Inside Out and Outside In: Cultural Sensibility and Globalization

SSP / ASTM Workshop

September 26, 2018

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“Muxungu!”







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A little about me…



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Where I have worked



Cross-cultural awareness starts here!

- Cross-cultural skills can be used at home too.
- The more you are aware of them at home, the more you can be attuned to them abroad.

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Today

Impediments to successful cross-cultural relations:

- Implicit Bias
- Microaggressions
- Cultural imperialism

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Different shades of self



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Different shades of self

In most places around the world, with each darkened shade of brown skin, life is that much harder.

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Implicit Bias and Race-based Stereotyping

Implicit Bias

Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner

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Implicit Bias vs Implicit Testing

- **Implicit Testing:** Techniques for measuring/understanding the strength of a person's automatic association with objects/concepts
- **Implicit Bias:** Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner

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Implicit Bias

- Activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control.
- Biases can include both favorable and unfavorable assessments.
- Different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness.
- Implicit bias leads to stereotypes.

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Stereotypes

- A stereotype is a widely held but oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.
- Unhelpful positive stereotypes:
  - African-Americans are all great athletes.
  - Referring to Asian women as “exotic”.
  - African-Americans are good dancers.
  - All Asians are smart.

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Important statistic

Studies have documented that 50% of ethnic minorities do not return to psychotherapy after their first visit.

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How Implicit Bias Manifests

- **Doctor's Office:** A study by Johnson et. al in 2004, showed that physicians, regardless of their own race, spent more time talking dominantly, were less patient-centered, and had less emotionally positive communication and camaraderie going with their black patients than their white patients.
- **Facial Features:** A separate study concluded that the broader the nose and the fuller the lips, the more likely the probability that the face would be assigned a negative valence whether the face was White or Black.
- **Starbucks:** Philadelphia, April 19, 2018
- **Black Lives Matter:** About raising awareness around implicit bias against African-Americans primarily.

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Implicit Bias

- The implicit associations we hold do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that favor the “dominant” group.
- You can change this behavior: de-biasing techniques.
- **May 29, 2018:** Over the course of 4 hours, 175,000 Starbucks employees took Racial Bias training.

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Old dog – new tricks



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Starbucks

- **April 19, 2018:** Starbucks manager ejects African-American men for not ordering something. Police called, men arrested.
- **May 29, 2018:** Starbucks Racial Bias Training:
  - 180,000 employees
  - 8,000 stores closed for 3 hours across entire U.S.

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Microaggressions

Brief and commonplace hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults directed toward groups marginalized in society.

Marginalized groups can include racial minorities, LGBTQI members, women, lower SES, people with disabilities, etc.

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Racial Microaggressions

- People who use them might actually think they're giving a compliment, e.g., referring to Indians (or Asians) as smart or exotic
- More examples:
  - A person clutches their belongings as a dark-skinned man approaches or passes them. *(Message: You and your group are criminals.).*
  - An Asian American, born and raised in the United States, is complimented for speaking "good English." *(Message: You are not a true American. You are a perpetual foreigner in your own country.)*

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Cultural Imperialism

- The process and practice of promoting one culture over another.
- Going into a different culture holding the idea that one's own culture is "better".
- Cultural imperialism can take various forms, such as an attitude, a formal policy/law, or military action - anything that seeks to reinforce cultural dominance.

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Cultural Sensibility

Being thoughtful, compassionate, respectful and considering context can make the difference between coming across as collaborative and coming across as insulting.

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Cultural Imperialism



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Cultural Imperialism vs Cultural Humility

- Cultural Imperialism can also manifest through globalization.
- A **culturally imperialistic** attitude seeks to "inject" the values and aspects of one culture into another, and considers its consumers to be passive/powerless participants.
- Globalization coupled with **cultural humility** is more about presenting products to empowered individuals who can then choose what they want to incorporate into their lives.

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Developing Cultural Sensibility

- Color-conscious
- Culture-conscious
- Understanding privilege and power
- Flexible framework
- Embracing within-group differences
- Knowing every person is a cultural being
- Strive to hear each person's story from the inside out

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Thank You!

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