

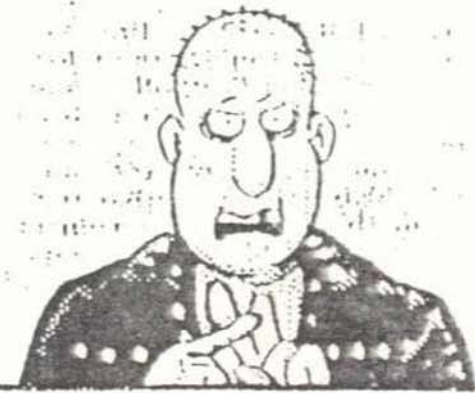
I hate anyone  
who's different  
from me:



black people...



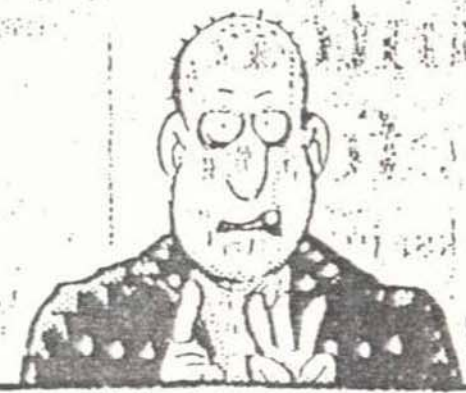
Jewish people...



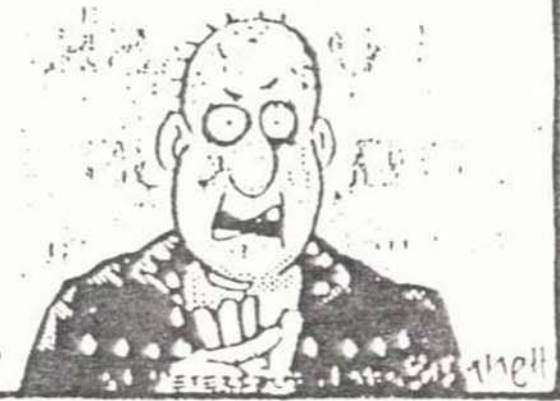
gay people...



and especially...



smart people.



A blue-tinted image of a globe reflecting on water. The globe is the central focus, showing continents and oceans. The water around it is dark blue with lighter blue ripples, creating a clear reflection of the globe above. The overall mood is serene and global.

# Civil Discourse on Difficult Topics

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# Civil Discourse

- The engagement in conversation intended to enhance understanding.
- It can drive insight that is actionable.
- Improves individual dignity and society as a whole.



# Purpose

- To explore how to dialogue about diversity and social justice issues in order to foster student learning.
- “The thing that happens is that I’m not afraid to bring up race, religion, sexual orientation...”

# Learning Objectives

- To understand why practitioners and students struggle to engage in dialogue about diversity and social justice issues.
- To share several techniques for framing diversity dialogues.
- To facilitate a discussion about the barriers of effective diversity dialogues.
- To provide strategies for overcoming the barriers of effective diversity dialogues.



# ROADMAP

- Ground Rules
- Dialogue Skills
- Managing Insensitive Comments
- Discussion
- Resources



“We were struggling for words.”

- Paralysis of Fear
  - Avoidance to help becomes lack of awareness
  - Ostracism (exclusion by general consent from social acceptance).
- Cost of Silence
  - Underperforming
  - Hostile environment
  - Not the right thing to do
- Finding Courage for Change
  - Realizing we all have learning edges



# ROPES

- Respect
- Open-minded
- Pass/Participate
- Educate
- Safety



# Social Justice

- System of privileges and advantages afforded based upon dominant group membership.
- Results in assumptions and bias directed toward non-dominant/target group members.



# What are my privileges?

- White
- Heterosexual
- Christian
- English as first language
- American born
- College educated

A blue-tinted image of a globe reflecting on water. The globe is the central focus, showing continents and oceans. The water around it is dark blue with light reflections, creating a shimmering effect. The overall mood is serene and global.

# Barriers to Dialogue

- First-year students
- Students leaders
- Entry-level professionals

# Falling into TRAPS

- Conversations stoppers
  - Limits dialogue
  - Timing and Use of Comment
  - Traps can trigger
- Examples
    - "Yeah, but..."
    - "That happens to me too"
    - "I know someone who..."
    - "He/she didn't really mean it that way"



# Intent v. Impact

- What is meant versus, How it felt.
- Explaining what you meant impacts how they feel.
- Why are you explaining?
- How does it feel to hear explanations?
- Effects of cumulative impact.

# Perfectly Logical Explanations

- Rationalizing what someone felt as an oppressive act as something else.
- Validate feelings
  - Same events may impact people differently.

# Finding the Words

- Validate without using your experiences.
- Ask for more
- Recognize that pain isn't comparable
  - Join carefully
- DO YOUR HOMEWORK!!
- Ask thoughtful questions.



# Finding Your Social Change Voice

- Inspiration
  - Finding
- Overcoming being overwhelmed
  - Educating yourself
  - Using your sphere of influence
    - What language do you role model?
    - What books do your children read?
    - Who do you hire?



# Best Practices

- Intercultural Dialogues
  - Black Men-White Men
- Retreats
  - Skin Deep, Crossroads Retreat
- Training
  - Leadershape
  - National Coalition Building Institute
- Academic Courses
  - Psychology of Race
  - LGBT Issues in the Workplace



# Resources

- National Conference for Community and Justice
  - <http://www.nccj.org>
- Washington University's Social Justice Center
  - <http://sjc.wustl.edu/aboutsjc.shtml>
- Social Justice Training Institute
  - <http://sjti.org>