felt a Don't Ask, Don't Tell feeling in many areas of my life. I came out to my mother right before graduating high school, partly because she had always taught me everyone is equal and knew she was a "safe" person to talk with. The bond I have created with her has only strengthened since my disclosure. However, with other family members, I still experience this sense of Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Often times, I find many family members avoiding such questions about romantic relationships or marriage with me. Not only is there an enormous elephant in the room, but it is doing cartwheels and everyone is actively ignoring it. Such experiences have made me feel as if I live in a null environment, without support and affirmation from certain family members. Luckily, I do have amazing family members and wonderful friends in my life that are great supporters. I feel great empathy and compassion for military members because I can only imagine working in a field that actively discriminates against my identity and promotes

shame about who one is.

Thinking about my own experiences makes me reflect on potential LGBT clients that come into our lives during our graduate

career. My own experiences have made me realize that an individual that has completely come out can still feel the effects of a hidden identity. There may be specific areas where they feel talking about their identity should be avoided. It is strange because I have been openly gay for 7 years now, but still find myself struggling to talk about my identity with some individuals, even family members. It can be very frustrating to not be able to talk about your relationship or other parts of your life. As therapists, teachers, and researchers, I feel it is imperative that each of us remember that any LGBT client/student can experience a Don't Ask, Don't Tell feeling. We each have the opportunity to be a support for such a person and eliminate this feeling for our clients/students. I know that I will have an ongoing battle with DADT in different areas of my life. I only hope that each of us, including APA and psychologists alike, continue to educate ourselves about the impact of such policies, and continue to be at the forefront for stopping a DADT policy or feeling.

"I feel it is imperative that each of us remember that any LGBT client/student can experience a Don't Ask, Don't Tell feeling."



Kvetching & Kvelling*

Andrew Friedman



Recently I had an experience which illustrates the two prongs of my experience of being Jewish in Lubbock; the second most conservative city in this country. I was quoted in an article that appeared in the local newspaper describing the traditions of Passover. I was excited to see that there was an interest in learning about traditions that differ from those practiced by the majority of Lubbock citizens. With relish I recalled the way in which I was able to practice my traditions with fellow members of my faith, and the way I felt welcomed so far from home. Although I come from a minority culture, I never felt that way so much as I do here in Lubbock. This is due to the thriving Jewish communities in my previous cities of residence. However, my reaction to this increased magnitude of minority status was a positive one in that I have embraced my culture with far more vigor than I have in the past.

I am more devout in my practice of my faith's traditions. I have also taken it upon myself to study the Tanakh and learn more about the reasons behind those traditions. In that study, I have been reminded that the differences between my faith, and faith of the majority is much smaller than many may believe. What Christians refer to as the "Old Testament" comprises the majority of their own liturgy (It should be noted that "Old Testament" is not

the preferred nomenclature when speaking to people of the Jewish faith because it connotes our liturgy to be outmoded). I have also been reminded that elements of my own world view and personal philosophy on everything from business ethics to politics are actually rooted in the 613 commandments found in the Holy Scriptures.

I am also encouraged by the fact that when people in town learn of my minority status, it is largely met with curiosity, rather than bigotry. Friends and family are shocked when I inform them that I have the honor of being the first Jewish person that many people in this town have encountered. I say it is an honor because these people are often filled with questions which I am more than happy to answer. I also regard it as a responsibility to rebut the stereotypes that are often attributed to my people.

However, not all experiences have been positive. The same lack of knowledge which drives this curiosity, also motivates behaviors which, while well intentioned, are often quite offensive. In the online version of the article mentioned above, there are several comments which carry the message that any explanation

of Judaism must be understood in terms of its purpose as a stepping stone to the ascendance of Jesus of Nazareth; that practitioners of the faith shall not know G-d unless they accept Jesus as their own personal savior. It is this lack of knowledge which has added sting to ostensibly innocent actions that certainly favor one faith over another.

“Although I come from a minority culture, I never felt so much that way as I do here in Lubbock.”

There is the fact that my tuition and fees at this state-funded university, go towards supporting a decidedly ecumenical practice such as the Carol of Lights. Or there is the experience of looking for Kosher for Passover foods which is met with invitations to Church or a wringing of hands and prayers for my soul because I have not accepted Jesus into my heart.

I do not believe this to be the sentiment of all Christians, and indeed many have shaken their heads when I recount these experiences to them.

Truly, I have considered this very department a refuge. The knowledge and understanding of its members, has served to offer support and even aid in ending these

innocent offenses. I have also greatly appreciated this department’s drive to increase multicultural awareness and sensitivity; notions I previously regarded as hollow baubles of political correctness. As a minority, I hope only that this understanding will continue to grow; that it will be contagious as professors spread it to their advisees, graduate students to undergraduates, and undergraduates to their friends and families. Through my experiences in this city, I have come to know two things; that people are still greatly unaware of cultures outside their own; and that there are understanding, caring people willing to stick their necks out to change that.



and understanding of its members, has served to offer support and even aid in ending these

****To complain and take pride; a Yiddish phrase highlighting the duality of conversions***

What Does Diversity Mean To You?

“Diversity means bringing together of different perspectives that focuses on understanding.”
- Ashlee Brown, 5th Year Counseling Student

“Diversity means difference”
-Maggie Durham, Ed.D., M.P.A.

“Diversity is differences in ethnic background, age, sexual orientation, gender, cultures, but also work and life experiences. Generally, a broad spectrum of opinions and mindsets.”
-Cortney Mauer, 2nd Year Clinical Student

“Diversity means being accepting of others unique qualities and being non-judgmental.”
- Michelle Guthrie, 1st Year Experimental Student

“Diversity means being receptive to incorporating the world view of others while still being open to the gaps of my own.”
- R.B. Watts, 4th Year Clinical Student

From My Melting Pot

Curtis Craig



“We all want to love and connect. We all want some kindness.”

Imagine walking in a picturesque tree-shaded neighborhood. This neighborhood is heavily populated by private wooden fences. The sound of dogs barking, children playing, and adults laughing is in the air. The planks of the fences are just far enough apart that you may perceive a sliver of the scene beyond the fence. With some effort, you may manage to piece together the panorama of slivers into a semi-coherent story, the many sounds becoming visually real to your eyes. Now imagine wherever you go, you are always surrounded by fences. You wake up, grab some terrible Starbucks coffee, do some work at the office, attend a less than interesting class, and eventually go home. No matter where you are, the fences are there. You can hear your colleagues and friends having fun around you, but you cannot quite see what they are doing. This closely describes my life. Instead of sight, my fences block out sound.

Diversity implies not only the variety of worlds we inhabit, but how we respond differently to similar circumstances. Others in worlds like my own have responded by being powerfully social, overwhelming the isolating fences with their dynamic personalities. Whether they came to this by natural temperament or some early shaping force in their lives, this adaptation allows them to connect with others. But the problem of isolation never entirely goes away.

My own response to the world of odd hearing has been multifaceted. People desire to connect with others, to see themselves in the world around them and share themselves in a larger story. So I love books. Even with my overstrained vision, the words come through clearly. People express their ideas, feelings, and experiences to whoever wants to hear them, across distance and across time. Books were a constant

companion in my childhood, keeping me company and teaching me the treasure in our shared knowledge and stories. So I love animals. They live wordless lives, yet they survive. The most social of them may share our feelings of anxiety, fear, anger, and affection, while expressing those feelings in silence. We share an unspoken emotional and biological bond, and they deserve our kindness. So I love many things (nature, art, music...) and my hearing contributes to some of those loves. Most interesting to you may be my relationship with people. My adaptation to hearing and relating to others may not be particularly good.

A natural disposition towards shyness and introversion has found a willing enabler in my hearing loss. Because of this, I reflexively withdraw from social situations. I find myself unable to easily follow conversations when there are more than three people present. Any background noise, such as chatter in a restaurant or music playing on the nearby stereo, makes it difficult for me to participate in a conversation. Parties at bars, clubs, and restaurants are emotionally exhausting and frustrating, as those are times when one is supposed to bond and connect with friends and I cannot. The most challenging aspect may be that I am unaware of much desire of others to talk to and get to know me. I have been told that I have walked down a hall, a few people will try to talk to me, and I will not notice.

There are also strange benefits to the hand life dealt. Unfortunately, my other senses have not become supernaturally sensitive. My eyes are almost as bad as my ears. But I have been told that I am insightful, a gift from years of watching people and wondering what they were thinking. Often it is not the words that matter, but the tone in which they are said, the shape of the eyes, or the curve of the mouth that carries the real meaning in the message.

The real truth can be found by seeing how people look at each other, touch each other, and show their feelings. Another benefit may be a heightened willingness to understand there may be hidden reasons for the things people do. I have been accused of being cold, because I did not respond when people spoke to me. That may or may not be an accurate diagnosis of my character, but there are other reasons why I did not respond. So there may be reasons why one student does not perform his work and appear to be slacking off. Perhaps he is aimless in life, or his home life is very difficult. There may be a reason why another person says harsh words or appears to be alternatively fearful or demanding of others. Perhaps she had difficult relationships and can only gauge her estimation of others based on those experiences. We all have our demons. How does one grow and change if others are not kind and plant the seeds for that growth? One last benefit is that I am more willing to understand other ways of perceiving the world. If I am different in one way, irrespective of anything I can do, being different in other ways becomes less difficult. So I am unusual in my religious, dietary, and political points of view, relative to

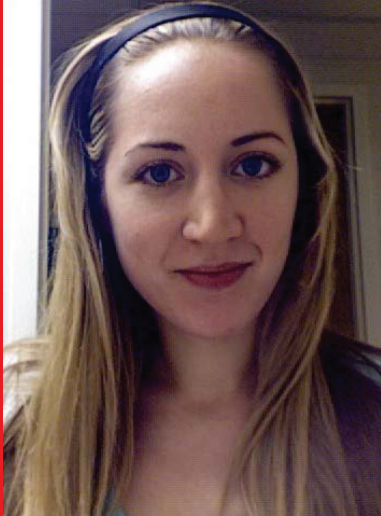
the conservative environment in which I grew up.

In living this life so far, the central value of diversity to me is that it serves to highlight those things we share in common. There are many different ways of seeing the world, many different things to value, and many differing priorities to those values. There are many types of families. There are many different ways of dressing, acting, standing, and talking. There are many different standards to right and wrong, beauty and ugliness, the sacred and profane. But we all need to eat and drink. We all want to be happy. We are all here for a moment, briefly sharing the world before we are gone. We all want some meaning. We all want to love and connect. We all want some kindness.



On Learning to Unlearn: Diversity Revisited

Chloe Menon



Diversity does not merely imply difference. I think of diversity as a frame of mind, a way of thinking characterized by one's conscious effort

to maintain a critical yet accepting eye on things, such that one attempts to refrain from excessive and unfair categorization of their world.

My personal background is what many would characterize as diverse. I spent the first eighteen years of my life in France, all the while traveling around the world with my family, and then moved to the United States about six years ago. While I believe I am able to speak of differences I have observed between various cultural

groups, what I find most relevant to discuss are the ways in which I see us as being united. I find the topic of the very process of relating such differences particularly interesting in as much as it invites a discussion on humans' common striving to construct strong meaning from their own reality even at the cost of critical sense. Seeing the world through others' lives takes courage, as sooner or later we are bound to see some of the truths we have constructed about our reality become shattered. Surely it requires one to go beyond appearances, beyond subjective judgment and labeling, all of which we naturally all seem to rely on so intensely in the process of protecting ourselves

from facing any limitation of the truths we have created for ourselves (whether or not we are willing to recognize it). In particular, being exposed to perceived differences raises the challenge of having to decide whether one will avoid contradiction yet risk to live in oblivion, or face the limitation of their own knowledge while having a chance to allow it to grow into a more adaptive one. I personally used to live by the first approach. I traveled, observed differences, yet admittedly stayed at a distance to ensure that my own truths about this world would not end up being discredited. I lived in opposition, listening to others yet not hearing them, often spending

"Seeing the world through others' lives takes courage..."

much energy seeking to disprove divergent views in an effort to ascertain the validity of my own. The encounters I have had since that time have forced me to realize that diversity actually goes beyond mere observation and superficial tolerance of differences.

I now see diversity as a state of mind marked by a genuine willingness and openness to see one's truths discredited in an effort to grow, a focus on raising the important questions as opposed to simply seeking to preserve a reality we believe it. In this sense diversity is no foreign concept to us; in a way it speaks to the scientific endeavor of

establishing valid truths.

Strong science implies that the scientist does not simply seek support for their own hypotheses but that they also acknowledge alternative explanations for their findings while generating questions that move them closer to a more accurate representation of the world. Similarly, diversity entails the ability to recognize the limitations of the truths we have constructed in the face of contrasting evidence, and a willingness to explore conflicting views to generate an altered truth and

associated questions that extend beyond oneself.

That is one way in which I think diversity matters, in that facing up to it shapes our thinking such that one becomes able to extract themselves from their own reality to in turn generate the important questions that eventually lead to improved meaning. As such diversity is not merely a matter of addressing contrast as much as it reflects an opportunity to establish more pertinent meanings that unite and help us.

Our Wonderful Staff



From left to right: Linda Stracener, Karen Carroll, Sandra Olive, Kay Hill
Not Pictured: Maggie Durham



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

College of Arts & Sciences™
Department of Psychology

This Just In!!

Congratulations to **Danielle Jahn** for receiving the 2010 **Diversity in Psychology Science Research Award**. She is being recognized for her work on older adults with Dr. Kelly Cukrowicz.

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