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Multicultural Education: Work Yet to be Done

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Abstract   This paper brings to the surface for review, discussion, and debate, some critical
                issues for which multicultural education specialists need to provide useful
                theoretical frameworks that may guide our explanations to these issues.

                With the embracing of the ideology of multicultural education in the United
                States, practically every institution of formal learning, from the grade school to
                the university, is rapidly subscribing or has already subscribed to multicultural
                curricula. By embracing the multicultural agenda, educational institutions are
                demonstrating a commitment to broadening students' views of American
                subcultures (and world cultures). By exposing students to these subcultures,
                their histories, experiences and contributions to the U.S. society, it is expected
                that students will appreciate and celebrate cultural differences, and that
                ultimately, multicultural education will help eradicate all forms of bigotry, such as
                racial-ethnic bigotry, sexism, homophobia, etc. in the United States.

                While the intent of multiculturalism is positive, a critical examination of some
                aspects of this educational reform endeavor, reveal, at least theoretically, that
                certain issues in multicultural programming require the development of strong
                explanatory frameworks. Without adequate explanatory frameworks to explain
                the issues outlined in this study, these issues may pose great threats to the
                strength of multicultural education as an interventionist program against bigotry.
                The area of multiculturalism covered in this study is limited to racial and ethnic
                (cultural) diversity.

INTRODUCTION

        In the 1960s and early 1970s, the United States experienced many social movements,

ranging from the Civil Rights to the anti-war movements. Within the larger umbrella of the civil

rights movement were specialized movements such as school desegregation, special-needs

education, bilingual education, and mainstreaming, designed purposely to make education more

accessible to various underprivileged students (Grant 1992). It was from these educational

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reform movements that today's popular multicultural education movement gradually emerged (Grant 1992).

Today, institutions of formal learning use terms like "multiculturalism", "cultural diversity" and "multicultural education" to describe their programs which are designed to broaden students' views of other cultures, especially American minority cultures (Oyinlade 1994). Due to this new commitment, multicultural education has become a popular buzzword and general theme in American education (Ehlers and Crawford 1983; Sowell 1994b). But despite its high popularity, multicultural education is a contentious issue in American education (Stotsky 1992). The debate on multicultural education includes such issues as its definition, goals, and practicality. In the attempt to define multicultural education, scholars have been able to agree only on one thing: there is no one common definition of multicultural education, because there is no one model of what it means to be American (AACTE 1973; Grant 1992; Trevino 1995). This means that one can define multicultural education according to one's perceptions and objectives. Hence, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) defines it as education that rejects cultural assimilation and a mere tolerance of cultural pluralism. Rather, it is education that affirms, values, preserves and enhances cultural pluralism (AACTE 1973). Poplin and Wright (1983) agreed with the AACTE's definition but accentuated the role of cultural pluralism to encompass "autonomy for each group to work out its own social future as long as it does not interfere with the same rights as other groups" (p. 367). Further, Banks and Banks (1995) looked at multicultural education as "a field of study and emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social class and cultural groups" (p. xi).

Regardless of the definition of multicultural education to which one may subscribe,

educators appear to agree more readily on its ultimate goal; the eradication of bigotry and discrimination in the United States (Banks 1994; Lincoln Public Schools 1994). This goal is expected to be achieved through a curriculum change that provides an equitable acknowledgment of the histories, cultures, and contributions of all peoples of the United States (Banks 1995; Felix 1992; Grant 1992; Trevino 1995). This goal especially applies to those who have traditionally been dismissed, ignored, de-emphasized, or scorned by school curricula (Grant 1992; Trevino 1995).

Some of the supporting arguments for multicultural education indicate that through the multicultural imperative, students will expand their "literary cannon of western civilization so that it more accurately and fully reflects the cultures of Africa, Asia, and Latin America" (Trevino 1995:126). Through this, students will gain appreciation for cultural, racial and gender diversity. They will also change how they interact with people from whom they are different through the acquisition of tolerance and acceptance of differences (Adams 1995; Diaz 1994; Sherritt 1990). In addition, multicultural education will enhance equivalency in educational achievement, greater positive attitudes towards members of out-categories and development of pride in the heritage of minority students (Fleras and Leonard-Elliot 1992; Kehoe 1984; Kehoe 1994; Young 1984). Therefore, multicultural education, including a gender perspective, becomes an important "step toward unity with sectors of American society that currently feel alienated" (Diaz 1994:10).

Simultaneously, as multicultural education has been positively reviewed, it has similarly attracted some criticisms. Some critics, for example, have argued that multicultural education lacks an unambiguous definition and it is nothing but a political movement (Wax 1995) with an underlying thrust of rejection of the dominant culture (Elhers and Crawford 1983). This fact was further accentuated by Stotsky who indicated that an important part of the question on

multicultural education is about "who/what is being served; academic or political ends" (1992:

65).

Due to its political status, multiculturalism has been criticized as the new buzzword in

educational circles that must not be challenged, else one risks being labeled as intolerant or as

a betrayer *of the race, if one were a member of a racial minority* (Sowell 1994b; italic mine).

This, ironically, portrays multiculturalists who advocate diversity, as, themselves, intolerant of

opposition to their own views. According to Sowell (1994b),

> ...when the buzzword 'diversity' is used, all brain cells are supposed to stop functioning, so that a
> rosy glow of feeling can take over. Nothing is more rigidly conforming than 'diversity'. Use the
> generic 'he' and it proves that you despise women. Fail to keep up with the ever-changing
> names for various racial and ethnic groups, and it proves you are a racist. (P. 69)

Sowell (1994a) further criticized that what is being done in the name of multicultural

education is provincial and still Eurocentric due to its focus on discrediting western civilization.

Also, Lynch (1987) criticized multiculturalism for ignoring the structural basis of domination and

discrimination. That is, multiculturalism fails to critically analyze the complex dynamics of race,

power and social stratification within the schools (Adams 1995), and it promotes the

"balkanization" of American culture, divisiveness and fragmentation; a complete opposition to

the nation's ideals of a melting pot (Stotsky 1992; Wax 1995). Similarly, McCarthy (1990)

indicated that multicultural education generally leads to an inadequate discussion of racism,

providing avenues for students to talk around racism in generalities and half truths. "By

focusing on sensitivity training and on individual differences, multicultural proponents typically

skirt the very problem which multicultural education seeks to address; WHITE RACISM"

(McCarthy 1990: 34-35). Hence, honest discussions of racism that could make students

uncomfortable or angry are avoided (Adams 1995).

In view of the opposing perspectives on multicultural education, this study examines

certain areas where the multicultural education agenda could attract more criticism, so that

scholars in the field of multicultural education could develop explanatory frameworks that could

be used to address such criticisms. Although this author does not propose any explanatory

framework for addressing the issues raised in this study, it is important for scholars and

practitioners of multiculturalism to address these issues to prevent these issues from becoming

the weak links in the multicultural education agenda. Hopefully, with a recognition of these

issues, scholars of multiculturalism will investigate potential explanatory frameworks that will be

useful in defraying any attacks on multicultural education. The area of multiculturalism covered

in this study is limited to racial and ethnic (cultural) diversity, but the author recognizes that the

field of multiculturalism is much larger than the scope addressed in this study.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

Multiculturalism is rooted on the tenets of equality of all cultures residing in America and

the eradication (or at least amelioration) of bigotry and dominant-subordinate race-ethnic

relations in the country. The following issues in multicultural education are proposed for good

explanatory frameworks because of their potentials to weaken the power of multiculturalism in

helping to eradicate or ameliorate American bigotry. These areas are selection bias, potential

stereotypes, theoretical underpinning, avoidance of ethnocentrism and ethnicism[1], cultural

conflicts, and practicality of equalitarian pluralism.

Selection Bias

The concept of multicultural education connotes teaching students about the cultures of

the American minorities and elevating each culture to an equal status with the dominant White

Anglo Saxon Christian[2] culture. However, several cultures from various parts of the world are

represented, to a significant degree, in sub-cultural contexts in the United States.

Pragmatically, most of these sub-cultures cannot be covered in a curriculum, therefore, it is

unlikely that all ethnicities residing in the country or in any particular state or school district

(especially in areas with many sub-cultures) will receive equal recognition (i.e. coverage) in a curriculum. The selection process for determining the ethnicity to include in a (school's) curriculum is likely to be determined by power differentials among the minorities in a particular state or school district. The more politically powerful minorities in the state or school district stand a better chance to dominate the curriculum, while the less powerful ones risk being given only a glossary mention, if not completely excluded from the curriculum. This is a selection bias that favors the more powerful minorities, making it possible for them to use the platform of multiculturalism to influence educational curricula in similar ways as Whites have traditionally done, due to their (Whites') power dominance over the American society. This phenomenon can be most readily observed in some school districts in Milwaukee, Portland, and Atlanta where African Americans constitute the dominant minority population. These districts adopted in the early 1990s, the Single-Category Studies approach to multicultural education. This approach emphasizes a methodology that focuses on teaching the experience and contributions of one specific minority category (normally, the dominant one in the area) to the United States (Grant 1992; Grant and Sleeter 1989). In the aforementioned districts in Milwaukee, Portland, and Atlanta, the Single-Category Studies curricula have been primarily Afrocentric, centering in some cases, on the Black American male experience (Grant 1992). However, by focusing on the experience of the dominant category (ies), this approach, in effect, discriminates against other (less powerful) minority categories. Hence, a program designed to help eliminate discrimination is in itself discriminatory. This is counter to the goal of multicultural education.

Avoiding Stereotypes

When multicultural education identifies and addresses American populations as Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, White, etc. it runs the risk of assuming that Americans are monoliths, thereby overlooking the extensive within category differences that exist among the

various categories. Like Whites, Blacks, for example, vary in their ways of life by geographic location and socioeconomic status. Poor, rural, southern Blacks do not share the same sub-culture as rich, educated, urban Blacks in the North. Although they share the same minority status, they belong to different regional and social class sub-cultures. Using the middle and upper classes as the embodiment of the American White Anglo Saxon Christian (WASC) core culture, Gordon (1964) indicated that the acculturation of Blacks into the core culture was class dependent. He contended that Black elites as well as middle class Blacks were well acculturated into the core culture while lower class Blacks still lagged behind. Similarly however, he indicated that poor, lower class Whites equally lacked complete acculturation into the core culture. Gordon's position remains valid today as seen in the work of Pinckney (2000) who claimed that poor Blacks and poor Whites in the South are not significantly different from each other. For example, they both eat less expensive foods and are both significantly emotional in their religious practices.

In addition to social class differences, Americans of Asian descent also have within category cultural differences by country of origin. They are from countries such as Japan, China, Thailand, Korea, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and the Philippines. They have neither language nor cultural commonality based on differences which are rooted in thousands of years of cultural traditions of their countries of origin. They "do not see themselves as Asian-Americans and many resent being labeled this way. Many Japanese-Americans do not feel a particular affinity to Filipino- or Pakistani-American, or to Korean-Americans. And, the feeling is rather reciprocal" (Etzioni 1998:60). Therefore, to simplify these various Asian nationalities as one "Asian-American" category under the rubric of multiculturalism is to discount their unique traditions. This is akin to addressing and treating

the citizens of the United States, Canada, and Mexico as indistinguishable North Americans (Etzioni 1998).

The Native Americans and Hispanics are not monoliths either. With over 560 federally recognized Indian tribes and about 278 federal Indian reservations (Marger 2006), traditional Native American cultures are as diverse from one another as they are different from the WASC culture (Lurie 1991; Thornton 1995). Similarly, Hispanic cultures in the U. S. originate from many Latin countries in the Americas and Spain. It is granted that Hispanic peoples have a similar language and religion, but the rest of their cultural characteristics are different. The disappointment, among Americans of Central and South American origins, of being labeled incorrectly, as one people, was expressed by a social service administrator of Spanish ancestry that "...there is no place called Hispanica. I think it's degrading to be called something that doesn't exist. Even Latino is a misnomer. We don't speak Latin" (Etzioni 1998:60). Therefore, when a multicultural curriculum speaks of the Native American, Asian, or Hispanic culture, it runs the risk of either using one cultural variant as a standard for a diverse population or simply focusing on generalized stereotypes to describe the population.

Theoretical Underpinning

The multicultural agenda assumes that Whites are bigots due to their ignorance of the cultures of the American ethnic minorities. Based on this assumption, it is believed that multicultural education would give White students the necessary knowledge and appreciation needed to become non-bigoted. However, no sociological or psychological theory (normative theories, power conflict theories, scapegoat, authoritarian personality) supports this "ignorance thesis". In addition, if cultural ignorance is the true source of bigotry, intra-ethnic prejudice, such as that often found between earlier and later generations of members of the same ethnicity would not exist. Also, well-educated people, such as those with advanced degrees in

the social sciences, history, and the humanities would not be bigots. And, this is not true.

Bigotry is distributed across all social classes and educational levels. In fact, Schaefer (1995)

questioned the traditional assumption that formal education reduces bigotry by indicating that

while surveys typically show an inverse relationship between education and prejudice, educated

people are not necessarily less prejudiced. Rather, they have learned to express their prejudice

in more subtly aversive ways, and they have learned socially desirable responses to

questionnaire and interview items. Therefore, White prejudice has remained widespread,

despite their education.

As an interventionist program for bigotry, multicultural education needs a strong and

valid theoretical base upon which it can ground its assumptions. Without strong theoretical

underpinnings for its assumptions, multicultural education risks being susceptible to attacks as

being nothing more than a political or feel-good exercise for school administrators.

Avoidance of Ethnocentrism

Ironically, while multicultural education teaches the embracing of cultural differences, it

also holds the potential to increase the likelihood of ethnocentrism and ethnicism. On the

positive side, ethnocentrism and ethnicism are intrinsic to culture, functioning to enhance and

promote solidarity among the members of a culture, as well as helping to justify why people

continue to subscribe to their cultures. According to Healey (1997:66), "without some degree

of ethnocentrism, people would not sort themselves out along group lines, and the

characteristics that differentiate 'us' from 'them' would not be identified". However, a

dysfunction of ethnocentrism and ethnicism is that they cause divisions and segregation among

people, thereby discouraging unity among people of diverse backgrounds. This point is central

to Noel's (1968) model of ethnic stratification. In his discussion of Noel's work, Marger (2006)

indicated that

...on initial contact, divergent groups will judge each other in terms of their own culture, that is ethnocentrically. Given the nature of ethnocentrism, such evaluations will usually be negative. The extent of this negative judgment, will, however, depend on the degree of difference between groups: the more dissimilar they are from each other, the more negative the judgment. (P. 49)

This means that through our culture, we learn to favor what is familiar and to reject (discriminate against) what is unfamiliar or different. Even Napoleon Chagnon, a trained anthropologist, expressed his disgust at the appearance of the "burly, naked, sweaty, and hideous" Yanomamo Indians at his first contact with them. He said,

> I am not ashamed to admit that had there been a diplomatic way out, I would have ended my fieldwork then and there. I did not look forward to the next days-and months-when I would be left alone with the Indians; I did not speak a word of their language, and they were decidedly different from what I had imagined them to be. The whole situation was depressing, and I wondered why I ever switched from physics and engineering in the first place. (Chagnon 1983:11)

Due to this *social* inherence of ethnocentrism and ethnicism to culture, if an educational philosophy emphasizes the teaching of cultural differences, regardless of its good intentions, those who are judged to be "different" are likely to be treated differently. This is because discrimination is rooted on the perceptions (real or imagined) of differences (Bogardus 1959; Noel 1968). Being judged to be different would prove detrimental to the minorities, since the power of the distribution of resources lie predominantly with the majority (WASC). By dominating the power of resource distribution, members of the majority category are more likely to favor one another to the detriment of the minorities. This is evident in Bogardus (1959) who demonstrated that those who were perceived to be similar to Americans of White Northwestern European origins were favored over other Americans. The closer the *perceptions* of physical and cultural similarities of an ethnic category to the White Northwestern European Americans, the better the preferences accorded that category (Isaacs 1989; Van den Berghe 1981; Yinger 1981).

Given that discrimination is directed at those that are considered to be different (Bogardus 1959; Isaacs 1989; Noel 1968; Van den Berghe 1981; Yinger 1981), the benefits of

multicultural education, with its emphasis on differences along category lines, will ultimately, accrue to the WASC category more than to minority categories. It is granted that multicultural educational approaches will present differences in positive ways to reduce the likelihood of discrimination against the minorities, however, prejudice is an inflexible emotional state of mind that is normally not discarded simply due to a positive presentation of the minorities or contrary evidence (Allport 1958; Mason 1970; Merger 2006; Pettigrew 1980). Therefore, it is necessary for multicultural education to provide adequate explanation for how students will be able to avoid or abandon ethnocentrism while being taught how others are different, given the fact that an anthropologist of the caliber of Napoleon Chagnon still fell prey to ethnocentrism and ethnicism in his contact with the Yanomamo Indians.

Cultural Conflicts

Bearing in mind that multiculturalism teaches the acceptance and embracing of cultural traditions of others (who are culturally different), would multicultural education promote the teaching and embracing of cultural phenomena that stand in complete contrast to the American dominant culture? For example, would multicultural education teach students to accept, appreciate and respect practices such as polygyny and the wearing of veils among some Arabs, the eating of dogs among some Vietnamese and Chinese, female circumcision among some Africans, and the phenomenon of child bride among some Arabs and Asians? The likelihood of implementing multicultural education to the extent of embracing these practices by Americans is highly unlikely due to our WASC cultural opposition to these practices. Yet, such acceptance is necessary if we are to be true to the ideals of multiculturalism that advocate the embracing of different cultural ways of life and elevating all American minority cultures to equal status with the WASC culture.

The dilemma of embracing the ideals of multiculturalism in a situation of cultural conflict was evident in a 1996 case in Lincoln, Nebraska, in which two Iraqi men aged 34 and 28 married to two sisters aged 14 and 13 respectively. As reported in the major local newspaper, the Lincoln Journal Star, the marriages were approved by the girls' parents and were based on Islamic laws and customs. All the participants in these marriages, including the girls' parents were recent Iraqi immigrants (refugees) to the United States, and they had no knowledge of American laws regarding marriage. Both weddings[3] involved the payment of dowries (not required by state law) by the men to the girls' parents, but excluded marriage licenses and blood tests which were required by state law. Upon hearing about the marriages, Lincoln Police arrested and jailed the girls' father and his two sons-in-law under charges of child abuse and first-degree sexual assault of a child, respectively (Mabin 1996).

What happened in Lincoln was, arguably, a simple clash of cultures whereby the Iraqi refugees practiced their marriage customs which conflicted with the laws of their newly adopted home. These men were given prison terms; a rather big price to pay for being culturally different. Their imprisonment confirms that cultural difference is not acceptable as a reason for violating a law; rather, cultural conformity is expected. According to the prosecuting county attorney, "people can make comments about a clash of cultures, but my sworn obligation is to enforce the criminal laws of the state. "Culture doesn't really enter into a determination of whether the criminal laws should be enforced" (Zeleny 1996:9A).

One may say that if the Iraqi men in the Lincoln story had been well exposed to multicultural education, they would have been made aware of US marriage customs, and would have avoided violating Nebraskan marriage processes. While this point is valid, one is simultaneously implying that the Iraqis should not practice an aspect of their traditional marriage customs in the US because the practice is in conflict with our American customs. This

is tantamount to advocacy for Anglo conformity and assimilation rather than multiculturalism. Hence, if multiculturalism cannot be used as a platform for engaging in one's *legitimate* cultural practice that conflicts with the dominant American culture, multicultural education would be teaching only conformity to the dominant WASC culture that it intends to de-emphasize.

Practicality of Equalitarian Pluralism

Multicultural education seeks to legitimize pluralism in its contributions to eradicating or ameliorating bigotry in the US. Through pluralism cultural differences are expected to be fostered and strengthened in positive ways (Kitano and Daniels 1988; Marger 2006). With this perspective, two patterns of pluralism; equalitarian and inequalitarian are possible (Marger 2006). Equalitarian pluralism is characterized by complete *equality* in access to opportunities and outcomes of effort by members of every ethnic category. In equalitarian pluralism, there is an absence of dominant-subordinate ethnic relations, but there is maintenance of cultural and structural separation of the minorities from the majority. For equalitarian pluralism to happen, however, certain conditions must be met: different ethnicities must be territorially based in separate geographic areas of the country where they are native due to long historical roots, the national government must distribute national resources (economic, political etc.) proportionately by ethnic population, and the language of every ethnicity would be formally equally recognized as official lingua franca (Gordon 1981; Lijphart 1977; Marger 2006). These conditions make equalitarian pluralism impracticable in the United States because ethnic minorities are not territorially based in any one specific part of the country; they are dispersed throughout the nation. Also, the multiple lingua franca requirement is unlikely to be met due to the dominant Anglo Saxon history of the country, and a power imbalance which favors the Whites who predominantly speak only English.

The other type of pluralism is inequalitarian. Under the inequalitarian system, separate ethnicities have *unequal* access to national resources (Marger 2006), the minorities are treated with coercion by the majority, and the state protects the interests of the majority (Smith 1969). Also, the wealth of the nation is dominated by the majority who dominates the prestigious and highly-rewarding jobs, while the minorities are disproportionately represented in menial, poorly paid, labor intensive and non-prestigious jobs (Rex 1970; Van den Berghe 1978). This is the current pattern of pluralism in the United States, and it is hardly a good alternative for the minorities.

CONCLUSION

This paper brings to the surface for review, discussion, and debate, some critical issues for which multicultural education specialists need to provide useful theoretical frameworks that may guide our explanations to these issues.

Prejudice and discrimination remain perennial problems of the American society and efforts must continue to find viable avenues for their demise. Multicultural education, with its valid and admirable tenets, was conceived to be one such viable solution. But as outlined in this paper, multicultural education is an approach that needs to develop some frameworks for explaining and strengthening certain areas that could prove to be its weak links.

It is important that scholars and practitioners in the field of multicultural education provide a nondiscriminatory method of selecting the ethnicities that are included in a multicultural educational curriculum. It is equally important that multicultural education curriculum be designed to recognize within category differences, so that no category of people is treated as monoliths or stereotyped as conforming to the standards of one variant within a broader category.

Multicultural education specialists also need to help develop explanatory frameworks and methods for dealing with ethnocentrism and ethnicism which are inherent in culture. All cultures give their members standard ways of life which are used (by members) to measure other cultures with which they (members) make contact. This is an ethnocentric quality of culture. Since all cultures carry ethnocentric properties, teaching cultural differences, even in the most positive ways, is to create a room for evaluations and judgments of the "other" culture. Such evaluations and judgments typically reflect ethnocentrism and ethnicism, since one is more likely than not, to favor the values of his/her own culture over those of others. Therefore, it is important for scholars and practitioners of multicultural education to provide explanations for how students would accept and embrace cultural differences that conflict with their American cultural values. This fact is especially important given the recognition that prejudice is rooted in people's emotions, and it is not abandoned simply due to a positive presentation of the category to which one may hold negative feelings.

It is also important for multicultural scholars and practitioners to succinctly explain the nature of pluralism that multicultural education intends to promote. Literature on multiculturalism overwhelmingly proclaim strong support for pluralism, but none has explicitly explained the nature of pluralism it advocates, though I assume the equalitarian type. I assume that multicultural education will seek equalitarian pluralism because of its goal of elevating minority cultures to *equal* status with the WASC culture. However, no literature has explained how this equality is to be achieved and maintained. The challenge, therefore, is for multicultural education scholars to help explain how equalitarian pluralism is to be accomplished and maintained in the US, given the fact that the country is not currently structured to meet the necessary conditions for establishing equalitarian pluralism outlined under "practicality of equalitarian pluralism" (see also Gordon 1981; Lijphart 1977; Marger 2006). And, if American

equalitarian pluralism can be accomplished by conditions other than those outlined under "practicality of equalitarian pluralism", it is important that such conditions be made part of the literature on multicultural education and pluralism.

Lastly, as indicated in this study, the multicultural agenda assumes that people are bigots due to their lack of knowledge of other people's ways of life. Based on this assumption, multicultural education attempts to educate students, especially White students, on various cultures with the expectation of making the students less culturally ignorant, and hence, less bigoted. But as earlier indicated, no sociological or psychological theory supports the notion that bigotry is caused by ignorance, it is therefore imperative that multicultural education scholars provide a sound theoretical basis for the "ignorance thesis" that underlie multicultural education philosophy.

NOTES

1. A distinction is made here between ethnocentrism and ethnicism to show two different elements of culture. While ethnocentrism refers to the attitude of judging the traits of other cultures by the standards of one's culture, ethnicism describes the prejudicial attitude of claiming cultural superiority. That is, ethnicism is the belief or attitude that one culture is inherently superior to another. While ethnocentrism is a necessary prerequisite for ethnicism, not all incidence of ethnocentrism leads to ethnicism. For example, Whites from the dominant culture often positively evaluate the academic achievements of members of some Asian-American sub-cultures. Although such evaluation is in comparison to the standard of achievements among Whites, i.e. ethnocentric, it is none-the-less favorable to the minority. On the other hand, to believe that the WASC culture is superior to an Asian-American sub-culture is ethnicism. Therefore, ethnicism is to culture as racism is to race.

2. White Anglo-Saxon Christian (WASC) is adopted in this study to describe the dominant (core) American culture of today instead of the commonly used White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) description. This is because this author believes that while the early part of American life was dominated by protestant values, today, American culture is predominantly Christian, regardless

of denomination. There has been a significant social intercourse between Catholics and

Protestants to transform the American culture from being strictly Protestant to being generally

Christian.

3. The weddings cited here were used strictly as an example of cultural conflicts that make the

practice of true (equalitarian) multiculturalism highly difficult, if not out right improbable, in a

society like the U.S. that has a strong dominant culture. The weddings are not cited in this

article as a show of support or opposition by this author for what many may (rightfully or

wrongfully) consider as forced or improper marriages.

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