

# **The Journal of Unabridged Genius: JUG**

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## **The TALO Leadership Theory recognizes two great white management gurus, Peter Drucker and Russell Ackoff**

Author: Keith Orlando Hilton, PhD

I have tremendous respect for Peter Drucker and Russell Ackoff, two of the greatest management gurus to walk the earth in the last one hundred years. Okay, let's start with the well-known fact that both Peter Drucker and Russell Ackoff rejected the term "guru," but that descriptor is most often used to describe their mammoth roles in the development of management as a discipline. In fact, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School professor of Business Administration, also opined on American Public Media that "[Drucker] didn't love the word 'guru.' It sounded a little like a put-down. But he clearly was. He was the first and the best."

In late 2009, November to be exact, the management world celebrated the life of Peter Drucker, considered to be the "father of modern management." Mr. Drucker died in November 2005 at the age of 95. Russell Ackoff died in October of last year at the age of 90. Mr. Drucker often said, "Knowledge has to be improved, challenged, and increased constantly, or it vanishes." I think we all should be of that mindset.

If the election of Barack Obama as president of the United States is indeed representative of the dawning of a post-racial society, then honoring the lives and accomplishments of these two management legends, Peter Drucker and Russell Ackoff, also gives us pause to talk frankly and honestly about interpretations of management, leadership and race.

I earned my PhD in the mid-90s from the same private, research extensive university that Mr. Drucker was affiliated with and where the university's school of management is co-named after him. I had the pleasure of chatting with Mr. Drucker on several occasions when I would visit my colleague Sidney Harris, who was then dean of the Drucker School of Management. At the time I was a young dean in the Claremont Colleges' Office of Black Student Affairs.

I recall that Peter Drucker often said and wrote, "The future may be 'post-Western'; it may be 'anti-Western.' It cannot be 'non-Western.' Its material civilization and its knowledge all rest on Western foundations: Western science; tools and technology; production; economics; Western-style finances and banking. None of these can work unless grounded in an understanding and acceptance of Western ideas and of the entire Western tradition." Well, that is quite a history lesson.

However as an African-American, I also read these two white men's shorthand to mean, "*The future may be 'post-white'; it may be 'anti-white.' It cannot be 'nonwhite.' Its material civilization and its knowledge all rest on white foundations.*" But that leaves a lot of people with African and Asian cultures on the margins, even though those regions and philosophies represent the world's majority.

I never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Ackoff, but began studying his influential works after he returned from a 1992 trip to South Africa. While there he questioned if

either the black or white people there had a leadership plan for the future. "Getting rid of what one does not want is not the same as getting what one wants," Mr. Ackoff said.

Once again, as did Mr. Drucker with his "western" ideals, Mr. Ackoff comfortably viewed the world from a deeply entrenched Western perspective, even though the South Africa changing-of-the-guard was one of the most significant world events of the twentieth century.

While Mr. Ackoff correctly assessed the need for all social systems to have a business plan; he failed, for instance, to acknowledge the brilliant African leadership strategy of leading from behind as described by Nelson Mandela. Today this strategy is being explored at many business schools and within organizational leadership programs.

While a countless number of corporate CEOs, captains of industry, business schools, journalism schools, and yes, even presidents of "developed nations," owe much of their leadership finesse to Mr. Drucker and Mr. Ackoff, I suspect that future successful leadership knowledge will be more than just Western. That is as long as we pause and talk frankly and honestly about interpretations of management, leadership and race, such as offered in the TALO Leadership Theory. We welcome other scholarly and pop outlets to join the Journal of Unabridged Genius in this discourse.

We are now in exciting times as other academics and pracademics will join in and expand this and other theories that help explain the way the world works and are "testable." Please feel free to contact the eJournal or any of the contributors at any time about their/our findings via our front page blog. Also feel free to cite these articles as you continue to build your own research bases. I am confident that future contributions to the eJournal will also be valued by current and future researchers. I also strongly recommend that the TALO Leadership Theory be re-visited and re-read in its entirety on a regular basis, because it is designed to be a living, encompassing theory, and not an appendage.



# **Leadership in Tough Times: African American Women**

Author: Carolyn B. Buck, PhD

This is a reflective discussion related to the intersection of race, gender and leadership with a particular focus upon African American women (AAW) leaders in higher education. Typically the literature has focused on the predominant male leadership styles and little has been done to recognize the knowledge skills and leadership lenses of AAWs who provide leadership within the context of higher education. The predominant view is that leadership is associated with white males or white women in positions of authority, power and influence (Byrd, 2009).

Theories of leadership focus upon leadership traits such as the leader is transformational or charismatic. The transformational leader is described as being an ethical individual. Leadership is also described as being situational, relationship oriented, and focus on the institution and individual's "fit"; inclusive, it is the multi-ethnic and based in an afro-centric lens representative of the African Diaspora (Fine, 2009; Hilton, 2009). Yet, AAWs may find themselves in the midst of a socially constructed hierarchy where the intersection of race, gender, and social class may serve to disempower their leadership position (Collins in Byrd, 2009), resulting in barriers and marginalization of their leadership abilities.

These are tough times, which require a different leadership lens than has been prevalent in the past. Organizations will need to communicate more, embrace different perspectives and analysis before crafting strategic plans of actions versus the prevailing model of pointing fingers, accusations, fault finding, creating an atmosphere of mistrust and character assassination. Tough times provide opportunities to re-assess the institution's goals, its mission and actions past and future. This is even more critical given that most institutions of higher education face diminishing budgets, need for staff layoffs and on-going competition from, technical and private education as well as the exploding online distributive education market designed to meet the demands of the current demographics-timely response, quick, easily accessible and with a minimum of barriers.

Regardless of the difficult times in which we find ourselves, it can be difficult to define leadership. The traits, skills, and leadership style are complex and open to debate. It is unclear at times to define what is good leadership. Observers can see so much underhanded deceit in real life, with a focus on power and control, the economic bottom line supersedes the community needs, relationship building and/or the need to engage in communication across common grounds. The theory and practice may not intersect, and one begins to question, what should it be? It appears that most of us are unclear about leadership and how it happens or even what it may look like. Thus the insane reactions within our public and private organizations, the unrelenting effort of one group to control the behaviors of another and the need to destroy those whose beliefs, ideas, and life experiences make them different.

The research on leadership and ethics for AAWs evolves from several different lenses. Leslie and Fretwell in the book, *Wise moves in Hard Times*, writes that "sustained transformation relies on the human capacity to work together to make tough,

intelligent decisions” about whatever challenges the future may hold. Stress period of tension uncertainty in organization structure serves to “push” the organization to seek new and different alternatives, new relationships, collaborations, opportunities and common ground that can be mutually beneficial. This concept of “push” creates a vision of the leader being behind as opposed to in front of the group. Stress, tension uncertainty implies tough times and requires that decisions be made based on solid information and more pragmatic than emotional-decisions that would have been postponed in good times but now are expedient and necessary.

Transformation for the purpose of this reflection refers to transparency, collaboration, planning, open conversations and decisive actions, thus providing the foundation for leading through the “Perfect Storm” and the periods of qualm. Elements that we may consider important in this leadership style are ability to establish common ground through conversation, being visible by moving around and working side by side with subordinates, and the ability to respect and include the ethno-centric lens of individuals within the organization.

Using the perspective of Hilton (2009), the organization would function from an African centered lens that embraces the concepts of ethnocentric perspective, life history and ways of being. Specifically, it is a recognition of the attitudes, beliefs, skills knowledge, resources and influence of race and racism in organization structures and decision-making with institutions of learner, as well as corporate and government structures. In the transparent model alluded to earlier, it is important to implement structured processes that encourage creative collaborations, and differences of opinion. Wheatly (2009) discusses transformation as being sustained in an environment that ensures all personnel feel enfranchised. This empowerment must be implicit and expected in all interactions and communication.

The scenarios that follow represent different leadership challenges and decisions of African American women within higher education. A colleague recently shared a story about an interview she had for an executive management position in an institution of higher learning. The candidate responded to a question about her leadership style. She felt quite good about her knowledge, skills and abilities and especially her philosophy of leadership and ability to lead a team effort. She said to the committee that while her basic leadership style was eclectic, she saw herself as a servant leader. Well, the interviewer to her left folded his paper, closed his book, and placed his arms across his chest. The room was silent and no one made eye contact. Well, she thought, there are no servants in the room and there are definitely a lot of managers and top down decision makers. Now, primarily non-ethnically diverse males and a few females were representative of the powerbase in the room. Her response was not in congruence with the view of self-aggrandizement focused completely in the “what’s in it for me “ mode and using every opportunity to denigrate others in the organization structure so that one or more power brokers will continue to look good to upper management.

This was a very sobering moment for the candidate because she had reached a point in her life where she believed that her work must make a difference and that society should be improved. She thought that leadership inferred making a difference and providing a vision for others. She had spent time reviewing various scholars’ views on leadership and organization effectiveness, empowerment, transformation, teambuilding,

changes, diversity, and inclusion (Bennis & Nurus, 2005; Metcalf & Metcalf, 2005; Palmer, 2007, Wheatley, 2009). Yet, she found herself in an environment where her vision of a leader was obviously not in harmony with the group's non-verbal disapproval. She wondered about the impact of her personal history and background as an African-American woman on her leadership style and relationships. Being a servant leader for her represented a desire and philosophy of working closely with the team she would lead, a symbol of open communication, being inclusive and willing to build future leaders and push the team and its member to think outside the box to achieve excellence. She did not receive the job offer and the person hired fit the traditional leadership mode of management being top down and a power and influence model.

Another example relates to a particularly strong African American female leader within higher education who had moved through the academy as a vice chancellor, associate vice chancellor, associate vice president and chancellor in different institutions of higher education. During an administrative evaluation of a subordinate, also an African American female, she shared that leadership requires that one be strong, take the lead and never trust the majority culture male figures of power and influence. To be leader for this particular female leader meant being prepared, making certain that all written documents, even drafts, were submitted in final format and that the leader had to be a top performer, on top of her game at all times. This view was not restricted to the highly educated personnel but also to classified staff as well. The discussion went on further to suggest that the reason a classified African American female staff person was seen as a leader was directly related to the fact that she was prepared and knowledgeable, she spoke with authority and did not second guess herself. In this scenario, the leadership paradigm for each of these women emanated from the more traditional views as leadership being power based on skills and knowledge, and position. For each of the scenarios the women managed themselves based on majority culture expectations that are based in traditional views about leadership, power and control.

A good leader must recognize that the individuals and groups that they are leading may not be at the same level in terms of thinking, processing, planning, implementation and vision. Regardless, they must find common ground and be willing to accept the contributions of individuals and the group. It is in working together and supporting one another that new paradigms are initiated. The leader allows the group an opportunity to take responsibility, thus moving beyond fear and uncertainty. In this way, the group response ensures that the needed input for reflection, analysis and formulation of new ideas that occurs through shared experiences, knowledge, skills and group empowerment will then take a poor idea and develop a break through.

In today's economic fragmentation the leaders needed to initiate that change have already arrived. In the current mode many of these are African American women, whose perspectives have been influenced by their personal experiences, and who have found work in environments where their contributions have not been heard or respected, where subordinates with less knowledge were more likely to be heard and included. Women's whose modes of leading may be counter to the traditional power and influence model because of race, gender and social class (Byrd, 2009; Hilton, 2009). African American women who demonstrate the leadership principles of collaboration and inclusiveness with a goal of implementing change for the good of their community, organization, industry, government or group (Fine, forthcoming; Hilton, 2009, Wheatley, 2009).

Given the tough decisions that colleges have to make today, it is even more difficult to move forward when there are such divergent styles of leadership in the mix. Clearly, we have choices about the types of leaders and leadership style that can be utilized. As described some may be considered more ethical and humanist than others. Clearly, this writer believes that the collaborative, consulting mode is the leadership style of the future that will provide a platform for restructuring the academy.

Specifically, the eighth leadership profile of the TALO Leadership Theory appears to represent the height of leadership for organizational change and creation of new ways of being. Hilton (2009) describes it as the acknowledgement of the contribution of African knowledge. It may be that we move forward to embrace the socio-cultural influences of the African Diaspora, incorporating the acceptance of one's historical perspective, long-standing contributions, and build upon them for the good of society and culture. Transcending race and gender stereotypes can serve as the foundation for a leadership style that is inclusive, builds consensus and ultimately is collaborative in nature. The challenge will be that the emerging leadership styles of newly minted women leaders not be marginalized in the process of acceptance. This will be particularly true for African American women in positions of leadership, and yes for men as well.

***About the author Carolyn B. Buck, PhD:*** Joint doctorate in education from San Diego State University and Claremont Graduate University; born in Benham, Kentucky, she moved to California after living and working in Greensboro, North Carolina, and Stony Brook, New York. She is a mother and grandmother. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Bennett College, and master's degree in guidance and counseling from North Carolina A&T State University. In addition, she hold a Life Time California Community College Supervisors credential and has completed numerous supervisory and leadership training programs as a staff member in the University of California and California Community College systems. Currently she serves as the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Transfer Coordinator for California State University Bakersfield.

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# **An Expose of the Emperor: The Illusion of Reverse Discrimination**

Authors: David J. Jefferson, B.A. & Debra A. Harkins, PhD

There is no doubt that the meaning of race in America is changing. The elevation of individuals such as Barak Obama and Sonia Sotomayor to the nation's most powerful political offices truly marks a breakthrough that stands in stark contrast to the United States' sordid history of race-based tyranny. Yet it would be erroneous to declare that race relations have been perfected in contemporary American society. In the past few months, uproars provoked by incidents involving polemical phenomena such as racial profiling—embodied by the arrest of Robert Louis Gates, Jr.—and reverse discrimination—as publicized in a court case involving white firefighters in Connecticut—have illustrated that modern interracial relations are far from harmonious.

Why is it that although 35 years have passed since Civil Rights were enacted into law, officially guaranteeing the inalienable right of equality promised by the U.S. Constitution to people of all backgrounds, that American society remains racially stratified? The purpose of this essay will be to briefly review the presently ironic state of racial inequality in the age of Obama in America through an examination of concrete figures. Relative distribution of privilege and access to opportunity based on race will then be explored, and sociological explanations for the maintenance thereof will be offered via a review of Social Dominance Theory.

While much of the present discussion will apparently focus on the racial climate in contemporary America as if it were indicative of 'black and white' divisions, it is important to acknowledge that the situation is much more complex than what would be suggested by the delineation of such a dichotomy. Instead, the authors view postmodern U.S. society as constructed in 'shades of grey'. So while much of the following discussion will focus on African and European American populations, such emphasis is due to the limited range of racial complexity represented in much empirical social science literature, rather than to denial of the importance of ALANA/AHANA concepts. ALANA stands for African, Latino, Asian and Native American. The H in AHANA stands for Hispanic.

## ***Perceptions of Progress***

Although it would seem counterintuitive to many—especially white—Americans, race-neutral or 'colorblind' attitudes exacerbate rather than alleviate the problem because they fail to acknowledge that historical legacies of race-based discrimination continue to have impact today. In contemporary society, racial issues are widely acknowledged to have progressed from simplistic distinctions made on the basis of black v. white (e.g., Hilton, 2009). Yet racial group membership continues to script the relationship that many individuals have with power, privilege, and opportunity. Even while law and policy

dictate equality, broadband socioeconomic discrepancies surge between groups. The superficial guarantee of equality in post-Civil Rights era America, juxtaposed with an inequitable distribution of privilege, has served to fuel racial tension.

Americans' perceptions of racial progress seem to have shifted recently, especially since Obama's election, and though a color line still runs through them it has become less boldly etched. A decade ago, a national survey reported that 34% of whites believed that racial justice had already been achieved, with an additional 18% avowing that equality will soon be enjoyed. In contrast, only 6% of blacks then believed that racial harmony had already been realized. Meanwhile, in January of 2009, 38% of whites and 20% of blacks polled said that racial equality had been achieved; an additional 38% of whites and 36% of blacks that harmony would soon be achieved (ABC News/Washington Post, 2009). The proportion of blacks that did not believe that equality would be seen within their lifetimes dropped 30 percentage points since 2000, from 59% to 29% (Pettigrew, 2004; ABC News/Washington Post, 2009). The changes, especially in the perceptions of black Americans, are striking. Perhaps even more striking is the fact that the polls did not ask the people of color other than African Americans similar questions about perceptions of racial equality. Such a denial of participation in a forum of discourse limits the debate over race to black and white terms, recapitulating an adversarial dynamic indicative of lingering modernist conceptions of race relations. An alternative would involve extending equitable eligibility for participation in the dialogue to members of all ALANA/AHANA populations.

Although perceptions of progress appear increasingly positive, it is notable that a much larger percentage of whites than blacks avow that modern America is a space of racial harmony. The ability to experience equality even in the tangible absence thereof is one of the hallmarks of white privilege (e.g., Wise, 2007). Since the typical white American does not have even one close black friend (e.g., Berry, 2006), and since another common indicator of white privilege is the ability to socialize exclusively with other in-group members (e.g., McIntosh, 1988), it is logical that white Americans would be disconnected from the reality of the experience of many of their compatriots of color.

Meanwhile, people of color continue to gain prominence in realms of national political and popular influence. The relatively high-status roles inhabited by Obama, Sotomayor, and other individuals, as transmitted through media portrayals, could significantly influence the conceptualization by the average white citizen of the experience of out-groups in America. Some scholars have argued that the contemporary media landscape, which features people of color in prestigious public roles, suggests to viewers that racial discrimination is no longer a problem (Entman, 2006).

## ***Discrepant Realities***

In contemporary American society, disparities in access to socioeconomic wealth and capital are still clearly delineated based on race. The unemployment rate for blacks has historically been about twice that of whites (Pettigrew, 2004). According to recent numbers, in December 2008, the white unemployment rate was 6.6%, while it was 11.9% for blacks and disproportionately high for Hispanics as well, at 9.2% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.). Furthermore, the poverty rate in the year 2007 was at 8.2% for whites, less than half that of blacks and Hispanics, at 24.5% and 21.5%, respectively (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2008). That same year, the median black family income was 62% that of whites, and the median Hispanic family income was 70% that of whites (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2008). For black Americans, this represents a difference only 10 percentage points higher than the proportion compared to whites in 1950, and a *decrease* of 2% compared to 1970 (Pettigrew, 2004).

Though the practice of overt race-based discrimination in housing may have declined since the Civil Rights Era, many African Americans and members of other groups of color continue to be redlined in urban neighborhoods. This phenomenon largely results from the continued targeting of low income people of color by subprime mortgage lenders (e.g., Hernandez, 2009). Foreclosure rates are much higher for subprime mortgages than the more mainstream, middle-class 'prime' mortgages. (Wyly, Moos, & Kabahizi, 2009). Even when a person of color owns his or her own home, it is an asset typically worth far less than the likely value of a property owned by a white individual. For example, a housing unit deeded to a black individual is typically valued at 35% that of an average white-owned unit (Bonillo-Silva, 2006).

The progress in combating the social component of racism alongside the relatively minor advancements in securing broadband baseline economic equality has prompted some to call for a new framework with which to effect change (e.g., Ford, 2009). The contemporary 'New Racism,' in contrast to its overtly discriminatory, Jim Crowe counterpart from the past, is encapsulated in practices that are subtle, institutional, and apparently nonracial. Laws and business practices that are ostensibly 'race-neutral,' coupled with the vision of high-status people of color that is recapitulated throughout popular media, compounded by the in-group isolation in which many white Americans live, together lead to the overarching white perception that racial equality has either already been achieved or will soon be enjoyed in the contemporary United States. On the other hand, the personal experience of people of color with inequality in the distribution of wealth, capital, and opportunity can beget discouragement and the supposition that racial equality is, at best, a figment of some vague future.

### *Affirmative Action and the Myth of 'Reverse Discrimination'*

Contributing to the discrepant perceptions of progress across racial groups is the utilization of different reference points by which to gauge equality. Whites tend to gauge racial progress by focusing on how much positive change has occurred in comparison to eras of stark, overt inequality, such as during slavery or periods in which Jim Crow laws were operative. Meanwhile, people of color tend to define progress based on how far away contemporary society is from true egalitarianism (Brodish, Brazy, & Devine, 2008). Empirical study reinforces popular culture polls, with the result that people of color tend to perceive that less progress has been made towards racial equality, relative to the opinions of whites (Brodish, Brazy, & Devine, 2008).

Social policies designed to address and provide redress for historical legacies of race-based discrimination are not universally regarded as fair, especially by whites. Affirmative action, which refers to a somewhat loosely-defined set of practices embodied in programs most frequently employed in private sector companies and higher education, is opposed significantly more frequently and vehemently by whites relative to people of color (e.g., Kravitz & Klineberg, 2000). In relation to the Brodish, Brazy, & Devine (2008) study, such opposition is partially elucidated—the amount of racial progress that an individual perceives strongly predicts his or her reactions to affirmative action policies. As such, if large numbers of white Americans perceive that racial equality has been achieved—or that adequate progress has been made—then it is logical that whites would oppose measures that might advantage members of a historically oppressed group over them, however incongruent this perception might be with the reality of less privileged groups.

The term *reverse discrimination* has been popularized based on the unease that whites may feel when they believe that racial equality has been achieved and in spite of this perception, programs such as affirmative action continue to be maintained. Likewise troubling for whites who have bought into the colorblind model of race relations is the fact that racial preferences interrupt the myth of meritocracy. This is a fundamental supposition upon which the Constitution is based. It refers to the American ideal that “Getting ahead is ostensibly based on individual merit, which is generally viewed as a combination of factors including innate abilities, working hard, having the right attitude, and having high moral character and integrity” (McNamee & Miller, 2004). Yet contemporary U.S. society fails to live up to its meritocratic aspirations, as it fails to provide an equitable baseline from which merit alone could script success.

The parallel phenomena of 1) framing racial discrimination as a past problem; and 2) defining race-targeting as a subversion of meritocracy—are threaded throughout the discourse of opponents to programs such as affirmative action. Narrative interviews with whites who equate affirmative action with reverse discrimination have elucidated discursive themes that characteristically redefine the race-targeting policies originally

designed to be social remedies instead as social problems (Fraser & Kick, 2000).

Individuals in opposition to efforts meant to address historical race-based U.S. inequality because these are ‘discrimination in reverse,’ base their opposition on specific ideological and rhetorical positions. In hiring decisions for example, whites more readily oppose affirmative action when its underlying reason is stated as to ‘make up for past discrimination’ than when the objective is stated as one of ‘diversity’ (Berry & Bonilla-Silva, 2008). In this study, when asked to elaborate about their reasoning, whites voiced the attitude that ‘the past is the past.’ While white participants did not deny concrete historical oppression, they dismissed its connection to the contemporary racial situation.

A rhetorical strategy that involves a language of universalism and minimization of racism allows whites and members of other privileged groups to decry affirmative action and similar practices as reverse discrimination while maintaining their own sense of reason and morality (Berry & Bonilla-Silva, 2008). Such an argument reasons that affirmative action is reverse discrimination because it gives ‘unfair preference’ to individuals of color, based on race group membership. But affirmative action can only be seen as giving *unfair* preference if baseline social equality has been comprehensively achieved. In other words, affirmative action can only be deemed as unjust if the system of social stratification established by discriminatory practices of the past has been thoroughly eradicated.

Any policy such as affirmative action, which boosts the representation of blacks at a given educational institution cannot, by definition, be seen as an unfair racial preference, because, in the absence of the prior inequality of opportunity, blacks would have obtained all the necessary qualifications to attend those schools anyway. Likewise, those whites currently ‘burdened’ by affirmative action would not have been in a position of superior qualifications to obtain those slots that they are now being ‘denied.’ (Wise, 2005, p. 74)

Other authors note that in order for reverse discrimination to be a rhetorical argument of sound logic, whites would have to be subjected to discrimination of the same sort and magnitude that, for example, blacks were forced to experienced during pre-Civil Rights era society. “... A true reversal of [the] traditional white-generated discrimination would mean that the once radically subordinate groups now discriminate on a large scale against whites” (Feagin & O’Brien, 2003, p. 62). While whites may be occasionally discriminated against based on their race, neither formal nor informal prejudice against this group exists on a scale that could be considered widespread. Any unfair discrimination against whites has done nothing to subvert this group’s general position as the most privileged race in America.

Reverse discrimination, a term whose usage was begun by reactionaries to affirmative action policies in the 1970s (e.g., Fullenwider, 1980), has been employed

since then by whites to rhetorically position and portray themselves as an oppressed or victimized group. The implementation of a comprehensive affirmative action program in the Detroit police department in the 1970s and subsequent protests thereof can serve as an example of white self-portrayal of victimization. In an historical review of the era, Deslippe (2004) describes the argumentative strategy employed by white officers. “White policemen expressed their indignation with liberalism generally and affirmative action specifically in dramatic, often eloquent, fashion by portraying themselves as an oppressed group” (Deslippe, 2004, p. 940). In those Detroit protests of the 1970s as well as across the contemporary United States, language is used to enact a significant shift. Through provocative rhetoric, whites—on the whole the most privileged group in America—have managed to transform themselves from oppressor to oppressed.

### ***The Sociology of Dominance***

One ideological orientation that can beget the sort of ‘universalist’ discourse necessary to equate affirmative action with reverse discrimination is derived from *principled conservatism*, an orientation ostensibly guided by “race-neutral” political values (e.g., Federico & Sidanius, 2002; Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996). Characteristic of this worldview are ‘universal’ values such as justice, order, balance, and moderation which together promise of social mobility based on the supposition that the United States’ society is a true meritocracy, and “Whether or not a particular individual holds these values high depends not on his social affiliations but upon his personal capacity to see their inherent truth and desirability” (Huntington, 1957, p.455). Based on this definition conservatism would purport itself to be divorced from certain sociohistorical realities, such as contemporary racial stratification based on past discrimination.

It would seem that through its universalist rhetoric principled conservatism would propound ‘colorblindness’, embodied by such statements as ‘I don’t see color, just people’ (Bonilla-Silva, 2006) as the best way to correct for past racism and to prevent against it in the present and the future. In a formal, organizational context, this philosophy would dictate that decisions such as admission to higher education, hiring, or promotion should never be formally influenced by the race of those involved, even if racial variables have pervasively shaped the same individuals’ historical and contemporary realities. Such an argument permits affirmative action to be rhetorically framed as unjust even when the most fundamental purpose of affirmative action is social justice.

As principled conservatism purports itself to be representative of a race-neutral, political values oriented agenda, whites who employ its arguments should be 1) ignorant of the privilege that their racial group membership affords, 2) in denial that such privilege can be clearly delineated based on race-group membership, or 3) unable or unwilling to recognize that inequitable distribution of privilege based on past discriminatory practices should be corrected. In other words, the values associated with a conservative philosophy should be divorced from race entirely. Yet empirical evidence suggests that white

political conservatism is positively related to classical racism, indicating that this ideology is not in fact a matter of colorblind idealism (Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). This relationship between white political conservatism and classical racism exists across educational strata and actually *becomes stronger* as years of education increase (Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996). As such, it is unlikely that the designers of the principled conservatism argument are ignorant of race-based privilege.

For conservative whites, resistance to affirmative action may be more closely tied to perceptions of group deservingness than to any fundamental notions of fairness that the policy might represent. In a pair of studies, Reyna et al. (2005) found that male and female white conservatives opposed affirmative action for blacks more vehemently than for women, suggesting that attitudes towards the policy are more affectively linked to race than to gender. Subsequent data collection with white adults by Reyna et al. (2005) found that the relationship between conservatism and affirmative action attitudes was best mediated by group-based stereotypes about benefactors than by other variables such as classical racism or perceived threat. These stereotypes were primarily driven by perceptions of deservingness—that is, whites held the belief that blacks did not ‘try hard’ in society and therefore were not entitled to the benefit of affirmative action.

Evidence suggests that underlying principled conservatism is a sociological phenomenon that would account for the white opposition to affirmative action, and thereby lead to rhetorical claims of reverse discrimination. The literature has termed this phenomenon *social dominance theory*, in which members of high status groups seek to dominate individuals from low status groups in a given society (e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Several studies have found that opposition to affirmative action is strongest for whites high in a variable termed *social dominance orientation* (SDO) (e.g., Haley & Sidanius, 2006). Alignment with SDO has been shown to influence organizational decisions, such as in hiring and promotion decisions. For example, individuals high in SDO report that they are less likely to select a potential ‘team member’ who is a member of a low status group than an individual from relatively high status group (Umphress, Simmons, Boswell, & del Carmen Triana, 2008).

Social dominance orientation is passed down through families, for as many as three generations (Chatard & Selimbegovic, 2008). Therefore, even if whites in contemporary American society strive towards ‘colorblindness’ in matters of race, they may nevertheless have been subtly influenced by the discriminatory or hierarchical attitudes of their forbearers. Evidence of non-conscious, hereditary socialization influences mirrors the concrete, cross-racial discrepancies in wealth and access to opportunity that perpetuate in modern society. Even if some racial progress has been achieved in America, the past is still present, at least to some degree.

Social dominance orientation is not a static underlying trait, but rather a characteristic that can increase in relevance to the individual as a result of realistic threat

or perceived obstacles to the high status in-group's position and general welfare (Morrison, & Ybarra, 2008). Therefore when universalist, meritocratic rhetoric previously discussed is employed by affirmative action opponents to case such programs as reverse discrimination, whites high in SDO may feel that their position is being unfairly jeopardized by members of low status societal groups. Such perception of threat will then reinforce an individual's defensiveness of the socially dominant position that he has inherited.

Empirical evidence further demonstrates SDO to be both positively correlated with and a significant predictor of perceived discrimination (Shorey, Cowan, & Sullivan, 2002). As such, individuals high in the SDO variable are more like than those to whom social dominance is less salient to perceive unfair discrimination when their status is threatened. Thus the members of the majority group most likely to claim that affirmative action is in fact reverse discrimination are the same individuals prone to social dominance orientation.

### ***Where Do We Go From Here? Recommendations for Educators***

The TALO (Traditional African Leadership Oath) Theory (Hilton, 2009) argues that since all humans can trace their ancestry to a common African heritage, divisions between races are ultimately inaccurate and unnecessary. The TALO orientation holds as its objective the development towards a 'post-racial' society in which humankind would be unified under the umbrella term of African. The authors of this essay do not dispute the TALO logic. Unfortunately, the social realities which underlie contemporary American society cannot be described as post-racial. The tangible and perceptual cross-racial discrepancies explored throughout the present discussion demand multi-level solutions, with growth necessary from the intraindividual to the systemic sphere to raise critical consciousness surrounding our common ancestry and the perceptual illusions of race differences among groups of people.

In addition to the maintenance and continual adaptation of programs such as affirmative action to provide redress for historical socioeconomic, race-based inequality, education is a means through which change can occur at the level of individuals. It is crucial that educators foster talk about race in the classroom, since "Interactions with and among our students give meaning to racial representations, containing the tension of the seen and unseen, the gap between 'racism is everywhere' and 'racism is over' sensibilities and knowledge" (Cooks & Simpson, 2007, p.1). Teachers at all levels of instruction have the power to interactively construct racial meanings with their students, encouraging development in the spaces between personal, racial/ethnic, and social/interpersonal identities.

Freire (1990) esteemed dialogue as fundamental to education and liberation from historically based inequalities in his seminal *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In the context



of the contemporary American classroom, the process of racial education towards open minded attitudes and actions begins acknowledgment of the dynamics of race that might be present in the teacher/learner transactional relationship. In the context of adult education, Johnson-Bailey (2002) recommends critical reflection through 1) understanding of one's personal cultural history; 2) understanding of the sociopolitical forces that affect the learners and learning environment; and 3) evaluation of whether one's practice is part of the problem or part of the solution.

Critical theory in education attempts to simultaneously discover why oppressive structures exist in societies and explore means for societal transformation, yet is itself race-neutral in its perspective (e.g., Jennings & Lynn, 2005). Meanwhile, Critical Race Theory (CRT) functions as a counterdiscourse to mainstream pedagogy—which can potentially recapitulate dominant societal racial attitudes—approaching educational questions from the perspectives of people of color (e.g., Solorzano & Yosso, 1998). CRT can provide an alternative for pedagogical exploration of race via classroom dialogue.

Other pragmatic tools for instructors interested in exploring race in an educational context include intergroup dialogue, which unites students who identify with two or more social groups (e.g., race, ethnicity, class) to "...build relationships across cultural and power differences, to raise consciousness of inequalities, to explore the similarities and differences in experiences across identity groups, and to strengthen individual and collective capacities to promote social justice" (Nagada & Gurin, 2007, p.35). Exercises in intergroup dialogue specifically, as well as classroom racial discourse more generally can facilitate the development of conflict resolution skills since "The American (postmodern) college classroom may be one of the few settings to explore ways to engage in nonviolent conflict" (Harkins & Wells, 2009, p. 47). The classroom can therefore provide a forum for working through both intra- and interracial dissonance before such tensions manifest themselves at street level.

### ***Conclusions***

Threat to one's status as a member of a privileged group appears to underlie the arguments forwarded by some whites that affirmative action and similar measures designed to provide redress for past prejudicial practices are in fact reverse discrimination. Despite the appeal of such rhetoric, the concept of reverse discrimination is not reflective of a reality grounded in any serious, concrete loss of wealth, access to opportunity, or even social privilege for socially dominant whites. Instead,

[Reverse discrimination] is a socially constructed, ideological package that distorts the reality of affirmative action and contains an entire set of conservative attitudes about the state of race and gender relations today. It is a codeword for those angry whites who feel threatened by increased competition from people of color and women. (Pincus, 2008, p. 84)

In the age of the presidency of Barak Obama in the United States, tangible progress has been made to combat the overt interpersonal and institutional race-based discriminatory practices of pre-Civil Rights America. Such progression is evident in the cultural *zeitgeist* and represented through broad public perceptions—black and white—that racism is less of a problem in this country than in the past.

The problem now is that because of the tangible progress made, and because of popularized ‘colorblind’ attitudes among whites, the socioeconomic disparities that comprise the realities of blacks and other peoples of color are as intractable as ever. Members of the majority, highest status group are perhaps less willing to embrace programs such as affirmative action as necessary and more likely to decry them as reverse discrimination.

It would be unbecomingly universalist to suggest that all whites in America act solely out of an unconscious—or in some cases conscious—drive for social dominance. Yet it is important to recognize that historical legacies continue to influence contemporary realities, and one of the most fundamental heritages upon which the United States were founded is that of inequality predicated on the creation of racial groups. In order to move towards a truly post-racial society, it is imperative that the critical consciousness of all peoples be raised. Open dialogue can foster shared understanding and should be initiated in classroom discussions across educational levels. In exploring racial legacies inter-individually rather than retreating into polarizing rhetoric such as that of reverse discrimination, the seeds of systemic change are sown. The issue for all of us is to expose the emperor’s illusions in a voice that will be heard.

***About the author:** David J. Jefferson is a masters candidate in a psychology doctoral program at Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts. He holds B.A. degrees in Psychology and English from the Schreyer Honors College of Penn State University and has also studied English Literature at Goldsmiths College in London. Originally from Pennsylvania, David has taught English as a Second Language in Spain and worked as a translator and educator in Spanish and English. David’s research interests center on empowerment, specifically surrounding poverty and homelessness, and employ qualitative research methodology. Additionally, David works as the Editor-in-Chief of the Cambridge, M based Spare Change News, a street newspaper published by the Homeless Empowerment Project.*

***About the author:** Debra A. Harkins, PhD is Associate Professor of Psychology at Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts. She received B.S. degrees in Psychology and Anthropology from the University of Massachusetts-Boston, M.A. and PhD degrees from Clark University in Psychology, and completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Children’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School. Dr. Harkins’ interests include social justice, diversity, empowerment, conflict resolution, and systems learning, and she is involved in teaching, consultation, and community and narrative based research.*

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## **A Global Paradigm Shift for Corporations and Businesses**

Author: Frank T. Scruggs, ABD

The world has entered a new era in world politics which has led scholars, statesmen and the people of the world to consider various paradigms in order to better analyze global policy, the international economy and business operations. The shrinking of the world and the growing interdependence between people, corporations and nonstate actors have served to create a homogenization of economic, political and culture around the world, thus making globalization a critically important factor. Although now typical, globalization is a rather ambiguous concept, defined here:

Globalization is the expanded economic integration of and interdependence of states through international free trade, market economies, investments and capital flows (Duncan, Jancar-Webster and Switky, 2006).

Cultural paradigms also deserve attention in terms of understanding the blending of various cultures across the globe. Ray and Kaarbo (2008) have stated that:

Cultural practices are becoming globalized as people are listening to the same music and watching the same television programs and films. The English language is facilitating the spread of cultural values and practices, as are the high levels of migration, refugees and worldwide tourism (p. 519).

The internationalization of business, the information age, the internet and foreign policy have become a part of the everyday. The Eurocentric paradigm remains a part of the political economy for the Western world. Even though much of the culture exported around the world is Western (American culture is still essentially Eurocentric), the Western cultural paradigm is not necessarily the superior cultural paradigm. This need to retain cultural richness and individuality has a great deal of significance to one's identity.

Those who object to cultural globalization condemn it for undermining the world's rich tapestry of cultural diversity and potentially producing a less vibrant monoculture that one scholar has described as the eternal yawn of MacWorld (Rourke, 2008).

Corporate CEOs shape corporate culture and will initiate or influence paradigm shifts in the culture in one direction or the other. CEOs are ultimately the people exerting the greatest influence towards shaping corporate culture. These significant changes would include creating an atmosphere that would allow for healthy conflict in the workplace. In this way their actions would decrease the perception of racism and allow for African American managers to grow and develop within the corporate community.

American corporations, banks and businesses also need to take measures to avoid exportation of America's brand of racism and requirements for cultural assimilation that have been required of blacks and other minorities in America. Many times in the United States, African Americans have adopted a personal policy of assimilation to gain success in Corporate America, where white American culture is predominant. When she contemplated assimilation as a problem for blacks, Hooks (1989) offered this skeptical critique that in America, blacks who assimilate are actually partners in their own oppression. Ever skeptical of integration and assimilation she explained that blacks in America who choose to fully assimilate also internalize white supremacy or institutionalized racism. She has stated that:

No social environment in the United States can exist that truly supports integration. When black people can enter social contexts that remain unchanged, unaltered, in no way stripped of the framework of white supremacy, we are pressured to assimilate. We are rewarded for assimilation (Hooks, 1989).

Thus, African Americans have been expected to value white culture, subjugate black cultural values and at the same time maintain white supremacy. This is a strategy, that subtly urges black people to negate their own blackness. She also has stated that given the continued force of racism, racial integration translated into assimilation ultimately serves to reinforce and maintain white supremacy (Hooks, 1989). This view holds onto the idea that inequality is built into the corporate structure to continue to maintain an unequal relationship between white and black. In some cases empirical evidence was offered by her that black people working or socializing in predominantly white settings whose very structures are formed by the principles of white supremacy. She then went on to add that those who dare to affirm their blackness, love of black culture and identity, do so at great risk (Hooks, 1989).

What would have to be closely scrutinized is the post-colonial structure which is also one that has roots in white supremacy and when contemplating a globalized economy that includes so many black and brown people the need to avoid exportation of racism requires a need to reset the American paradigm of race and racial conflict.

The need then exists for Corporate America to reassess how business abroad is conducted. Since the globalization trend is on the increase, corporate management personnel will need to manage others in a different and progressive manner. Corporate managers must now become even more mindful in a globalized business arena about race and culture than in times past. Conducting business in markets abroad multinational corporations must effectively deal with the inevitable workplace conflicts involving race and identity. Davidson (2002) spoke of two studies that involved race and conflict. In these studies he explored the dynamics of interpersonal conflict and articulated how race is likely to affect conflict behavior (p. 261). He found that in both studies that race influenced the way participants responded in conflict situations. In the studies blacks,



relative to whites were more expressive in their conflict response preferences; less likely to suppress emotionality. After interpreting the findings arising from these studies, what he found was quite interesting; white managers may be inclined to be more color-blind than blacks in conflict situations. However, he did offer consideration that this may simply be due to the fact that as part of a majority, whites may not be as sensitive to the subtleties of the minority (Davidson, 2002: 274).

Hilton (2009) has encouraged the usefulness for corporations and other types of organization to operationalize his TALO Leadership Theory. Since the economies of the world have become more globalized, he has also provided incentives for multinational corporations a means to first build up their markets and improve on their ability to better adapt to the global arena. The TALO Theory offers Acknowledged Africans (black people) five incentives, which are:

- 1) Opportunities to expand positive public relations and increase financial profits.
- 2) Opportunities for increased professional credibility.
- 3) Opportunities to continue serving as positive cultural and ethnic role models.
- 4) Opportunities to offer encouragement and discouragement to Unacknowledged Africans.
- 5) Opportunities to prevent self, community, cultural lynching and genocide.

The TALO Theory also offers six incentives for Unacknowledged Africans (non-black people) working for multinational corporations:

- 1) Opportunities to expand positive public relations and increase financial profits.
- 2) Opportunities to elevate an organization above the competition.
- 3) For Unacknowledged Africans working for Acknowledged African leaders, the more they understand, the more likely they will be successful.
- 4) For Unacknowledged Africans who supervise or work with Acknowledged Africans, the more they understand the theory's merit, the more likely they will be able to offer encouragement or discouragement to Acknowledged Africans.
- 5) For Unacknowledged Africans who patronize Acknowledged African establishments or know Acknowledged Africans whom patronize their establishments, the more they understand the theory's merits, the more likely all groups will benefit and ethnic animosities will be minimized.
- 6) Unacknowledged Africans need to fully know their histories because no one should ever know more about another's history than the members of that group.

The global environment is a system of delicately and tightly integrated components that together impose limits on the planet's carrying capacity. Although many ALANA people populate the planet, many are excluded from the decision making

process that occur in corporate boardrooms that affect their lives and environment. Maquiladoras, for example, which are multinational corporations along the northern border towns of Mexico, pollute the land, water and air in a country that is not their own however everyone is affected. The deforestation of the rainforest in the Amazon River regions and polluted air in China also has equally long-range consequences globally (Scruggs, 2009:15).

Corporations speak of corporate social responsibility therefore unrestrained population growth becomes an issue of corporate social responsibility. Population will at some point exceed the global carrying capacity and result in lost economic opportunities, environmental degradation and domestic strife. Corporations have political power and ability to influence public policy around the globe. The question raised then is this: How does population growth affect corporations? The answer is this:

Population growth and aging will soon place migration as an important political and policy agenda for both developed and undeveloped nations. Opportunities for labor are on the rise for less developed nations as population and the labor pool age in the developed nations. Population growth will continue to strain existing economic problems and create new national security concerns. The international toll of excessive population growth and consumption will lead to dramatic changes in the following areas:

- Global Patterns of Production
- Over fishing and maintaining the ecological balance in the oceans
- Trade
- Capital Flows and
- Migration

The behavior of key corporations in different national settings does influence the dynamics that govern energy supply and demand, price and production. Global energy consumption is disproportionate most of which is consumed by the world's wealthy industrialized nations. Meanwhile, pollution of the environment by fossil fuels still continues; cause acid rain, global warming and ozone depletion. While coal, natural gas, hydropower and nuclear power are major alternatives to oil each comes with its own set of economic, environment and political uncertainties. In the context of globalization, corporations today have become even more important in terms of global economic decision-making than governments. Painter and Jeffrey (2009) whom discussed corporations in the context of economies and globalization said:

The globalization of economic processes undermines the ability of the state to plan, steer and govern the national economy. Increasingly, multinational corporations, international companies and multinational financial institutions...

have been able to take decisions with little or no regard to the wishes of individual governments (p. 31-32).

Hilton's (2009) TALO Leadership Theory has provided a means for corporations that allow African American corporate officers and managers a means to maintain their blackness and their own cultural perspectives. His theory is further supported by Hooks (1989) who found that African Americans are expected to value white culture and to subjugate black cultural values at the same time while maintaining that white supremacy is a strategy, she goes on to further state that this strategy urges black people to negate their blackness. She also suggested that given the continued force of racism, racial integration translated into assimilation. This accepted subjugation ultimately serves to reinforce and maintain white supremacy. This view also holds onto the idea that inequality is built into the corporate structure to continue to maintain an unequal relationship between white and black. She also emphasized that black people work and socialize in predominantly white settings whose very structures are formed by the principles of white supremacy. Black people, who dare to affirm blackness, love of black culture and identity, do so at great risk when they are members of corporations and similar institutions (Hooks, 1989).

Hilton's (2009) TALO Leadership Theory also provides an opportunity for blacks to hold onto their blackness and for whites to challenge themselves to change the white supremacist corporate structure which even though according to hooks (1989) negates African people and their culture. The TALO Theory has promise as model for corporate CEOs and corporate managers seeking change their corporate culture to a higher context culture for corporations looking to develop a corporate culture that is less individualistic. The TALO Theory has possibilities as an alternative for those corporate leaders whom seek a paradigm shift in corporate culture away from Eurocentric business management models so prevalent in Corporate America. As an Afrocentric principle, the TALO theory serves to facilitate a more cooperative and group oriented approach to business and business operations. The TALO theory also helps corporate officers to identify the paradigms of the various corporate managers and their leadership orientation.

Corporations could also promote ways of enhancing cooperation, building cooperation and managing cooperation. The role of culture is a key component to healing. The paradigm created by capitalism has been one proceeding from competition, consumption and corruption. The need then exists to initiate a paradigm shift towards one that proceeds from cooperation, conservation and consociation. Although, a complete paradigm shift is problematic, such a shift is not impossible. Challenging opportunities arises for the global community to consider alternatives to competitive economics and Eurocentric values offered by Western low context cultures.

Cultural considerations are important when discussing paradigms. Macionis (2006) wrote that:

Culture is the value, beliefs, behavior and material objects that together form a people's way of life (p. 59).

The role that culture plays is vital to understanding managing identity based conflicts, especially those involving race and/or ethnicity. Mohammed Rabie (1994) emphasized the role of culture when he stated that:

Cultural backgrounds, belief systems and social values play a vital role in shaping peoples' ways of thinking and influencing their perceptions of themselves and others (p. 32).

People belonging to different cultures tend to have difficulty communicating with each other and find it harder to understand why they often fail to communicate; this he suggested that this [culturally-based, communication difficulties] happens because different cultures place different values on the same things, causing people's expectations and beliefs of what is important or right to be different, contradictory or in conflict (Rabie, 1994).

Often, Afrocentric paradigms which proceed from high context cultural views, offer cooperative economics, group affinity and embrace life often are overlooked. This neglect is another reason for Americans to consider race relations in any new paradigm shift. In the U.S., there are African Americans who have adopted a personal policy of assimilation to gain success in U.S. corporations where white or Eurocentric culture is predominant. When pondering assimilation as a problem for African Americans, Hooks (1989) offered a skeptical critique of assimilation by African Americans. Specifically, she spoke of those African Americans who assimilate as being complicit or partners in their own oppression. She explained that African Americans assimilated and internalized white supremacy or institutionalized racism. Always skeptical of integration and assimilation she has said that:

No social environment in the United States can exist that truly supports integration. When black people can enter social contexts that remain unchanged, unaltered, in no way stripped of the framework of white supremacy, we are pressured to assimilate. We are rewarded for assimilation (Hooks, 1989).

According to Hooks (1989), African Americans are also expected to value white culture and to subjugate their own black cultural values at the same time they're expected to maintain white supremacy as a strategy. She also revealed that this strategy urges black people to negate their blackness. She also stated that given the continued force of racism, racial integration translated into assimilation ultimately serves to reinforce and maintain white supremacy (Hooks, 1989).

Hilton's (2009) TALO Theory serves as a strategy to help African Americans succeed in the corporate structure and maintain their black cultural identity. This view holds onto the idea that inequality is built into the corporate structure to continue to maintain an unequal relationship between white and black. In some cases empirical evidence offered by hooks that black people (working or socializing in predominantly white settings whose very structures are formed by the principles of white supremacy) who dare to affirm blackness, love of black culture and identity, do so at great risk (Hooks, 1989).

<b>Table 1: Characterization Concepts of High/Low Context Cultures as a Continuum</b>	
<b>Low Context Cultures –Focus is on Doing</b>	<b>High Context Cultures – Focus is on Being</b>
Earned Status Individual achievement Self-reliance/independence Factual Deductive Time is planned, concrete Individual competition Adversarial resolution of conflict	Ascribed status Group affinity Rely/depend on others Intuitive/affective Inductive Time is circular, stretches Cooperation Conciliatory resolution of conflict
<i>Table created based on information received from Cathie Witty, PhD, Cross-Cultural Conflict Lecture, Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, September 2001</i>	

In an attempt to further understand how to communicate cross-culturally, Witty (2001) emphasize a need to understand and appreciate the culture of others among those she factored in the need to consider when communicating with others from a vastly different cultural background. She made for example the following statements:

What seems logical, sensible, important and reasonable to a person in one culture may seem irrational, stupid and unimportant to an outsider (Witty, 2001)

The assimilation and homogenization of other cultures is precisely what is to be avoided by practices such as McDonalldization. Some theorists have considered the idea that globalization paradigms and the hegemony long held by Western nations have allowed for many Western corporations to adopt the principle of McDonalldization to assimilate non-Western cultures and as a standard operation procedure for conducted business on a global scale.

McDonalldization is the process by which the principles of fast-food restaurants are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society, as well as the rest of the world. The nature of the McDonalldization process may be

delineated by outlining its five dimensions: efficiency, calculability, predictability, control through substitution of technology for people, and, paradoxically, the irrationality of the rational (Ritzer, 2008, p. 583).

McDonald's Corporation is a commercial success internationally, with over half their restaurants outside the United States, however these franchise processes appear to require that other nations to negate their own cultural identity. Cultural identity and understanding becomes important also when inequality needs to be understood. Culturally, inequality hinders conflict. Therefore in order to adequately be resolved that inequality is a situation that is created between unequal participants.

Globally a shift in paradigms is required. The current paradigm proceeds from the Western perspective which holds the technological, economic and political/military advantages. These advantages have given the Western world a cultural hegemony and the ability to shape global thinking towards a pattern of Western thinking and a Western paradigm in matters of global policy. A shift in the global paradigm towards Afrocentric thinking requires the shedding of myths about Africa that stand as roadblocks to Afrocentric paradigms. One myth is the myth of African corruption. The perception of African corruption appears to have been greatly exaggerated in recent times.

Corruption is a part of many regimes in Africa as a result of several hotly debated reasons but foreign corporations do indeed encourage corruption of African officials.

Transparency International says foreign companies that pay bribes to obtain market access have helped to foster corruption in Africa (Katel and Greenblatt, 2008:179)

The well-documented fact that corruption exists in Africa is without question; although the degree and depth of African corruption is definitely questionable. The corruption problem suggests alternative viewpoints may also exist in regards to African corruption; for example:

Economist Sachs says the extent of corruption in Africa is hyped and then used as an excuse for stinginess. Our stereotypes about African corruption are a near-obsession on our part...they're not the reality (Sachs, 2005: 311-315).

Katel and Greenblatt (2008) added that:

There are countries, such as South Africa and Botswana, whose perceived levels of corruption are comparable to developed countries such as Italy, Greece, Hungary and Taiwan. (p. 179).

The viewpoints in the Western world tend to be that corruption is tolerated and unique to Africa, a viewpoint has also been challenged by the Radelet of the Center for Global Development. They have suggested methods of dealing with corruption and misdirected foreign aid such as funneling aid through Nongovernmental Organizations.

When they addressed the issue of perceived African corruption they said:

Western politicians sometimes appear hypocritical, condemning corruption in Africa while tolerating it back home. Yes, there is corruption [in Africa]...and if a scandal broke out in Mozambique, a bunch of congressmen would stand up and say, cut off aid to Mozambique. But they'd never say cut off aid to New York State. Poor countries that are trying to halt corruption, lack police, courts and records-keeping systems that Americans take for granted (Katel and Greenblatt, 2008: 181-182).

Afrocentric theories often do not support corruption when they are implemented and they also stress responsibility. The principle of Ujima, i.e. collective work and responsibility, demonstrates that businesses and corporations need not fear being overtaken by corruption by adopting a more Afrocentric paradigm Karenga (2008) stated:

Ujima, as a principle and practice, also means that we accept the fact that we are collectively responsible for our failures and setbacks as well as our victories and achievements...such a commitment implies and encourages a vigorous capacity for self-criticism and self-correction (p. 53).

Corporation interested only with pursuing money and wealth have had a tendency to become institutions that value above all else, materialism, greed and perversion. Another Afrocentric value, Ujamaa, cooperative economics stress sharing wealth and working to achieve a measure of wealth that is evenly distributed Karenga (2008) noted;

[Ujamaa] grows out of the fundamental communal concept that social wealth belongs to the masses of the people who created it and that no one should have an unequal amount that it gives him/her the capacity to impose to impose unequal, exploitive or oppressive relations on others (p. 56).

The older African values and beliefs such as *Ujima* and *Ujamaa* were replaced in some places by a more capitalistic and money-oriented, values; one that sought wealth for the sake of wealth and increased individual power. While corporations should seek to create wealth, they also need to practice social obligation towards all workers including the neediest and often most exploited. The development of the vast human capital of the world's population; providing quality, affordable healthcare, housing, work and education is essential to corporations since this will allow for a better workforce, a better product and the development of each nation's greatest resource, their people.

**About the author:** *Frank T. Scruggs is a doctoral candidate at Nova Southeastern University in Florida. A graduate of Illinois State University and Governors State University, he is a professor of political science in Chicago. Much of his research addresses the perceptions of racism's influence on workplace conflict and conflict management for African American managers in the corporate workplace (also referred to as Corporate America). His studies often involve understanding corporate governance, sustained dialogue and conflict management systems in corporations. This particular study provides a closer look at white and black American cultures, perceptions of racism, white privilege and corporate culture in the United States.*

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## **Killing the Roots of Addiction in Our Children**

Author: Clint Williams, MA, Licensed Professional Counselor - Intern

*\*Not the person's real name*

Many of us may know someone like my friend, whom I'll just call "Art\*." He's intelligent, spiritual and possesses leadership qualities. He is also thoughtful, compassionate, energetic – and addicted to crack cocaine. Art will look at you and tell you in no uncertain terms he is clean, and clear of the desire to use drugs anymore, and he's been able to sustain himself for up to eight months.

Yet, the next news you'll hear about Art is he's been missing for several days, or weeks, only to resurface at a crack house or on the street begging for a few dollars "to get something to eat." Art just turned 50 years old in September, but time and the miserable yoke of addiction seems to take him out each time like a straight right punch from Mike Tyson in his hey day.

Art's Christian faith, numerous recovery home stays, sponsors, and impassioned pleas from those who love and respect him can't diminish his urges. He's out there with the untold number of faceless abusers, who seem powerless to stop the urge to use when it hits. But Art is an adult, and no one can really make him stop. He seems to have no fear of repercussion, even when he knows that he has to stop, not only for the sake of his health, but also for the possibility of an arrest for drug possession. If an adult cannot stop themselves from using drugs, or drinking too much alcohol for that matter, then how much more difficult is it for young child exposed too early to this *national plague* to make the right choices?

And then there's Tim\*, a 17 year-old white male, who began using marijuana and non-prescribed medications, like Xanax, in middle school. From a well-to-do family, and the only child, he seemed to want for nothing. However, he experienced emotional trauma early when his parents divorced (his father is purported to be an alcoholic). He eventually ended up living with his maternal grandmother. Tim later reluctantly reported having seen a friend shot by the friend's older brother who was high on drugs, a memory he apparently chose to suppress. He subsequently became attracted to the next level of drugs, such as cocaine and heroine. Though we worked the issue in counseling, he vacillated between denial and a grudging acknowledgement he had a drug problem. He was later admitted to an in-residence treatment program, and eventually released after he decided he didn't want treatment. He was still in addiction's grip when I was compelled to conclude services with him for non-cooperation.

Vivian\* was a 15 year-old Hispanic female, living with a single parent mom. Vivian started using marijuana around age 11. By the time I began working with her, she too, had been using both cocaine and heroine for some time, and continues to struggle with addiction now. Andre\*, a 17 year-old African-American male, toiled with denial marijuana dependence, and like those mentioned above, admitted he began using in middle school. His single parent mom, a health care professional, labored with him for more than four years, before Andre finally dropped out of high school in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. She said he eventually left home earlier this year to “hang out with his friends.” These were just a few of the many young people whose lives have been devastated by drugs. While some parents were able to financially support their children through health care coverage, others were not. They had to either rely on the city’s social services programs, or stand by helplessly as their child fell into abuse, delinquency, gang activity and other risk factors.

As a counselor, I’ve encountered families caught up so tightly in the grip of substance abuse, it seems to drain away the vitality of their relationship. A one time loving child, eager for living, is now distant, sullen and experiencing increased trouble in school, at home, and other important social connections where they once thrived. Parents lament to me the helplessness they feel, as their teenager slides further into the abyss of addiction. I don’t want to neglect or diminish tobacco use either, for it too, gets a grip on a teen’s behavior, and the need for nicotine begins to affect them as well. Their son or daughter drifts along, oblivious to the future suffering and regret that is the hallmark of the addicted person. They also become blind to the impact their using is having on every member of their family. By the time they come for counseling, the child is most likely well on their way to becoming an addict.

But what is particularly tragic is the reality that many of those who become consumed by substance abuse could have averted it if parents and family members responsible for the children could have discovered the problem at its origin. I have heard stories from colleagues, and my own clients as well, that they had been introduced to some drugs and alcohol early in life by peers and older family members. A colleague intimated that one of her regular adult clients had been given marijuana at two years old by adult relatives, who were supporting themselves by selling drugs.

Having looked through the TALO Leadership Theory, I believe our successful treatment process in working with families already employs many of the objectives espoused in the concept. One of the main themes in dealing with drug abuse is identifying family of origin dysfunctions, and incorporating the parents to help diminish or eliminate them (TALO Points 3-5).

One of the tools used in our program calls for empowering parents to be the ‘*medicine*’ for treating their child’s substance use. Empowering parents as leaders in their families is a prime objective. The therapist works to instill relational awareness to the

parent or parents, such as showing how their interaction affects the way they handle the child's behavior. Learning better ways to communicate their authority and feelings contributes to helping their child abstain by engaging them in a way that validates them, rather than criticizes and condemns them (Liddle, MDFT Manual 2007, pp. 54, 242). We also draw in community resources, such as extended family and friends, and encouraging academic, religious and other pro-social entities that fosters support of the counselor's efforts to develop a favorable outcome once therapy ends (Liddle, MDFT Manual 2007, pp. 63, 66-67).

Within the successful parameters of my work with these families are areas where the TALO Leadership Theory plays an integral part as well. A majority of the children and families with whom I'm privileged to assist in counseling are multicultural, in addition to being biracial and they permeate all socioeconomic levels. Understanding that teenage development is a crucial period, and can be disrupted by substance abuse, we work hard to get in with the family, understanding their 'world,' and instill a sense of hope we can provide the help they're seeking.

Our counseling process includes in its focus on appreciation for their ethnic/racial identities, creating a sense of hope in overcoming their troubles, and dealing with '*real lives*' in '*real time*' (Point 3). We also promote positive individual and group relationships, and encourage them to be nurtured in a tangibly positive manner (Point 5). However, I don't have any illusions. Some of the clients I've worked with in the past two years haven't all ended counseling successfully. In fact, many continue to use despite our best efforts. But I have seen successful outcomes in some of my cases, especially when the parents have used the skills taught them during counseling that engages their child in a loving, but parentally authoritative manner.

It seems that the family is the primary "group" relationship where the child first learns, or isn't appropriately taught, about the world around them. Research into the origins of children who become addicted appear to stem from several directions: (1) childhood sexual abuse, (2) parental emotional abuse and/or (3) neglect, parental or adult physical abuse. Injury to children during this crucial phase of human development has both physical and psychological effects. Dysfunctions in families where the aforementioned conditions exist, according researched garnered from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), apparently result in the following:

"Child maltreatment has a negative effect on health. Abused children often suffer physical injuries including cuts, bruises, burns, and broken bones. In addition, maltreatment causes stress that can disrupt early brain development. Extreme stress can harm the development of the nervous and immune systems. As a result, children who are abused or neglected are at higher risk for health problems as adults. These problems include alcoholism, depression, drug abuse,

eating disorders, obesity, sexual promiscuity, smoking, suicide, and certain chronic diseases,” (*CDC Fact Sheet 2009*).

As American society changes, both in complexity and how it defines family, there appears to be a trend towards a loosening, so to speak, of parental structure in families. Where there once was a clear adult male role model, designated a ‘father,’ there now seems to be a distinct absence of such a person in a large segment of American society.

Divorce, and couples choosing to have babies without a marital or long term commitment, have become normalized, and appear to result in a higher incidence of children born to them being involved in at risk behaviors (i.e. drug and alcohol abuse).

Divorce and single parent families appear to cultivate some of the fundamental causes of a disruption of healthy childhood development. Families face a significant socioeconomic change, as a departing parent takes both his/her social connections and income out of the familial relationship. Lower family income, the development of post-marital relationships, and their dissolution, expose children to new uncertainties of where their parents will land after the divorce. Among the many consequences, physical abuse and neglect, emotional stress, low self esteem and a poor self image, lower academic performance, depression and the potential for suicidal ideations rank among the top symptoms suffered by children, and all are potential breeding grounds for substance abuse and dependence (Fagan and Rector, 2003).

Since such a reality is difficult to ignore for families today, how can they stop the tide of drug abuse from sweeping their own family? There is no simple response to such a question. However, research has indicated that one of the basic forms of human interaction can serve as a major deterrent for families contending with the prospect of substance abuse – communication.

Social science has gathered clear evidence that show families that have engaged parents and children have remarkably lower incidences of drug and alcohol use. Parents that are appropriately involved with their children’s social activities have a more effective parenting style, and children respond to their style more positively and appropriately. When parents display a positive model themselves, children tend to avoid using drugs and alcohol because they don’t want to disappoint them (National Council on Crime Prevention, 2009).

The Council also recommended several areas where parents can make timely and effective contact with their children, and enable them to make better decisions when helping their child in their growth and development:

## **Establish and maintain good communication with your children.**

Why? The better you know your children, the easier it will be to guide them towards positive activities and friendships. How?

- Ø Talk to your children every day. Share what happened to you and ask what happened to them during the day.
- Ø Ask questions that kids can't answer with "yes" or "no," such as "what was your favorite part of the day." Ask your children their opinions and include them in making decisions. Show your children that you value their thoughts and input.
- Ø Be ready to talk to your children as early as the fourth grade, when they may first feel peer pressure to experiment with alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes.
- Ø Listen to your child's or teen's concerns in a nonjudgmental way. Repeat them to be clear that you understand. Don't preach.

**Get involved in your children's lives.** (Excerpted from the National Crime Prevention Council article: *"How Parents Can Help Prevent Drug Abuse."* - *National Council on Crime Prevention, 2009.*)

For my friend, Art, who still lives under the weight and sorrow of choices he made as a young boy or man, I believe there's still hope that he can untangle his life from the gruesome net of crack cocaine. But he has to want something more than just momentary relief from daily 'hit' he gets from drugs. He has to want to truly live, and live with the desire to enjoy the more precious 'high' of knowing he can live and love freely anyone and anything he chooses, and not compelled to love something he really hates – the pain of unrelenting addiction. Come on home Art. Come on home.

*About the author Clint Williams: BAAS in Journalism from Southwest Texas State University, and MA in Marriage and Family Therapy from St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas. A native of Roanoke, Virginia, Clint served in the military until retiring in 1996. Currently he is a resident of San Antonio. He serves as a therapist for youth and families who are considered "at risk" for HIV infection, alcohol and drug abuse, and gang activity. He is the proud husband, and father of five children, and grandfather of three. He is also a devoted Virginia Tech 'Hokie' fan.*

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# **The Ethics and Values of Racial/Cultural Labels**

Author: Cleveland Percy, Jr.

This essay is largely based on a previous conference paper that I recently revised based on my participation in the June 2009 HHEW Leaders Conference & Retreat in Las Vegas, Nevada. At this conference & retreat, I was formally introduced to the TALO Leadership Theory. As a result of this exposure, I am presenting several concepts that I believe continue to have merit with regards to ethics and values of racial/cultural labels.

The issues of race and cultural relations continue to permeate most sectors of American society. The Los Angeles riots, the O.J. Simpson trials, Proposition 209 of California's Affirmative Action Initiative, African-Americans linking drug dealing and CIA activity, burning of African-American churches, and even public education complaints are inflammatory issues which vividly define racial and/or cultural perspective. An appropriate question was once asked on national television by Rodney King, "Can't we all get along." Does anyone remember the media, scholars or social leaders responding to Mr. King? The American racial/cultural social clashes might cease in the twenty-first century if we begin the process needed to answer this vital question.

## ***Overview***

It is the purpose of this paper to explore the ethics associated with racial and cultural identification, and labeling in American society. In addition, this presentation will explore the philosophical aspects of racial and cultural differences and the morality of human understanding.

Since ethics is about standards of behavior and relationships, the media as well as civic-minded leaders missed a golden opportunity to respond to this issue. Can we value the exploration of Mr. King's question and make it a social issue to advocate ethical understanding and behavior at all levels of society? Scientists, teachers, journalists and organizational leaders must answer this question with an ethical consciousness and competency of logical positivism with affirmation using core ethical principles and philosophical thinking.

## ***Visual Racial/Cultural Recognition and Implied Distinction***

Can we get along? First, we must ask ourselves about the primary or recognizable distinctions between racial and cultural groupings of people. There are many in American societies who have accepted the value of skin tone as being of no measure of true character. Yet, certain segments of society still find racial/cultural bias and find fault in the attitude and behavior of people distinguished as different from a visual and presumed acceptable cultural norm.

Racial/cultural identification has primarily occurred by voluntary or legal requirement. Group and non-group members identify others for mostly positive and negative reasons. For purposes of this presentation, it is recognized that the terms race and culture have different meanings. While the term race is often used to represent genetic characteristics, cultural distinctions have been used to imply categorical context of sociological or psychological concepts of human growth and development of ethnic grouping. These terms, race and culture, have been woven so tightly into the fabric of social and legal politics that separation might only occur through linguistic obliteration. We hear these terms almost daily being used to advocate group perspectives or to describe unwanted social bias. They are interchanged, transposed and mostly misunderstood in group interactions of main stream Americans. The basic perspective or point of representation is often lost or disregarded.

### ***Relevancy of Implied Recognition***

What value would racial/cultural identification or labels have without visual recognition? It is often confusing to an identified group member as to exactly what is meant by racial/cultural identification and how it is perceived by non-group individuals or group perspectives. On the other hand, as observed by a non-group member, the social implication of racial/cultural group identification can be ambiguous in terms of what is implied by an individual's group identification and what should be known or understood. If we can progress from the primary visual racial/cultural distinction to a secondary distinction of group beliefs, norms and behaviors as identified or assumed, we will be taking another great step for humanity.

An implied label often perpetuates judgmental assessment of an individual's personal beliefs, operating values, or genetic physiology. Prejudicial group assessments relating to ethics and instincts are fundamentally grounded in racial profiling and undesirable discrimination.

If we were to some how design a survey that could measure the moral character of a group identified as African-Americans, we could make certain assessments about human moral priorities. Would it be reasonable to apply the overall survey results for all African-Americans? Simple reasoning suggests that this group is neither totally angelic nor dishonest.

How do multi-cultural proponents establish group membership, group norms, values and behavior? Most likely it is through historical observations and visual perceptions of judgmental differences and social deviations adverse to a baseline or dominant group? It is my belief that cultural perspectives as advocated by many multi-culturalists, often fosters misapplication, adversity and unreasonable cultural bias.



## ***Racial/Cultural Values***

What are the delineating values of racial/cultural distinction? Can racial/cultural social values be perceived from a philosophical stratum? What about bi-racial or bi-cultural identifications? To collectively examine racial/cultural perspectives regarding universal truths, spirituality or ethical concepts might reveal potential group differentiation from a historical perspective.

Group deviations or values might vary from material acquisition to human cohesiveness or spiritual enlightenment. Could time relativity be measured by quantity or quality through group assessment? Would there be cognitive learning deviations distinguishable from group to group? Would individual reasoning skills or critical thinking be inherently assumed? Are cognitive learning skills racially or culturally motivated? Is group logic based on a dichotomous model assessment of either good or bad, or assumptions of rhythmic pendulum swings from good to bad, or bad to good striving for the unity of opposites?

Does any group conceive of logic as going beyond human insight or independent of thought and mind? What about expectations and behavior? Can we distinguish group principles which recognize laws of science for influences of mankind and nature for socialistic and civil behavior? Does any group accept natural conditions and advocate leaving nature alone trusting in divine intervention? The possibilities seem too immense to consider.

Considering the above cultural values as developed by psychologist Edwin J. Nichols, in his book, "Philosophical Aspect of Cultural Differences," we might find enlightening rational in the beginning of cultural/racial traditions and human behavior. Dr. Nichols' philosophy does require an evolutionary journey to understand the prodigious context of racial/cultural genesis and differentiation. What can be understood is historical in the sense of indigenous human development, but does it help with truly recognizing and understanding modern humanity and concepts of social acclimation?

The anthropological view into the development of racial/cultural perspectives is helpful in understanding indigenous group perspective but not necessarily individuals' operational values. Once beyond individual survival motivational behavior, the human instinct premise and learned behavior is grounded in logic and collective association to promote social, cultural and community growth. To develop relationships without association of *undefined traditional group labels* might diminish association barriers and unify human assimilation.

Will future American history studies reveal evolutionary social significance bred by racial/cultural experimentation and class expectations? Has American society created a mosaic of peoples and cultures that cannot be morally recognized? Can we

find common affiliation through communication of a common bond? The future of American culture must be grounded in human understanding of what is basic and rational to any and all human groupings. If we continue to educate American people, only in multi-cultural understanding without unifying objectives, people will continue to look for attitudes and behaviors to confirm negative human assumptions.

### ***Conclusion***

Where do we go to find the universal aspect of human harmony and assimilation? It would be too simple to say that what is needed are common words and a common language for the collective good. Many students of the English language have stated it is a very difficult one. Probably due to the fact that words are given real meaning by the intent of the user and users may have various intents while using the same word. In 1918, the following words were written by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in *Towne vs. Eisner*, 'A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged, it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances in which it is used.' Let us change the term "word" to "person" in Justice Holmes' quote and make the association as to the intent of race/culture labels. This should provide realizations that race/culture should not matter unless appreciated and expressed by the individual's intent and need.

What element is needed to promote the proper ethical response in relating to individuals and group associations are common words and a common understanding of ethical thinking? This is where the enlightened careers of journalists, educators, and legislators could profoundly affect the understanding of people through promotion of core principles as advocated by Michael Josephson, founder of the Josephson Institute of Ethics, and possibility through the application of the TALO Leadership Theory. The challenge is to explore the definitive meaning and value of core ethical principles such as honesty, integrity, promise-keeping, loyalty, fairness, compassion, respect for others, civic duty, pursuit of excellence, and personal responsibility. Hilton (2009, p. 6) also suggests an expansion that needs to first acknowledge the place of power, politics, fear, fit, racism, race and positioning, before proceeding with other more comfortable topics and principles. The moral priority of these principles would be helpful in common relationships involving individual or group perspective.

Of course, ethics and learned behavior cannot be controlled, but the advocacy of a common terminology could dwell in the depth of human understanding, and those who choose the higher moral values of broad community spirit could at least begin to communicate. As in ancient mythology where attempts were made to personify the things of nature including human emotions and characteristics, it is a myth to believe or hold fast to the concept of racial and cultural icons in American civilization. To do so would not dignify the highest essence of our humanity nor consider the beauty of our moral aspirations and universal behavioral characteristics.

**About the author:** *Cleveland Percy, Jr.* is a native of Helena, Arkansas and graduate of the University of Central Arkansas. He has a degree in Business Administration. He enjoyed a 20 year career serving as a contracting officer with a federal agency. His activities and interests include community service and cultural anthropology. Cleveland has served as a volunteer presenter for several national conferences focusing on the topics “Ethics, Values and Decision-Making” and “The Ethics and Values of Cultural/Racial Labels”. Cleveland and his wife celebrate 29 years of marriage and raising two children.

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