WHERE YOU STARTED, WHERE YOU ARE,

& WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

A Guided Reflection on Ethnic-Racial Identity

Authored by: Holly Hollopeter

Author's Note —
This document incorporates material written for the following MAICD courses: Community Development, Culture Studies in a Global Context, Social and Environmental Justice, Fieldwork, Research for Social Change, Peacemaking and Reconciliation, Fieldwork, Program Evaluation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts: International Community Development
College of Behavioral Sciences
Northwest University

PREFACE

If you have ever found yourself thinking, “The amount racial injustice in America is overwhelming, I don’t even know where to begin,” you’re not alone. It often feels as if we are being constantly bombarded with news of hate crimes, protests, riots, human rights issues, and racially motivated injustices. There have been massive historical strides made toward racial equality, yet the war for justice continues to be fought today. For some, these issues have simply become inevitable. After all, it’s far easier to just accept the reality of the world we live in rather than to continue believing that change will come. Yet, there are still those who press on toward racial justice, asking “What can I do?” If this is a question that often crosses your mind, then you’re in good company. There are powerful communities of individuals across the globe that are not ready to lose hope in humanity’s ability to change for the better. This change will not begin by asking, “What can I do?” but rather, transformative is found when we can answer the question: “Who am I?”

For those of you that aren’t ready to surrender in the battle for racial justice, this guidebook is meant to serve as a practical resource for reflection and action. Oftentimes, we who seek to engage in community development work unintentionally contribute to the problems that plague our communities. When the passion for diversity is not accompanied by a commitment to education and awareness, we may create cross-cultural casualties. Put simply: intentions alone are rarely enough, and reckless actions are often harmful. If furthering the fight for racial equality and fairness is the end goal, the first step must be toward deepening our awareness of ourselves, of others, and of our shared communities.

We will take this step by reflecting on ethnic-racial identity and the role it plays in our modern-day U.S. culture.

Ethnic-racial identity is a term that informs the entirety of this guidebook. I use this term intentionally, as it is more inclusive than just "racial" or "cultural" identifiers often are. Ethnic-racial identity can be understood as the complex geographical, biological, and cultural factors that form our understanding of self and others. More specifically, this term refers to the ethnic and racial backgrounds that an individual identifies with. Get familiar with this term and prepare to strengthen your own personal ethnic-racial identity through this reflection journey. The hope is to be able face ourselves before trying to face the world around us. When self-awareness increases, our ability to see from the perspectives of those around us must increase as well.

Although seeing through the eyes of another is an integral part of the change-making process, it is important to accept that no amount of research or reflection will enable us to *fully* understand any perspective other than our own. As such, I will not be gearing this project toward a racial or cultural group to which I do not belong. Rather, I will simply be accumulating content that can be used for contemplative action. Actions that I have been taking as a white, American woman who is seeking to reflect upon my own identity, and how that identity affects my ability to pursue holistic ethnic-racial justice. When engaging with the content of this guidebook, it is crucial for the reader to understand that my personal reflection is not the standard by which all white Westerners should judge

themselves. Experience is never identical, even if it shared within the same cultural group, at the same time, or in the same community.

For this reason, I will not be outlining a specific set of rules or guidelines for existing as a white person in twenty-first century America. Instead, this workbook will serve as a starting point for anyone, regardless of their ethnic or racial identity. If you share in my desire to encounter ethnicity and race in a reflective way for the sake of doing better and *being* better, then welcome to the journey.

We will begin by remembering where you started: the formative parts of your life that you had little to no control over such as where you were born, the family that raised you, and the privileges that you may have been born into. Then, we will transition into where you are now: your workplace, relationships, religion, and any other lifestyle choices that you make on a daily basis. We will end by looking ahead toward where you want to go from here, and we will answer the "What can I do?" question with practical tools for allyship, advocacy, and accountability. Now that we are all on the same page, it's time to take a deep breath and grab your favorite pen. Let's begin.

Race: Background and Significance

Although we all belong to "one human race," we as a society have constructed different classifications that assign people into different racial groups as a means of categorizing humanity. Why do these categorizations exist? What purpose do they serve? What does racial identity mean? The answers to these questions may vary depending on who you ask. Part of the purpose behind this ethnic-racial reflection guide is meant to serve

as a resource for you to encounter your own opinions regarding the concept of ethnic-racial identity. Before we analyze the history of racial relations in the United States, it is important to first establish a mutual understanding of what we are talking about when discussing the concept of "race." Oftentimes, people use race, culture, ethnicity, and nationality as interchangeable identifiers. However, this is not always an accurate use of these terms. **Race** can be understood as an individual's physical traits that groups and/or cultures may consider to be socially significant, while **ethnicity** refers to shared culture such as language, ancestry, beliefs, and practices (*American Sociological Association*). Let's break down these complex concepts with a few concrete examples.

Do any of these examples resonate with you? Perhaps, on the other hand, you feel misrepresented or excluded when reading about these three different individuals? Regardless of how each reader may react to these examples, the inclusion of stories like these are not meant to accurately outline every possible ethnic, racial, or national identity. Rather, these stories are meant to turn our attention to the greater issue at hand:

Example # 1

Ian's mother is a Latina who immigrated from Brazil to America before his birth, and his father is a white American. Ian identifies racially as a white man with an American nationality, but identifies ethnically as Hispanic/Latino, because he was raised with his mother's Brazilian cultural influence. Ian's sister shares the same mother but has a Brazilian father, and she was born before their mother emigrated from Brazil. Although they are a part of the same family unit, Ian's sister identifies her race, nationality, and ethnicity as Brazilian/Latina.

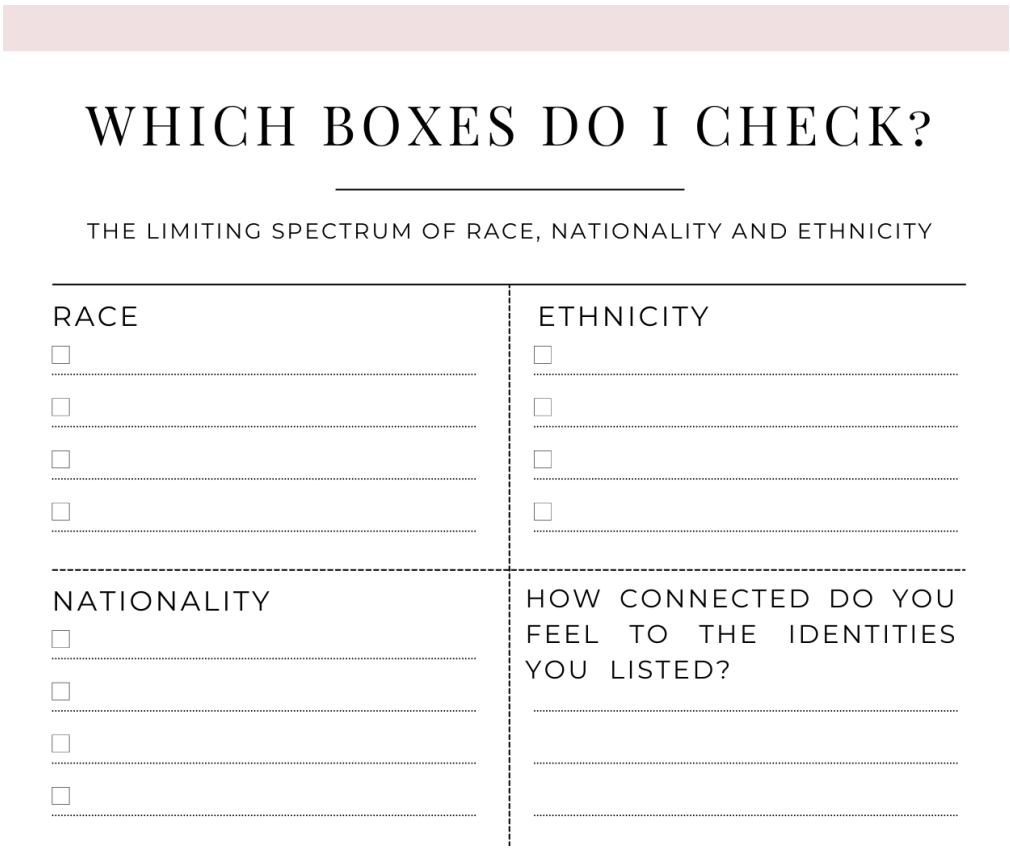
Example # 2

Kenisha's mother is from South Korea and her father is African American. Kenisha can read, write, and speak Korean fluently despite having never lived in South Korea. Kenisha was raised in the United States and identifies her nationality as American. Racially, Kenisha identifies with both her Korean and Black cultural ties, and as a result she usually identifies as "bi-racial." Ethnically, Kenisha struggles to feel "fully" like any of her various ethnic identities, leaving her with an ethnic identity that she would describe as being ambiguous.

Example # 3

Jean is currently residing in the United States on a work visa and has been a permanent citizen of France since he moved there a few years ago. Before that, Jean had been raised in Germany for the first 20 years of his life. Jean's grandparents were originally from Saudi Arabia and, based on his appearance, many people try to speak to Jean in Arabic. However, Jean always has to respond explaining that he speaks French, German, and English. Jean's current nationality, based on his citizenship, is French. However, he identifies ethnically with German culture. On the U.S. census, Jean is forced to identify racially as "white," because there is no "Middle Eastern and North African" (MENA) option.

Systems that categorize people will almost always result in exclusion, misrepresentation, or overgeneralization. Put simply, these three examples barely scratch the surface of the complexity that is beneath the surface of the "check your race" box on applications,



WHICH BOXES DO I CHECK?

THE LIMITING SPECTRUM OF RACE, NATIONALITY AND ETHNICITY

RACE	ETHNICITY
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
NATIONALITY	**HOW CONNECTED DO YOU FEEL TO THE IDENTITIES YOU LISTED?**
☐	
☐	
☐	
☐	

documents, and surveys. Do you have a grasp of your various identifiers? Utilize the "Which Boxes Do I Check?" activity to acknowledge number of the racial, ethnic, and national groups that you most identify with.

When tackling the topic of ethnic-racial identity, we need to acknowledge the controversial concept that all people belong to one "**human race**." There are many arguments against this idea, backed by individuals that claim there are genetically based biological differences that constitute to the inherent separation of different races. Although there are biological and physical differences that may contribute to visual and physical variances between racial groups, many people believe that humanity still stands as one collective *race* or species. To this point, studies have proven that:

> . . . neither race nor ethnicity is detectable in the human genome. Humans do have genetic variations, some of which were once associated with ancestry from different parts of the world. But those variations cannot be tracked to distinct biological categories. Genetic tests cannot be used to verify or determine race or ethnicity… (*National Geographic*).

Although sources like this serve as evidence of inherent human sameness across the racial spectrum, humanity's unified genetic reality does not prevent divisive social practices from occurring across the globe.

This source goes on to articulate that: "Though race has no genetic basis, the social concept of race still shapes human experiences. Racial bias fuels social exclusion, discrimination and violence against people from certain social groups. In turn, racial prejudice confers social privilege to some and social and physical disparities to others…" (*National Geographic*). It is important to acknowledge that with the separation of the human race into certain categories based on appearance, behavior, or lifestyle often comes the separation of us from one another; whether we like it or not.

Ask yourself: What role does race play in the way I am perceived by the world around me? And, in turn, what role does race play in the way I perceive the world around me? Let's continue to dive into this topic by looking at our ethnic-racial identities through many different historical, contextual, and pragmatic lenses.

Historical Perspective: Racial Identity in America

In order to comprehend the significance of ethnic-racial identity, we must first study the roles that race has played historically in the construction of American society. In other words, we cannot fully understand the current state of U.S. racial relations without

familiarizing ourselves with the historical significance of race in America. Many of the cultural and racial realities that we face today are the result of global events and systems that have spanned over the course of centuries. With that in mind, we are responsible for educating ourselves on the history behind the issues we care about. If we embark on our journeys of racial reflection without first obtaining basic understanding of United States history, we ultimately limit our ability to interact with the concept of race in the most impactful ways possible.

With this in mind, let it be known that obtaining a complete, all-encompassing understanding of any society's history is impossible. There are far too many significant people, places, and events to ever fully include in any historical source. It is also important to recognize the inherent bias that is present within any one historian's account. What I will be presenting within this section should be seen as a very simplified U.S. racial relations timeline. The purpose of this timeline is to serve as an introduction to the topic and to provide context for our conversation about ethnic-racial identity throughout the rest of the guidebook. Please supplement the historical accounts I am including in this section with findings from your own separate research. This resource is part of PBS's "Race: The Power of an Illusion" series. The timeline is specifically focused on the theme of racial inequity in the United States and is relevantly entitled: "U.S. Timeline - In Search of Equality."

United States Timeline - In Search of Equality

1765	**African Americans lobby for freedom**	During the American Revolution, free and enslaved Africans are aware of the moral contradiction between slavery and the natural rights of man. Like their fellow patriots, African Americans are inspired to press for their own equality. In Charleston, South Carolina, they march through the streets carrying signs reading "Liberty, Liberty." One Massachusetts slave petition reads: "Every principle from which America has acted in the course of her unhappy difficulties with Great Britain pleads stronger than a thousand arguments in favor of your petitioners." Although their emancipation is not gained for another century, their cries are not unnoticed. In a letter to her husband, future president John Adams, Abigail Adams writes: "How is it we are denying people that which we are fighting for ourselves?"
1854	**Frederick Douglass challenges race scientists**	As race science is embraced by public intellectuals, ex-slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass takes to the podium to challenge the "objectivity" of America's most prominent "race" scientists: "It is the province of prejudice to blind; and scientific writers, not less than others, write to please, as well as instruct, and even unconsciously to themselves sacrifice what is true to what is popular." In his 1895 obituary, however, the New York Times credits the "white blood" in him for his success and ponders "whether the fact that he had any black blood at all may not have cost the world a genius."
1868	**14th amendment guarantees equal rights**	Passage of the Fourteenth Amendment is a landmark event, not only for African Americans but for all Americans. Conceived during Reconstruction, the amendment extends citizenship to African Americans and attempts to heal the wounds of the Civil War by emphasizing national unity over sectional divisions. The amendment defines citizenship for the first time, guarantees all citizens equal protection and due process under the law, and most importantly, grants citizens privileges and immunities that cannot be abridged. The amendment's validity is tested by discriminatory laws and policies throughout the 20th century, but the equal protection clause nevertheless forms the cornerstone of the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision and provides the legal basis for all civil rights and anti-discrimination efforts to this day.

1898	**Birthright citizenship established**	Most people take for granted that anyone born in the U.S. is a citizen. However, that hasn't always been the case, especially for groups barred from naturalizing. The 1898 Supreme Court case of Wong Kim Ark v. United States first establishes the precedent of birthright citizenship when the court rules that, under the 14th Amendment guarantee, a Chinese man born in America to immigrant parents is a citizen even though his parents are ineligible for citizenship. Throughout the 19th and 20th century, Asians, like other minority groups, fight consistently for inclusion. The Chinese alone bring 170 cases to the U.S. Supreme Court, most under the 14th Amendment.
1903	**Japanese and Mexican farm workers strike**	In 1903, Japanese and Mexican farm workers organize the first multi-ethnic agricultural union to demand fair wages and labor rights in the sugar-beet industry in Ventura, CA. The union leads 1200 workers - 90 percent of the labor force - on strike and scores the first victory against big agribusiness in the west. Their success attracts the attention of the American labor movement concentrated in the industrial east. However, when the Mexican secretary of the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association applies for a charter from the American Federation of Labor, it is granted only on condition that the Japanese are excluded. The JMLA refuses to bend, but without the support of other organized labor, the union folds within a few years.
1905	**African Americans demand equal rights**	Founded under the leadership of W.E.B. DuBois, the Niagara Movement marks an important turning point in the African American struggle for equality. The group sets an aggressive agenda demanding equal rights and an end to racial discrimination: "We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America. The battle we wage is not for ourselves alone but for all true Americans." The Niagara group gives rise to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909, whose legal efforts culminate in the watershed Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education, marking the beginning of the end of Jim Crow and legal segregation.

1954	**Legal segregation ends**	In the wake of the Brown v. Board of Education decision, civil rights advocates led by Martin Luther King, Jr. organize a yearlong boycott of city buses in Montgomery, Alabama, to protest the state's resistance to school integration. What begins as a struggle over schools spreads to public transportation, voting, and all areas of social life. Despite the violent opposition of some white groups, especially in the Deep South, integration and the freedom struggle continue during the 1950s and 1960s through the work of whites and nonwhites alike. Students, church groups, workers, and volunteers participate in massive non-violent protest, civil disobedience, and public education campaigns. Their efforts culminate in the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.
1967	**Laws against mixed marriage declared invalid**	In the 19th century, 38 states have anti-miscegenation laws prohibiting marriage between whites and nonwhites. By 1924, 29 states, including Virginia, still ban interracial marriages. Anti-miscegenation statutes are not outlawed until 1967, when a Virginia couple is tried and convicted, and files a suit challenging the law. Although the state Supreme Court of Appeals upholds their conviction, the U.S. Supreme Court rules unanimously against it, declaring that a person's individual right to marry cannot be restricted by race. The Loving decision finally reverses the racist policies set forth in the 1924 Racial Purity Act and invalidates the anti-miscegenation laws remaining in 16 other states.
1974	**Lau v. Nichols guarantees bilingual education**	A class action suit by 1800 Chinese families whose children speak limited English leads to a unanimous Supreme Court decision with far-reaching consequences. The court mandates that school districts must provide students with special instruction to ensure "equal access" to the curriculum. Significantly, the court distinguishes between treating students "the same" and supplying them with the tools needed to put them on a par with other students. Although the case specifically deals with language ability and public education, it opens up a new era in federal enforcement of equal opportunity laws.

1985	**Minorities lead nationwide union campaign**	The struggling Service Employees International Union begins a campaign to attract and organize low-wage workers, predominantly Black and immigrant janitors. Their efforts culminate in the nationwide Justice for Janitors Campaign 2000, headed by minority leaders on the local level. A hundred thousand janitors in 16 cities pledge to fight for a living wage, full-time work, and ongoing health coverage. First to strike are hundreds of Latino and Latina janitors in Los Angeles, who win widespread public support and a dramatic victory after three weeks. Similar protests and strikes follow in New York City, Chicago, Cleveland, Seattle, and other major cities - raising awareness of the "invisible" labor forces dominated by minorities and reinvigorating and diversifying organized labor.

The scope of this timeline is very limited but, when combined with supplemental knowledge, can prove to be a great starting point for many of us in our journey toward understanding the relevance of race in the United States and global societies. Also, I am sure that many of you recognize that the timeline above stops abruptly in 1985, failing to include the past 4 decades of the fight for ethnic-racial equality in the United States. Although I will be addressing some of the more recent racially motivated events within our discussion throughout the rest of this guidebook, there is still a chance that an event you find significant may be excluded from our conversation. Let's take a moment to identify which ethnic-racial events have been most formative in your life thus far. Whether taking place during your lifetime or occurring historically, think of a few events/issues that weigh heavily on your mind when contemplating America's history with race and culture. In the space provided below, please list three historical events/movements that are not included

in the “In Search of Equality” timeline. Preferably, try to list three events that you feel are most significant to consider in your ethnic-racial reflection journey.

_____

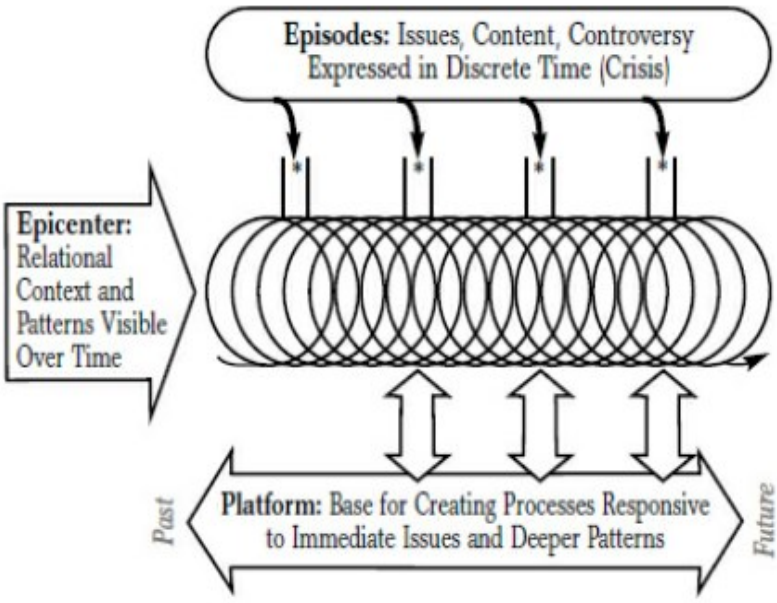
Take a look at the three historical events/movements that you chose to list. What do you think your choices reveal about your values, worldview, and personal identity? For many of us, we are most familiar with history that has affected us most directly. This begs the question: what historical occurrences are you less familiar with, or completely unaware of entirely? As previously mentioned, no one can obtain a perfectly encompassing understanding of the world’s historical timeline. However, we should not let this inevitable limitation prevent us from educating ourselves. By pursuing a more well-rounded, inclusive understanding of our nation’s history, we potentially become better equipped to perceive the communities around us with less

ignorance. Now that we have begun to identify a few historical contexts that are relevant to our ethnic-racial reflection, we can venture deeper into the topic of ethnic-racial conflict and its effects on modern U.S. communities.

Ethnic-Racial Conflict: Identifying Conflict Trends

As agents for change, we must reach far beyond the issue before us to look behind us. In doing so, may we have the clarity to see what has brought us to where we are now. Chances are, the more context we seek beyond merely the immediate issue, the greater our chances of addressing the conflict at the root rather than just pulling weeds. This is where the concept of reconciliation must be brought into our journeys of racial reflection.

Figure 1: Transformational Platform



Source: *Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, Lederach

Episodic conflicts are the issues that occur during specific cultural moments, or "one time" occurrences. Episodic aspects of a long-running conflict can be understood through

remembering moments that made history, such as the death of George Floyd at hands of police officers in 2020, the verdict of Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, or Cesar Chavez leading the 1966 Delano grape strike. Episodic events often draw attention, raise awareness, and then begin to fade as time passes. The reality of these "one time" events is that they are not, in fact, stand-alone occurrences. By viewing *episodic* events collectively, we begin to discover the overarching themes and patterns of the issue, otherwise known as the *epicenter* of the conflict. It is vital that we take both perspectives into account. We must view one-time incidents and overarching systems as two sides of the same coin. Once we have a complex understanding of the issue at hand, a transformative approach then allows us to move into the identification and implementation of practical steps that can be taken toward interracial justice.

Why is it important to understand ethnic-racial conflict trends? For our purposes, this topic is important because many of the social issues we face have underlying ties to pre-existing ethnic-racial tension. Understanding these concepts is vital in comprehending one's role in the ethnic-racial reality of our society. Change must be pursued through the most impactful ways possible. The question then becomes: is racial reconciliation the best avenue for change throughout our communities?

Redefining the Issue: Can Racial Unrest be Reconciled?

We can, and should, view racial disunity for the conflict that it is: a problem that has caused deep unrest, tragedy, and turmoil since the inception of racially divided societies. However, there is no conflict resolution class that can heal the ailments of racism, discrimination, or prejudice. In fact, many argue that the goal of our interracial work

cannot be rooted in the desire to "reconcile" the issue. Katongole and Rice write in *Reconciling All Things*:

> Much is at stake in who is saying "reconciliation," what they mean by it and the experience and story out of which they speak. "No reconciliation without justice" can be an attempt to resist a politically or historically naïve vision of reconciliation that doesn't take into account the complex processes and long history through which people's sense of who they are has become connected to the past and its conflicts (31).

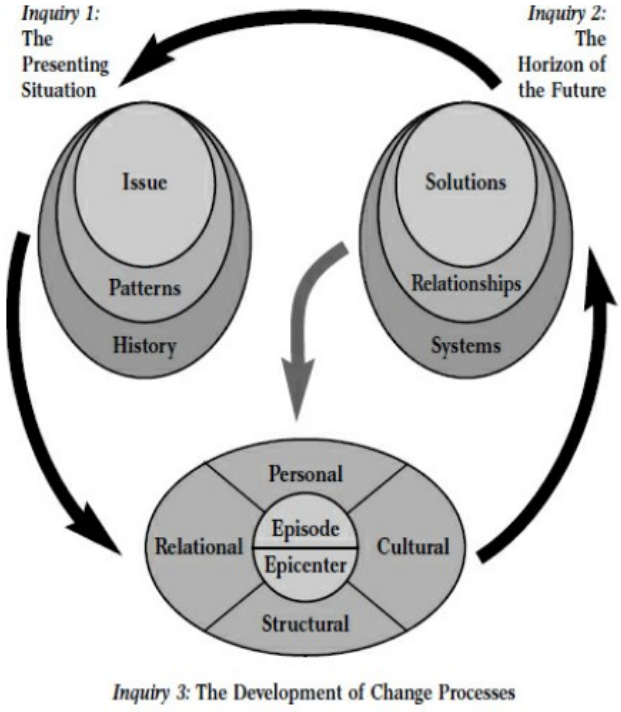
Reconciliation and resolution imply that there was once a state of wholeness of rightness to which we can return. In many cases of racial unrest across the globe, there is not an acceptable standard of racial justice to which we can return. Transformation, on the other hand, takes into account the long-standing systems of injustice that are often behind ethnic-racial conflict. With this sentiment in mind, we will be moving forward using the terminology of "conflict transformation" rather than the conventionally used "conflict resolution," or "racial reconciliation." In order to truly address the ethnic-racial tensions and conflicts within the U.S., we must utilize a transformational platform.

The conflicts that surround us will never change if our efforts are not based in a desire to see transformation. Oftentimes, those who are ardent to see resolution neglect to address the conflict at its' core level. Those with the best intentions fall victim to rushing the resolution that they hope to see transpire, leaving them with change goals that are both unrealistic and unsustainable. By employing a deeper, more firmly rooted comprehension of the conflict, we increase our chances of creating real change that will last beyond the

immediacy of our efforts. How do we go about pursuing sustainable peace amidst tension filled communities? The answer is found in looking at the big picture.

Presented below in figure 2 are three stages of inquiry that John Lederach outlines in his text, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. These stages of inquiry, when followed accordingly, equip a peacemaker to take into account all of the necessary aspects involved in the conflict. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with each stage of inquiry, and what components must be involved when pursuing conflict transformation work.

Figure 2: The Big Picture of Conflict Transformation



A transformative lens allows us to view conflicts as opportunities to explore needed changes that are felt by the community. Remember, we are aiming not just to remedy the ailment before us, but to reach further back, reconciling the brokenness in the systems that produce the problems themselves. A transformative process responds to both the pressing, immediate issues that affect a community and the patterns that contribute to the conflict within a society.

Getting Personal with Conflict Transformation: Where to Begin?

One of the best ways to combat our contributions to racially motivated discrimination — whether we are doing so knowingly or unknowingly — is through

intentionally seeking out opportunities to be surrounded by the "other." This phenomenon is known throughout the discipline of Sociology as "Contact Theory." This theory, in part:

> . . . suggests that relationships between conflicting groups will improve if they have meaningful contact with one another over an extended period of time. This contact must occur in a mutually beneficial learning environment and involve multiple opportunities for the participants to have cooperative interactions with one another. According to the theory, this type of contact will likely decrease the hostility between groups because the animosity is typically fueled by stereotypes that result from limited exposure (*Roadmap to Reconciliation*, 37).

We would all be wise to heed the research conducted surrounding Contact Theory. We will dive into this reflective process together by taking a look at how our perspectives of the "others" in our lives begin to form before we are able to realize that we are being influenced. Let's begin with where you started.

PART I: WHERE YOU STARTED

When embarking our journey of ethnic-racial reflection, there is no better place to start than at the beginning. Anti-apartheid revolutionary and political leader Nelson Mandela writes in his book *Long Walk to Freedom*, "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally

to the human heart than its opposite" (41). If there is any truth to this sentiment, then there is hope for us to unlearn some of the biased worldviews that we may have unknowingly inherited throughout our lifetime. However, we can only do so by examining the sources behind the ethnic-racial prejudices that may be clouding our perspective. The foundational parts of identity are often shaped by things that we had little to no control over, such as: the neighborhoods we grew up in, the cultural ties of our families, the people and places we were exposed to, and the privileges that we may be in possession of as a result. In order to understand your racial-ethnic identity, let's travel back in time to take another look at your earliest memories.

Geographic Influence

Our geographical influences — the physical locations that have been significant throughout the phases of our lives — are responsible for more than we know. Things such as our psychological development, access to resources, familiar demographics, social problems, and our worldview are all potentially linked to our early geographical identities. As such, this specific influential force is an important milestone in our journey of ethnic-racial reflection. Within this section, we will discuss socioeconomics, gentrification, area-based demographics, and other micro-issues that arise when examining geographical influence.

Know your Neighborhood: Socioeconomics and Gentrification

Where we grew up — our neighborhood, its location, the subsequent resources that were made available to us — sets us up for the life we may live after adolescence. Now, that's not to say that we are bound to become the sum of our geographical circumstances.

However, it is clear that where we started has the potential to greatly impact where we end up. For better or for worse, this reality has proven to be all too true for many people. Certain individuals are born into situations that give them a "higher quality of life," ultimately contributing to the disparities that exist between socio-economic classes. This opens a dialogue about privilege intersectionalities, which will be discussed in later sections. Within this portion of the guidebook, we will discuss the importance of gentrification as a system that contributes to ethnic-racial identity. What does gentrification have to do with our identities as individuals? Any system that sculpts and shapes the world around us ultimately holds the power needed to sculpt and shape us as well.

As always, let us begin by establishing a definition for the term that we will be unpacking within this section. Gentrification can be understood as a sort of "double-edged sword," in the sense that, "It updates older, generally run-down housing in urban areas with modern, attractive infrastructure but may result in worse outcomes for low-income households who are priced out of the improved housing market… These improvements increase house prices and may displace lower-income households who can't afford higher rent prices…" ("Neighbourhood Inequality Spillover Effects of Gentrification"). With this definition in mind, we can begin to inspect the implications that gentrification may have on the families that are affected by it.

If you have benefitted from the effects of gentrification, it's important to give attention also to the dark side of this approach to urban development. The effects of gentrification show up within communities in very tangible, measurable ways. For some, gentrification means better schools, an increase in health-food stores, safer parks, and less

crime. The other edge of the gentrification sword, however, can be less shiny and a bit more lethal. It has been recorded that higher levels of socio-economic inequality — like those caused by gentrification — have a direct correlation to unfortunate outcomes in the social sector. Some outcomes that disproportionately affect lower income communities include higher homicide rates, increase in violent crime, obesity, imprisonment rates, and lower levels of social capital ("Inequality in Income and Mortality in the United States: Analysis of Mortality and Potential Pathways"). Consequences like these are the cost of gentrification; a cost that the realtors don't include in the price tag of a freshly upgraded old home.

The inclusion of gentrification is not meant to serve as a guilt-trip for those who reaped the benefits of gentrification, and it is also not a means of over-simplifying the life and struggles of those who have been hurt by it. Rather, this portion of the guide could potentially be an introduction to a topic that has been left untouched in your life thus far, a topic that has been impacting you whether you've been made aware of it or not. Conversely, for those of you who have already been made acquainted to the gentrification system and its effects, this is merely a reminder that the neighborhood you were born into or raised in is a contributing factor to your worldview and, in tandem, your ethnic-racial identity. The way we view the neighborhoods we walk through, those we marvel at and those we avoid, says a lot about how we view the identities of those who reside there.

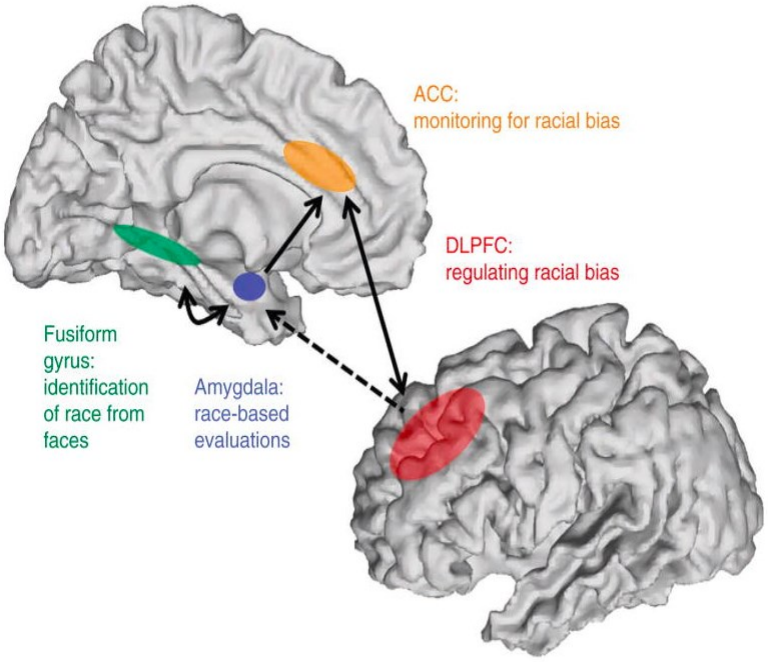
Early Exposure: Who did You Know?

From the moment our eyes first open, our brains begin to collect information about the world that we see around us. In the very beginning of our lives, we do not have any control or autonomy over ourselves and our day-to-day lives. For most people, the food they eat, the places they go, and the people they see are decided for them until after their

earliest developmental years have passed. In other words, most of us don't get much of a say in the composition of our communities until after our adolescent years have come and gone. Why does this matter within the context of ethnicity and race? Because, most times, our brains are capable of reaching conclusions about the people that surround us before we are old enough to talk. "Our brains have evolved to be really sensitive to differences in our environments, to novel things," explains Jeni Kubota, psychologist at the University of Chicago's Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture. "Those systems, because of the culture, have co-opted the processing of race." So, what does this neurological processing look like in our day to day lives?

Over time, our brains begin to categorize people into categories that trace back to our biological need to survive by categorizing outside elements into friend or foe, safety or threat. The contextual knowledge that an individual has been collecting over time will ultimately contribute to the assessment made by their brain. The information used to make these assessments is often rooted in bias and, as a result, the results of the brain's conclusion will reflect their internal biases. "Unfortunately, that leads to horrible inaccuracies and, in some cases, life-and-death consequences," Kubota said. "So, the system that's really efficient in processing a lot of information can also lead to a lot of harm." This neurological phenomenon has been studied by psychologists and has been backed by evidence on a neuroanatomical level as well.

Source: "The Neuroscience of Race," Kubota et. al.



Let's talk about the amygdala. The amygdala is a collection of cells in the human brain, commonly thought of as a core of the neural system that is responsible for processing fearful and threatening stimuli, including the detection of external threats and the activation of fear-related reactions (*National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*). According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, a number of studies have found a higher rate of amygdala activity in reaction to **outgroup** race faces. Outgroup, in this sense, refers to any individuals that belong to a race group other than one's own. Through various Implicit Association Tests (IATs), it has been found that,

> Specifically, for white Americans, even when little to no race preference is apparent on explicit, self-report measures, substantial levels of preference for positive stereotypes of white rather than black are observed on the IAT. For black Americans, the pattern is more complex, with 40% of black Americans showing a pro-white preference on the IAT, 40% showing pro-black attitudes and 20% neutral with regard to race (Kubota et al).

Studies such as the one cited above reveal the discrepancies that often exist in perception of race. For those who may claim to not have a biased perception of racial identities, their subconscious may be subjected to influences that they are unaware of. Many of these neurological subconscious processes remain out of our control until we have become aware of their occurrence. That is to say, many of us begin to form our understanding of race through the faces that surround us at our earliest age. Feeling a bit discouraged? That is to be expected. Part of uncovering our neurological racial processing mechanisms involves dealing with the reality that, oftentimes, we have been subjected to years of built-up subliminal messaging. For many of us, we are not aware of the biases that we are allowing to influence our perception of the world and those who inhabit it.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, try to take heart. Neuroscientific studies have begun to show that the human brain is capable of keeping prejudicial associations in check, especially when the brain owner is operating under the motivation to be equitable, fair, and to maintain an active awareness of their own biases. Individuals that want to avoid racially motivated neurological patterns have been observed exercising self-control over their own prefrontal cortex, which ultimately gives them greater ownership over their own behavior (Kubota). This proves that, although we can never fully rid ourselves of the racial conditioning that our brains have been subjected to, we can make active efforts to reclaim those parts of our brains.

This is a practical way to hold ourselves accountable for our own actions. We may not have been able to control what racial messaging we were surrounded with when our lives began, but we must certainly can take ownership of the messages about race that we

send to those around us now. This is why it is so important to take a critical look at the life that was built around us when we were young.

Kids Grow Up: Childhood Effects on Adolescence and Adulthood

Although we are not doomed to become the culmination of our childhood experience, much of an adult's identity is rooted in what was planted within them during their earliest years. Our perception of rce and ethnicity during our adolescent years — both our own and the identity of others — is certainly not exempt from the lessons that we learn as children. One effective way to approach the relationship between early childhood and racial identity development is through ethnic-racial identification (ERI). According to research conducted by the 21st Century Study Group, the ERI components that are particularly salient during the developmental periods of early to middle childhood are:

- ethnic–racial labeling (self and other).
- ethnic–racial knowledge (including behaviors).
- ethnic–racial constancy, which largely capture the process of ethnic identification.

Now that we have outlined some basic components of ethnic-racial identity, allow me to explain why this particular concept is valuable when trying to collaborate with others for the sake change-making in your community. Consider this example: You want to get involved with the local foster care system, and you are eager to learn that you will be able to work with kids that grew up "just like you did." Perhaps you draw connections between your racial identities, early childhood experiences, or general upbringings. You are eager to connect with these kids, because you know that you can provide the kind of guidance that you were seeking when you were their age. However, your attempts are not met with the

enthusiasm that you had envisioned. Quite the opposite, actually. How is it possible for two children to grow up in similar environments, yet have vastly different ethnic-racial identities?

This is where the concept of saliency becomes crucial in our understanding of childhood development. **Saliency**, in this context, refers to the extent to which one's ethnicity-race is relevant to one's self-concept in a particular situation. It is important to recognize that a child's degree of salience is typically determined by the interface of the situational context and someone's tendency to define themselves in terms of ethnicity-race (*Child Development*, vol. 85). Put simply: there are countless factors that can influence the level of importance that someone places on their ethnic-racial identity, and much of this emphasis is learned throughout early childhood. We must avoid the temptation to assume the importance that someone's ERI plays in their understanding of self and/or their perception of others. We can avoid ostracizing others through over-generalizations by using this knowledge of ERI studies as a weapon against stereotyping. Rather than assuming, seek first to investigate. When we understand where someone came from, we have a much better chance of seeing how they hope to progress; Another crucial component for the exploration of your origin stories is rooted in your family tree.

Family Ties

When talking about where we started in our ethnic-racial journeys, family history is an unavoidable part of the conversation. The term "family" is a nuanced concept that requires the use of different definitions in order to be inclusive. Here are a few examples of what "family" could mean:

Defining Family – Examining the Examples

Nuclear family - "A family unit consisting of two adults and any number of children living together. The children might be biological, step or adopted."

Extended family - "Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, either all living nearby or within the same household. For example, if a married couple lives with either the husband or wife's parents the family changes from a nuclear to extended household."

Reconstituted family - "Also known as a stepfamily. A family where one or both adults have children from previous relationships living with them."

Single parent family - "Consists of a parent not living with a partner, who has most of the day-to-day responsibilities for raising the children. The children will live with this single parent for the majority of the time, but they may still have contact with their other parent."

Same-sex family - "Since civil partnerships were legalized, the number of same sex families has been growing. Same-sex couples cannot conceive together, so their children may be adopted or be the biological children of one member of the couple. They may also be from a sperm donor or a surrogate birth mother."

Source: "Personal and Family Issues: Different Types of Family." BBC News.

If your family structure is not represented in the examples listed above, consider it a testament to the limitless types of families that exist across the world. We have the tendency to try and fit the idea of "family" into a familiar box or to try and force it into fitting one of a few convenient definitions. For the sake of this section, **"family"** is to be defined as whatever you need it to be, because the purpose of this reflection guide is to help you understand yourself better. Utilize the space below to establish your personal definition of family:

Defining Family – What is Family to Me?

Growing up, my family consisted of

_____

_____

Currently, my family consists of *(if different than definition above)*

_____

_____

Now that we have touched on the concept of family and you have identified your personal definition, let's evaluate the potential impact that family upbringing may have on our ethnic-racial identities.

Familial Heritage: Do I Have a "Culture?"

In order to emphasize the importance of cultural competence, allow me to provide you with an analogy. One would never expect a specialized doctor to perform an intensive surgery prior to attending medical school. If the doctor lacks an understanding of the area

that he/she is operating on, or if they never learned the correct procedures to utilize, they will undoubtedly only worsen the patient's condition. One could argue that these kinds of harmful outcomes often occur as a result of any serious endeavor that is done carelessly. Why then, do we not view interracial and cross-cultural work with the same mindset? Although a surgery may seem more critical than cross-cultural work, there are inarguably high stakes in both scenarios. In attempting to educate ourselves prior to (and continually throughout) our interaction with issues rooted in ethnic racial identity, our family's cultural ties are a great place to begin.

One practical way to analyze your family's cultural influences is through utilizing Hofstede's Compare Countries tool. Geert Hofstede is a social psychologist and a notable anthropological figure who has dedicated his life to cultural studies. A culmination of his life's work is presented in a user-friendly interface entitled, "Hofstede's Insights." Within this helpful resource, we can educate ourselves about various cultural indices. These indices reveal cultural realities that may be reflected in our family's geographical location and allow us to compare our cultural orientation with those from other nations.

The six indices evaluated by Hofstede are individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long versus short term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint. It is helpful to establish some unified definitions before analyzing these indices within the context of familial culture. The following are the definition of the six cultural indices, as determined by Professor Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Michael Minkov and their research teams:

Cultural Indices – Establishing Unified Definitions

Individualism versus Collectivism —
"The high side of this dimension, called Individualism, can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families. Its opposite, Collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular ingroup to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether people's self-image is defined in terms of 'I' or 'we.'

Power Distance —
"This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The fundamental issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people. People in societies exhibiting a large degree of Power Distance accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place, and which needs no further justification. In societies with low Power Distance, people strive to equalize the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power."

Masculinity versus Femininity —
"The Masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success. Society at large is more competitive. Its opposite, Femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus oriented. In the business context Masculinity versus Femininity is sometimes also related to as 'tough versus tender' cultures."

Uncertainty Avoidance —
"The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. The fundamental issue here is how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen? Countries exhibiting strong UAI maintain rigid codes of belief and behavior and are intolerant of unorthodox behavior and ideas. Weak UAI societies maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles."

Long Term versus Short Term Orientation —
"Every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and the future. Societies prioritize these two existential goals differently. Societies who score low on this dimension, for example, prefer to maintain time-honored traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion.

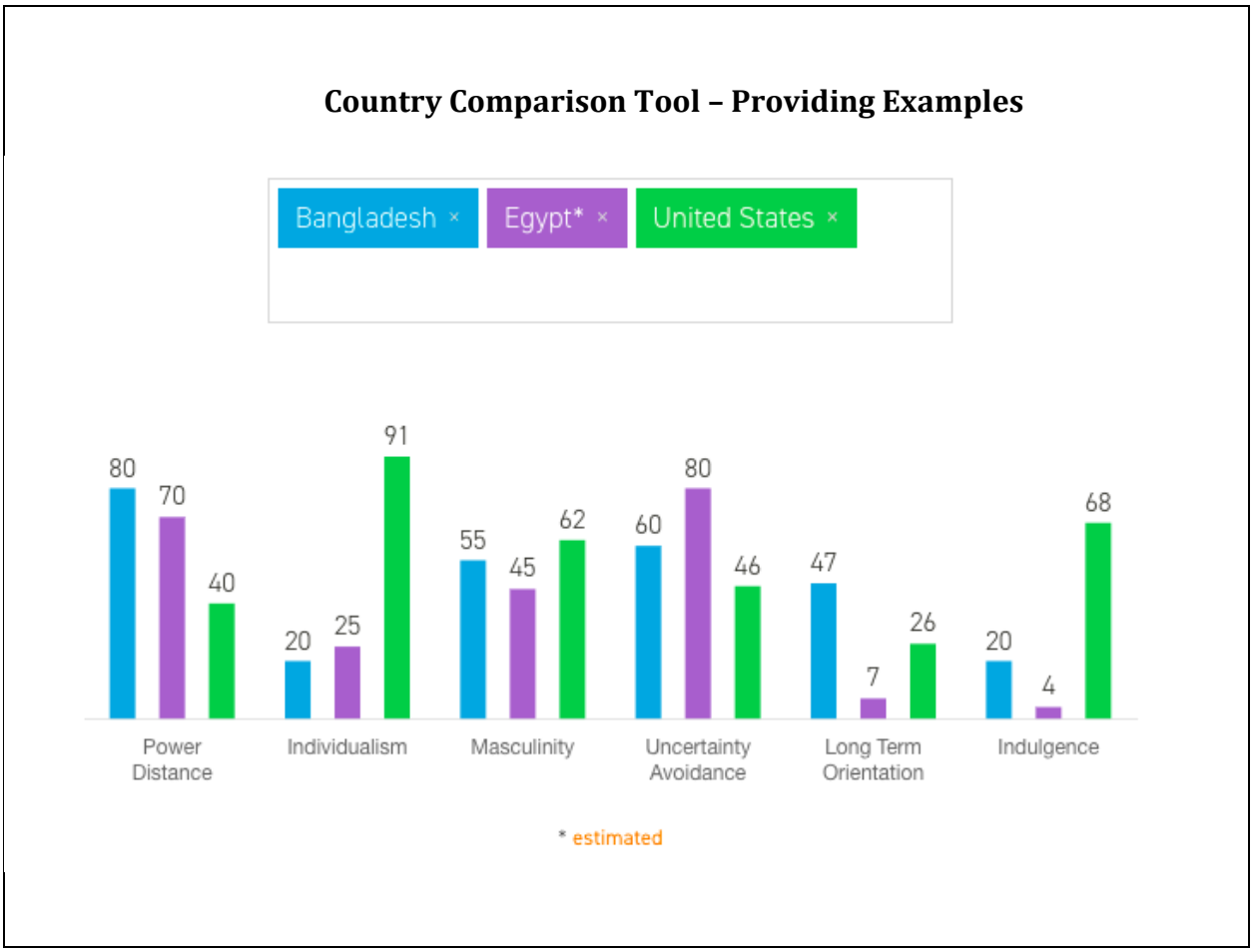
Those with a culture which scores high, on the other hand, take a more pragmatic approach:

they encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future. In the business context, this dimension is referred to as '(short-term) normative versus (long-term) pragmatic' (PRA). In the academic environment, the terminology Monumentalism versus Flex humility is sometimes also used."

Indulgence versus Restraint —
"Indulgence stands for a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint stands for a society that suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms."

Source: Hofstede Insights, "National Culture"

In order to best articulate the effect that this kind of knowledge has on our approach to our reflection work, I will provide a few practical examples through which these six cultural indices can be identified through utilizing Hofstede's Country Comparison tool. If you are curious as to where your family's cultural heritage falls on these indices, the Country Comparison tool is a great place to start. You simply type in the name of the country that you wish to learn more about, and the index ranking is displayed in a bar-graph format. The user can even type in multiple different countries and compare their cultural index rankings side-by-side. As an example, I have attached below a chart comparing the cultural indices rankings of three different nations to serve as references for the rest of this section:



Source: Hofstede Insight's Compare Countries Tool

Our families and their native cultures have an impact on who we become and how we view the world. Let's take a look at individualism versus collectivism, and how that specific cultural index can have a direct impact upon someone's values and worldview. Consider this interview of Ayesha, a sex trafficking survivor from Jessore, Bangladesh. She explains, "My father was a simple farmer. We were poor, but all of my eight brothers and sisters went to school… Although I am happy to no longer be in prostitution, with so many years taken from me, I have little options for an alternative way to support my family. That is my main concern" (Equality Now). For Ayeesha, it is not merely enough to be freed from

sex slavery. Rather, providing for her family is of *equal* importance to her. Granted, there are cultural nuances surrounding the legality and normalcy of industries such as sex work vary from country to country. Perhaps the severity of Ayeesha's situation is not the same across all cultural orientations, however, the testimony of Ayeesha serves as a testament to the effect that a collectivistic culture can have on someone's view of self-versus others. This is the essence of a collectivistic society: it is not every man for himself, it is every man for those they care about. It is important to reflect upon this cultural index in order to understand what subliminal influences you have been surrounded with throughout your upbringing.

Pause and Reflect

Ask yourself: how important are my own goals, dreams, and ambitions? How do these things compare to considering what is best for my overall community of those that I care about?

Is this example not resonating with you? Another way in which the concept of individualism versus collectivism occurs in the world around us can be seen through our relationships with the elderly. Many collectivistic cultures place a high emphasis on caring for their older family members as they age by allowing their relatives to move into the family home. A great deal of individualist nations, however, choose instead to turn toward nursing homes, hospice care, or other forms of provision for their aging elders.

Let's take a look at a second example of the cultural indices by examining the indulgence index. According to the Hofstede Insight's Compare Countries tool, Egypt ranks at a 4 on the indulgence index. In comparison to the United States' score of 68, we can see quite a discrepancy between these two nations' approaches to the ideas of things such as happiness and pleasure in life, importance of leisure and friendship, and life control. To provide a clear comparison between an indulgent nation such as the United States and a restraint-based country like Egypt, let us turn to this comparison chart directly developed by Hofstede et al., 2010 and Yavuz, 2014:

IVR Index: A Cross-Country Comparison

Indulgent Society	**Restrained Society**
Higher percentage of people focused on a "happy" lifestyle	Lower percentage of "happiness" as a driving value and norm
A perception of and emphasis on autonomy and control of life circumstances	A perception of powerlessness; what happens to me is not in my control
High importance placed on leisurely activities	Low importance placed on leisurely activities
High importance placed on friendship and social connections	Low importance placed on friendship and social connections
Financial saving is not important	Strict, monetarily conservative view on finances is common
Less moral rigidity and discipline	Moral discipline is highly valued and often expected
Equal delegation of household tasks between living partners	Unequal delegation of household tasks between partners
Emphasis on loose or fluid gender roles	Gender roles are strictly prescribed
In wealthier nations there are less strict norms surrounding sexuality	Stricter norms surrounding sexuality

Smiling is widely considered a social norm	Smiling can be viewed as suspect
Freedom of speech often serves as a national pillar or cultural value	Freedom of speech is often not considered a national priority

Source: Enkh-Amgalan, Rentsenkhand.

Search for your family's cultural heritage and identify it as either indulgent or restrictive. Do you feel misrepresented by the general comparisons from this chart? If so, that is completely okay. Misrepresentation makes a crucial point in our conversation about cultural identity: No country is composed of identical culture. Humanity is constantly growing, moving, emigrating, exchanging, and learning and with it, cultural diversity intensifies.

While it is valuable to pursue knowledge regarding our family's cultural identity, there are many pitfalls associated with following Hofstede's research too closely. While recognizing a country's general tendencies is beneficial, we must remember that tendencies are simply that: *tendencies*. There is nothing absolute about a generalization. Someone's culture does not dictate the entirety of their identity. Hofstede lends to this idea in his text, *Cultures and Organizations.* Regarding stereotyping, he explains, "Stereotypes are literally printing plates; figuratively they are conventional notions that are usually associated uncritically with a person on the basis of his or her background" (39). How does this understanding of stereotypes influence the way I interact with culture? It means that I should not assume that someone does not wish for power to be distributed equally merely because they are Dominican. Similarly, I cannot treat all Bangladeshi people as if they are collectivistic in their thinking. Although the research gives a great starting point for our work, we must go the extra mile to make interpersonal connections with the people that

we interact with. In doing so, we are more likely to make changes that are sustainable for a specific place, at that specific time, and for those specific people.

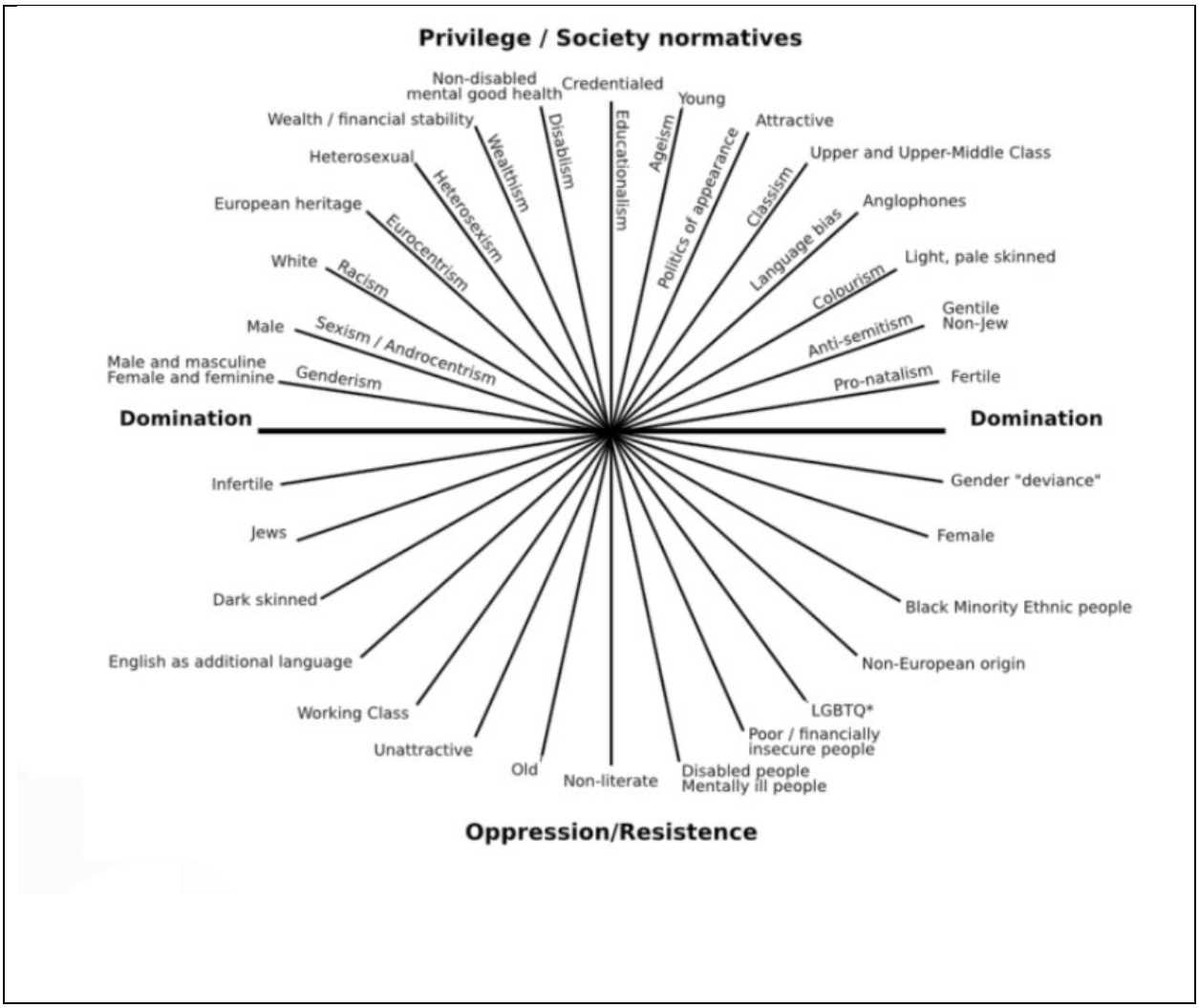
Why study cultural dimensions? The answer is simple: If people matter, their culture has to matter as well. While acknowledging the diversity of culture, we must not neglect the diversity of people. We cannot dehumanize people in our attempt to be humanitarians. People may share a place, but they may not always share a personality. Just as surgery cannot be done without knowing the correct anatomy of the patient, change cannot be accomplished without knowing the cultural influences that exist within our communities. In attempting to partner with those from other cultural orientations— or perhaps even come alongside our own — we need to remove the **ethnocentric** lens that may be clouding our vision. Hofstede's research on cultural dimensions and various indices is invaluable to our pursuit of a more cohesive cross-cultural society, serving first as a tool for your own personal cultural reflection.

In pursuing our knowledge of culture — both our family's and our own — we must motivate ourselves to move beyond the textbook. It should be noted that there is a huge difference between **cultural competency** and **cultural humility**. If one is pursuing cultural knowledge, they may be under the impression that the ideal outcome of studying culture is to obtain a general competence. This is very different from the desired outcome of a pursuit in cultural humility, which is a life-long commitment to becoming other-oriented in our posture toward foreign cultures. Countries are composed of countless people with individual experiences and upbringings, so no index could perfectly share your family's cultural story — that is yours to tell.

Let's Talk About Privilege

The term "privilege" can be interpreted in many ways, as it is an applicable concept across countless contexts. For the sake of our conversation, let's define **privilege** as any unearned advantages that are highly valued but restricted to certain groups (*National Association of School Psychologists*). There are contrasting ideas surrounding which components of someone's identity constitute a "privilege" in their life. Allow me to clear up a few common misconceptions surrounding this term. Having privilege in one or many areas does not mean that your life is without challenges. Privilege simply means that a certain part of your identity does not *contribute* to those challenges. I've heard it described this way before: "Privilege does not mean that you get bonus points added to your score. Rather, it means that the other team is being penalized unfairly by the referees, making it more difficult for them to win the game" (*Anonymous).* As always, I encourage you to conduct your own research and determine what areas of society privilege some traits over others. However, for the sake of our conversation within this section, I will provide one commonly used resource for defining privilege across various categories. Below is the "Wheel of Power and Oppression," a diagram created to display the vast spectrum of privileges in U.S. society:

The Wheel of Power and Oppression



Source: Adapted from *The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy, & Politics*

Again, it is okay to disagree with any of the information included within this section. Remember, this isn't about being right, it is about being open-minded to learning that we may be wrong. I am also still on my own journey of learning my own privileges, and there is a lot to learn. That being said, we cannot begin our journey of discovering which privileges we benefit from without stumbling across a few intersections. Oftentimes, individuals are not affected by only one type of privilege. Rather, when examining the privileges that we possess, we encounter what are known as intersectionalities. **Intersectionalities** are essentially the various systems of societal disadvantages that do not act independently of

each other. Some key areas of privilege that overlap or "intersect," could include race, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, able-bodiedness, and so on.

Pause and Reflect

Ask yourself: What are a few of your identifiers that may grant you certain privileges that others do not have? Conversely, do any of your identifiers result in negative effects? Take a moment to identify a few of the classifications that often result in privilege disparities.

Gender Identity: _____ Race/Ethnicity: _____

Sexual Orientation: _____ Religious Affiliation: _____

Socio-economic Class: _____ Citizenship Status: _____

Disability Status: _____ Age: _____

Educational Attainment: _____ Political Affiliation: _____

There are many categories that can result in intersections of privilege. **Intersectionality theory** has origins in the work of Black feminists and other feminist women of color (i.e., Anzaldua, 1987; Crenshaw, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Stewart, 1831/1987), and argues that, ". . . it is important to consider the multiple social groups individuals belong to when attempting to understand their lived experiences because the meaning of one social identity depends on the other identities one holds" (*Translational Issues in Psychological Science*). Before we dissect the concept of privilege as it pertains to social justice in the world, let's first begin by examining how privilege actively affects *your* world.

Using the identifiers-reflection activity from earlier, engage with this resource to create a visual representation of what privileges may be prevalent within your daily life.

The Wheel of Privilege

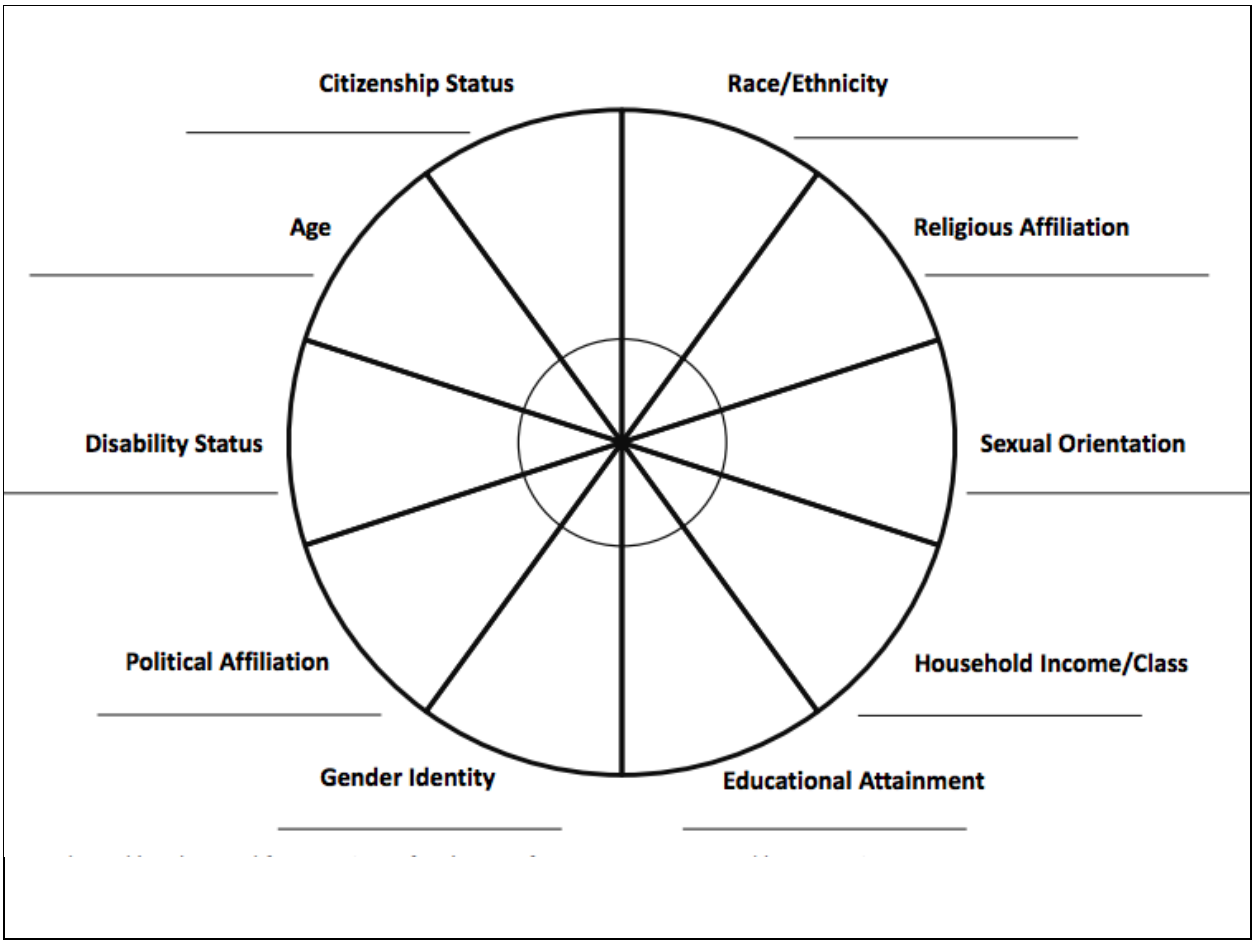
How the Wheel Works:

(1) "Write on the blank line below each demographic category in the Privilege Wheel what group you think is accorded the most privilege in your community. For example, in most (but not all) communities in the United States, white people have the most privilege when it comes to Race/Ethnicity, so you would write "White."

(2) In the outer circle, *shade* in the portion of the wedges where your demographics align with the most privileged group and place a star next to categories where you think the reality is complicated.

(3) In the inner circle, for each wedge you shaded in, reflect on how your privilege in this area manifests for you. Color that smaller corresponding wedge:

- **Green** if you have mostly used that privilege in ways that have positively impacted the community.
- **Yellow** if your privilege in that area has largely had a neutral impact on the community.
- **Red** if you have mostly used that privilege in ways that have negatively impacted the community.
- Leave it **white** if you don't know and/or haven't thought about it."



Source: Adapted by *Clay Lord for Americans for the Arts*, created by ArtEquity.

Looking at your wheel, do you feel that it is perfectly accurate? Chances are, if you were to show your wheel to someone else, they may disagree with some of the privileges that you've identified within your life. Similarly, they may have a contrasting opinion regarding how certain identifiers have benefitted or harmed your community. This is because, usually, we each perceive privilege differently. Although no one knows you better than you know yourself, there is a lot of wisdom to be found in inviting others into your reflection on privilege. We all contribute to inequity in one way or another. Oftentimes, the person that is most blind to privilege that they possess is the one who actively benefits from it. In an effort to perceive yourself with less bias, I suggest that you attempt to view

your life through someone else's eyes. Share your privilege wheel with someone that you trust and ask them for their insights on what you have identified. Preferably, create space for this dialogue with someone that sees world differently than you do. In choosing to listen, we can demonstrate empathy, exhibit humility, and strengthen our ability to fight unjust biases.

When Privilege Meets Bias: A Dangerous Duo

In an article published within the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, religious author Matthew Lundberg argues that:

> When we settle for partial versions of the truth, it is all too easy for us to settle for versions that are convenient, comfortable, or self-serving… Just as it may be understandably difficult—perhaps impossible—for some black Americans to understand the relief that some of their fellow citizens feel in knowing that a police officer is only a phone call away, so also those of us who are advantaged by race, citizenship status, class, gender, or all of the above may have a hard time really recognizing the slow and grinding violence of American racism that stands beneath the obvious instances of high-profile violence ("Deception, Blinders, and the Truth: On Recognizing and Acknowledging Racism and Its Violence").

As Lundberg articulates, it is oftentimes challenging to relate to the perspectives of those with ethnic-racial experiences that do not align with our own. Rather than assuming that our experience is the only one with validity, we must be cognizant of the role that privilege plays in painting the world that we get to live in. Privilege and bias, when mixed together, cast the world in different colors and shades.

This is why we must never dismiss someone's story, simply because "that's never happened to me." We must also be weary of using the phrase, "I understand exactly what you're going through." In most cases, you will *not* know what someone has endured, even if you have been through a similar experience. Sadly, our efforts to relate to someone result in making them feel less understood. The best thing we can do in situations where we are sitting face to face with a differently privileged individual is this: We can listen. When we listen to the experiences of those whose privileges that differ from our own, we begin to see the ways in which policies of equality do not always occur in practice.

Policies versus Practice: Know the Discrepancies

The American Dream represents for many a promise of a better, more equitable life. Written into the United States' foundational documents are constitutional claims of all men being equal. Outlined in the earliest pages of this newly independent country's legislature are expectations for a fair and justice-oriented governing body. If America's foundation was supposedly built on such a promising dream for its people, how then have so many people of the United States found themselves living in a nightmare? Many of the promises for equality and fairness made by the U.S. government are not reflected in the policies used to govern the U.S. people. In other words, our policies rarely reflect the heart of the American Dream when put into practice. Let's contextualize this concept by looking at specific ways in which "liberty and justice for all" has actually become "liberty and justice for some."

Disadvantages for DACA Students

When the topic of migrant families is discussed within the context of American government, many people are quick to discount the suffering faced by many immigrants by

disqualifying them as American citizens. The debate about migration is important but will not be the main focus of this section. Rather, I will be turning our attention to the discrepancies that occur for migrants that have been promised certain American rights yet are at constant risk of being denied those rights. Let's talk about DACA students and Dreamers. **DACA** refers to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an immigration option that applies to undocumented immigrants who arrived in the U.S. prior to the age of sixteen. This option was created during former President Obama's administration to provide a renewable two-year, temporary relief from deportation and legal work permit. Not all undocumented students have pursued temporary citizenship through DACA; these students are often referred to as Dreamers because they are beneficiaries of the "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors" act. Now "Dreamers" are students who are affected by the American Dream and Promise Act, which exists to ". . . provide current, former, and future undocumented high- school graduates and GED recipients a three-step pathway to U.S. citizenship through college, work, or the armed services" (American Immigration Council).

For the sake of this example, I am focusing only on students that belong to the Latino community. Latino migrants are not necessarily a racial group, but rather a geographically based demographic. In other words, not all Latino DACA/undocumented students fall into the same racial category, meaning there are different nationalities, languages and cultures represented within this broad category of students. This is important knowledge because we must be informed in order to avoid making assumptions about a student's cultural background. Although the DACA and American Dream and

Promise Act provided hope for many young migrants, the inconsistent political tides have created a constant sense of uncertainty and fear for many students who are undocumented.

Although the majority of college students experience financial strain, minority communities such as DACA/undocumented students are even more so subjected to financial hardship. Systemically, migrant families are more likely to belong to a lower socioeconomic class. This structural reality translates to very practical disproportioned privilege. One example of the economic disadvantages faced by many migrant students involves unforeseen college finances. Everyone who attends a college or university does so with the understanding that there are tuition and room/board costs. Undocumented students are made aware of basic financial realities because organizations such as NAFSA inform them that, "you are not eligible for federal financial aid such as Federal Pell Grants, Federal Work-Study, and Federal Direct Student Loans (Direct Loans)." Immediately, this is a disproportionate disadvantage that U.S. citizens do not have to face.

Nevertheless, migrant students attend college already aware of this financial knowledge. However, the underlying expenses can often contribute to a more stressful college experience. DACA and undocumented students often cannot rely on their parents to pay for textbooks, required trips, course fees, fines, etc. If a migrant family is aiding in their student's educational expenses, it can usually be the result of working multiple jobs. Students are aware of their parent's sacrifices, which leads them to make sacrifices of their own in order to help make the needed payments. These sacrifices can contribute to the loss of belonging within the campus community and academic distraction.

There is a clear cause and effect relationship between the reality that migrant students often face and their academic performance. The financial stress that is often experienced by these populations can result in more time working and less time for academic efforts. However, academic performance is not only affected by tangible obstacles such as time. In the American climate surrounding the issue of immigration, many migrant students are left mentally distressed and therefore less capable of giving complete attention to their studies.

In a study conducted by UCLA's Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, it was concluded that 79% [of migrant students] reported being distracted in class, 74% lost needed study hours, 62% did poorly on an exam, and 52% missed class. These percentages were all based in the anxiety that surrounded the student's citizenship This study was affected by the timing in which it was conducted, as the research was conducted during the peak of President Trump's vow in 2016 to end the DACA program and threats to deport students and their families. Respondents reported that their increased levels of stress resulted in a poor reflection of their academic ability. Similarly, many students lost academic hours due to mandatory meetings with immigration officers, lawyers and other services related specifically to DACA students. There are clear academic ramifications that are the direct result of attending college as an undocumented individual, and these few examples barely begin to scratch the surface.

Pause and Reflect

Ask yourself: Do I know any DACA students or Dreamers personally? Have you taken the time to ask them about their experience, or to hear their family's story? If you can't identify any DACA students or Dreamers in your life, why might that be?

These are merely a few examples of how the equity policies do not always translate well into practice for DACA students and Dreamers. When approaching these issues, being educated and choosing empathy are the two most important steps. Once we have assumed the appropriate posture, we can begin the collaborative process of advocating, reforming and caring well. Regardless of cultural identity, socioeconomic background, or nationality, all students deserve to be given an equal chance to handle financial stress, perform academically and find a place to belong. DACA students and Dreamers are not the only community within America that are reeling from the effects of disproportionate policies. Let's turn toward another example of how the citizens of the United States are experiencing inequitable levels of suffering, from sea to shining sea.

Environmental Racism

Racial disparity manifests in various ways throughout the United States, and it has for quite some time. Oftentimes, people argue that racism does not exist, because the United States has abolished racist laws and policies. While some adamantly argue against the existence of racial injustice, others spend the duration of their lives reeling from its effects. Could there be evidence of injustice that is being ignored, or potentially even hidden, by the majority of the population? One of the largest yet unrecognized issues faced by minority populations in the United States is environmental racism.

Many Americans deny the concept of environmentally based discrimination, while others are calling it a fatal issue. However, more often than not, people are unaware of this topic entirely. In order to understand this topic, we will take a closer look at the structural injustices that have led to environmental racism and examine an example of this issue in action across the country. In her book, Resisting Structural Evil, author Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda takes an in-depth look at the concept of structural evil. Moe-Lobeda is adamant that most of the injustice that we encounter, either domestically or globally, is deeply rooted in a corrupt structural system. She explains that "These forces [that make up structural evil] include intricate webs of interrelated power arrangements, ideologies, values, practices, policies, and ways of perceiving reality that span generations and have unintended snowballing consequences'' (115). Much of the environmental racism being experienced by many communities of color is simply a product of this "structural evil." Once the issue is acknowledged, eliminating it can seem complex and nearly impossible. Many of the structures that are currently in place date back to the origin of the nation.

During the mid 1800's, the U.S. was the largest slaveholding country in the world ("A Defining Time in Our Nation's History"). As the nation progressed, it soon abandoned this economic structure, but not entirely. Many ex-slaves were forced to accept whatever jobs were available to them. They were also forced to live in the most affordable conditions available. The National Bureau of Economic Research examines segregation in American cities over the century from 1890 to 1990. They found that, "From 1890 to 1940, blacks migrated to urban areas, creating economic ghettos in the process. Between 1940 and 1970, black ghettos expanded and cemented themselves in economic life." Living in

centralized, under-privileged areas resulted in many disadvantages for people of color during the 19th and 20th centuries.

African Americans were not the only people group that were subjected to this form of inequity. Many immigrants left their home countries in search of opportunity but were met with discrimination. The construction of the Transcontinental railroad is one of the most prominent examples of the mistreatment of immigrants. The railroad company actively engaged in preferential treatment of its workers based on ethnicity/ race. According to Immigration Direct, a leading immigration software company:

> Central Pacific offered higher pay to its white workers and provided them with meals and shelter; meanwhile, Chinese laborers received lower wages and were expected to find their own food and tents. Chinese workers often had to live in the underground tunnels they were constructing, and more than one thousand died in accidents and avalanches while laboring in the mountains.

As painful as this reality may be for us to accept, we must understand that this was not an isolated instance. Across the country, racial/ethnic prejudice ran rampant throughout most industries. These politicalized prejudices played an orchestral part in the creation of our current sociological structures.

The formation of economic ghettos and the mistreatment of Chinese immigrants barely scratch the surface of the United States' history with racism, prejudice and inequity. I have selected these particular examples because they reveal that structural evil is the backbone of a social issue known as **environmental racism**. Specifically, within environmental issues, the effects of inequity are not always immediately visible. Oftentimes, there is no evidence of the harm that is occurring until it is too late. People's

declining health, chronic exposure to carcinogens/toxins and decreasing life spans is the evidence that proves the existence of environmental racism; even once this evidence has been studied, researched or proven, it can be hidden or bought by big corporations, industries and politicians. Let us turn to see where the structure of the 19th century is generating injustice within the borders of the United States in the 21st century.

The term "environmental racism" was coined by civil rights leader Reverend Dr. Benjamin Chavis Jr. In the words of Chavis Jr, this concept can be understood as:

> … the deliberate targeting of people-of-color communities for toxic waste facilities and the official sanctioning of a life-threatening of poisons and pollutants in people-of-color communities, … It is also manifested in the history of excluding people of color from leadership in the environmental movement ("Environmental Racism Killing People of Color").

Where can this sort of targeting and exclusion be seen in the United States today? Although there are countless examples, I have chosen to discuss the selective exposure to harmful pollutants, and the effects that this exposure can have on health and well-being.

When we hear the term "pollutants," some may think of littering or choosing not to recycle, but to think in this way diminishes the severity of the issue. Pollutants, quite literally, are capable of creating fatalities. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development defines the term pollutant as, "A pollutant is a substance that is present in concentrations that may harm organisms (humans, plants and animals) or exceed an environmental quality standard. The term is frequently used synonymously with contaminant." Clearly, most Americans would not want to live near areas that could risk their exposure to harmful pollutants/contaminants. There are supposed to be laws and

policies in place to protect the American public from coming into contact with such hazards. If this is the case, why do many people of color and impoverished communities experience chronic exposure to chemicals, toxins and industrial waste?

The Commission for Racial Justice's study "Toxic Waste and Race in the United States" was conclusive in their finding that race is the single most influential factor in deciding the locations of abandoned toxic waste sites. Additionally, this study was able to prove that three out of five African Americans were – as of 1987 -- living in areas that are on or near abandoned toxic waste sites ("Toxic Waste and Race"). I could relentlessly list additional statistics that reinforce the reality of this injustice, but to do so would be redundant. There are countless studies, cases and research that exist with the intention to reveal the truth behind the American industries and policies. They all collaborate to prove one point: People of color (and communities of lower economic standing) are being neglected, oppressed and knowingly placed in harm's way so that other communities do not have to.

There are life threatening diseases and conditions that have been affecting and continue to affect those who suffer at the receiving end of environmental racism. An academic paper from the Environmental Protection Agency's National Center for Environmental Assessment found that, "when it comes to air pollutants that contribute to issues like heart and lung disease, Blacks are exposed to 1.5 times more of the pollutant than whites, while Hispanics were exposed to about 1.2 times the amount of non-Hispanic whites. People in poverty had 1.3 times the exposure of those not in poverty" ("Our Built and Natural Environments"). These numbers are so much more than mere calculations. There are real people who are developing real health problems, which could lead to earlier

death and decreased quality of life. Meanwhile, the economically and socially affluent are benefitting from not having to face the aftermath of their own consumerist lifestyles.

Ironically, the populations that are most responsible for lifestyles that produce toxins, pollutants and waste are not the same populations that feel the effects of those choices. Within his book *Resisting Global Toxins*, author David Pellow confronts a concept known as "The Global Village Dump." This idea revolves around the use of transboundary and transnational waste/garbage disposal. Building upon the work of environmental philosopher Robert Higgins, Pellow argues that,

> Immigrants, indigenous populations and peoples of color are viewed by many policymakers, politicians and ecologists as a source of environmental contamination, so why not place noxious facilities and toxic waste in the spaces these populations occupy or regulate these groups to spaces where environmental quality is low and undesirable? (98).

Although Pellow's chapter focuses predominantly on the global community, the principles that he introduces throughout his book are applicable within the borders of the United States as well. If the waste has to go somewhere, it will likely not contaminate the lives of those who have the most money, social power or cultural influence. Within the on-going conversations about environmental issues, there is a dire need for equal political representation and influence for all ethnic-racial identities.

Pause and Reflect

Interactive Activity: Pull out your phone or computer and do a quick web search of the word "politician." What racial group is most commonly represented amongst the top results of that search? Have you considered the effect that a lack of minority political representation may have upon the policies that affect certain communities of color?

Ultimately, there will always be inequity of some form on earth. However, although the United States has been built upon a prejudicial foundation, this does not excuse the continuation of racist policymaking, political agendas and industry processes. Pollutants and contaminants are disproportionately impacting the citizens of the United States, and our negligence of the issue is quite literally costing people their lives. By examining the structural injustices that have led to environmental racism, we identify yet another way in which the U.S. policies that aim to achieve equality end up contributing to disproportionate injustice instead.

PART II: WHERE YOU ARE

Wherever you find yourself when reading this section — whatever age, season, or circumstance — this portion of the guidebook is meant to address the life that you are building for yourself, day by day. Perhaps it doesn't feel much like you are "building" much of anything. For many of us, we become trapped in the notion that our lives, like a house, are already built around us. We sit back, kick up our feet, and let life happen to us. However, we *do* change things over time, even when we aren't trying to. Just because you may not be in the middle of a huge home remodel, that doesn't mean that you aren't slowly adding things to the walls, accidentally staining the carpet, and rearranging the furniture to your liking. Over time, the home you have created for yourself barely resembles the empty house you once bought. The same thing happens with our lives. Although it may not seem

like we are making drastic daily decisions, the small, passing moments add up and ultimately contribute to the world we build for ourselves. Every decision we make reveals something about the kind of life, policies, and people that we value.

Perhaps this feels a little hyperbolic; not every moment carries the same importance, right? In some ways, yes. However, our lives are the sum of a million little moments. In light of this, we need to be intentional with the moments that we have. Perhaps this section will expose areas of your current identity that cause you to feel guilty or uncomfortable. Take heart, dear friends. In a speech given on February 5th, 2008, former U.S. president Barack Obama articulated, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek" (*New York Times*). Our convictions can create change in our lives and, ultimately, in the lives of those around us. Let's use this sentiment as the backbone to the reflection work that we will accomplish within this section. In order to reflect upon "where you are," we will touch on various areas such as the workplace, relationships, religion, and the various government policies and practices that affect the daily lives of Americans. Because your life may look very different from that of another reader, there is a high probability that not all of the following sections will feel applicable to you. However, this is a prime opportunity to practice holistic understanding of ethnic-racial identity. What affects one of us needs to matter to all of us. Moving forward, I encourage you to engage with every topic that this section has to offer, despite the level of relevancy that you may feel it has for your life.

Analyzing your Vocation

Do you show up to your job because you want to, or because you have to? There are often a wide range of factors that are taken into consideration anytime an individual has to make a vocational decision. Some people are privileged to work in a field that aligns with their interests and passions. Others may seek employment that will meet their basic needs, give them opportunities, or provide a better lifestyle for their family. Still for others, it isn't that simple. Regardless of the reasons that may have led to landing the job you have now, the point is: you're there now, interacting with the same people, in the same place, over and over again. Our workplaces often become the most consistent source of socialization that we experience. For this reason, it is imperative to take critical look at the relationship that exists between ethnic-racial identity and the workplace.

It is convenient to believe that we have little to no say in the diversity we experience within our workplaces, but this isn't always true. Although you may not be responsible for the employment of those around you, you are in control of your own interactions with those that do share your workplace. By pausing to consider the different faces that you are surrounded by in the office, we can learn quite a bit about the kinds of diversity that you interact with on a consistent basis. Much of who we become is a result of where we dedicate the most of our time. For this reason, we must examine the relationship that often exists between the workplace and our understanding of ethnic-racial identities. Let's begin by taking a critical look at the kinds of diversity that your workplace exposes you to, and the workplace culture that may impact people in your office disproportionately.

Pause and Reflect

Ask Yourself: How many different races or ethnicities are represented within my workplace? Do I belong to the minority of majority group of employees? Of those that belong to one of the minority groups, how many are in higher-level positions?

Look around: The Workplace and Your Exposure to Diversity

Workplace diversity has become a hot button issue throughout recent decades, and rightfully so. Although 69% of executives believe that diversity and inclusion are the most critical issues facing businesses today, 41% of all managers claim that they are "too busy" to implement any kind of diversity and inclusion initiatives ("The Importance of Diversity in the Workplace"). As a result, we are left with many discrepancies between what the ideal diverse workplace should look like. The definition of workplace diversity, in the mainstream, often includes a series of dimensions within its scope. Some of these dimensions of diversity may include gender, race and ethnicity, age, disability, obesity, sexual orientation, and social class (*The Psychology and Management of Workplace Diversity*). While all of these elements should absolutely be present within a truly diversified workplace, we will be focusing specifically on the dimensions of racial and ethnic diversity for the purposes of our conversation.

Ethnic-racial diversity has been at the center of many discussions geared toward creating more inclusive, equitable workplaces, and for good reason. Companies with more diverse management teams are reported to produce 19% more revenue (Boston Consulting Group) and outperform industry norms by 35% (Mckinsey & Company). One of

the most recognizable steps that has been taken toward workplace inclusivity came through the **Affirmative Action** legislature. The concept of Affirmative Action has existed in America since the 19th century, but it wasn't until former President Kennedy's 1961 Executive Order that it began to take on the shape that many of us are familiar with today. In the order, it is outlined that: "The contractor [employer] will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin" (Legal Information Institute). In many ways, Affirmative Action policies have made great strides toward creating more opportunities for ethnic-racial diversity and inclusion in workplaces across America. However, there have also been unanticipated backlashes that have contributed to unhealthy cultural norms in many organizations and businesses.

We cannot discuss ethnic-racial identity as it exists in the workplace without addressing the topic of tokenism within our conversation. As the equal integration of diverse ethnic-racial identities becomes increasingly important for businesses, the push for increased diversity can easily become a matter of meeting a quota. This quickly leads to a rise in feelings of tokenization amongst minority ethnic-racial groups. **Tokenism** within the workplace can be understood as "the practice of doing something (such as hiring a person who belongs to a minority group) only to prevent criticism and give the appearance that people are being treated fairly" (*Merriam Webster*). Tokenism has the potential to push beyond someone's interview, influencing the entirety of their time as an employee within the organization. Many individuals — particularly those that represent a minority group amongst their co-workers — have expressed that they find themselves questioning if they

are valued for their work, or for their main contribution is just to meet the company's racial quota. Has tokenism affected you in the workplace? Use the activity on this page to assess if you have ever encountered some basic examples of common tokenizing workplace occurrences. How many boxes did you check? While these are not the only examples of tokenism, they do represent a small handful of occurrences that some are forced to face regularly within their workplace.

This section is not devoted to hiring reform or explaining the intricacies of affirmative action policies; these topics alone could fill hundreds of pages, and even still we would have more to discuss and learn. In the name of awareness, I encourage you to do your own research on these topics. Regardless of whether or not you get to help choose the faces that fill your workplace, you *do* get a say in creating the workplace culture that you and your co-workers experience every day. If I were to ask an entire workplace's staff to describe their organization's culture, I could potentially be met with a different answer from each individual. How is this possible? Workplace culture, although shared by all, is

never the same for all. In some cases — especially those wherein diverse ethnic-racial identities are involved — the difference is actually quite extreme. Let's take a look at how two people in the exact same workplace can potentially have vastly different experiences. In order to continue acknowledging the discrepancies that often exist within workplace cultures, we need to identify other variables that may contribute to these contrasting experiences. Microaggressions are one of the most commonly faced issues that disproportionately affect some ethnic-racial identities over others. A **microaggression** can be defined as subtle interactions or behaviors that communicate a negative bias toward someone that identifies with a particular marginalized group. According to NPR, "The difference between microaggressions and overt discrimination (macroaggressions), is that people who commit microaggressions might not even be aware of them," and a few examples may include:

> Someone commenting on how well an Asian American speaks English, which presumes the Asian American was not born here. . . Presuming that a black person is dangerous. . . A common experience that black men talk about is being followed around in stores or getting on an elevator and having people move away and grab their purses or their wallets ("Microaggressions Are A Big Deal: How to Talk Them Out and When To Walk Away").

Microaggressions are often rooted in implicit bias. Although some are privileged to study microaggression in a conceptual capacity, others are often forced to deal with the very tangible consequences of this concept. The absence of equitable ethnic-racial opportunities in the workplace is felt by some more than others.

Pause and Reflect

Ask yourself: Have I ever experienced a ethnically or racially motivated microaggression? Has someone ever been unable to pronounce my name? Have I ever been asked to wear a more "professional" hairstyle or wardrobe? Has someone ever wrongfully assumed that I knew a certain language, ate a certain food, or could speak to a certain topic? Conversely, have I ever done any of things to any of my co-workers?

Within a field experiment on labor market discrimination entitled, "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal?" implicit racial bias was tested through the submission of resumes. The study found that, on average, job applicants with "white passing names" would receive a callback after submitting 10 applications, while individuals with "African-American names" needed to submit 15 resumes in order to receive one callback. According to the researchers from this study:

> The 50 percent gap in callback rates is statistically very significant. It indicates that a white name yields as many more callbacks as an additional eight years of experience. Race, the authors add, also affects the reward to having a better resume. Whites with higher quality resumes received 30 percent more callbacks than whites with lower quality resumes. But the positive impact of a better resume for those with African-American names was much smaller (National Bureau of Economic Research).

Have you ever felt that your ethnic-racial identity has made it more difficult for you to receive employment opportunities? Conversely, has your ethnicity or race potentially

benefitted you in a way that may have negatively impacted others outside of your ethnic-racial group? By reflecting upon your answers to questions like these, you are taking ownership of your own awareness. Being aware of the fight for true diversity and inclusion is half the battle. Our relationships with our co-workers only represent a small portion of the people we interact with on a regular basis. Let us now turn our attention toward the other prominent relationships that shape our understanding of ethnic-racial identity.

Examining your Relationships

By reflecting upon ethnic-racial identity, we have the power to radically re-imagine our relationships with those around us. Within this section, we are going to invest our mental efforts in dissecting the various relational dynamics that exist in our lives. In doing so, we will examine the underlying ethnic-racial influences that influence our posture toward relationships with others. We will be addressing relationships of both the plutonic and the romantic varieties. I am asking for you to join me in approaching this section with humility and bravery. Only the humble can see their relationships from a perspective other than their own, and it takes bravery to take ownership of our role in creating diverse and thriving relationships. By entering into relationships, we experience the collision of our own ethnic-racial identity with that of another. As such, we must be committed to reflecting upon our own ethnic-racial identities *and* those whose identity may differ from our own. The best way to go about accomplishing both of these things is through calling our current relationships into consideration. Let's learn from our relationships, for our relationships.

That's a Deal-Breaker: Race and Romance

Contextually, interracial romance has a complicated history in the United States, and it continues to present a complicated reality to this day. Any nation that has been rooted in the elevation of one racial group over other groups is bound to have a lingering hierarchy in its relational structures. Interracial romance — like so many other topics we are covering within this guidebook — is a multifaceted concept with limitless routes of discussion that we could pursue. However, for the sake of our conversation, we will be focusing specifically on the social stigmas and identity issues that often create barriers for interracial couples to pursue romance with the same freedom that same-race couples often get to.

Before getting into the specifics of this topic, let us start by developing a few important general understandings together. Firstly, it is important to recognize the relevancy of this topic. Many people do not understand why interracial romance is still being talked as an issue. Claims like, "it's not illegal anymore, so why is it a problem," or, "I just don't see color when thinking about dating" represent some of the common misconceptions held by Americans. It is important to remember that marriage equality across racial groups is not a prehistoric issue, quite the opposite is actually the case for many. Legal prohibition of interracial marriage was not lifted until the Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court case in 1967. As I write this guidebook in 2021, there have only been 54 years of supposed "equality" for interracial couples in America; and, as we have been learning, the policies that are put in place on paper do not always create the change in society that they are supposed to.

Let's shift from a policy-perspective to a perspective that is more personal in nature. When two people choose to date across the ethnic-racial divide, they often have to face hurdles that would not exist otherwise. Take, for example, the stereotypes and stigmas that affect the Black community. For many, these represent shared experiences that those outside of the Black community may not have been forced to face. Similarly, a Black American has no way of knowing first-hand the lived experience of living as a white-skinned individual in the U.S. When attempting to date someone from outside one's racial community, the two racial identities will not line up. This inherent difference can create beautiful space for the sharing of culture, background, and worldview between two people as they share in a romantic encounter. However, this difference can also contribute to a couple's conflict, misunderstanding, and a sense of identity-disparity that can make culminating a long-term romantic relationship rather difficult. Let's take a look at some of the social stigmas that have the potential to negatively impact interracial couples in their pursuit of romantic partnership.

In conducting research for this section, I came across some problematic content. Ironically, a text intended to be in support of interracial marriage will actually serve as an example of the sociological issues that contribute to the interracial romantic hardship. Within the text *Interracial America*, an anthology of opposing viewpoints, author Andrew Sullivan attempts to articulate the "terrific news" for interracial marriages in the U.S. In doing so, he makes a few statements that raised concerns for me, as a reader. Before outlining the issues that I found with Sullivan's work, I invite you to draw your own conclusions. Below, you will find various quotes from Sullivan's chapter, followed by space set aside for your personal reflection. Let's see what conclusions we can reach together:

Reading with a Critical Eye – Spot the Sociological Issues

1. "After decades of very modest rates of interracial marriage in America the proportion of black women marrying white men has experienced a dramatic jump… This coincides with other encouraging data from teenage black women as well: their pregnancy rates have just hit their lowest level since 1976. And in the latest survey of sexual activity among high schoolers, the percentage of black teens saying they'd had sex in the last three months dropped from 50 to 40% in one year" (155)

   What, if anything, do you find to be problematic about this portion of the text?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. "Slowly but surely, black American women are making it. At least that's one plausible explanation for the sudden jump in interracial marriage… They have more self-confidence, more independence and decreasingly see themselves as trapped in any particular identity, or required because of their skin color to marry one particular race rather than another" (155)

   Aside from a rise in interracial marriage, what other factors do you think could be contributing to black women "finally making it" in America?

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. "Sadly, the new numbers may also be a function of the dearth of black men to date. With much of the young black male population in jail or in some part of the criminal justice system, there is a huge surplus of datable black women" (156)

   Based on this excerpt, what image of Black men does this paint for you, as the reader?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. "One black woman told the Atlanta paper, 'I've just found that there is a lack of appreciation of black women in Atlanta. We come a dime a dozen here. I haven't found any black men trying to take me to the museum. I wish they would make an effort other than, 'Let's go have a drink,' or 'Let's go to the Red Lobster for all you can eat crab legs on Monday.' Into that demographic gap, white men have jumped" (157).

   Do you feel that the author may have jumped to any inappropriate conclusions after including the woman's quote?

   _____
   _____
   _____

Source: Williams, Mary E. *Interracial America*. Greenhaven Press, 2001.

I found the Sullivan text to be a perfect example of how misogyny and/or white saviorism often become unintentionally implicated in situations of interracial romance (specifically within situations wherein one of the romantic partners is white). The author's language demonstrates marginalization of Black women, criminalization of Black men, and the elevation of white men into a savior-like position. It is also important to note that the author excludes entirely the relationships that occur between white women and Black men, leaving a huge gap in the narrative of black and white interracial romance. This is merely one example of how social perceptions of interracial relationships may unintentionally perpetuate dangerous social stigmas surrounding race. When made aware of stigmas such as these, individuals may be deterred from pursuing interracial relationships. Now let's take an analytical look at the role that identity plays in the world of romance, either interracial or otherwise.

Before entering into a relationship of any kind, it is important for an individual to have a healthy grasp of their own personhood. There is a lot at stake when two different identities come together. If we do not dedicate the effort required in order to understand

how the unique aspects of our identities interact with the identity of another - for better or for worse - we put ourselves at risk of hurting ourselves and the person that we are pursuing. This is especially true in situations of cross-cultural and/or interracial dating. Ethnic-racial identity is, as we have established, very complex and should be surrounded with as few assumptions about the "other" as possible.

This is where reflecting on our ethnic-racial identities comes in handy. Throughout this guidebook, there are various tools and topics that prompt you to reflect on your own identity. If you're currently in a romantic relationship, or if you are interested in pursuing one in the future, you can apply these same tools and prompts toward understanding the ethnic-racial identity of that individual. A great place to begin is by uncovering some of the misconceptions that you may be unconsciously allowing to influence your perception of another's identity. Simply because you may "know a thing or two" about a certain ethnic/racial group, this does not mean you are automatically aware of every intricacy in the life of the person you are romantically interested in. You may be unaware of things that seem harmless to you but are hurtful toward their sense of identity. Some of these seemingly harmless thoughts often come out in unintentional microaggressions. In order to gain some insight into the harmful ethnic-racial identifiers that have infiltrated modern dating culture norms, I conducted a diverse focus group composed of members from the Latinx, Black, white, and Asian Pacific Islander communities. The following are their insights, presented with their amenity in mind:

Dating Norms - Harmless or Harmless?

- "When white girls tell me they want to have 'cute mixed babies with me, that have light skin, curly hair, and blue eyes' it makes me feel uncomfortable. What you're talking about is just appropriation through procreation."

- "There's a whole assumption that Latino men are these sensual and suave lovers, but that isn't always true. And even if it is, it shouldn't be assumed before getting to know someone. It just makes me feel like I'm a pre-established character in their exotic romance novel."

- "As a Black woman, there is a cultural expectation for me to have a fat ass and 'womanly' curves. To reduce me to the sum of my bust, waist, and hip measurements is to treat me like an object. I'm tired of not knowing whether someone is interested in me, or if they're just interested in my body."

- "I don't know where the fetishization of Asian women started, but it doesn't seem to be ending anytime soon. I'm proud of my ethnicity and race, but the perversion surrounding female Asian sexuality brings embarrassment into the dating scene for me."

- "As a white person who has dated a couple different POC individuals, I always worry about how others perceive my motivations. There's a stigma that some white people only date people of a certain race or ethnicity. Even though I definitely wouldn't personally put myself in that category, I'm always worried that's what everyone is thinking."

Source: Anonymous Focus Group. 13 March 2021. Conducted by Holly Hollopeter

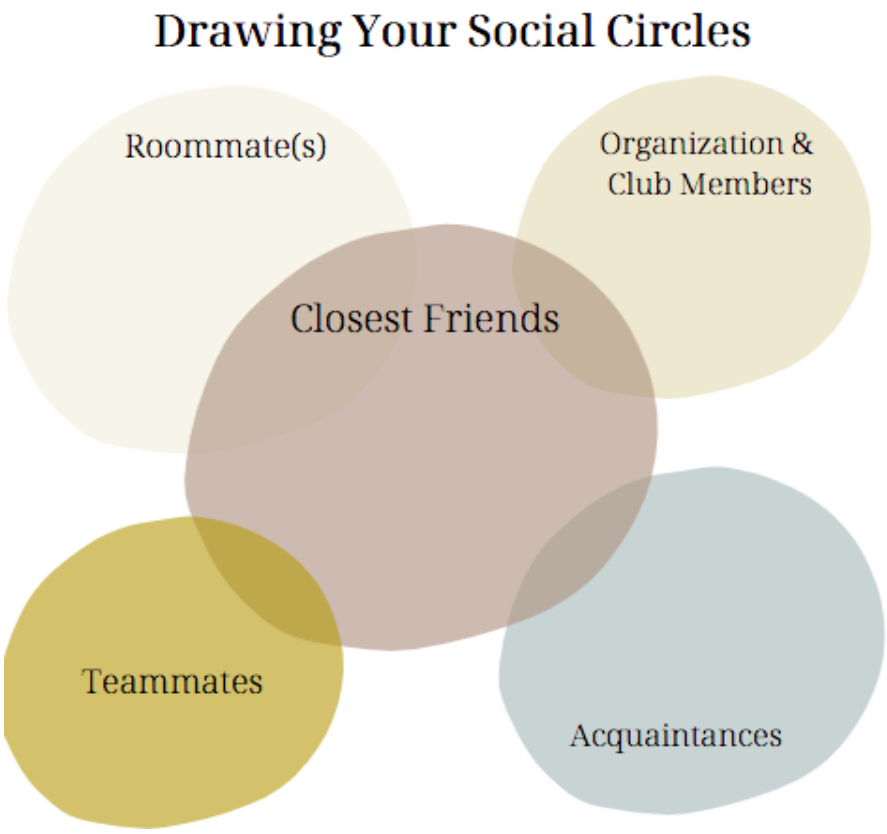
Within this section, we have identified problematic social stigmas that create additional barriers by analyzing one example of Black and white romantic situations. We have also acknowledged the importance of understanding ethnic-racial identity when navigating dating culture. Please keep in mind that this section has excluded the vast majority of many other interracial scenarios that exist across the U.S. and the globe. I implore you to deepen your understanding of interracial romance beyond what this section can offer, as it is meant only to act as a brief introduction to a very complex topic; a topic that deserves in-depth research, conversations, and reflection on your part and mine. There are many opinions on the concept of interracial relationships, and it is your duty to form your own. I urge you to approach this topic with a posture of humility and a willingness to acknowledge some of the misconceptions that you may be carrying with you unknowingly. We are all responsible for the roles we play in our relationships. In order for interracial and cross-cultural romance to be healthy, it needs to be loving. In order to love well, we need to be able to first learn well.

Find out Who your Friends Are

According to research conducted through the J*ournal of Diversity in Higher Education*, there are two main conceptual factors that are most indicative of friendship

development: Homophily (similarity-based attraction) and propinquity (proximity). These two factors are at the core of what psychologists have named "Similarity-Attraction theory." This theory is rooted in the human tendency to feel a greater attraction toward what we identify as "similar" others. Researchers that study Similarity-Attraction theory also believe that we are significantly more likely to develop strong interpersonal relationships with those that have the highest levels of perceived similarity to ourselves.

How can we know if Similarity-Attraction theory has been at work in our friendships? Let's take a look at your college experience and draw some "social circles" to find out. For this activity, think back to your college friendships (or just your friendships from your mid-twenties, if college is not applicable to you). While writing down the names of the people that helped define your collegiate life, reflect upon the ethnic, racial, and cultural influences they had on you. How many of the names within your circles represent individuals that are similar to you, and how many brought about differences into your life?



After taking a walk down memory lane, what did you learn about your relationships from college? For some, exercises like this may feel uncomfortable, or even pointless. Why can't we just let friendships happen, and not worry about whether or not we have diversity represented within our social circles? Put simply, if we do not pursue friendships with intentionality, we rob ourselves of our own growth and development. Research suggests that those with friends from different racial and/or ethnic groups in college have reduced prejudicial inclinations lesser levels of, ". . . intergroup anxiety, ingroup bias, perceived racial social distance, and reliance on superficial characteristics for racial classification, as well as to increase expressions of sympathy and empathy toward other racial groups" (McClelland & Linnander, 2006; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). In order to experience this kind of prejudice reduction through intercultural contact, we need to prioritize diverse friendship *after* graduation as well.

As if the benefits of intercultural friendship isn't already impactful enough during the college experience, it has been proven that reductions in college students' prejudiced mentalities continues after graduation, creating a case that interracial collegiate friendships prepare students to make personal contributions to a more diverse, inclusive society (Gurin et al., 2004; Jayakumar, 2008). The research being done by social scientists reinforces the importance of interracial interactions. With this in mind, what is our call to action?

We need to take a practical look at things like our college experience, because in doing so we can gain a better understanding of our chosen realities. Perhaps you couldn't choose where you were born, or what district your high school was in, but you *did* choose

who you surrounded yourself with whilst at college, even if the decision was a subconscious one. Our subconscious decisions are just as formative as our conscious ones. Our friendships shape who we are, far more than we'd like to believe. Intercultural friendship has benefits that span beyond individual impact and reach out into our understanding of the global community.

Reflecting on Religion

We cannot neglect to acknowledge that a large portion of our worldview is informed by our sense of spirituality or lack-thereof. Regardless of what one's religious or spiritual beliefs are rooted in, their ethics, morals, and values are what guide them through the world. We must have insight into our own religious identities in order to understand the context of the cross-cultural conversations that we engage in. For some of you reading this — particularly if you identify as non-religious or atheistic — you may be tempted to skip this section altogether. However, in doing so, you would be willingly turning a blind eye to an area of identity that will allow you to see yourself and others more clearly. One cannot go about defining culture without the inclusion of religion or spirituality within the conversation. Put simply: who or what we worship reveals much about who or what we value -- even if the "who" or the "what" is nonexistent.

In light of the limitless spiritual differences that exist between each of us, it is crucial that we dedicate the needed time and energy to understanding how our spirituality influences the way we perceive the world around us. This section will act as an introduction to this specific area of ethnic-racial reflection. I will examine the relationship between spirituality and ethnic-racial identity by identifying the significance of someone's

specific god(s), followed by an invitation to identify which demographic comprises the group of people that share in their praise.

Worship: What do you Praise?

The higher power(s) that an individual believes in — and the degree to which they hold those beliefs — informs a great deal of their worldview. It goes without saying that religion often acts as a moral guide for those that subscribe to it. People navigate life using different ethical compasses, which can often result in the tensions that we experience when interacting with those that view life through a different worldview than our own. Rather than naming and explaining the various world religions — of which, there are thousands — I will instead provide an example of how the same spiritual concept can be interpreted differently by different religions.

One concept that has proven to be significant across the religious divide is that of compassion. Countless religions have their own teachings and guidance surrounding the ideal of compassionate living, though the specifics of these teachings vary. To understand this concept a bit better, we can contextualize it by comparing two different religion's viewpoints on compassion. For many Hindus, for example, the practice of compassion is known as Ahimsa; the belief that love, genuine care, and compassion should be extended towards all living beings in act, speech, and thought (Swaminarayan Sanstha). Meanwhile, if we seek to understand compassion within the Jewish Tanakh, we are met with many stories of god showing compassion to some and wrath to others. Within the book of Exodus, the Hebrew Scriptures tell of a time when god struck down the Pharaoh and his legions, while sparing those that obeyed him. According to an article written by the American Jewish University, the rationale for god's selective compassion is that,

> "Compassion alone will not suffice. . . There are times when refusing to combat evil is to accede to it. God bests Pharaoh while insisting on the expression of compassion. Those Egyptians who were willing to break with Pharaoh's cruelty and self-interest, who were willing to see the humanity of their Israelite slaves and the holiness of Israel's God were deserving of God's protection and love" (American Jewish University).

The difference between compassion within Hinduism and Judaism is merely one example of the nuances that exist across the religious divide. Furthermore, we must never assume that two people belonging to the same religious system hold identical perceptions for every teaching or belief. When studying these differences through a religious lens, it is inevitable that cultural and racial factors will eventually make their way into the concept of compassion as well. As a way to measure the cross-cultural differences that affect the practice of compassion, researcher Jyh-Hann Chang performed an in-depth analysis using the Compassion of Others' Lives (COOL) scale. According to Chang's research,

> "Some studies have shown that members of individualistic and collectivistic cultures express compassion toward different people (Duan, Wei, & Wang, 2008). Duan, Wei, and Wang (2008) noted that empathy, a hallmark trait of compassion, was usually developed and experienced within the framework of specific **cultural contexts**, and should one neglect the role cultural values play within that framework of the empathy-compassion expression, may limit the accuracy and consistency of research findings in this area. For example, Goetz, Keltner, and Simon-Thomas (2010) highlighted that individualistic American participants were likely to express

> more compassion toward strangers, while collectivistic Chinese participants were more likely to express compassion toward members of their own group" (The Humanistic Psychologist).

Studies like Chang's are evidence that, although the same concept can exist cross-culturally, different communities' practice of that same principle can look vastly dissimilar. This is why two different racial communities can share the same religious affiliation, but still have contrasting beliefs. These differences in beliefs are often at the root of many political tensions felt by members of the community. What are some practical examples of this reality that you have experienced within your own local, national, or global context?

Although there are very publicized examples of religious tension across the globe, there are also many situations of conflict that go unnoticed by the public eye. Some of the world's minor religions are not given the attention or credibility that the major religions receive. I came across this concept when reading about the Hmong people — an ethnicity found predominantly in southeastern Asian regions — and their relationship with modern medicine. In *The Spirit Catches You,* author Anne Fadiman tells of instances wherein the Hmong people's spirituality puts limits on the medical care that they are willing to accept. Fadiman records her conversation with an American obstetrician, who articulates:

> It is when the well-being of a fetus is in jeopardy… and the beliefs and customs of the family seem to be going against what you believe is in the fetus' best interest, that you have the worst conflict. When that happens, it is a terrible situation to be in. It is not the kind of tension you feel when you get mad at someone from your own background for doing something they know is bad, like smoking or drinking while

> they are pregnant. This is a different kind of tension because they don't know that they are doing something bad. According to their beliefs and principles, they are trying to protect the mother and baby and their way of life. And what you think is necessary happens to be exactly the opposite of what they think is appropriate (75).

This excerpt from *The Spirit Catches You* is a clear example of how crucial it is that we surround ourselves with those that pursue spiritualities that differ from our own. In limiting our exposure to only those that share our own cultural backgrounds, we increase the likelihood that we will contribute to cultural tension caused by ethnocentrism. Differences will emerge regardless of the level of diversity in our lives. However, by approaching religious difference with empathy as our goal, we potentially eliminate one of the main factors that is often responsible for cross-cultural conflict. However, in order to practice compassion for those that are religiously different from us, we have to first surround ourselves with diverse populations.

Congregation Culture: Who Fills the Seats of your Sanctuary?

When reading this portion of the book, I invite you to think very practically. This section is meant to be a hands-on tool for self-reflection. It will serve you well to use this reflection activity as a way to take a critical look at your involvement in congregations throughout your spiritual journey thus far.

Reflecting on Religion

Have you ever attended an institutional religious service? (Prayer, worship, scriptural study, meditation sit, etc). How regularly do you attend the same kind of service(s)?

_____

_____
_____

How many different places/houses of worship have you experienced first-hand? (Temples, mosques, churches, etc):

_____
_____
_____

Which ethnicities and racial groups do you recall seeing whilst attending a religious service?

_____
_____
_____

Of these groups, what demographics would you say were represented amongst the congregation?

_____
_____
_____

In the past, have you usually belonged to the ethnic-racial majority at your religious services, or do you find yourself representing a minority group?

_____
_____
_____

Can you identify practical ways in which your ethno-racial identity impacts the way you interact with the various elements of the religious service(s) you attend or have attended?

_____
_____
_____

I would like to look more closely at that final question, together: How does ethnic-racial identity impact the ways in which people interact with religion? For those of you that identify as religious: Do the people you worship with share your skin tone? Speak your language? Come from a similar background? If so, that makes sense. Part of our cultural similarities include religion and spirituality. However, the existence of a norm does not excuse us from challenging If you do not actively seek out congregational seats that are filled by those whose cultures look, sound, and feel different than yours, you are subjecting yourself to spiritual singularity.

Many who are devout in their faith practice may feel threatened by this challenge to pursue the religiously unfamiliar. However, it is key that we do not confuse the pursuit of people with the practice of polytheism. Choosing to ask someone, “how do you worship?” is far different than worshipping in that way yourself; although, I could also make an argument for the benefit of practicing other religions' liturgies. The choice to diversify your religious perspective can start within the familiar: Try speaking to members of your own faith that practice the same religion in a way that is different from you. By viewing your own beliefs through the eyes of another, you are bound to be left with a clearer vision of what or who you believe in. Dare I say, you will also be left with a clearer image of the person doing the worshipping: you.

To conclude this section on congressional culture, I would like to provide a supplemental resource for those that are involved in religious leadership. More specifically, the following information will be most applicable to spiritual individuals that are in preaching/teaching positions who wish to open a dialogue surrounding racial tension

within their communities. Author Carolyn Browning Helsel published the article, "Ten Myths about Racism: Toward a Deeper Understanding among White Christians." Although this piece was originally directed toward white Christians, the content of her writing is applicable to a wide range of religious and racial identities. The following are her Helsel's ten strategies for interacting with racism in mostly white churches:

10 Strategies for Interacting with Church Racism

1. "Consider your own motivation for preaching about racism, moving beyond guilt. Root your preaching in gratitude for the grace of God and the gifts of relationships.

2. Remember that your listeners come from different perspectives when it comes to defining racism and members bring their own stories of how they have seen racism play out.

3. Schedule time outside of the preaching event for congregants to share their stories and the emotions that emerge when talking about racism.

4. Invite listeners to notice their emotions in response to these conversations, help them to name those emotions, and encourage self-care.

5. Connect the experiences of personal emotions to the larger social patterns of racial identity development, reminding listeners that guilt and shame are not the final goal.

6. Share the stories of role models—both people of color and white people—who have worked against racism throughout history and today, broadening your listeners' repertoire of racial justice icons beyond Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks.

7. Name racism as sin through different metaphors to help listeners understand racism as more than individual acts. Describe how racism estranges us from one another and from God, and name how the sin of racism perpetuates a bondage to

sin where white people act out of habituated responses that can harm persons of color despite individuals' intentions.

8. Point to theological reasons for faith and hope. If we acknowledge the sin that continues to have power over us, we can also proclaim the good news of faith about the power of God's love over sin and death and Christ's power to break down the dividing wall and free us from our captivity to sin.

9. Get your congregation engaged in building relationships with another faith group or organization working against racism, moving into interreligious or inter congregational partnerships to address a specific problem in your community.

10. Practice self-care throughout the process of working against racism, noticing any tendencies to look for reassurance from people of color that you are doing this right or count among the "good" white people. Instead, spend time continuing to read and listen to the voices of others in gratitude. Remember that we do this work not to justify ourselves but because the grace of God has invited us to the table for these conversations."

Source: Adapted from "Ten Myths about Racism," Helsel.

Now that we have areas of change that need to take place within our vocations, relationships, and religion, we are ready to put our thoughts into action. Looking ahead, the future of our ethnic-racial identities must involve steps toward creating practical, lasting change.

PART III: WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

After spending time reflecting on “where you started” and “where you are,” we are finally ready to begin considering where you can go from here. Before attempting to make a difference for the future, we must have a firm grasp on the current reality that surrounds us. By interacting with the earlier sections of this guidebook, you have begun to invest in important, meaningful identity-forming work that has potential to result in real, lasting change. One of the most practical ways to apply your identity-work to your change-making work is through committing yourself to lifelong allyship, advocacy, and accountability.

How does personal reflection prepare us to engage in allyship, advocacy, and accountability practices? By developing a preliminary understanding of the various topics that affect ethnic-racial identity, you have likely identified a few issues that are of interest to you. Allowing your interests and identity to inform one another puts you one step closer to contributing to impactful change-making work. The common denominator between allyship, advocacy, and accountability is *action*. Holocaust survivor and human rights activist Elie Wisel articulated the importance of action in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech by articulating: "Action is the only remedy to indifference: the most insidious danger of all" (*The Nobel Prize*). With this in mind, let us press on toward choosing action over complacency in our interracial and cross-cultural allyship, advocacy, and accountability.

Allyship: Tackling the Trend

Amidst the recent rise of social justice activism amongst younger generations, the term "ally" has experienced a spike in popularity. It is becoming increasingly common for individuals to identify themselves as an ally to minority or marginalized communities. What is an ally, and what do they do? Let's establish a clear understanding of what this term is, and what kinds of impact are possible when this role is fulfilled in authentic ways. According to the Anti-Oppression Network, and allyship is the, "active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person in a position of privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group." Do you resonate with this definition? If so, you may be in a social position to become an ally. In

order to pursue impactful allyship, you must become educated regarding the issues that you are standing against.

Want to be an Ally? First, be an Ethnographer

When we hear the term “research,” it is tempting to simplify the concept down to numbers, statistics, and science experiments. However, research takes on many different forms. One form of research that can greatly benefit our journeys of allyship is qualitative inquiry. This specific kind of research allows us to “analyze data from direct fieldwork observations, in-depth, open-ended interviews, and written documents. Qualitative researchers engage in naturalistic inquiry, studying real-world settings inductively to generate rich narrative descriptions and construct case studies'' (Patton). When employing qualitative approaches to our journeys of ethnic-racial reflection — and eventually to our allyship — we have the power to potentially become more impactful agents of social change. By prioritizing our own cultural learning before we try to engage in allyship, we lessen the chances of contributing to the problems that we are attempting to stand against.

As a graduate student, I spent a lot of time in a learning environment. One of the required classes within my program was “Fieldwork,” — a course that was dedicated to understanding ethnographic research. **Ethnography** is essentially the study of a specific cultural group, and fieldwork is often used as a hands-on, in-person approach to understanding a community from the perspective of those who live within it. This approach to our allyship can be highly beneficial, because it positions us as learners before we act. All those who wish to serve as ethnic-racial allies should also seek to be cultural ethnographers. Two ethnographic tools that could prove to be particularly useful for cross-cultural allyship include interpersonal interviews and observation making.

Interviewing is one of our most practical ways of understanding the perspective of another. You do not need to have a fancy microphone, expensive camera, or a team of television crew members in order to conduct an interview. When employing this particular research method, it could look as simple as sharing an intentional conversation over a cup of coffee with a member from the community that you are trying to better understand. In having these conversations, the researcher (that's you!) often uncovers a wealth of knowledge that would otherwise be unavailable to them. The concept of **insider language** is one example of the power that is found within ethnography.

There are insights within the stories of insiders that we could never find through a trip to the library or a cursory web search. I have experienced how, "A single word can unlock a flood of insider knowledge" (Fieldworking, 282). In the next section, you will find the testimonies of several individuals regarding allyship, advocacy, and performative activism within the realm of racial reconciliation work. Through these conversations and interviews, I was able to gain an understanding beyond what I could have ever obtained on my own. Especially when advocating on behalf of ethnic-racial communities that we ourselves are not members of, interview-based ethnography is a non-negotiable component in our approach to allyship.

Another research tool that can equip us in our quests of learning is the practice of observation. When taking action on behalf of a place or its people, we must maintain a deep and leveled understanding of that community. Making strong observations about a community is directly connected to developing a deeper understanding of the specific sub-cultures that have developed there. For example, if you want to be an ally for members of the LGBTQ+ community, you should probably spend some time in environments with

members of that community. Before advocating for the needs of others, we should do our best to familiarize ourselves with the problems they face in the courses of their daily lives. In this example, you may consider attending rallies, going to events, and even spending time near or inside of certain facilities that may serve those who identify as LGBTQ+, and doing so as an observer rather than an active participant. As you approach the community spaces that you are seeking to align yourself with, here is a checklist of elements likely to be present in any setting. I encourage you to take tangible notes regarding these elements. In doing so, you may begin to uncover recurring patterns, themes, and realities that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Learning from Looking Around – Qualitative Research Observations

1. **The physical setting**: What is the physical environment like? What is the context? What kinds of behavior is the setting designed for? How is space allocated? What objects, resources, technologies are in the setting?

2. **The participants**: Describe who is in the scene, how many people, and their roles. What brings these people together? Who is allowed here? Who is not here that you would expect to be here? What are the relevant characteristics of the participants? Further, what are the ways in which the people in this setting organize themselves?

3. **Activities and interactions**: What is going on? Is there a definable sequence of activities? How do the people interact with the activity and with one another? How are people and activities connected? What norms or rules structure the activities and interactions? When did the activity begin? How long does it last? Is it a typical activity, or unusual?

4. **Conversation**: What is the content of conversations in this setting? Who speaks to whom? Who listens? Quote directly, paraphrase, and summarize conversations. If possible, use a tape recorder to back up your note-taking. Note silences and nonverbal behavior that add meaning to the exchange.

5. **Subtle factors**: Less obvious but perhaps as important to the observation are Informal and unplanned activities Symbolic and connotative meanings of words Nonverbal communication such as dress and physical space Unobtrusive measures such as physical clues "What does not happen"…especially if 'certain things ought to happen or are expected to happen' (Patton, 2015, p. 379, emphasis in original)

6. **Your own behavior**: You are as much a part of the scene as participants. How is your role, whether as an observer or an intimate participant, affecting the scene you are observing? What do you say and do? In addition, what thoughts are you having about what is going on? These become "observer comments," an important part of field notes.

Source: Adapted from Qualitative Research, Merriam & Tisdell

It is important to recognize that, within seconds of observing a new environment, our **spatial memory** is already hard at work. Our spatial memory, when used in the context of social research, refers to the cognitive and often subconscious process of recalling memories regarding a certain place and its defining qualities. When faced with something even remotely unfamiliar, our brains are working quickly to fill in the unknown with things that are familiar to us. While this term can encompass many different concepts within the field of research, I find it to be most applicable in the context of studying someone else's native community.

Why is this understanding of spatial memory such a crucial component in conducting good research? Sunstein articulates that, "sometimes our memories of home — or other places where we have felt comfortable — obscure our abilities to understand other perspectives. Political, economic, and social influences often shape a place in ways that are not always visible to its inhabitants" (166). Although you may not consider a

different ethnic-racial community to be "foreign," we must always take a step back and realize that we are not natives to these communities. This means that, although you may share the same citizenship as someone with a different ethnic-racial identity than your own, you will never be able to have the same insight as someone who has walked in different shoes for their entire lifetime. We need to actively identify subliminal influences from our own upbringings that may interfere with how we interpret those we interact with.

Moving forward, I will continue integrating these sorts of questions: "What images do we remember from particular landscapes? What details do we recall about places we've visited? Why do these sensations return to us at particular moments in time? Why those images, details, and sensations—and not others?" (Sunstein,168), into any of my future attempts to study a place or the people that inhabit that place.

As researchers, we must carry an air of humility into any cultural context we enter; even our own. To assume that we know all that there is to know about a place or its people is to deny that we, like all people, have upbringings that have shaped our worldview. The way I view a different community will likely be contrasting in comparison to someone who has spent a lifetime living there. Ultimately, it is my hope that this section has served as a healthy reminder that we all need to rely on the perspectives of others in order to supplement and shift my own understanding of what kind of allyship or advocacy is needed.

Amplify the Voices of Others: Turning to Testimonies

We have just discussed the importance of interviewing and observing communities that we seek to advocate with. So, if I were to provide solely my personal experiences when

giving examples of powerful allyship, I would be contributing to the problem that I aim to address. In an effort to reach beyond my own understanding, this section will consist of various testimonies that I have gathered through interviewing a private university's multicultural department. The following are the stories of Northwest University's multicultural life student leadership team:

Natasha (Tasha) Vederoff serves as the Student Director of the university's multicultural department. Although Tasha has been an American citizen for the duration of her life, she is culturally connected to the Dominican Republic through her mother's origin story. Tasha's father is a white American, who has been an example of allyship and advocacy for as long as Tasha can remember. Through her journey of understanding her own ethnic-racial identity, Tasha has encountered allyship in many meaningful ways. She shared the following insights with me:

> "Good racial allyship is when I see people doing the work to be educated and speak up for racial justice on their own time. They don't just talk about it when they are around me or other people of color. They bring up race issues with their white friends and family as well. They watch movies, read books, and look up issues on their own without leaning on their **POC** [Person of color] friends as a crutch to feel woke or aware. They say something even when they know that literally everyone else in the room would disagree with them. They go above and beyond to make POC feel seen, heard, and known in white spaces. Not in an over-the-top way, like calling POC out in performative gestures, but in a way that intentionally chooses to see those people as real humans to invest in relationships with, ask questions, and acknowledge that they are real, complex humans…"

"... I have interacted with many white people on the cusp of their journey into allyship. Maybe they have had a POC friend or two who made some effort to educate them about their culture, or maybe they've seen just enough movies about racism to feel educated. That often looks like only talking about race when POC are around. Telling me all the stories about their racist family members to make sure I know that they are 'different.' I do not need (or want) to hear about your racist family members or friends, unless you're about to tell me about the way that you shut them down and advocated for me. I do not want you to talk about the three people of my race that you have interacted with. I do not want you to use your limited knowledge of Hispanic culture to try and connect with me, when there is so much more to me that you could connect with if you just made an effort. Do not talk to me about my Hispanic dancing hips or my mom's cooking if you have never seen me dance or never eaten my mom's food..."

"... If you want to engage in this work, you need to have a constant state of humility. You will never fully understand it all. Even as a Hispanic woman, I have barely scratched the surface in understanding the scope of racial injustice and what that feels like. I cannot even speak to the fullness of the Hispanic experience in the US. Always team up with others. You can never do reconciliatory work on your own, because reconciliation is interpersonal. You need to have a number of perspectives and people speaking into the work that you are doing. Not only that, but you need to be prepared, and almost expectant, for the people you surround yourself with to give you critiques and shut down your ideas. You are never going to get it fully right. If you have good people around you and have exhibited that you are someone who

wants to do this work well, then you should expect to be told over and over again that something needs to be changed or was not done right" (Vederoff, personal interview).

Our second testimony comes from Grace Jeong, the Logistics Coordinator for the university's multicultural department. She is a Korean American female with cultural ties to the Pacific Northwest. Grace is passionate about culture, Biblical justice, reconciliation, and the fullness of God's Kingdom. She shared the following perspective regarding interracial allyship:

"Good allyship to me, looks like asking good questions, building foundational trust, and constantly seeking more. When it comes to allyship, an essential part of this is understanding that allies do not know all of the answers (as they are not expected to). It is critical to be open minded and affirm to those around you that you are advocating *for* and with them. When I think of racial allyship, I think of Jesus as He carried our cross with Him to the grave. He didn't do it because He had to, He did it because of His unending love and His servant characteristics. In that same way, being a good racial ally is a choice. It is not something you should ever feel forced to do, but something that is born out of selflessness and a higher call to justice in the diverse kingdom of God. . ."

". . . Allyship and advocacy can get very messy when we are not constantly checking our hearts and our intentions behind both our words and actions. We must always stop and ask ourselves what the root is of the thing/person we are

advocating for. Because of the idea we live in a generation where cancel culture is SO prevalent, it is easy to say one thing rather than showing it through one's actions. I think so often, we are all guilty of doing things for acceptance in fear of getting "canceled", oftentimes fear is more of a driving force than justice, reconciliation, and advocacy…."

". . . Be okay with not having it all figured out. The journey of cross-cultural and/or reconciliatory work is a lifelong process, and no one will ever have all of the answers. It's important to accept or not know all that you will need to know as you will be learning every single day. I would tell people to buckle up. Prepare your heart to break at the injustices our brothers and sisters have to face every day, prepare to get burnt out on days when it seems like winning is not an option, prepare to grow in boldness as you will learn to stand up for justice, acceptance and reconciliation" (Jeong, interview).

Noah Harvey is currently a junior at Northwest University pursuing a bachelor's degree in business management. Noah serves as a Resident Assistant (RA) in the multicultural residence hall. Noah is biracial, identifying as both Caucasian and African American. Noah was raised by his mother in a single parent household. As a result of the lack of relationship between Noah and his father, he was disconnected from his African American culture during most of his childhood. However, Noah expressed that he was still able to learn and experience African American culture through his community and athletic teams during his time in high school and college. When asked about his experience with allyship and performative activism, Noah articulated the following:

> "In today's society — combined with college I attend — I would say I see performative activism almost daily with people tweeting their support for BLM, LGTBTQ, or any other social issues we see. Honestly, there are times where I catch myself falling into performative activism when I repost BLM content on my Instagram story with the intentions to bring light to myself rather than to bring light to the issue that I say I support. I have experienced allyship gone wrong at Northwest University when people come together and try to initiate allyship with people who either are performative activists or with people who are not ready to hear someone else's perspective if it's different from theirs. I believe it has a lot to do with people struggling to listen to other people's perspectives and being miss informed about issues and topics in our world through social media platforms. When in an allyship, it requires a level of vulnerability that can expose when people are inauthentic about things they believe. I would encourage people to really self-evaluate and ask themselves why they want to get involved in cross-cultural work in hopes they would realize if they are being authentic and have true passion. If they discover that their passion is authentic, then I would continue to lift them up and encourage them to speak to people who have a diversity of perspectives in all aspects. I would also tell them that being well educated is one of the most important aspects in cross-cultural work."

By taking the time to stop and listen to the voices of others, we are investing in the power that our own voices will have, together. Being an ally requires knowing as much as possible about the person or people that you are entering into an alliance with. These few testimonies are only the beginning of the listening that I hope to continue doing as an agent

for change in my communities. I encourage you to find practical ways to learn about the needs of those around you before jumping to fix them. Now that we have taken the time to turn toward the testimonies of others, let's take a look at how you can begin writing your own testimony of allyship and advocacy.

The Journey of Advocacy

To embark on the journey of advocacy, we must first pause to unpack the baggage that we are carrying with us. Unbeknownst to many of us, there are terms, concepts, and ideals that we subconsciously allow to inform our advocacy efforts. Like anything that goes unexamined, we subject ourselves to our own ignorance when we do not actively seek out education. For many of us, problems arise when our operating understanding of certain terms and processes are counter-productive to healthy and impactful advocacy. We need take the time to redefine advocacy and its related terms before identifying the paths of change.

One of the most overused and under examined concepts within communities of advocacy is the term **empowerment**. This term was coined primarily through the rise of NGOs charity work, oftentimes intended to 'empower' communities that are in need. This term becomes problematic because of the way in which it frames the communities that are being subjected to it. When we view ourselves as advocates as "empowering" others, we are creating an unequal power-dynamic between us and those that we seek to empower. Author Katie Willis speaks to this disproportionate power dynamic by outlining the different dimensions of power. According to Willis, there are four main power dimensions, each with their own specific meanings:

The 4 Dimensions of Power

Power over — the ability to dominate. This form of power is finite, so that if someone obtains more power then it automatically leafs to someone else having less power.

Power to — The ability to see possibilities for change.

Power with — The power that comes from individuals working together collectively to achieve common goals.

Power within — Feelings of self-worth and self-esteem that come from within individuals

Source: Adapted from Rowlands (1997, 1998).

Empowerment, Willis argues, will never be a means through which we can access the "power within." In fact, Willis argues quite the opposite: "While NGOs may be able to provide a context within which a process of empowerment is possible, it is only individuals who can choose to take those opportunities and use them" (Theories and Practices of Development, 113). If this is true of NGOs, it is even truer for us: our goal as advocates should not be rooted in the desire to "empower" communities. Rather, we should coin a more accurate term: **copowerment**. This term refers to those of us who wish to work in cross-cultural advocacy that is embedded in the desire to see mutually beneficial empowerment. We must also be conscientious of which community members are being involved in our advocacy efforts, and who, if anyone, is being neglected in the process.

Who we engage with in our advocacy attempts is equally as important as *how* we choose to engage. In his book *Walking with the Poor,* Bryant Myers speaks to the importance of involving a diverse representation of any given community. We must remember that "If participation is limited to local leaders, government personnel, and agency staff, then participation is limited to the non-poor and their input will necessarily be flawed because of their desire to sustain their privilege. They are easily tempted to play god in the lives of the poor" (214).

Essentially, by not actively seeking out a fair representation of a community's population, we subject ourselves to falling victim to the **savior complex**. The savior complex — often directly related to/used in place of the white savior complex — refers to the subconscious perspective that an individual maintains of themselves whilst doing "good work" for others. This complex has been explained as: "When good intentions meet a toxic mindset. We praise the philanthropists that operate with a mentality of, 'If I don't do it, who will?' but there are many underlying consequences of this way of thinking" *(White Savior Complex: The Dark Side of Volunteering).* This unsustainable approach to change-making work can easily begin to permeate if not kept in check through healthy civilian involvement.

Do all Roads Lead to Rome? Different Avenues of Advocacy

We cannot become so preoccupied with the brokenness of the world that we fail to find hope in the healing work that is already being done all around us. There are countless activists, organizations and movements that have begun to pursue tangible acts of advocacy. There are more than one or two ways to pursue personal involvement with

advocacy efforts in our communities. In fact, many change-based organizations are dedicated to seeking change in various different social sectors as a means to combat the intersectionalities that occur within the realm of social injustice. Let's take a look at some renowned organizations that are pursuing practical change through advocacy and, in doing so, spark inspiration for our own involvement in advocacy work.

One prime example of the intersectionalities that exist within advocacy can be found in the work being done by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP implemented the Environmental & Climate Justice Program in 2009, and it is still flourishing today. Over the years, they have made efforts to abolish environmental racism through various awareness campaigns, advocacy programs and change initiatives. One key advancement made by the NAACP was their launch of the Equity in Resilience Building for Climate Adaptation Planning Project in 2015. According to the NAACP, this project,

> . . . was by far our most externally embraced project by far because it fills such a glaring gap in the climate adaptation field around how to measure equity in climate adaptation planning. The release of the Equity in Resilience Building for Climate Adaptation Indicators Document was met with critical acclaim and it has been cited in multiple state climate action plans as well as national organization materials… (Environmental and Climate Justice Program).

This organization, along with many others, has been making leaps toward advancing people of color into influential leadership positions. They also fight for tangible change through dedicating themselves to research and field work. In doing so, they provide statistical evidence of suffering, making it that much harder to silence the voices of those

who are begging for environmental reform. For most individuals, making change in such a structural way seems far too advanced and complicated.

Many Americans have good intentions but feel overwhelmed in the face of complex issues, such as environmental racism. However, engaging in advocacy and policy change is easier than we have led ourselves to believe; in fact, we are all actively participating in the formation of our sociological structure. Julie Clawson's *Everyday Justice* revolves almost exclusively around the ideal that people cast votes with their daily decisions. In her opinion, our purchases and lifestyle choices all speak to the kind of world that we want to live in. We can make deliberate, small changes that accumulate into something much, much larger than any one of us. Clawson explains that, "Living justly means understanding the impact of our decisions. It involves not only an awareness of the needs of others but also choosing to love others in a way that cares for their needs. It forces us to take a hard look at how our daily choices affect others" (26). Choosing to not be implicit to the structural injustices is the first step in reforming the system as a whole.

If more people chose to say "no" to supporting lifestyles that reinforce environmental racism, perhaps equality would begin to feel less impractical. It's important that the way we go about framing our proposed changes is almost as important as the changes themselves. It is unlikely that someone will be willing to consider making a change that is in direct contrast to their core beliefs. Instead, if people are presented with a proposed change that "fits with their values and identities, they'll be enthusiastic about incorporating the new structures" (Vogl 22). What new structures need to be incorporated into your life? And what unexamined values and identities may be stopping you from engaging in advocacy?

Accountability

As people we often struggle to put our ideas into action, which is why accountability is such a crucial component in any change that we hope to make in our lives. Think back to a New Year's resolution that you made but were unable to follow through with. What happened? Why were you unable to stick to this goal? Author Petra Kuenkel speaks to this type of self-disappointment, explaining that:

> That feeling of failure stays with us and reduces our self-confidence. Not surprisingly, the same happens for a group of collaborators. Decisiveness is both a mind-set and a technique. It is a mind-set, because it's the testing ground for how important our goals are to us. It requires us to take a mature stance on an issue and show that we feel accountable to a goal or vision (1654).

Oftentimes, we need to be decisive with our dreams. It is not enough to merely want to see a change, we have to decide what the change is, how we will achieve it, and, ultimately, how important it is to us. Making lasting change is definitely easier to talk about than it is to accomplish. Let's prepare ourselves to create resolutions that won't fail by equipping ourselves with practical accountability practices.

Individual Accountability

A quick web search about this topic will result in pages upon pages worth of resources for workplace, financial, and fitness accountability. But what about the accountability that needs to occur within our commitments to social change? As you have engaged with the content of this workbook, it's quite likely that one or two topics stood out to you. As you reflect upon the topics that felt the most inspiring, convincing, or engaging, I

urge you to consider what your interests reveal about your values. When attempting to create change in your life or in the lives of those around you, it is often helpful to let your passion lead you to your purpose. Behind every change we wish to make, there must be an underlying purpose; why does this change need to happen? If you can identify the "why" behind a desired change, you are equipping yourself to treat your desired changes less like a to-do list, and more like a mission statement.

Once you have identified your personal "mission," you can begin committing yourself to accomplishing that mission. There are countless tools that have been created to help people hold themselves accountable to their social justice missions. I have included in the appendix a collection of accountability resources that you may choose to make use of. In doing so, you are taking ownership of your actions and, as a result, holding yourself accountable to holistic ethnic-racial identity practices.

Collective Accountability

What happens when others are not holding themselves to the same standard of change that you have committed yourself to? Is it our job to hold others accountable? This is where the concept of cancel culture becomes increasingly problematic. **Cancel culture** is a term that has become popular within recent years, referring to the calling out and "cancelling" of public figures when their wrong-doing or lack of political correctness is exposed. The process of someone being cancelled often begins with the public judgement of 'you did/said something wrong,' paired with the punishment of "you don't belong." ("From Cancel Culture to Collective Accountability"). What impact does cancel culture have upon the change culture we hope to cultivate? In short, cancel culture harms our chances of creating lasting change.

When we attempt to change people through the use of fear, rejection, or punishment, we are relying on extrinsic motivation. **Extrinsic motivation** is the result of any pressure we feel to behave a certain way based our desire to earn a reward or avoid punishment ("Differences in Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation"). When motivated by extrinsic factors, people will engage in a certain behavior not because they believe it is the right thing to do, but because they feel the social pressure to do so. In this way, extrinsic motivation is rarely a sustainable method for producing change. We should instead invest in creating a social culture that promotes **intrinsic motivation**. Unlike extrinsic motivation, "intrinsic motivation occurs when we act without any obvious external rewards. We simply enjoy an activity or see it as an opportunity to explore, learn, and actualize our potentials'' ("Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior with Concept Maps"). Our purpose in holding others accountable should be rooted not in punishment, but in the desire to see others develop the genuine desire to shift their values and actions in a way that will contribute to a better, more equitable world.

This is especially true when dealing with issues of ethnic-racial wrong-doings. People absolutely need to be held accountable for their actions. However, when we inflict consequence without compassion, we are potentially eliminating the opportunity for real, lasting change to take place. In this way, cancel culture becomes the enemy of collective accountability.

Organizational Accountability

If you work for a non-profit, small business, or any other organization that is responsible for executing programs or overseeing projects geared toward social change, this section is for you. Rather than writing a book on project management, I am going to

urge you to read the countless texts that have already been published on the topic. If you are overseeing projects that directly affect the people within a community, it is your responsibility to be as educated as possible regarding sustainable project management. Accountability for organization leaders takes on many forms, but proactive preparation is one of the most practical ways in which you can prevent yourself from contributing to the issues that you and your organization are seeking to alleviate.

In the sectors of management and project development, evaluating the effectiveness of one's leadership is a crucial step in the direction of healthy organizational impact. People are often encouraged to determine a unique definition of leadership, because it is too limiting to agree upon one universal standard for leaders. I find this emphasis on multiple truths to be both liberating and limiting. However, when leaders do not have a clear set of goals for their practice, they will become limited in their execution of projects.

I invite you to read PMD Pro's perspective on project management. These four areas of competency provide a standard for leaders, while still allowing individuals to lead in a way that suits their unique personalities and approaches. Do keep in mind, however, that:

> . . . while all four competency areas of project management are critical to ensuring project success, the scope of the Guide to the PMD Pro specifically focuses on the Technical Competency Area of project managers… It is indisputable that project managers should also work to strengthen their personal, interpersonal and development sector-specific competencies; however, it is not the goal of this document to elaborate extensively on those areas of professional development (14).

In performing a self-evaluation, you will potentially be able to identify the strengths and deficiencies that rest at the core of your leadership style, thus taking the first crucial step in

improving your effectiveness as a project leader. Similarly, project managers must familiarize themselves with structural frameworks that will enable their effectiveness and, as a result, produce greater accountability. One example of a project management framework that could be implemented into organizational work is known as a work breakdown structure, or a WBS.

Generally speaking, there are countless benefits to the utilization of a work breakdown structure within project management. When managers do not utilize the WBS, they are ultimately running the risk of delivering less than 100% of the project's potential, both metaphorically and literally. Within a WBS, there is a concept known as the 100% rule. According to the PMBOK Guide, the 100% rule refers to ". . . all of the product and project work including the project management work. The total of the work at the lowest levels should roll up to the higher levels so that nothing is left out and no extra work is performed" (161). Essentially, the WBS is a safety net that ensures no pieces of a project are falling to the wayside or being forgotten.

By focusing on the "what" of the project, the WBS can help a manager and his/her team stay focused on what the general and/or specific outcomes that need to be delivered. If a manager uses the WBS to help their team understand the basics of the project, they will be better off than if they just jump straight into implementing a plan or a timeline. In other words, a WBS — when used correctly — can help a team understand the "what," before rushing into the "how" and the "when" of their project.

The concepts outlined in this section are mere introductions to the world of organizational accountability. If you are personally involved in organizational leadership, please view this section as an invitation to pursue means of accountability for the projects

you oversee. For many non-profits, social enterprises, and other change-based organizations, the programs that are in place are meant to directly benefit community members. If the goal is social change, accountability can often be pursued through project management skills that are rooted in sustainability and effectiveness.

Performative Activism: Take the Oath

In an effort to end our conversation with a tangible take-away, I have chosen to include an oath of accountability that we can take together. This oath takes the language provided by the Anti-Oppression Network and frames it in a way that allows for you to create a binding contract, between you and yourself. This oath is intended to be your way of committing to personal accountability while also fighting against performative activism. **Performative activism** occurs when one's own self-glorification becomes elevated above the social cause they are claiming to represent. This tendency is an easy trap for any change-maker to fall into. When advocating for social issues and standing as an ally, the line between community service and self-gratification often blurs. We will combat performative activism together, by taking an oath against it. I implore you to take one step further, and fight against performative activism by keeping your pledge private, rather than publishing it for the world to see. Read through the following statements about allyship and advocacy very carefully, and to only sign your name if you mean it:

AN OATH AGAINST PERFORMATIVE ACTIVISM

By signing this document, I am committing myself to the following roles and responsibilities of an ally:

- I am choosing to invest into a lifetime of building relationships and trust
- I acknowledge that I am a recipient of privilege and I will always be capable of perpetuating systems of oppression from which my privilege came
- I will listen more and speak less: creating space for diverse ideas, opinions, and ideologies
- I will pursue allyship not act out of guilt, but out of responsibility
- I will continuously do my own research on the oppressions experienced by the people I seek to work with.
- I will build my capacity to receive criticism, and be accountable for my mistakes.
- I will turn any spotlight I am given away from myself and towards the voices of those who are continuously marginalized, silenced, and ignored

My Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Source: Adapted from "Allyship," by The Anti-Oppression Network

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I will never forget when an old role model of mine looked deep into my eyes and said plainly: “If you think you are going to change the world, you won’t. But you shouldn’t let that stop you from trying.” They were right. You and I will never be able to fix all of the world’s problems, and we will certainly never come close if we never attempt to create change within ourselves. It is as Maya Angelou so eloquently wrote, “Prejudice is a burden that confuses the past, threatens the future, and renders the present inaccessible.” This quote is powerful and can perhaps feel a bit disheartening. However, this realization results in the need to make a decision: will you let the recognition of your ethnic-racial identity stop end with this guidebook, or will you dedicate yourself to a lifetime of learning?

The decision is yours to make. You cannot change where you began, but you can reflect upon your origin story in analytical and meaningful ways. You may feel limited in your day-to-day life, but you have more control over your moments than you think. You may not be able to predict what the future of ethnic-racial work may hold, but you can commit to consistency in your allyship, advocacy, and accountability. If we choose to ignore our limitations, we are likely to succumb to them. Our chance of making a difference in the lives of those we care about lies in our ability to confront our own contributions to racial injustice. Many of us try to make others aware of pressing social problems when we ourselves have not yet opened our own eyes. If we remain blind ourselves, we will never see change.

Having an eyes-wide-open approach is, in many ways, terrifying. It forces us to stare back at our own reflection in the eyes of those around us, and trust me, you will not always

like what you see. But in our reflection, may we find reconciliation. Better yet, may we transform. Personal transformation, when experienced by many, leads to entire communities full of transformed people. Although we cannot save the entire world through our desires to make a difference, we *can* certainly change lives. I, for one, am going to start by changing my own. Are you with me?

Works Cited

"A Brief Overview of the American Civil War." *American Battlefield Trust*, 16 Oct. 2018. Web.

"Affirmative Action." Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, 2019, Web.

**A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge: (PMBOK® Guide).* Project Management Institute*, 2017. (1 – 68, 541-558). Print.*

"A Hub for Oregon's International Development Community." *GlobalPDX*, 28 July 2020, globalpdx.org/. Accessed 12 September 2020.

"Allyship." *The Anti-Oppression Network,* PeerNetBC, 28 Nov. 2017, Web.

Aronson, Marc. *Race: A History beyond Black and White*. New York: Ginee Seo/Atheneum for Young Readers, 2007. Print.

"Ayesha." *Equality Now*, Aug. 2016, www.equalitynow.org/ayesha?locale=en. Accessed 02 Oct. 2018.

*Beck, Richard Allan. *Unclean: Meditations on Purity, Hospitality, and Mortality*. Lutterworth Press, 2012. Print.

Chang, Jyh-Hann, et al. "Cross-Cultural Comparison of Compassion: An in-Depth Analysis of Cultural Differences in Compassion Using the Compassion of Others' Lives (COOL) Scale." *The Humanistic Psychologist*, Apr. 2020. Web.

Cherry, Kendra. "Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic Motivation: What's the Difference?" *Verywell Mind*, 15 Jan. 2020, Web.

Christafore, David, and Susane Leguizamon. "Neighbourhood Inequality Spillover Effects of Gentrification." *Papers in Regional Science*, vol. 98, no. 3, June 2019, pp. 1469–1484. Web.

*Clawson, Julie. *Everyday Justice*. IVP Books, 2009. Print.

Coon D, Mitterer JO. Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior with Concept Maps. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth; 2010. Web.

Corpus, Joshua. “Environmental Racism Killing People of Color.” *The Greenlining Institute*, The Greenlining Institute, 20 Nov. 2019. Web.

Enkh-Amgalan, Rentsenkhand. "The Indulgence and Restraint Cultural Dimension: A Cross-Cultural Study of Mongolia and the United States." 2016, Web.

“Environmental & Climate Justice.” *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*, NAACP, 2018. Web.

Ethnic and Racial Identity in the 21st Century Study Group, et al. “Ethnic and Racial Identity During Adolescence and Into Young Adulthood: An Integrated Conceptualization.” *Child Development*, vol. 85, no. 1, Jan. 2014, pp. 21–39. Web.

*Fadiman, Anne. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall down: a Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. Simon Fraser University Library, 2018.

Federal News Service. *Barack Obama's Feb. 5 Speech*. The New York Times, 5 Feb. 2008, Web.

G. Baxter, Mark, and Paula L. Croxson. “Facing the Role of the Amygdala in Emotional Information Processing.” *PNAS*, National Academy of Sciences, 26 Dec. 2012, Web.

Gould, Kayley. “The White Savior Complex: The Dark Side of Volunteering .” *TedXTalks*, TedTalks, 19 Apr. 2019, Web.

Greenstein, Shane. “Employers' Replies to Racial Names.” *NBER*, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2018, Web.

Harvey, Noah. Personal interview. 30 January, 2021.

Hayasaki, Erika. “The Pathology of Prejudice.” *New Republic*, vol. 249, no. 12, Dec. 2018, pp. 16–25. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

Helsel, Carolyn Browning. "Ten Myths about Racism: Toward a Deeper Understanding among White Christians." *The Christian Century*, vol. 136, no. 1, Jan. 2019, pp. 23–25. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

*Hofstede, Geert. "Compare Countries." *Hofstede Insights*, 2018, www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/.

*Hofstede, Geert. *Cultures and Organizations: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*. Sage Publications, 2001.

Skowron, Carol. Personal interview. 22 July, 2020.

Hudson, Tara D. "Interpersonalizing Cultural Difference: A Grounded Theory of the Process of Interracial Friendship Development and Sustainment among College Students." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, Sept. 2020. Web.

Hunt, Vivian, et al. "Why Diversity Matters." *McKinsey & Company*, McKinsey & Company, 12 Mar. 2021, Web.

Jacimovic, Darko. "The Importance of Diversity in the Workplace - 20 Key Statistics." *WhatToBecome*, 25 Feb. 2021, Web.

Jeong, Grace. Personal interview. 30 January 2021.

Katel, Peter. "Racial Conflict: Are U.S. Policies Discriminatory?" *CQ Researcher*, vol. 26, no. 2, Jan. 2016, p. 25. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

Kaplan, George A., et al. "Inequality in Income and Mortality in the United States: Analysis of Mortality and Potential Pathways." *Bmj* 312.7037 (1996): 999-1003. Web.

Kathryn Pauly Morgan, "Describing the Emperor's New Clothes: Three Myths of Educational (In) Equality." *The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy, & Politics,* Ann Diller et al., Boulder CO: Westview, 1996. Web.

*Katongole, Emmanuel. Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing (Resources for Reconciliation) (p. 40). InterVarsity Press. Print.

Kubota, Jennifer T, et al. "The Neuroscience of Race." *Nature Neuroscience*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, 26 June 2012, Web.

*Kuenkel, Petra. *The Art of Leading Collectively*. Chelsea Green Publishing. Kindle Edition.

Lamphere, Carly. "A Tool for Change: Technology and Activism in the Year 2020." *Online Searcher*, vol. 44, no. 5, Sept. 2020, pp. 32–35. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

*Lederach, John. *Little Book of Conflict Transformation: Clear Articulation of The Guiding Principles by A Pioneer In The Field* (Little Books of Justice & Peacebuilding). Good Books. Kindle Edition.

*Lederach, John Paul. *Reconcile* (p. 21). Herald Press. Kindle Edition.

*Lewis, Bonnie Sue. "Interfaith Friendship as Incarnational Mission Practice: Presidential Address, ASM 2018." *Missiology*, vol. 47, no. 1, Jan. 2019, pp. 6–17. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

Limbong, Andrew. "Microaggressions Are A Big Deal: How to Talk Them Out and When To Walk Away." *NPR Lifekit*, NPR, 9 June 2020, Web.

Lord, Clay. "Tools and Templates." *ArtEquity*, Americans for the Arts, 24 Feb. 2021, Web.

Lorenzo, Rocío, et al. "How Diverse Leadership Teams Boost Innovation." BCG Henderson Institute, Boston Consulting Group , 4 Mar. 2021, Web.

Lundberg, Matthew D. "Deception, Blinders, and the Truth: On Recognizing and Acknowledging Racism and Its Violence." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, vol. 55, no. 1, Wint 2020, pp. 21–32. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

Maloney, Ian. Personal interview. 29 September 2020.

*McNeil, Brenda Salter. *Roadmap to Reconciliation*. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition. Accessed 22 Oct. 2020, Print.

Millsquin, Noah. "Pollutants and Contaminants." *OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms - Pollutant Definition*, OECD, 2018. Web.

*Moe-Lobeda, Cynthia D. *Resisting Structural Evil*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2013. Print.

*Myers, Bryant L. *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*. Orbis Books, 2014. Print.

Omar AL-Tabbaa, et al. "Collaboration Between Nonprofit and Business Sectors: A Framework to Guide Strategy Development for Nonprofit Organizations." *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 25, no. 3, 2014, p. 657. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

"Our Built and Natural Environments." *EPA*, Environmental Protection Agency, 21 Sept. 2017. Web.

*Pellow, David Naguib. *Resisting Global Toxics Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*. The Mit Press, 2007. Print.

"Personal and Family Issues: Different Types of Family." BBC News, BBC, 2017, Web.

Pickett, Kate E., Oliver W. James, and Richard G. Wilkinson. "Income inequality and the prevalence of mental illness: a preliminary international analysis." Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health 60.7 (2006): 646-647. Print.

Prentice, Christopher R., et al. "Conceptualizing the Collaborative Toolbox: A Dimensional Approach to Collaboration." *The American Review of Public Administration*, vol. 49, no. 7, Oct. 2019, pp. 792–809. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

Rabbi, Dr Bradley Shavit Artson. "Compassion Is a Jewish Value." *American Jewish University*, Web, 2018.

"Race and Ethnicity." American Sociological Association, 2015, Web.

"Race and Ethnicity Facts and Information." Culture, National Geographic, 10 Feb. 2021, Web.

"Race Timeline, The Power of an Illusion." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 2012, Web.

**Revised Guide to the PMD Pro. Project Management for NGOs,* 2013, www.pm4ngos.org/wp-content/uploads /2015/05/PMD_Pro_Guide_2e_EN_USLetter.pdf (1-38, 111-116). Accessed 10 March 2021.

Rudolph, Joseph R., Jr., and McCrea Adams. "Racial and Ethnic Discrimination." *Salem Press Encyclopedia*, 2020. *EBSCOhost*, Web.

Samuels, Amy J., et al. "Champions of Equity: Fostering Civic Education to Challenge Silence, Racial Inequity, and Injustice." *Multicultural Perspectives*, vol. 21, no. 2, Jan. 2019, pp. 78–84. *EBSCOhost*,

Sanstha, Swaminarayan. *Compassion and Nonviolence: Ahimsa*. BAPS, 2015, Web.

Smidt, Hannah M. "United Nations Peacekeeping Locally: Enabling Conflict Resolution, Reducing Communal Violence." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 64, no. 2–3, Feb. 2020, pp. 344–372.

Stockdale, M. S., & Crosby, F. J. (Eds.). *The Psychology and Management of Workplace Diversity.* Blackwell Publishing, 2004, www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/stockdale/IM.PDF.

Stout, Brian. "From Cancel Culture to Collective Accountability." *Building Belonging*, Racial Equity Tools, 24 Aug. 2020, citizenstout.substack.com/p/from-cancel-culture-to-collective. Accessed 14 March 2021.

Tabb, Kenisha. Personal interview. 26 September 2020.

"The Rise and Decline of the American Ghetto." *The National Bureau of Economic Research*, NBER, 2015. Web.

Tiffany Jana, and Matthew Freeman. *Overcoming Bias: Building Authentic Relationships Across Differences*. Vol. First edition, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2016. Web.

United Church of Christ. "Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States." Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States | Reimagine, 1987. Web.

*Uribe, Jose, et al. "When Friends Become Foes: Collaboration as a Catalyst for Conflict." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 65, no. 3, Sept. 2020, pp. 751–794. Web.

*Vogl, Charles. *The Art of Community: Seven Principles for Belonging*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, a BK Currents Book, 2016. Print.

Wiesel, Elie. "The Nobel Peace Prize 1986." *NobelPrize.org*, 1986, Speech.

Williams, Mary E. *Interracial America*. Greenhaven Press, 2001. Pages 11-51, and 153-164. Print.

*Willis, Katie. "Theories and Practices of Development: 2nd Edition Routledge." *Routledge.com*, Routledge, 24 Feb. 2011, Print.