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**Considerations of a Propaedeutic Paradigm of Multiculturalism
The Case For and Against**

by Prof. Chuck Stone

I. Culture (a definition).

A. A complex pattern of living or gestalt - comprising mores, customs, values, technology, language, religion and other factors - that humans develop and pass from one generation to the next as teachers, educators, writers, journalists, scientists, merchants, movie actors, and griots." (Stone).

1. The Culture of whiteness (or Eurocentrism): Moby Dick, chap. 42, "The Whiteness of the Whale;" Kipling's "The White Man's Burden;" Lothrop Stoddard's The Rising Tide of Color;" Henry W. Grady's speech to the Boston Merchants Association, 1889 on "the peaceful majesty of intelligence;" the Dixiecrat Party's Manifesto, 1948; and Murray and Herrnstein's The Bell Curve.

2. The culture of "La negritude" (Leopold Senghor), Afrocentrism (Molefe Asante) and black nationalism (Marcus Garvey). Do these ideologies differ in practice? Are all three cultural or subcultural manifestations of the African Diaspora?

B. Subculture

"A culture within a culture; a group that nurtures and sustains its own set of beliefs, morals, values and norms that usually are at variance with those of the dominant culture."

In South Africa where the different races and tribes work in a symbiotic harmony in the major cities, the culture of skin color nonetheless dominates the differential lives of blacks, whites, (Afrikaners) and browns (Coloreds) by grouping them in physically separate enclaves. Two of the racial groups - Coloreds and Afrikaners - share the same lingua franca, Afrikaans. (See Wall Street Journal page one article, "Coloreds Struggle To Find Their Place in a Free South Africa." Dec. 6, 1995.

Two additional substantive variables that differentiate cultures from subcultures are demographic preponderance and linguistics. India, for example, has 14 major linguistic groups, but the current 25 states are not organized by language. However, language is a principal basis for the political organization of six states: Assam, Gujerat, Maharastra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal). See "Linguisticism" under the Ten "Isms")

Demographic preponderance can be a pivotal criterion in determining, for example, whether gays and lesbians, handicapped persons and deaf persons are cultures or subcultures.

For example, in San Francisco with a comparatively high concentration of gays and lesbians of 30 to 35 percent of the population (vis-a-vis other major cities or communities), that comparatively high percentage could be perceived as constituting a culture rather than a subculture.

For references on the culture of deafness, see "Deafness as Culture," The Atlantic, Sept. 1993; "Deaf Is Beautiful: Deaf Activists live proudly in a different culture, but not a lesser one," The New York Times (Sunday) Magazine, Aug. 28, 1994; "The changing deaf culture," USA Today, May 2, 2000.

II. Definition of Multiculturalism (also expressed as diversity, cultural pluralism, crossover and the cultures of otherness).

A. Multiculturalism (two definitions):

1. Several cultures, both dominant and marginalized, co-existing or living conjunctively or symbiotically, (Note: This definition attempts heuristic objectivity).
2. Douglas Kellner's definition in Gender, Race and Class in Media: Multiculturalism affirms the worth (my emphasis) of different types of culture and cultural groups, claiming, for instance, that Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, gay and lesbian and other oppressed and marginalized voices have their own validity and importance. (Note: This definition embodies a value judgment of multiculturalism).

3. Three Queries about Multiculturalism:

a.) In any society, is parity of power among ethnic groups a necessary component of multiculturalism? (See De Tocqueville's Democracy in America, chapter XVIII, "The Three Races that Inhabit the Territories of the United States"; The History of South Africa; and India).

b.) Can multiculturalism be equated with "political correctness" as the conservative Young America's Foundation has contended? (page one story, Daily Tar Heel, Nov. 1, 1995). Also see critics of multiculturalism in Section III, "The Case against Multiculturalism" and Stone's lecture, "The Myth of Political Correctness."

c.) Is multiculturalism a desirable or even a necessary goal in a society composed of different ethnic and social groups? (See Kellner's statement in Part IV., "The Case for Multiculturalism as a Goal in a Cultural Studies Approach to Education.")

4. Multiculturalism operates, inter munia, in five domains: academe, business, education, the media and politics.

a.) Academe: the combining of multidisciplinary courses with ethnic and gender studies programs.

b.) Business: the increased employment and promotion of women and minorities in the work force based, on the expectation that increased sales and higher profit margins will accrue.

c.) Education: the pedagogy of cultural studies.

d.) The media: the increased employment and promotion of women and minorities and the concomitant effort to report and interpret with a more balanced perspective the roles of women and minorities in society.

e.) Politics: Increased representation of women and minorities in elective and appointive positions, with the goal of achieving parity.

B. Cultural pluralism - "The continued existence of several distinct, but marginalized, subcultures within a dominant culture."

C. Crossover

Etymologically, a genotype that crosses over, a character or an individual having characters inherited by crossing over. To effect the crossover process, however, the individual makes a decision to "cross over" into the culture other than that of the dominant genotype.

Sociologically, an individual of one ethnic group who crosses over into a domain or several domains of a second ethnic group's communal activities and is able to interact at a high threshold of comfort by taking on some of the characteristics of the second ethnic group's customs, styles or linguistics and is, in turn, accepted by the second ethnic group.

Examples: interracial or inter-ethnic marriages; Jewish American screenwriter, Paul Bass, who wrote the screenplay for the movie about African American women, "Waiting to Exhale"; Japanese American Theo Mizuhara, popular disc jockey for L.A.'s black-oriented KKBT radio audience.

1. Three Types of Multiculturalism

a.) Symbiotic multiculturalism

Symbiosis - in biology, the living together of two or more dissimilar organisms in any of mutually beneficial relationships. In **sociology**, it is the mutual cooperation between persons and groups in a society, especially when ecological interdependence is involved. (See "Note" next page)

Note: Alexis De Tocqueville in his epochal Democracy in America (1848) has written one of the first scholarly interpretations of the American multicultural experience in chapter 10, "Some Considerations Concerning the Present State and Probable Future of The Three Races That Inhabit the Territory of the United States," pages 316 to 413.

b.) Political multiculturalism

Governmental efforts to enact legislative, judicial and executive strategies, in order to provide equal opportunity access to democracy's benefits for all of a nation's races and genders, with the expectations of achieving parity and fostering reciprocal civility among those races.

c.) Social multiculturalism

The efforts of a society's private sector of civic organizations, ethnic groups and religions to effect a higher level of harmony among peoples, in trying to achieve the summa bonum of domestic tranquility.

III. The Case against Multiculturalism

A. The National Association of Scholars; George F. Will's columns; Richard Hughes's Culture of Complaint; Jonathan Rauch's Kindly Inquisitors; Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s The Disuniting of America; Richard Bernstein's Dictatorship of Virtue; and Joe Urschel's USA Today column, "Exposing a multicultural lie."

IV. The Case for Multiculturalism as a Goal in a Critical Studies Approach in Education.

From "Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and Media Culture" by Douglas Kellner in Gender, Race and Class in Media edited by Gail Hines & Jean M. Humez:

"Multiculturalism affirms the worth of different tyoes of cultural and cultural groups, claiming, for instance, that Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, gay and lesbian and other oppressed and marginal voices have their own validity and importance....Cultural studies thus promotes a multicuralist politics and media pedagogy that aims to to make people sensitive to how relations of power and domination are encoded, or embodied in cultural texts, such as those of television or film."

The following statement (next page) is from an interview with Dr. James A. Banks, director of the Center for Multicultural Education, University of Washington, in the booklet, "Teaching Tolerance," published by the Southern Poverty Law Center:

"Multicultural education is a reform movement designed to bring about educational equity for all students, including those from different races, ethnic groups, social classes, exceptionality and sexual orientation...[Its four dimensions include] content education, i.e., adding ethnic information to whatever topic you're teaching...knowledge construction process [which] has to do with epistemological issues...equity pedagogy, those teaching strategies, like cooperative learning, that enable kids from various groups to learn better...[and, finally, the creation of] school cultures that promote equity."

V. Ten "Isms" -- Ethnocentrism, Nationalism, Sectarianism, Irredentism, Balkanism, Conscience-ism), Fell-ism, Slenderism, Juvenilism and Linguisticism - that unify people on the basis of the particular cohering quality or gestalt.

A. Ethocentrism

William Graham Sumner's definition: "The view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything." When reciprocal ethnocentrism occurs, tensions and conflicts develop.

Two contemporary examples of reciprocal ethnocentrism:

a.) The national African American position on the O.J. Simpson jury verdict and the criminal justice system vis-a-vis the national white American position as reflected in national polls.

b.) The Louis Farrakhan-led Million Man March. This was an act of African American ethnocentrism, an exercise in Leopold Senghor's negritude and Marcus Garvey and Malcolm X's black nationalism.

B. Nationalism

The popular sentiment that places the existence and well-being of the nation highest on the scale of political loyalties.

Stephen Decatur's definition: "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations, may she always be right; but our country, right or wrong."

Compare this sentiment to the statement by the Athenian general, Alcibiades, in Thucydides's The Peloponnesian War, after he defected to Sparta during the war: "And love of country is what I do not feel when I am wronged, but what I felt when secure in my rights as a citizen...and the true lover of his country is not he who consents to lose it unjustly rather than attack it, but he who longs for it so much that he will go to all lengths to recover it."

C. Sectarianism

A sectarian spirit or belief: exclusive or narrow-minded attachment to a sect, denomination or cult. Examples: religious, ideological and racial fringe groups.

D. Irredentism

Nationalist agitation in a country, based on historical, ethnic and geographical reasons, for the incorporation of territories under foreign rule. Concept inspired by the Italian nationalist movement for the annexation to Italy of territories - Italia irredentia (unredeemed Italy).

E. Balkanism

The process of a territory's dissolving or attempting to dissolve into smaller independent or sovereign states.

Examples: a.) America's Civil War a.k.a. the War between the States.

b.) Serbian-Bosnian-Croatian conflict in former Yugoslavia. (Also irredentism).

c.) India's 25 linguistic/cultural states.

d.) French-speaking Canadians in the province of Quebec voting in an October, 1995, referendum to form an independent or sovereign nation. English-speaking Canadians call them "separatists," French Canadians, "sovereignists."

F. Conscience-ism

Governed by or made in accordance with dictates of conscience; the right to disobey an unjust law; Advocates: Socrates, Thoreau, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

(As interpreted by Dr. Charles Malik of Lebanon in the Report by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, '1947:

"[M]an has other loyalties than his loyalty to the state. He has his loyalty to his family, to his religion, to his profession; he has his loyalty to science and to truth. These loyalties are equally exacting as his loyalty to the state." (my emphasis).

G. Fell-ism

A dislike of a person or group for prejudgmental, inexplicable, or irrational reasons. When Thomas (Tom) Brown (1663-1704), was a student at Christ Church, he penned this doggerel to the headmaster, a bishop: "

"I do not love thee, Dr. Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell;
But this aloine I know full well,
I do not love thee, Dr. Fell."

A Gaulic version of fell-ism was written by Roger de Bussy-Rabutin who may have been protesting the required reading of Greek mythology, or feeling uncertain about his own masculinity. Hylas was a beautiful youth in Greek mythology who was a favorite companion of Hercules (making them possibly one of mythology's first gay lovers):

"Je ne vous aime pas, Hylas;
Je ne saurois dire la cause.
Je sais seulement la chose;
C'est que je ne vous aime pas."

Then, there is always the possibility that the British school boy had read the epigrammatical poetry of Marcus Valerius Martialis (40 A.D. - 104 A.D.

"I do not like you, Sabidius I can't say why;
But I can say this, I don't like you, Sabidius."

H. Slenderism

An abnormally obseesive affection for slender, thin, or willowy people that is expressed in an equally obsessive dislike, rejection or social ostracism, denial of employment opportunities that require interactions with the public, or utilization as fashion models.

I. Juvenilism

An economic, marketing, advertising, political, social, or educational partiality or choice of people that is based on nothing more than the youthfulness of the person.

J. Linguisticism

An ethnic group's insistence that its lingua franca be the language of commerce and pedagogy in the schools because it is the dominant group within a state or a city. Example: States in India; The United States; Hispanic-majority city in Texas.

VI. Ethnic Americans

A. The Inexorable Duality Among America's Ethnic.

From the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution to De Tocqueville; Henry Cabot Lodge and President Theodore Roosevelt on hyphenated Americans; Israel Zangwill's The Melting Pot, W.E.B. Du Bois's "double consciousness"; Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma, and the 1968 Kerner Commission Report's prediction, "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white - separate and unequal."

B. Case studies in ethnic duality

a.) Demographic diversity of non-mainstream newspapers - 185 Black newspapers; 241 ethnic newspapers; 22 gay and lesbian newspapers; 177 religious newspapers.

b.) African Americans - Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poem, "We Wear the Mask"; TransAfrica; Yale black student doll project for South Africa; "The Two Faces of Farrakhan," Newsweek cover story, Oct. 30, 1995).

c.) Irish Americans - Irish National Caucus's support for Northern Ireland and civil rights for Catholics.

d.) Jewish Americans - Support for Israel through fund-raising and the American Israel Political Action Committee.

e.) Polish Americans - 100,000 Polish Americans can vote in Poland's elections because of dual nationality.

f.) Inter-Ethnic Americans - Between 1970 and 1993, the number of black/white and Hispanic/other marriages almost tripled from 894,000 to 2,410,000. (U.S. Bureau of Census).

Given that connubial trend, some surveys now include a category that gives interviewees the option of checking off all ascertainable ethnic backgrounds (for example, black, white, Latino and Native American).

A 1996 UNC-CH School of Journalism and Mass Communication national survey of journalist students attitudes is including the inter-ethnic option.

C. Ethnic Studies.

a.) Over 700 ethnic-studies programs on U.S. campuses.

b.) The diversity of ethnic studies programs within a campus can represent a form of multicultural studies.

c.) But according to Evelyn Hu-DeHart, director of Studies of Ethnicity and Race in America, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo. in an article, "The Undermining of Ethnic Studies," in The Chronicle of Higher Education, Oct. 20, 1995, the following paradox has developed:

"Almost 30 years after its founding, the field of ethnic studies now finds itself in a paradoxical situation, boasting some long-established programs and departments, yet intellectually marginalized; its necessity in the academy widely endorsed, yet its scholarly merits almost universally ignored."

d.) Some critics of ethnic studies programs, particularly the ideologically conservative National Association of Scholars, equate such programs with attempts to establish a new academic canon based on the ideology of political correctness and contend that such programs do not meet rigorous intellectual standards.

D. The Academic Case for Ethnic and Religious Centers on Campuses.

Asian Houses; Baptist Campus Ministries;
Black Cultural Centers; Hillel Houses; Hispanic Houses;
Newman Centers.

VII. Female Americans

A. The historical and contemporary duality of American women - from their invisibility in the Declaration of Independence and the founding of America (America's first feminist, Abigail Adams) to the suffragettes, the feminist movement, equal rights movement, women's lib, National Organization of Women and political fund-raising organizations such as EMILY's List.

B. Case study reference: Deborah Tannen's You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation.

NOTE: Assistant professors Anne Johnston and Lucila Vargas currently teach in alternative semesters in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, JOMC 115, "Women and Mass Communication."

Because of that course's in-depth examination of women and mass communication, JOMC 111, "Minorities and Communication," that I taught several semesters ago did not explore in any detail the relationship of women as a demographic, cultural or political minority in the relationship of society to mass communication.

Yet, the disproportionately limited role of women as decision-makers in mass communication - other than as consumers - must be acknowledged in any course dealing with minorities.

-10-

For those seeking more authoritative information on the relationship between women and mass communication, it is strongly recommended that they take Dr. Johnston's and Dr. Vargas's course, "Women and Mass Communication" (JOMC 115).