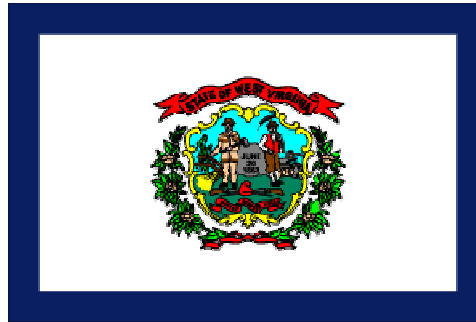


CRITICAL CULTURAL ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION



**Cecilia
(Neighbor)**



**Richard
(Self)**



**Francisco
(Teacher)**

A critical exploration of our cultural similarities and differences, my personal biases, what I have learned about “Self” and “Otherness,” and important implications for my teaching

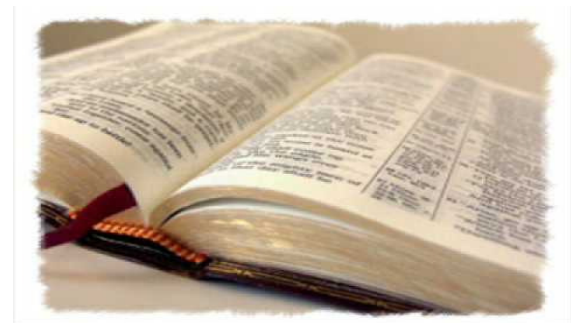
CULTURAL SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

What do we all have in common?



Quite a bit, including:

- Religion (Christianity)
- Language (Spanish)
- Current place of residence (Miami)
- Work (Professional)
- Class (Middle)



CULTURAL SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

In what ways are we different?

- Native language
- Ethnicity
- English proficiency and the role of English in our lives
- Primary cultures and countries of origin
- Educational background
- Family dynamics and the role of family in our lives
- Degree of cultural hybridity
- “Rootedness” and “Openness”
- Distinct life experiences



CULTURAL SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

- **Native language**

Spanish



English



- **English proficiency and the role of English in our lives**

Fluent and dominant



Not fluent



- **Primary cultures and countries of origin**

Cuba



Ecuador



USA



- **Educational background**

College



No college



CULTURAL SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

- Family dynamics and the role of family in our lives

Strong-integrated



Weak



- Degree of cultural hybridity

Very strong



Strong



Moderate



- “Rootedness” and “Openness”

More rooted



More open



Of course, these are my **subjective** views, subject to my own **biases** (both hidden and known).

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Reality

Some (hopefully most) of the cultural similarities and differences I have identified are real. They are mainly due to:

- ❖ Our global, national, social and individual realities
- ❖ Similarities and differences in our primary cultures and the communities to which we belong
- ❖ The fact that all individuals are unique and have unique life experiences
- ❖ Cultural hybridity

And many other factors of which I am not aware.

My Perceptions of Reality

What I interpret as reality is just my **mental representation** of the world around me. This means that what I believe to be real is influenced by the way I think, what I believe, what I know, and my life experiences.

- ❖ My values, biases and stereotypes **color my perceptions**
- ❖ Do the similarities I see in the three of us really exist, or are they due to the fact that the same person (Richard) is the source of the observation?
- ❖ How would my own cultural (auto)biography differ if Cecilia or Francisco wrote it?

MY VALUES, BIASES AND STEREOTYPES

My Values

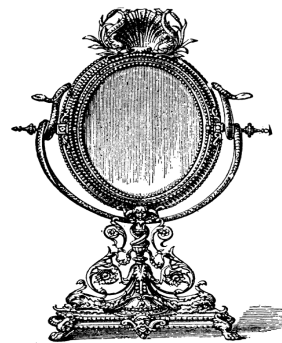
- Religious
- Cultural
- Global
- National
- Regional
- Social
- Individual
- Other

My Biases

- Known
 - 1) Linguistic
 - 2) Ethnic
 - 3) Religious
 - 4) Political
- Hidden
???

My stereotypes

- Of the “Self”
(communities to which I belong)
- Of the “Other”



Additional and ongoing critical self-reflection will be required for me to uncover my biases and stereotypes. Will I like what I find?

WHAT DOES 'CRITICAL' MEAN?

Honest: Acknowledging the bad along with the good and refusing to ignore inconvenient truths (the bad cannot be dealt with until it is identified and accepted)

Complete: Recognizing that we are all members of many cultures, subcultures and communities

Real: Understanding that there are positives and negatives in almost everything, including all cultures (cultural realism)

Objective: Considering multiple perspectives, to the extent that I am able (part of being honest is acknowledging that 100% objectivity is not possible)

Informed: Grounded in research, theory and fact

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED ABOUT CULTURE AND IDENTITY?

During the course and through my cultural autobiography and biographies, I have learned that culture is ...

- **Complex**
- **Dynamic**
- **Multifaceted**
- **Dialectical**
- **Multilayered**
- **Often not obvious or easy to understand**

I have also learned that our cultural identities are ...

- **Complex**
- **Dynamic**
- **Multifaceted**
- **Multilayered**
- **Contradictory**



My cultural identity has continued to change throughout my life.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MY TEACHING AND FUTURE



I now have to ask myself some important questions:

- 1) How will I **position myself** in the classroom in relationship to my students?
- 2) Will I be **open** to new ideas, new cultures, new ways of seeing myself and others?
- 3) How can I ensure that my personal **values, biases and stereotypes** don't negatively affect my effectiveness as a teacher?
- 4) What can I do to help my students develop **global cultural consciousness**?
- 5) Will I treat my students as **cultural informants** instead of mere vessels to be filled?

What **other questions** will I need to ask myself?