PATHWAYS TO DIVERSITY FOR WHITE MALES

A STUDY OF WHITE MALES' LEARNING EXPERIENCES ON THE PATH TOWARD ADVOCATING FOR INCLUSION AND EQUITY

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Abstract

Pathways to Diversity for White Males:
A Study of White Males' Learning Experiences
on the Path Toward Advocating for Inclusion and Equity

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This qualitative case study examines the learning journeys of eight white males who are advocates for inclusion and equity in organizations. The inquiry focuses on identifying and documenting successful pathways to advocacy in order to help accelerate learning for other white males in this arena.

Two areas of literature informed this study: literature on white males and diversity, and literature on learning, change, and transformation. The dissertation served as a test of transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991; Cranton, 1994).

This study follows the tenants of naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Seven external consultants and one sociology professor were identified utilizing nominations from 24 senior organization development practitioners. The selected advocates received nominations from all four nominator categories: women-of-color, white women, men-of-color, and white men. Following personal interviews with advocates, thick descriptions were compiled and common themes were identified.

The most striking discovery of this study was the importance of actively building relationships across categories of difference. While gaining a systemic understanding of oppression and the tools to advocate usually took extended time and focus, building these relationships provided critical support *and* challenge for

intensified learning, and thus played an important role in accelerating this transition. This dynamic is overlooked in current literature.

Concurrently, there was a lack of white male role models in most of the advocates' learning journeys. Furthermore, it appears most of the advocates are still searching for better ways to connect with other white males.

In reviewing the appropriateness of transformative learning theory, the advocates' journeys did not follow the rational steps of transformative learning theory, thereby supporting the critiques of Clark (1991) and Taylor (1994). Transformative learning theory proved too individualistic to acknowledge the central role which relationships played in creating changes in consciousness, thus confirming the critiques of Clark and Wilson (1991) and Collard and Law (1989). It appears that the social constructionist notions of Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar (1995) as well as Benne (1985) better describe the critical role of relationships in the journeys of these advocates.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all white males on the path to advocating for inclusion and equity in organizations, and to all those who offer these white males the necessary balance of challenge and support.

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I would like to especially thank the eight participants who contributed to this study: Bo Razak, Michael Brazzel, Michael Burkart, Mark Chesler, Dennis DaRos, Rob Neal, Ed Olson, and Joseph Potts. I would also like to acknowledge the support and expertise of the 24 nominators. I thank the late Len Hirsch, who mentored me into Fielding and nurtured my voice. I wish to recognize both my Fielding anchor group and the Minnesota cluster for being a network of creativity and support. Special appreciation to Linda Houden and Jude Miller-Burke, two local students with whom I have traveled every step of the Fielding journey together from start to finish. I'm glad we did it together! I have also appreciated the wonderful community of students, faculty, and staff at The Fielding Institute, and their commitment to diversity. Special thanks to my committee: Charlie Seashore, Willy DeMarcell Smith, Argentine Saunders Craig, Jude Miller-Burke, David Rehorick, and Robert Terry. I am particularly grateful to Charlie for endless humor, collaboration, and support.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The room is still. People around the circle lean forward listening, patient as Joyce struggles to find words to share a childhood experience. Through tears, Joyce gets to the heart of her story. One hot afternoon, while out with her grandmother, she was denied use of a public drinking fountain. The fountain was off limits, marked "For Whites Only." In response, her grandmother had struggled with the impossible, trying to explain to young Joyce why she could not drink from that fountain, while still trying to protect Joyce from the damage of racism.

For the seven white males in this graduate class of twenty-seven, this memory, shared by a classmate, had potential to trigger deep learning. I was one of those white males.   Though I do not remember many details of Joyce's story, I do remember her pain. This key experience was one of several events in my life which catalyzed a transformative journey toward advocating inclusion and equity. My journey as a white male has been challenging and rewarding. Certain events involving others have allowed me to develop greater awareness and advocacy. Had some of these learning events not occurred, I fear I could easily still be promoting the status quo and colluding with inequality. This self-awareness is the starting point in my search to identify experiences which have created similar transformation in other white males.

Project Overview

What are the learning experiences of white males in becoming advocates for inclusion and equity in organizations?

The results of this research can be added to the small but growing body of research on white males and diversity, helping to build critical mass in the literature of this relatively new area of study. Specifically, the results of this research can be utilized to help other white males accelerate the process of becoming advocates for inclusion and equity.

As suggested above, research on the topic of white males and diversity is scarce, at best. Nevertheless, enough articles are available to build an initial conceptual framework. In addition, literature from the field of learning, transformation, and change is useful. Mezirow's theory of transformative learning is particularly useful, especially when coupled with others' recent adaptations of his theory: His theory offers a framework for exploring significant learning which incorporates changes in consciousness. Other theories of learning and change are incorporated as well, based on their acknowledgment of the cognitive and social construction of reality.

This qualitatively based study focuses on collecting key elements of transformative learning. As a result, the methodology allows for an emerging conceptual framework through a process of constant comparison, an approach which fits within the boundaries of naturalistic inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry is defined in the methods chapter. This design, coupled with integration of the data with my personal experience, allowed the research process itself to become a transformative learning experience for me, both as a researcher and as an advocate. In addition to helping create more critical mass in the literature on white males and diversity, this approach also allows this study to add to the continuing application and evolution of transformative learning theory.

Beyond contributing to the body of literature noted above, this study also contributes to those organizations which actively choose to develop white males' capacity to embrace diversity. Our world is increasingly multicultural and diverse, yet many organizations are currently run by white males who do not fully understand or support efforts to embrace wider circles of traditions, beliefs, and differences. In this country, success in creating pluralistic organizations which value difference is linked to the ability of white males to move toward awareness, action, and advocacy in supporting inclusion and equity. However, most media attention on this topic focuses on the resistance of white men. In contrast, this study identifies specific events and themes which have played a significant role in the development of advocacy in white males who have been recognized for their diversity advocacy. The emergent patterns of factors which were present for many of the study's participants will be particularly useful to white males who pursue their own growth in this area, as well as to those responsible for coaching and developing these skills and attitudes in others.

Overview of Contents

Following this introductory chapter, chapter 2 reviews two areas of literature pertinent to this study: the literature focusing on white males and diversity; followed by research on learning, change, and transformation. Literature on the first topic is limited, and consists largely of articles written by other trainers and consultants who educate white males on issues of diversity and oppression. I show several main themes, beginning with an emphasis on the importance of increased understanding of diversity issues at a group and systemic level. A variety of conceptual frameworks are found to facilitate this shift toward a deeper

understanding of issues and problems, including recognizing and working with feelings associated with new insights; recalibrating personal commitment to core values which support advocacy; gaining an understanding of the personal benefits inherent in advocating diversity; and gaining external support for this shift. Later, in the discussion chapter, I will incorporate these themes into my study results.

The balance of chapter 2 is spent examining literature in the area of learning, change, and transformation. I include a thorough review of transformative learning, an adult learning theory developed by Jack Mezirow (1991). Mezirow's theory incorporates changes in consciousness and the revision of previous learning, areas which are identified as important in the above-mentioned literature on white males and diversity. I reveal transformative learning theory's assumptions and connection to the knowledge interests of Jurgen Habermas (1971). Finally, I conclude with an examination of recent critiques of Mezirow's theory.

One major critique of Mezirow's theory is the focus on the individual, thereby neglecting the social or environmental context. Recalling above that white males need to move to the group and systemic perspective, I have also explored alternative learning, change, and transformation theories which include this broader perspective. These include the work of Ken Benne (1985) on reeducation; a change perspective based on social constructionism by Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar (1995); Marshak's (1993) examination of metaphors of change; and Nevis, Lancourt, and Vassallo's (1996) synthesis of seven behavioral science approaches to transformation. These theories serve to extend beyond Mezirow's focus on critical self-reflection to include relational and systemic perspectives of change.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology for the study, first explaining the theoretical framework, followed by the study design itself. I begin by sharing my thinking behind the choice of naturalistic inquiry as a methodology framework. I identify the assumptions of naturalistic inquiry and contrast them to the positivist paradigm. I then summarize the theoretical framework segment by showing a flowchart of the major components of naturalistic inquiry in a research project. Next, I discuss the specific design of the study, beginning with my nomination process of using a diverse coalition of nominators to identify advocates, followed by an explanation of the interviewing and data analysis processes I followed in creating thick descriptions and initial study themes. This chapter concludes with a review of the trustworthiness criteria used in naturalistic inquiry and a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4, at 60 pages, is the largest section of this dissertation. Herein lies the individual stories of each advocate's journey to advocating for inclusion and equity. Each thick description summarizes an advocate's story and the essence of our interview. Because each advocate chose to forego confidentiality, these are the actual stories of the people named. This chapter concludes with an initial examination of the dominant patterns which link different thick descriptions together. These patterns, and others, are explored in more detail in the discussion chapter.

Chapter 5 concludes this dissertation by discussing emerging themes and relating these themes back to the literature explored earlier. I begin with a deeper exploration of emerging themes, leaving behind the identification of individuals to focus on theme elaboration. Additionally, a corresponding map of emerging

themes is included as Appendix E, which I created during the analysis of these themes. In addition to the exploration of themes, I revisit Mezirow's transformative learning theory to confirm several critiques mentioned in the literature review: primarily the overemphasis on rationality and the insufficient coverage of the role relationships play in all phases of the learning process. Consequently, I endorse other learning and change theories based on social constructionism.

The discussion chapter continues by returning to the literature on white males and diversity. I confirm major themes reviewed previously and add several new insights which center on the importance of relationships, particularly those across categories of difference, and the paucity of white male role models in this field for the participants in this study. I close by recognizing how the connection of advocates to other white males appears to be an ongoing challenge.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the literature which helped inform this study came from two topic areas: white males and diversity, and learning theory. As a relatively new area of study, the literature on white males in relation to diversity issues is somewhat limited. In contrast, learning theory literature has a richer history and a much broader base. Out of the range of choices offered by learning theory, this study leans heavily on Mezirow's work on transformational learning. Mezirow's theory addresses changes in consciousness, which is a critical component for examining white males' learning around diversity. However, Mezirow's work focuses primarily on the individual, without elaborating on relational and social group dynamics. Given the emphasis in the white male literature on the importance of gaining a systemic perspective on diversity issues, a range of other theories are addressed in order to provide the necessary breadth of perspective on learning and change processes. These additional areas include the social dynamics of change, begun by Lewin and continued by Benne and colleagues, the work of Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar on social constructionism, and Marshak's examination of metaphors of change.

Literature on White Males and Diversity

As noted above, the literature focusing specifically on white males' learning about issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity is limited. A few articles are connected to research literature, while additional articles were written by those involved in educating white males. The focuses of articles from both sources range from specific issues, such as race, to broader themes of inclusion and equity. Key

themes which are explored here include expanded self-awareness and the necessity of dealing with feelings, an expansion of awareness to include systemic issues and problems, the use of conceptual frameworks to grasp systemic issues, the importance of recognition of personal benefit in becoming "part of the solution," and the transformation of core values that can make the difference between gaining insight and taking positive action.

Many who write on the subject of white males come from a social justice framework, recognizing and emphasizing white males as a category. Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman (1993) place practitioners of diversity on a continuum from those who work from a framework of social justice to those who work from a framework of social diversity. Those who work from the social justice end of the continuum address system dynamics, highlighting oppression and privilege, and recognize social identity groups such as class, race, gender, and age, including white and male. On the other end of the spectrum, social diversity practitioners focus at an individual level, assume a level playing field, and emphasize individual differences. They do not address social identity groups, such as white men. Thus, my views and those of researchers and scholars cited in this literature review represent the social justice end of this continuum by emphasizing the category of white male.

Self-Awareness

A critical step in any personal change process is increasing self-awareness. According to Neal (1993), strong self-awareness includes knowing one's own strengths, weaknesses, feelings, beliefs, how one is viewed by others, and one's effect on others. Ball (1993) described the process of increasing self-awareness as

a wake-up call: "First, we have to recognize that we have been lying to ourselves and each other about our experiences and what we know. . . . After that, I started seeing, hearing, and feeling racism and sexism everywhere" (p. 6).

White males who lack this self-awareness can be found at all levels of power. Retired General Colin Powell, in a recent interview with *The New Yorker* magazine, said:

> The problem with Reagan and Bush and Weinberger and their ilk is that they just never knew. [Bush and Reagan were] two of the closest people in my life [but on the issue of racism] they were never sensitized to it. . . . This was an area where I found them wanting. ("They Just," September 25, 1995, p. 2)

Brown (1982, p. 30), in identifying 12 conditions which help people learn about the experience of other races, begins her list with "I look inside first." As she suggests, paying attention to one's own experience, then expanding that awareness outward to include the experiences of others, is a critical process in developing effective white male advocates. In many cases, increased self-awareness is triggered by an external event, which in turn leads to an internal shift of perception. Often, an internal shift, a recalibration of the lenses through which one views one's own relationship to issues of oppression, creates the necessary opening to perceive others' experience in a new light as well. When one remains open to continued learning, this becomes an interdependent, ongoing cycle, involving a constant interaction of internal and external factors. Both aspects of the cycle, a deepening self-awareness and dealing with one's own feelings, and an expanding awareness of others' experience, help strengthen one's comprehension of systemic issues of oppression.

Given the pivotal role of self-awareness in allowing one to understand the issues and problems associated with lack of equity, and the importance of internal examination in order to form the capacity for effective external action, this study focuses heavily on the development of self-awareness. Self-awareness is also discussed later in the context of reviewing selected literature on learning and change processes. In addition, while recognizing and working with feelings is a critical aspect for self-awareness, this area has been addressed as a separate theme, immediately following self-awareness, in order to delve more fully into this essential step of the growth process.

A final note on literature specific to self-awareness and diversity issues: While becoming conscious of the privileges and costs of being white (developing "white awareness") is commonly seen as the first step in individual change for whites, it is not clear whether this is the appropriate initial step in organizational change. Those attending a recent conference of leading diversity consultants and researchers were split almost evenly as to whether awareness-oriented training interventions are the most effective method for initiating an organization's diversity efforts (Morrison, Ruderman, and Hughes-James 1993). However, even if initiatives designed to build inclusion and equity into organizational cultures may need to be ordered differently than initiatives focused on individuals, self-awareness is a critical element in either process.

Recognizing and Working With Feelings

One of the strongest themes that comes up in the literature on white males moving toward equity and inclusion is the need to deal with feelings (Spelman, 1993). Alderfer (1984) specifically recognized the need to deal with depression and

guilt. Depression and guilt can come from recognizing one's own contribution to oppression. These emotions, while important in completing some processes of change or loss, can be a place where individuals get stuck and freeze with inaction. Steele (1990) had the following warning about guilt:

> What makes it so powerful is the element of fear that guilt always carries, fear of what the guilty knowledge says about us. Guilt makes us afraid for ourselves and so generates as much self-preoccupation as concern for others. The nature of this preoccupation is always the redemption of innocence, the re-establishment of good feeling about oneself. (p. 84)

Brown (1989) stated that "guilt is the glue that holds prejudice together." This indicates another view of guilt as an immobilizing force in the movement toward inclusion and equity. On the other hand, Steele (1990) noted some helpful aspects of guilt:

> This is not to say that guilt is never the right motive for doing good works or showing concern, only that it is a very dangerous one because of its tendency to draw us into self-preoccupation and escapism. Guilt is a civilizing emotion when the fear for the self it carries is contained -- a containment that allows guilt to be more selfless and that makes genuine concern possible. (p. 85)

Thus, guilt can be a motivator if it is contained so that one can focus beyond striving for innocence. Neal (1993) suggested providing opportunities for confession where confession, without religious connotations, is admitting mistakes and accepting responsibility for behaviors. Kochman (1992) noted that culturally, white males believe "I have to have it all right" which comes from the premise that "it's wrong to be wrong." This makes it hard to admit mistakes, or admit to those things which we do not know. White males culturally do not tolerate uncertainty well, responding to it with a reactive posture (Kochman, 1992; Hofstede, 1980). Spelman (1993) noted this can lead to withdrawal, denial, or resistance. Alderfer

(1984) suggested facing resistance of white males directly. In talking about race relations, he offered the following guideline:

> Theories of changing race relations should distinguish between dominating the opposition and "working through" their resistance. In psychotherapy, the concept of working through means that a client's difficulties are identified, accepted on their own terms, and then repeatedly encountered. A similar meaning of the term holds for changing race relations. . . . To contend with racism one must be prepared to experience its subtle and diverse manifestations again and again. (p. 157)

Alderfer continued by stating that "what is primarily important is that they 'feel' as if they are included, rather than that their points of view are an integral part of the enterprise"(p. 157). Kochman (1992) found that white males can control a situation by retreating and thus need measures of accountability which serve to keep them engaged with the issues. Hankins (1994) found that dealing with white male issues is perhaps the most critical aspect of diversity work. In describing focused work on white male issues:

> This dialogue was new for most of the participants. They rated the white male section of the workshop as the most powerful segment -- the one where they gained the most. . . . This was a unanimous opinion. White males were appreciative to have a forum to express their feelings without repercussions. (p. 125)

Given the variety of feelings generated and the different reactions, it is important for this study to capture the feelings white males experience as well as the impact of those feelings. As we will discuss again later, it is also useful for this study to identify whether white males have had the ability to discuss issues openly with others.

Understanding the Issues and Problems

Spelman (1993, p. 53) elaborated on the need for "realizing the dimensions of the problem," saying that race and gender dynamics are as ubiquitous as the

water around a fish: We do not notice these dynamics because we're so thoroughly immersed! He noted that "Because our [white male] race-gender group is 'the norm' we do not see how powerfully different the experience is for members of other groups." He suggested that one of the most important avenues for gaining this awareness is by real people telling real stories about their experiences. Others recognize the potency of this method but hesitate to place the burden on groups such as women and people-of-color to educate white males with their stories. Miller and Katz (1993) and Chesler (1995, p. 44) suggested reading the works of other white people who have wrestled with the same issues. Chesler (1995) also recommended learning the facts about oppression, as do others (see also, Neal, 1993; Terry, 1974). Neal specifically suggested looking at issues of employment, housing, education, the judicial system, finance, health care, and media. Not understanding the realities of sexism, racism, and other forms of oppression from the perspectives of those who are the targets of these biases can lead one to misdiagnose causes and advocate ineffective solutions (Spelman, 1993). One common example of misdiagnosis is to blame the victim (Neal, 1993; Ryan, 1971).

Gaining accurate perspectives can be challenging, since facts and history are recorded through people's beliefs and cultural filters.[1] Howard Zinn (1980) has demonstrated this by recounting American history from the perspective of the oppressed. His version is quite different from previously standardized history texts. In my reading, I have continually found examples of how facts can be twisted to support opposing viewpoints. For example, Zinn (1980) documented a story of Columbus' arrival which differs dramatically from the story contained in

[1] See Naureckas (1992a, 1992b) for examinations of racism and sexism in the media.

my high school history textbook. This is why Alderfer (1994) suggested that a major challenge of sound methodology is to provide a systematic discipline for taking account of our subjectivity. This includes taking account of group memberships (e.g, race, class, gender, ethnicity) of those who contribute to the literature.

Using Conceptual Frameworks

Models and conceptual frameworks can help us examine how differing perspectives interact and create dynamics at individual, group, organizational, and societal levels (Neal, 1993). Such frameworks can help us understand our role in promoting inclusion and equity as well as exclusion and inequity (Spelman, 1993). One framework described by Chesler (1995) clarifies active versus passive oppression. Bennet and Deane (1994) described a model of developing intercultural sensitivity. Katz and Miller (1993) articulated a model of a path from monocultural club to an inclusive organization. Another set of frameworks focuses on issues of race and white racial identity theory (Helms, 1994; Jackson and Hardiman, 1993).

Intergroup theory is a fundamental construct required to comprehend dynamics of difference beyond the individual. Numerous theorists (Alderfer, 1994, 1984; Chesler, 1995, p. 39; Loeser and Hackett, 1992) emphasized that we must "learn to see ourselves as racial beings" and "members of multiple identity groups." Terry (1975, 1974) was one of the first authors to suggest examining what it meant to be white, coining the term "to be white is not to have to think about it" to highlight the importance of such examination. Seashore and Fletcher (1994) articulated the resistance of many white males to seeing themselves as a category.

Other scholars see this focus on group membership as squashing our individuality (Kersten, 1996). I believe it is important to avoid being trapped by dichotomous logic. We are individuals *and* members of social groups. Individuality and group (or collectiveness) are interdependent, as is the polarity of sameness and difference, and we must look at both aspects to see the whole picture (Johnson, 1992). Exploring white males' understanding of these key polarities is a critical element of this study.

When the concept of belonging to different social identity groups is understood, then one can begin to recognize different treatment of different groups based on group memberships by race, gender, class, and other factors. Being capable of recognizing these differences allows us to better discern the impact our actions have on individuals and at the group level, regardless of our intentions. Kirkham provided an example:

> A manager may decide that all employees in a certain salary grade are not eligible for educational benefits, based on the amount of funds available in a fiscal year. This decision may have no element of bias or prejudice. However, if all employees in that salary grade are women or people-of-color, the decision results in an outcome that provides educational benefits disproportionately to whites or to men. Therefore the policy has race or gender **outcomes** that are different from the original **intent.** (Kirkham, 1993, p. 25)

In looking at social groups, there is often a tendency to focus on a disadvantaged group, which obscures what being a member of the advantaged group means. Peggy McIntosh (1988) articulated advantages for whites using the term *privilege* to describe "unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day" (p. 1). She listed 46 privileges for herself which she has come to recognize as a white woman. She emphasized that whites are taught not to recognize these privileges, adding that "the pressure to avoid [recognizing our privilege] is great,

for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy" (McIntosh, 1989, p.11) The importance of McIntosh's model is that the focus is shifted away from exclusive scrutiny of the oppressed, and toward examination of the life of the oppressors. In the past, oppressors often have escaped such examination. This fundamental shift in approach helps validate work which focuses on white males as a critical avenue for influencing diversity effort outcomes.

Seeing white privilege is easier for other groups, as Shearer noted: "Those placed on the margins of society often more easily understand the privilege of white skin" (Shearer, 1994, p. 105). A common expression, source unknown, summarizes this idea quite well: "Those who stand under, understand." Ellis Cose (1995) examined male privilege for multiple races and gave voice to the struggles of men. McIntosh herself is working on a book which highlights privileges for many different social, ethnic, racial, and religious groups, showing that privilege is not exclusive to any one group. Clearly, we need multiple models to see the multiple realities existing for white males around issues of inclusion and equity.

Core Values

Neal (1993) recognized that the white male transition toward inclusion and equity involves a "core values metamorphosis" (p. 20). Working with these issues leads one to ask, What do I stand for around the issues and realities of inclusion and equity? What values do I talk, and what values do I walk? White male advocates have found it very hard to consistently walk the values of inclusion and equity (Chesler, 1995; Alderfer, 1994). For this reason, this study pays particular attention to value changes in white males as well as elements of courage in their advocacy.

Recognizing Personal Benefits and Gaining External Support

Alderfer (1984) suggested establishing intrinsic incentives for white men in order to increase their motivation to learn and act on diversity issues. Spelman (1993) similarly recommended focusing on inherent benefits for white males. Taking this concept one step further, Neal (1993) recommended envisioning the personal benefits of equity. He identified the following for himself personally:

- Greater authenticity in relationships
- Increased knowledge and appreciation of differences
- Deeper compassion for others (p. 20)

Additionally, Neal gathered the following list of benefits from other white males:

- Increase in trust and respect from women and people-of-color
- Decrease in feeling the need to fill traditional roles and styles
- Far less guilt and discomfort from living in an unfair environment (p. 21)

Chesler (1995) described benefits of learning to engage hearts and minds in honest dialogue about race:

- A clearer sense of one's own identity as an individual and group member
- An understanding of the material, psychic, intellectual, and moral costs of maintaining a privileged status (p. 43)

Spelman suggested a benefit of better access to human resources previously squandered. To the above ideas, I would also add a benefit of learning to transcend the dysfunctional aspects of white culture (Welp, in press). Shelton (1995) has self-published a booklet entitled "The Self-Interest in Diversity for Straight, White, American-Born Male Managers." He identified the core benefit of diversity as "sustainable collaborative advantage" (p. 4).

It is also important to provide support systems for progressive white men (Alderfer, 1984). One way to achieve this involves connecting one with other white males on similar journeys who can support the development of new white identities and core values. Also important is the continued stimulation of diversity which will maintain the learning process. Chesler (1995) identified barriers stemming from organizational sources including:

- Threatening one's standing in the white male fraternity
- Charges of promoting political correctness
- Resounding attacks by white peers
- Preoccupation with charging reverse racism toward those perceived as threatening one's privilege (p. 41-42; see also Potts, 1993)

Kurt Lewin (1947) recognized the power of barrier forces when he suggested inducing change by reducing barrier forces rather then creating greater driving forces. Learning to respect and manage both internal and external resistance is, thus, crucial to white male development.

Learning, Change, and Transformation

Literature from the field of adult learning research provides valuable organizing concepts for a study of white males learning about inclusion and equity. As previously mentioned, prevalent themes from the literature on white males and diversity include an increase in self-awareness and the development of a systemic perspective on oppression. Thus, an adult learning theory which incorporates consciousness and how meaning structures are modified is critical in studying white male learning around inclusion and diversity. In addition, there needs to be a focus on learning based on interactions beyond the self, in order to examine how one gains a systemic perspective on the dynamics of oppression.

Mezirow's transformative learning theory addresses the first of these needs, and, therefore, is central to this portion of the literature review. However, despite the great value of Mezirow's work in this application, and the improvements his work makes over behaviorist and humanist approaches, as outlined below, his work also has key limitations: By focusing so clearly on the individual, dynamics on the group and social level, important venues for gaining systemic perspective, are not adequately taken into account. Therefore, the social dynamics of change, social constructionism, and Marshak's work on metaphors of change are reviewed here as well.

An example from my own experience which highlights the need for theory that addresses both consciousness and relationships with others as vehicles for changing consciousness involved interracial teambuilding courses in South Africa. I found that both blacks and whites had been socialized to fear each other through a set of specific beliefs, without ever being allowed or encouraged to test these beliefs in the context of real relationships. Over the course of week-long intensive programs together, time and again these beliefs were tested and proven false through interaction with those previously labeled as *other*. These individuals had to relearn, to become conscious, of how they had been socialized in order to address the inherent dissonance they experienced between their untested socialization and their actual experience, which occurred in the context of relationships.

Thus, Meziorw's theory of transformational learning is reviewed below in detail, with a focus on useful constructs for this study: different categories of knowledge and learning, emancipatory learning, and an exploration of the process of transformational learning. A critique of Mezirow's work, highlighting the

limitations of the theory, then provides a transition into examining theories which broaden the perspective beyond Mezirow to include more focus on how individuals learn through the dynamics of relationship.

Definition and Assumptions of Mezirow's Theory

By addressing changes in consciousness, Mezirow moved beyond the limitations of a behaviorist approach, in which a focus on behavioral reinforcements provides no useful framework for examining consciousness. Mezirow's work, with its clear and consistent frameworks, also reaches past humanistic approaches, which he described as "appealing but fuzzy, and sometimes contradictory" (1991, pp. xi-xii). Mezirow made the case for the need for his work as follows:

> A missing dimension in these psychological theories is *meaning* -- how it is constructed, validated, and reformulated -- and the social conditions that influence the ways in which adults make meaning of their experience. There is need for a learning theory that can explain how adult learners make sense or meaning of their experiences, the nature of the structures that influence the way they construe experience, the dynamics involved in modifying meanings, and the way the structures of meaning themselves undergo changes when learners find them to be dysfunctional. (Mezirow, 1991, p. xii)

Cranton, who has done the latest and broadest summary of Mezirow's theory to date, defined transformative learning as "the development of revised assumptions, premises, ways of interpreting experience, or perspectives on the world by means of critical self-reflection" (Cranton, 1994, p. xii). Mezirow defined learning as "the social process of construing and appropriating a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to action" (Mezirow, 1994, pp. 222-223). Clark, focusing on the outcome, stated that "in short, transformational learning *shapes* people; they are different afterward, in ways both they and others can recognize" (Clark, 1993, p. 47). From these definitions,

one can see that transformative learning is about how individual change occurs as a result of life experiences. This theory can thus be used to understand the learning experiences of white males who have become advocates for inclusion and equity.

Mezirow identified the current context of his theories as the convergence of constructivism, critical theory, and deconstructivism. He also identified the cognitive revolution, which has shown that: “It is not so much what happens to people but how they interpret and explain what happens to them that determines their actions, their hopes, their contentment and emotional well-being, and their performance” (Mezirow, 1991, p. xiii). He identified several constructivist assumptions specific to his theory: “Meaning exists within ourselves rather than in external forms such as books . . . the personal meanings that we attribute to our experience are acquired and validated through human interaction and communication” (Mezirow, 1991, p. xiv).

Contrasting the philosophical assumptions of positivism with constructivism is one way of comparing theories of learning. Cranton (1994) contrasted these assumptions:

> If we were to claim the existence of absolute truths or universal constructs that are independent of our knowledge of them, the goal of learning would be to discover the right answers rather than to reflect on our perspectives of the world. (p. 26)

Whereas behaviorist and information processing theories fall under the positivistic paradigm, humanistic and contextual theories of learning fit into the constructivist paradigm (Cranton, 1994, p. 9). As mentioned above, Mezirow based his theory on constructivist assumptions (Mezirow, 1991), assumptions which match the intention of this study.

Categories of Knowledge and Learning

Mezirow adapted ideas from the work of Jurgen Habermas, especially his distinction between instrumental and communicative learning and his description of the ideal conditions for rational discourse. Habermas (1971) proposed three domains of knowledge interests which can be used to classify learning theories. *Technical knowledge* includes information about cause-and-effect relationships and is part of the positivistic paradigm. *Practical knowledge* is focused on understanding what others mean which is connected to the constructivist paradigm. *Emancipatory knowledge* is gained through critical self-reflection and is also a part of the constructivist paradigm. Mezirow related these domains of knowledge to three domains of learning. This serves to: "differentiate between learning to control and manipulate the environment (*instrumental learning*), learning to understand the meaning of what is being communicated (*communicative learning*), and learning to understand oneself and one's perspectives (*emancipatory or reflective learning*)" (Mezirow, 1991, p. xv).

Cranton (1994) corresponded these three knowledge and learning domains to three categories of her own which place transformative learning theory in the context of adult education practice. *Subject-Oriented* learning, the "acquisition of content," is positivistic, and falls into Habermas's technical knowledge domain and Mezirow's instrumental domain of learning. *Consumer-Oriented* learning "takes place when an individual expresses a need to learn, looks to the educator for fulfillment of those needs, and then proceeds to learn under the educator's auspices." Learning is based on felt needs and thus is unlikely to challenge the learners' assumptions or question their values. Cranton associated consumer-

oriented learning with Habermas's practical knowledge and Mezirow's communicative learning. Finally, Cranton identified *Emancipatory Adult Learning* as her third category of adult education, corresponding to Habermas's emancipatory knowledge and Mezirow's emancipatory learning. For Cranton, emancipation is defined as the process of removing constraints. She saw emancipatory learning as a "process of freeing ourselves from forces that limit our options and our control over our lives, forces that have been taken for granted or seen as beyond our control" (Cranton, 1994). The above categories are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1:
Interrelated Categories of Knowledge and Learning Domains (Cranton, 1994, p. 45)

Habermas's Knowledge Interests Domain	Mezirow's Learning Domain	Cranton's Category of Adult Learning
Technical	**Instrumental**	**Subject-Oriented**
Practical	**Communicative**	**Consumer-Oriented**
Emancipatory	**Emancipatory**	**Emancipatory**

Using Mezirow's terminology, this study is a communicative study of emancipatory learning in white males.

Emancipatory Learning

Mezirow (1991, p. 87) identified emancipatory knowledge as "knowledge gained through critical self-reflection, as distinct from knowledge gained from our 'technical' interest in the objective world or our 'practical' interest in social relationships." Mezirow described unique aspects of emancipatory learning:

> Emancipatory learning often is transformative. In emancipatory learning, we come to see our reality more inclusively, to understand it more clearly, and to integrate our experience better. Dramatic personal and social changes become possible when we become aware of the way that both our

> psychological and our cultural assumptions have created or contributed to our dependence on outside forces that we have regarded as unchangeable. (Mezirow, 1991, p. 88)

Here, Mezirow illuminated Cranton's concept of emancipation as removing constraints by highlighting that the constraints removed are one's own assumptions based on previous learning. Beyond acquiring new knowledge (subject-oriented) or learning based on felt needs (consumer-oriented), emancipatory learning involves unlearning previous learning which no longer fits one's world. Cranton noted that:

> Unlike subject- or consumer-oriented learning, emancipatory learning is a difficult and often painful process. . . . It is only with emancipatory learning that terms such as reintegration, reorientation, and equilibrium are used. This distinction underlines the significance of the upheaval experienced in emancipatory learning. (Cranton, 1994, p. 18)

Mezirow was primarily interested in emancipatory learning, though his transformative learning theory places it among three learning domains. He clarified his focus for adult education: "The goal of adult education is to help adult learners become more critically reflective, participate more fully and freely in rational discourse and action" (1991, pp. 224-225).

Themes discussed earlier, including increasing self-awareness, seeing oneself as a member of a group, working through emotions, and struggling with core values, are important to cross-reference here. These themes involve the critical self-reflective and constraint-transcending natures of emancipatory learning. In general, learning can include acquiring content (subject-oriented learning), and can, in part, be based on felt needs (consumer-oriented learning). However, it is emancipatory learning, with its emphasis on self-examination and its transformative qualities, that best illuminates the learning processes of white males becoming

advocates for inclusion and equity. Thus, the processes by which transformational learning occurs are explored below.

The Process of Transformational Learning

Mezirow stated that "the process of learning to make meaning is focused, shaped and delimited by our frames of reference" (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223). He proposes two types of meaning structures: *meaning perspectives* and *meaning schemes*. Meaning perspectives are "broad predispositions resulting from psycho-cultural assumptions which determine the horizons of our expectations" (p. 223). They serve as a sociolinguistic, psychological, or epistemic code-shaping sensation, feelings and cognition. Meaning schemes are more specific meaning structures which shape a particular interpretation. Meaning structures or schemes, according to Mezirow, are transformed through reflection. Reflection is an "attending to the grounds [justification] for one's beliefs" (p. 223).

Reflection is triggered by a disorienting dilemma and, for Mezirow, takes place most often in the context of problem-solving. Mezirow differentiates between content, process, and premise reflection. Thus, one can reflect on the *content* of the problem, the *process* of problem-solving, or the *premise* of the problem. Premise reflection can transform meaning perspectives. For Mezirow, "The most significant learning involves critical premise reflection of premises about oneself" (p. 224).

Mezirow identified the following phases for this "perspective transformation" type of learning:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame, sometimes turning to religion for support
3. A critical assessment of assumptions

4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and others have negotiated a similar change
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisionally trying out new roles
9. Renegotiating relationships and negotiating new relationships
10. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
11. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

Mezirow stated that there are four ways to any learning: by refining or elaborating our meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, transforming meaning schemes, and transforming meaning perspectives. Whereas, with instrumental learning, we attempt to determine the truth, with communicative learning we attempt to establish the validity or justification for our belief. Mezirow suggested three ways to do this: one is to turn to authority figures, another is to use force, and the third is to validate through rational discourse. Rational discourse is reflection made public. Mezirow (1994) adapted Habermas's idea of ideal conditions for rational discourse:

> Ideally, a participant in a discourse will (a) have accurate and complete information, (b) be free from coercion and distorting self-deception, (c) be able to weigh evidence and assess arguments "objectively", (d) be open to alternative points of view and to care about the way others think and feel, (e) be able to become critically reflective of assumptions and their consequences, (f) have equal opportunity to participate in the various roles of discourse, and (g) be willing to accept an informed, objective and rational consensus as legitimate test of validity until new perspectives, evidence, or arguments are encountered, and are subsequently established through discourse as yielding better judgments. (p. 225)

Critiquing Mezirow's Theory

Cranton (1994) identified four types of criticism of Mezirow's theory in the literature: social change, power, context, and rationality; each of which is discussed below. Collard and Law (1989) recognized Mezirow's focus on the individual

perspective transformation and believed he failed to acknowledge the "social environment in which structural inequalities are entrenched" (p. 105; see also Tennant, 1993). Collard and Law believed social action is a prerequisite for emancipatory discourse. Mezirow responded (1989) by noting that he saw perspective transformation as individual, group, or collective. He also believed the learner must personally decide on his/her involvement in social action. Without this last condition, Mezirow saw the potential for indoctrination in such education.

The second type of criticism Cranton (1994) identified is power. She specified: "Hart (1990) points out an implicit claim in Mezirow's work that the educator can be outside a power-bound, and therefore distorted, context." Cranton responded that "an awareness of power seems to underlie his theory." She also noted that "Underlying Habermas's writing is a concern for dominance-free forms of social relations" (p. 53).

The third type of criticism is on the topic of context. Here, Clark and Wilson (1991) recognized that assumptions underlying Mezirow's theory reflect "the hegemonic American values of individualism, rationality, and autonomy" that have been uncritically incorporated within his theory (p. 80).

Finally, the fourth type of criticism is on the topic of rationality. Clark (1993) stated that:

> While Mezirow never clearly explains how rational discourse functions under less-than-ideal conditions, it is clear that, in his view, cogency of argument is the final arbitrator on the validity of constructed knowledge. Rationality determines what is reliably known. (p. 51)

Others, tapping Jungian psychology, suggest that transformation is not entirely rational (Boyd and Myers, 1988; Boyd, 1985; Boyd, 1989). Cranton devoted an entire chapter to looking at ways transformative learning varies among individuals

through utilizing the Myers-Briggs type theory (1994, chap. 5). One aspect of this chapter recognizes that "thinking types are more likely to engage in rational discourse" while, for feeling types, "[the] critical reflection process takes a different form" (p. 115).

In a study closely related to this one, Taylor (1994) attempted to utilize Mezirow's theory as a conceptual framework to research how individuals learn to become interculturally competent. He found that transformative learning theory only partially explains this learning process. He found, similar to Coffman (1991), that certain stages of Mezirow's model were repeated in the process of perspective transformation. He also noted that "Mezirow begins with a disorienting dilemma, but does not recognize the influence of what learners bring to a transformative learning experience" (Taylor, 1994, p. 169). As a result, Taylor added a preliminary stage called "Setting the Stage." He equated cultural disequilibrium with Mezirow's disorienting dilemma but found:

> The emotive nature of cultural disequilibrium was not limited to guilt or shame, the feelings used to describe a disorienting dilemma in Mezirow's model. Instead, the range of emotions expressed by participants included frustration, fear, loneliness anxiety, and over-excitement. . . (p. 170)

Taylor agreed with Clark's finding that "affect plays a prominent role" in the transformative learning process (Clark, 1991, p. 145). To the disorienting stage, Taylor added factors which intensify or mute the disorientation. In Taylor's study, cultural disequilibrium was intensified by gender, marital status, and race, and was muted by previous experiences of marginality, host language competency, and by experience in the host culture. The concept of intensifying and muting factors is useful, recognizing that many variables impact the resulting experience of disequilibrium.

In addition to the adaptations listed above, Taylor (1994) went on with further adaptations of Mezirow's theory:

> In response to cultural disequilibrium, participants utilize different cognitive orientations, nonreflective and reflective. A nonreflective orientation involves little or no questioning of prior values and assumptions . . . it involves thoughtful action without reflection, where the participants do not question taken-for-granted assumptions. (pp. 164 & 170)

Thus, Taylor clarified the notion that some experiences of disequilibrium do not lead to transformational learning. Taylor (1994) moved beyond the strategy of critical reflection, and found three categories of learning strategies: observer, participant, and friend. He saw these behaviors as "learning strategies that allow the participant access to the necessary knowledge and experiences in order to bring a balance back into his or her life" (p. 171). Taylor also found the process of transformative learning to be nonlinear: "By contrast, where Mezirow's steps tend to be sequential, the model described here identified strategies as on-going practices not occurring in any identifiable order" (p. 172).

Taylor's study of how individuals learn to become interculturally competent is similar to the focus of this study in that both involve critical components of self-awareness and attainment of fluency in perspectives other than one's own. Taylor's adaptations of Mezirow's theory are elaborated on in the discussion chapter.

Reflections on Learning and Change from a Broader Perspective

In order to further critique Mezirow's theory, I will broaden the discussion of views of learning and change from Mezirow's focus on critical self-reflection to include the relational dynamic present at both the group and system levels of change. The primary strength Mezirow brought is that the individual is key to

leading change: “We must begin with individual perspective transformations before social transformations can succeed (Mezirow, 1990, p. 363). Identifying Mezirow’s position, Clark stated that “It is the individual who is center in this model and change is incremental and reformist, not revolutionary” (Clark, 1993, p. 52). However, this position is in contrast to other views. Kurt Lewin, who formed action research by fusing democratic and scientific values, explored the impact of the group on the individual (Marrow, 1984). Ken Benne, in reflecting on Kurt Lewin’s views of reeducation articulated:

> Through what processes do men and women alter, replace or transcend patterns of thinking, valuation, volition, [or] overt behavior by which they have previously managed and justified their lives. . . . They involve not extrinsic additions of knowledge or behavioral repertoire to the self or person but changes in the self, and the working through of self-supported resistances to such changes. And, *since self-patterns are sustained by norms and relationships in the groups to which a person belongs or aspires to belong, effective re-education of a person requires changes in his envisioning society and culture as well.* (Benne, 1985, p. 273, emphasis added)

In 1945, Lewin and Grabbe formulated 10 general observations on reeducation. The 10th observation clearly states their view on the question of individual vs. other, or group, as the primary force in influencing change in the individual: “The individual accepts the new system of values and beliefs by accepting belongingness in a group” (Benne, 1985, p. 281). Lewin’s insights into the group as a medium for effective reeducation led him to conduct the Connecticut State Workshop on Intergroup Relations in the summer of 1946. The content of this workshop is relevant to this study since it involved training white males to advocate inclusion and equity by addressing anti-Semitism.

Reeducation is itself one of three strategies of planned change identified by Chin and Benne (1985). The second strategy which they identify is Empirical-

Rational, which rests on the assumption that people are guided by reason. This strategy is positivistic in nature and relates to Habermas's technical knowledge interest and Cranton's subject-oriented learning (acquisition of content). The third strategy they identify is Power-Coercive, which emphasizes political and economic sanctions in the exercise of power. This strategy also relates to Habermas's technical knowledge and Mezirow's instrumental learning (learning to control and manipulate the environment).

Reeducation is a strategy with a social constructionist foundation:

> Intelligence is social, rather than narrowly individual. [People] are guided in their actions by socially funded and communicated meanings, norms, and institutions, in brief by a normative culture. At the personal level, [individuals] are guided by internalized meanings, habits, and values. Changes in patterns of action or practice are, therefore, changes, not alone in the rational informational equipment of [people], but at the personal level, in habits and values as well and, at the sociocultural level, changes are alterations in normative structures and institutionalized roles and relationships, as well as cognitive and perceptual orientations. (Chin and Bennis, 1985, p. 35)

It is not that Mezirow denied the impact of social systems and group norms. In fact, his initial phase of critical reflection is "a disorienting dilemma," with the most likely source of the dissonance being some sort of contact with someone or something outside oneself. Mezirow's theory was originally built on a study of women returning to college, with college being the disorienting dilemma. Mezirow was most concerned with the internal process of learning. Examining the learning processes of white males around inclusion and equity involves many complex dynamics operating at individual, group, and systemic levels. Extending beyond Mezirow's theory to articulate the interaction of the individual *and* the group or system around processes of learning and change creates a more effective frame for examining key dynamics in this study.

Mezirow's theory is based on constructivism, while others (such as Chin and Bennis mentioned previously, and Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar mentioned below) are based on social constructionism. Constructivism and social constructionism have both commonalities and differences (Gergen, 1994; Pearce, 1995; Schwandt, 1994). They both emphasize the constructed nature of knowledge, reacting against the universalistic assumptions of positivism. Furthermore, both acknowledge that the knower and known (the researcher and subjects) are interactive and inseparable. At the risk of oversimplifying, Pearce (1995) described their differences by noting that: "Constructivists see communication as a *cognitive* process of *knowing* the world and social constructionists see [communication] as a *social* process of *creating* the world" (p. 98). Constructivism has its roots in cybernetics, while social constructionism is rooted in the ecological epistemology of Gregory Bateson and the philosophical critiques of Ludwig Wittgenstein (Pearce, 1995). For social constructionism, the realm of interest is the real world of social action, not the cognitive world of knowing.

Social constructionist change theories emphasize discourse and connection with others as core to individual change processes: "It is through patterns of discourse that we form relational bonds with one another; that we create, transform, and maintain structure; and that we reinforce or challenge our beliefs" (Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar, 1995, p. 353). Barrett et al. suggested that we:

> decenter the individual and instead begin to view "relating" as the place where meaning is made. In other words, instead of seeing meaning centered in the individual's head, we should view meaning as occurring in our relatedness with one another. (p. 353)

Within this framework: “Change, then, occurs when a new way of talking replaces an old way of talking” (p. 366). The change process requires available discourse systems that create, maintain, and transform people’s assumptions and beliefs. Cobb (1993) noted that narrative-based conflict interventions need to generate “news about difference” in order to avoid polarization. The success of dialogue can then, in part, be evaluated based on the success of this outcome. Thus, this study addresses the question of where these individuals engaged in dialogue that contributed “news about difference,” and thus to their learning about inclusion and equity.

In another broad view of change, Marshak (1995) synthesized the cognitive, cultural, and psychoanalytic approaches to organizational change with the following meta-theory:

1. Organizational behavior is influenced by usually out-of-awareness schemata. The schemata may be underlying theories-in-use, cultural assumptions and beliefs, and/or unconscious material or archetypes.
2. Organizational schemata may be accessed and modified. Different methods are suggested depending on whether or not the schemata are considered to be conscious, pre-conscious, or unconscious.
3. Second-order organizational change that creates innovative behavior different from “automatic” or “habitual” patterns requires modifying the controlling schemata. (p. 46)

This is another theory which states deep change requires altering schemata. Marshak saw metaphors as schemata and advocated intervening around metaphors in ways such as recognizing, repudiating, reframing, replacing, releasing, and reintegrating. While Marshak’s focus is the organizational level, this is parallel to Mezirow’s meaning structures.

In other work, Marshak (1993) examined metaphors of the change process itself and identified three types: developmental, transitional, and transformational.

These build on the stationary metaphor of "fix and maintain" to include "build and develop, move and relocate, and liberate and recreate" (p. 49). How one looks at the process of learning and change itself will impact one's experience and influence one's choice of change agents (Marshak, 1993). This study of white male learning gains depth by attending to both the metaphors of learning and change expressed in the voices of participants, and the general metaphors used around white males and issues of inclusion and equity.

Recent theorists on organizational transformation state that efforts to implement change based on a rational-mechanical model are not adequate enough for effective organizational change (Nevis, Lancourt, and Vassallo, 1996). Their movement is toward embracing a social constructionist orientation by using simultaneous methods of influence to address many multiple realities present in organizations. They define resistance as the need to manage multiple realities which already exist, particularly by legitimizing diverse perspectives. Similar to Cobb's research mentioned earlier, they suggest using questions to surface multiple realities before they become counterproductive. In the case of this study, the white male participants could be expected to hold multiple viewpoints, or stories, which may be incongruent, both within themselves and in relation with each other. Nevis et al. identified seven influence strategies which support change and can contribute to the formation of these varied realities: persuasive communication, participation, expectancy, role modeling, extrinsic rewards, structural rearrangement, and coercion. These varied facets of influence demonstrate the complexities involved in learning and change processes.

To conclude, as with other learning and change processes, there is great complexity for white men along the path to becoming an advocate for inclusion and equity. Given the themes in current literature on white males and diversity, it is important to extend beyond Mezirow's focus on critical self-reflection to explore relational influences, thus recognizing the development of consciousness around group and systemwide dynamics of oppression.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Question and Approach

Research Question: *What are the learning experiences of white males in becoming advocates for inclusion and equity in organizations?*

This study is qualitatively focused, attempting to explore significant life experiences of advocates for inclusion and equity. Relating back to Habermas's knowledge interests, it is "practical," focusing on understanding the learning experiences of white males, with specific focus on what works in the learning path of white males around inclusion and equity. It is an interpretive study of emancipatory learning processes in white males.

The methodology used in this study is aligned with naturalistic inquiry, This choice was made on the basis of the fundamental parallels between this method of inquiry and constructivism. In my view, the constructivist and social constructionist approach best moves us from a positivist world, which has only one correct truth, toward a world in which multiple realities and multiple perspectives can coexist. Therefore, naturalistic inquiry, which is structured around inclusion and exploration of multiple perspectives, was a logical choice for this study. In fact, Lincoln and Guba, who defined the field of naturalistic inquiry and contrasted it to positivism, recently referred to their methodology as constructivism rather than naturalistic inquiry (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

In Table 2, five beliefs which are basic to naturalistic inquiry are contrasted with beliefs that fit into a positivist approach. These beliefs, or axioms, form the basis for 14 operational characteristics which reflect naturalistic inquiry in

operation. (See Appendix A for a description of these characteristics.) These operational characteristics are also arranged in Figure 1 in a flow diagram of the naturalistic inquiry research process.

Table 2:
Contrasting Positivist and Naturalist Axioms (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 37)

Axioms About	Positivist Paradigm	Naturalist Paradigm
The nature of reality	Reality is single, tangible, and fragmentable.	Knower and known are interactive, inseparable.
The relationship of knower to the known	Knower and known are independent, a dualism.	Knower and known are interactive, inseparable.
The possibility of generalization	Time- and context-free generalizations (nomo-thetic statements) are possible.	Only time- and context-bound working hypotheses (idiographic statements) are possible.
The possibility of causal linkages	There are real causes, temporally precedent to or simultaneous with their effects.	All entities are in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping, so that it is impossible to distinguish causes from effects.
The role of values	Inquiry is value-free.	Inquiry is value-bound.

Several of these naturalistic inquiry operational characteristics are worth highlighting. The first of these is inductive data analysis and grounded theory. In their work cited above, Guba and Lincoln referenced Glaser and Strauss' initial work entitled "The Discovery of Grounded Theory" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and incorporated key elements of grounded theory in their methodology by building theory from their data. In addition to Glaser and Strauss, they quoted Elden in suggesting that grounded theory is "local" theory, in that it emerges from local and immediate circumstances.

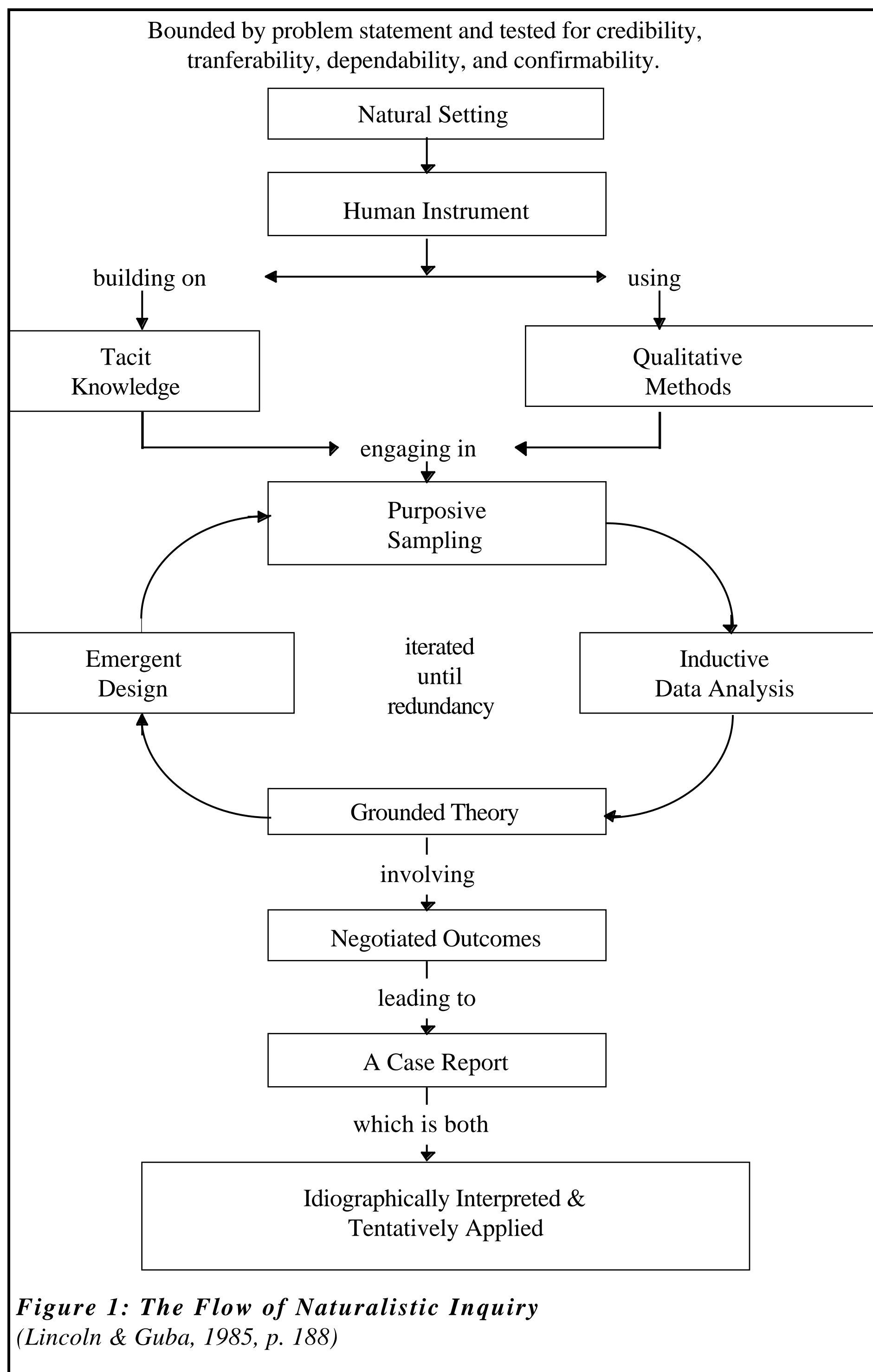

Figure 1: The Flow of Naturalistic Inquiry
(Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 188)

Lincoln and Guba also identified Kidder's description of "negative case analysis", which is being willing to shift an hypothesis to account for "negative cases" (p. 206). Inclusion of this last approach suggests a method of grounded theory in which one completes the literature review and formulates some questions prior to collecting data. This ordering of the process was used in this study. Naturalistic inquiry also prefers the case study reporting mode, which is used here. This use of grounded theory methods has allowed for an emergent design, where those involved in the study can help shape the design.

Study Design

Study Participants

This study involves white males who are identified as advocates for inclusion and equity. Most participants work as consultants, with their work representing a key avenue through which they demonstrate their advocacy. I chose consultants because of their accessibility, and because I believe they sometimes are able to speak more freely than internal executives who may feel a need to officially represent their company "in the best light."

In defining advocacy, I have drawn from Rob William's dissertation on the process of becoming a social advocate (Williams, 1989). He noted that the Latin root for *advocate* comes from the Latin verb advocatus which means "to give voice to." Williams defined Social Advocate as one who:

> (1) represents a minority expression concerning social or economic change; (2) . . . [demonstrates] commitment of significant personal resources; (3) . . . uses direct action, including civil disobedience and resistance, to effect social changes; (4) . . . [is part] of a small group who first brings to public attention a social issue; and (5) . . . [is] generally recognized by those he or she speaks for, by the media and by other institutions as a spokesperson. (p. 40)

I have adapted his criteria for my own definition of advocacy to include:

- Willing to take a stand to support inclusion and equity in the face of resistance
- Being one of a small group who brings attention to these issues
- Recognized by women, people-of-color, gay, lesbian, bisexual, disabled, and other marginalized groups as an advocate, as well as by other white males
- Demonstrated commitment of significant time and resources

I sought to develop criteria that would identify a select population of white males for what Stake (1994) called a "collective case study" (p. 237). I used my criteria to help me locate white males who are well-developed in their advocacy, to make certain that I located white males who are "there." At the same time, I paid attention to not becoming so rigid with the criteria that I might exclude strong candidates. Furthermore, since my research design was based on assumptions of constructivism, my selection process was based on similar grounds. Thus, I solicited nominations from multiple perspectives, thereby triangulating the nomination process with those who view issues of inclusion and equity from different perspectives.

Specifically, the nominating coalition consisted of approximately six women-of-color, six men-of-color, six white women, and six white men, all of whom are each senior practitioners / consultants in the field of diversity and organizational / systems development. Nominations from this coalition created a pool of 75 nominees identified as white male advocates appropriate for this study. Roughly eight of these nominees received nominations from all four nominator

categories. These eight were invited and agreed to participate in the study. Thus, the advocates participating in this study were recognized from multiple perspectives for their advocacy. By using this methodology, the nominee pool was limited by who knew whom. Nonetheless, the process was successful in identifying strong advocates for inclusion and equity.

This approach to developing a common pool of applicants is in accord with the naturalistic inquiry operational characteristic of purposive sampling. A constructivist approach also led me to allow each nominator to use his or her own criteria for defining an advocate of inclusion and equity.

Data Collection, Interviewing Process, and Data Analysis

Naturalistic inquiry emphasizes the use of human as instrument of data collection, using both qualitative methods and tacit (intuitive or felt) knowledge. Thus, I interviewed participants and kept a journal of my own impressions and thoughts. Each participant was initially interviewed for 2 hours. They were asked open-ended questions[2] about their learning experiences which led them to become advocates for inclusion and equity.

Naturalistic inquiry led me to create space for an emergent design where both researcher and researched could shape the process. In part, this was to meet the criteria of trustworthiness which, in naturalistic inquiry, replaces concepts of reliability and validity. I utilized the concept of constant comparison, which is one method for creating an emergent design: Data were analyzed soon after collection, and this process was allowed to shape the structure of sequential interviews as concepts began to emerge. Transcripts were analyzed using lifeline mapping

[2] See Appendix C for the general interview framework.

techniques to identify themes and concepts: From each transcript, an individual lifeline was created on large flipchart paper. Thick descriptions were then written utilizing these individual lifelines. Themes were identified and sorted from the individual lifelines and the thick descriptions.[3] One collective lifeline was created from these themes, a rendition of which is included as Appendix E. Interview questions used in early interviews were shaped by concepts which emerged in the literature review. In addition, questions in later interviews were shaped, in part, by concepts which emerged in earlier interviews.

Following the naturalistic inquiry method, I gave participants the opportunity to respond to both my emerging model and to a thick description resulting from their individual case data. This approach follows the naturalistic inquiry operational characteristic of negotiated outcome. Follow-up interviews for this purpose occurred by fax, phone, or electronic mail, or through some combination of these methods.

While inviting the selected eight nominees to participate in this study, several expressed interest in maintaining their identity instead of entering into traditional confidentiality agreements. This was primarily so that this research could serve as another avenue for their advocacy in this area. As a result, confidentiality options were offered and discussed during the interviews, and participants were encouraged not to make final decisions regarding waiving their

[3] Since my methodology includes generating some theory inductively, I had intended to use the computer program Nud•ist, which is the Macintosh program best capable of code-based theory building (Weitzman & Miles, 1995). However, I ultimately chose to use the flip chart method instead in order to preserve the context, thus better maintaining a whole picture. The flip chart approach also was a better match for my visual learning style.

confidentiality until after reading and giving input on their thick descriptions. All participants ultimately chose to waive their confidentiality. A sample confidentiality waiver form is included as Appendix D.

I included in the design the option of using focus groups for purposes of verification and further discussion. Early on, the idea of convening a focus group of participants to discuss themes was circulated to the selected eight nominees. This idea generated strong interest from participants, but their busy schedules precluded successful arrangement of a meeting place and time. However, participants were connected through electronic mail after choosing to waive their confidentiality. Prior to writing the discussion chapter, I shared emerging themes with participants by electronic mail and by fax. This effort generated some useful reactions and dialogue.

Trustworthiness Criteria

Naturalistic inquiry utilizes criteria for trustworthiness, rather than validity and reliability, since the underlying philosophy for naturalistic inquiry is inconsistent with these conventional measures (see Table 2). The criteria for trustworthiness in naturalistic inquiry is referred to as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each of these areas are specifically addressed in relation to this study in the following ways:

Credibility: To establish credibility the researcher must "[ensure] that the findings will be found to be credible . . . and . . . demonstrate the credibility of the findings by having them approved by the constructors of the multiple realities being studied" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 296). In this study, credibility was ensured by having participants approve thick descriptions, emerging themes, and models.

Transferability: As Lincoln and Guba (1985) summarized: "It is . . . not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability; it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers" (p. 316). In the design of this study, transferability was achieved by including the thick description necessary for others to conclude whether transfer is appropriate.

Dependability and Confirmability: In this model of inquiry, dependability and confirmability are supported by an audit trail. In the case of this study, the audit trail consists of raw data, interview guides, notes, documents, notecards, lifeline maps, peer debriefing notes, and journals.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study can be categorized into three areas: limitations based on size, limitations which result from the potential for bias in the research process, and limitations which result from the use of self-reported histories. Both small sample size and the philosophy of naturalistic inquiry limit generalization. However, this case study of eight is of sufficient size to generate initial theory building and allow for researcher-determined transferability. Questions of bias, however, and the implications of using self-reported histories, require closer examination.

Areas of bias to consider include the group identities of the researcher, the participants, and the dissertation committee. My work is likely to reflect my perspectives as a straight, white, upper-middle class, able-bodied, Catholic-raised, introverted male. In addition, the interview process and resultant data were surely influenced by the single group identity: a white male interviewing other white

males. Having multiple group identities, such as all four groups utilized earlier as nominators, to contribute their perspective on the journeys of these white male advocates would have added another dimension but was simply beyond the scope of this study. Moreover, because I was a white male interviewing white male advocates, I often found myself identifying with the stories I heard. In fact, halfway through the data analysis phase, I created my own life map to help me keep my own issues and perspectives sorted out during the data analysis. This dynamic is common with naturalistic inquiry, where the high interaction with those researched can create challenges of separating self from participants and their experiences. One source of multiple group perspective was my dissertation committee, which included an African-American female and male, a white female, and three white males. Thus, my committee contained the same four categories of group identity[4] utilized as nominators. This mix has been a positive contribution, helping me keep a clearer perspective in both the design and execution phases of the research as well as lending credibility to my findings.

In addition to questions of bias, it is important to recognize that the use of self-reporting life histories can carry its own type of distortions. As noted above, it would have been ideal to gather data from the participants' cross-category colleagues, not only to provide perspectives across categories, but also to be able to compare their views with the self-reported stories. Without this corroborative aid, it was even more important that the nomination process be a good one, identifying those who are truly advocates. While potential for error was present, especially

[4] The four nominating categories were women-of-color, men-of-color, white women, and white men.

since the nomination process involved a network which was limited by who knew whom, I do believe that the process of triangulation in the nominations worked well; the eight white males who were nominated shared life stories which place them clearly in the realm of advocates for inclusion and equity.

Naturalistic inquiry was chosen as the framework for this case study of white male advocates. This qualitative approach allowed for purposive sampling (see Appendix A), an in- depth exploration of each individual's journey, and initial theory construction. In the chapter that follows, each individual's journey is described through a thick description. In addition, the patterns which emerge in comparing the advocates' journeys are explored.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to share the research data both at the individual and collective level. A brief sketch of the eight research participants is provided, followed by thick descriptions of their individual stories. Finally, themes which emerge across the individual stories are explored.

All participants were between 50 and 60 years of age, except one who was 45. All currently serve as external consultants, blending the areas of organization change and development with diversity issues. For most, consulting is their primary career, except for one who is a full-time professor of sociology. Four participants were raised Catholic, two Lutheran, one Jewish, one Methodist, and one described his background as Christian. All participants declared themselves straight, making this a study of eight heterosexual white males. Participants all were either married or had been married. All had either raised or are currently raising children. I noted no physical disability and heard of no learning disabilities. All declared themselves as middle class or upper-middle class in their current lives.

What follow are the thick descriptions which describe both our interview and each individual's journey toward advocacy. These thick descriptions were generated by mapping relevant elements of each transcript onto a flipchart size diagram which served as the base for drafting a thick description. These thick descriptions were then returned to the respective individual for changes, corrections, additions, and deletions.

Thick Descriptions

Michael Brazzel

(January 18, 1997)

Michael Brazzel, 59, is an organization development consultant now living in Columbia, Maryland. I interviewed him in his home, a roomy, new colonial backed by a wooded yard of tall trees. He described himself as both an advocate and an activist, with advocate being more about voice, and activist being more about action. As he sees himself, activist is a title which he sometimes successfully fills, and to which he sometimes aspires. I was struck by the strength of his words as he described his experience of striving to live out these two roles: "It's about living fully. It feels like when I'm not doing it, when I'm not living it out, [then] I'm not living fully, [and] it feels like dying."

Along with a younger brother and sister, Michael was raised Catholic in Houston, Texas. Houston was quite segregated. He described his background as middle class. Michael later attended graduate school at Tulane University. Before finishing his degree, he taught at the Air Force Academy beginning in 1963, and at the University of Missouri beginning in 1965. He continued his degree work from a distance, eventually earning his Ph.D. in Regional and Urban Economics in 1966 from Tulane University.

His time spent in New Orleans, Colorado Springs, and Missouri did not provide him with much exposure to the social activism of the 1960s . However, in 1968, he spent one year in Cambridge, Massachusetts, working for the

Harvard/MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies. At this point, Cambridge was seething with student unrest. Although Michael found the unrest amazing, he did not feel he had much comprehension of it. He was focused primarily on being successful in his own career.

In 1969, Michael moved to Washington D.C. to work for the Economic Development Administration on issues of regional development and poverty. In 1970, he moved to the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and continued work on evaluation and policy analysis. This time period marked the end of the Johnson administration and the beginning of Nixon's years. Michael remembers that when he arrived in Washington, he thought that he was hotstuff: he was a young Ph.D., he was a white man, and he had lots to contribute. However, he soon discovered that he was often treated with distrust and suspicion.

Support for the poverty programs was starting to unravel. In his visits to low-income communities, people were distant. They saw him as someone who was trying to figure out how to disenfranchise them from funds. Thus, this became a confusing time of important personal reflection about who he was in the world. He struggled with being treated by others based on his membership in the white male category. His OEO work enabled him to have closer contact with people-of-color. In this environment, he found constant challenging of racist and classist behaviors and assumptions. In retrospect, though, Michael realizes that most of these issues were discussed at the individual level, rather than at the group or system level.

In 1973, Michael moved to the Census Bureau. Showing signs of advocacy, he had left OEO in protest because he believed the Nixon administration

was using funds inappropriately. One year later, he went to the Federal Energy Administration, which later became the Department of Energy. He would remain there until 1979, when he moved to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and continued policy analysis there.

The late 1970s became an important time of transition and reintegration, spurred by the death of Michael's father in 1976. In the early '80s, struggling with depression and with the decision of whether to live or die, Michael went on a vision quest in Death Valley. Michael's efforts to come to grips with a family history of alcoholism and sexual abuse contributed to this crisis. This period of struggle brought great learning. His learning from the experience of incest was that "if you do not give voice to what's going on, it kills you. You kill yourself. You have to advocate for what you believe in. If you do not, it kills you." I am taken by the depth, strength, and clarity of this statement. Michael's view of advocating is, at its core, about living fully and moving away from death. Michael also explained his view on "silence being violent":

> I've given a lot of thought to the notion of violence and evil and anything that is not life affirming. Anything that is life diminishing is violent -- it's destructive of human life or living life and that is violence. I do not know of any other way to put it. And, silence not only does violence to other people, but it also does violence to me as well in very fundamental ways.

In moving through this transition, Michael began to speak out on issues of incest, alcoholism, and oppression. Speaking out became an integral aspect of living fully, creating a turning point in his emerging advocacy. The locus of approval for speaking out moved from external to internal, making it easier for him to risk speaking out.

Michael found other opportunities for continued learning and growth. Back in 1971, while at OEO, he had participated in a sensitivity training and loved it. He later went to a Management Work Conference at NTL in 1979 and found it equally valuable. In 1980, he enrolled into the American University/NTL Institute Master's Program in Organization Development (OD) and continued to build the skills of his new profession. He complemented this learning with personal therapy. In 1981, he switched professions to become an internal OD consultant at USDA, and was able to build a focus on eliminating oppression into his OD work. After completing his master's degree, and beginning an internal OD practice, he joined the NTL Institute. His completion of Gestalt training in organization and systems development facilitated his move to thinking about OD and oppression issues on a system level.

Actively building a network to support his work in eliminating oppression has been a key element of Michael's activism:

> One of the reasons I joined NTL was to find a community that would support my own work in doing more around diversity and oppression. . . . Part of coming to NTL was to have a support network of people who would support me in paying attention to the work and challenge me and push me, and people I could learn from.

Through a diverse network, Michael has been able to build relationships which furthered his personal and professional development:

> There is something about becoming friends with somebody who's very different with you, and yet, in a personal way, in ways where you're vulnerable, in which people really are able to see all of -- where I'm hanging out there who I am. . . . My experience [was] that [in] those kinds of experiences when I developed intimate personal relationships with somebody, it felt like it ratcheted my understanding, my ability to understand myself, and my willingness to take risks in relationships and in speaking out for what I felt was important.

He recognized that he has received important affirmation from people-of-color and others for who he was, the work he was doing, and the voice he was giving to the issues. Sometimes the recognition others gave surprised him. Yet, it was also self-affirmation which set the stage for building networks:

> It's my own healing and getting comfortable with who I am that also positioned me to be able to build networks, you know, reach out and build support groups. . . . You know, the more I was able to accept who I am and care about myself, the more I was able to be with others in ways that I was willing to have other people see who I was and willing to take the risk that they might not like everything that I was, or the risk that they might like who I was.

He does not recall any white male role models who really touched him. "I've always felt by myself. And it's been a choice too. I think that's also the white male way." Michael looks for opportunities to talk with white males about these issues and finds it often happens in one-on-one discussions and sometimes in workshops. The most important relationships in his journey have clearly been across categories of difference.

Michael described his current learning edge as keeping the issues of inclusion, diversity, and eliminating oppression integrated into his OD consulting practice:

> When I find myself working, unless I really stay in touch with myself, working in predominantly white organizations, it just slips out. It just disappears.

He is actively working on ways to make these issues more of an integral part of OD theory and practice. Recently, he became a consultant with the Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group, a firm which integrates OD and diversity work, as another strategy in pursuing this challenge.

For Michael, advocating and being an activist for inclusion, equity, and elimination of oppression is simply about living fully. It is a way of living he came to through dealing with major struggles and challenges in his life, and now has become a foundation for his activism.

Bo Razak

(January 19, 1997)

Bo Razak, 51, is an organizational consultant focusing on long-term change related to issues of diversity and organizational transformation. I interviewed him at his home in Potomac, Maryland. Bo's journey toward advocacy accelerated at age 19 when he left his home state of Kansas to join the Peace Corps in Iran. He told a moving story of a critical moment of learning he would later identify as "we're all equal, but not the same." With that experience as a foundation, he later returned to the Washington, D.C. area where he has since worked in government and consulted to corporations and government.

Born and raised as a Methodist in Wichita, Kansas, Bo grew up with two brothers and one sister. He remembered that his grandparents discouraged the speaking of their native languages, German or Czech, even when they lived in a small Czech farming community. "These folks worked very hard at not being Czech because they were Americans." He described his family as a traditional family, one with some values which differ from those he now holds.

A valuable gift his parents gave him is what he calls critical thinking skills. This includes the willingness not just to accept things as they are but to think about them in an analytical way and to act on what seems right. He began to question his parents' values while still in Kansas, but did not really feel the freedom to "rock the boat" until he left for the Peace Corps. In bringing a black boy home from school to play pool, he noticed his other friends did not want to join him. Later, his mother told him that it was fine for him to play with this boy, but she went on to say, "Do not you dare bring home a colored girl." He remembers high school

sports as the bridge between black and white students, and recognized that this bridge was not present outside of the context of sports. While he did not challenge many of the prejudices he came to recognize around him, his interest and critical thinking did lead him to a growing desire to continue to explore the world around him.

Bo attended Wichita State, majoring in biology. An incident he remembers well was when he was blackballed from his fraternity. Although he was going into the Peace Corps and would not be able to pay his dues, he was surprised at some of his long-time colleagues' lack of advocacy for him to remain a member. His fraternity did not allow Jews, and in his current reflection he sees his fraternity as a breeding ground for privilege and exclusion and recognizes his own passive response to that dynamic. Reflecting on his fraternity experience was helpful in understanding the operations of an exclusionary club.

Bo had been in Wichita all his life, and wanted to explore new territory. When he chose the Peace Corps over Christian mission work, he became, at 19, one of the youngest Peace Corp volunteers to serve. Three months into his service, he was working with others to convince a mayor of a small village on the Persian Gulf to put a cover and pump on the public well. This would mean only one person could access water at a time. The mayor was resistant, worrying about all the changes in local custom and ritual that would create as well as the need to maintain the pump. Later, in a flash of insight and discussion with his co-worker, Bo realized:

> I was looking at this guy as ignorant and stupid. It's not stupid, it's just a different reality. . . . I felt arrogant about my rightness. . . . Events like that humbled me, re-calibrated my sense of self vis-à-vis people who were different.

These insights describe some of Bo's most important learnings while in Iran. I find his use of the phrase "re-calibrated my sense of self" to be an interesting and accurate description of what was happening. Bo spoke of how going away to the Peace Corps gave him the freedom and space to change his identity, and to begin to shape his own values away from those of his upbringing. He literally changed his name too, preferring his Peace Corps nickname of Bo, over his previous name of Vernon. His Peace Corps learning adventure was a symbol of his internal shifts, applying his critical thinking skills to help himself change into the kind of person he wanted to be. This identity shift centered around his strengthened belief in the importance of equality, and the need to advocate for equality.

In 1968, Bo returned to Washington, D.C. and worked in the Peace Corps office until 1970, when he began working in the drug abuse education and prevention field. Both work experiences provided important exposure to multi-racial teams. This access to differences allowed him to sort through his sense of identity individually and as a white male. He described these experiences as "confronting his identity." He remembers when a black man who ran the mail-room of the Peace Corps told him to quit trying to "be black," and to quit talking to him in black lingo. Another memorable moment was during the filming of a role play in drug education when a Native American confronted him with how little he knew about Native Americans. These confrontations added to his sense of naiveté and pushed him to reconsider his behavior, assumptions, and racial identity.

Bo worked from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s as an OD consultant and management trainer to government agencies, primarily through the Office of Personnel Management, United States Agency for International Development

(USAID), the United Nations, and the Peace Corps. His work in the international arena took him to over 20 countries in Africa, Central America, Europe, and Asia. In 1985, a white woman friend called him, looking for a white male trainer to work with Elsie Y. Cross and Associates, a national firm focusing on eliminating oppression in the workplace. As Bo describes it, he “parachuted in” to his first training role focused solely on eliminating oppression. His friend, Elsie Cross, and many other colleagues, different by race and gender, came to endorse him for the “integrity [with] which he came to the issues.” This endorsement of integrity had a strong positive impact on his sense of identity over the years. These colleagues and others nurtured, trained, and forgave him. Until 2 years ago, he spent 75% of his time working for her network. He is still an active consultant there, though he currently spends more time in his own practice and in affiliation with other consulting firms.

Bo only identified one other white male as a role model in the area of diversity: Joe Potts, the first white male to work in Elsie’s network. This was not a close personal connection, nor have they worked together. Bo heard about Joe’s skills through colleagues and came to appreciate the way Joe presented himself to clients and to colleagues of difference. Bo is not active, nor does he see other white males active in connecting with each other. Bo sees his current edge as “finding ways to engage people like me.”

> I'm much clearer about my identity with different others than I am with white men. . . . I'm not so clear about why I do not want to work it, but I haven't worked with the intensity or the depth on my white-male to white-male identity. Not that I haven't worked it, but, again, I'm aware that that's one of the things I have a) avoided, b) haven't done and the circle goes on, therefore, it makes it harder to do it. So, the work is not only helping others, but in order to do that I know that my pathway has to be clearer

> about what it is about me with white men that has me waiting for them to come to me.

He has found that white males do not access each other for support and also do not recognize each other as resources in learning about dominance. White males need a more structured way to come together.

Bo finds challenges in being an advocate when he is in mostly white groups. He spoke about feeling very different in his upper-middle and upper class neighborhood of Republican doctors, lawyers, and government lobbyists. People do not know what to do with him. He ends up withdrawing and maintaining connections primarily through his wife and two children. Some of his old friends disagree with his work, saying "you're just pissing in the wind" or that it is morally wrong. In consulting, he finds it a difficult test when there is no one around to hold him accountable for diversity work. He relayed one story of a client system, where he was not contracted to do diversity work, but had to express his disagreement with the oppressive dynamics he observed in order to feel comfortable continuing to serve that client.

Throughout our discussion, Bo shared his thoughts on how white males gain awareness and move toward advocating equity. He believes the core is gaining an understanding of one's identity related to one's group memberships. Once we are clear about what these memberships bring to our relationships, then we can fully access our identity around values. With this information, we can then fully calibrate what impact one's identity has had. For white males, he thinks staying present in conversations through any critical feedback is often the most difficult challenge:

> The communication piece is so important in doing the work. I've come to believe that the most important thing I can do to help people get in touch with their identity is teach them to communicate across difference, to access others, and to get them to hang in there for additional communication and feedback. To say, when you see difference you should approach it, rather than ignore it or deny it. And out of that you will learn about group identity and yourself. . . . Our willingness to access and work and create a new individual identity beyond the group identity is the pivotal piece for me . . . to hang in there when your identity and your self-image [do not] match -- [to] keep getting feedback and [hanging] in there means to take it in, work it, own the pieces that are yours, dialogue about it, find out about it, push it back and find a support system or create one.

One of Bo's favorite lines about this challenge is from a book he gave me called "Killers of the Dream": "They were so frightened that they would do the wrong thing, and so uncertain about what was right, that they did nothing." Our fear, as white males, creates a process Bo describes as "dumbing oneself down," in which we do not know how to or we become unwilling to access the wisdom and skills we already have.

In beginning our interview, I asked Bo about the fort that was built in his backyard. His 10- and 13-year-old sons built it with neighborhood kids. His sons first wanted to create an exclusionary club, but Bo challenged them to recognize the effects of being exclusive. It is clear that Bo wants to create a more inclusive and equitable world with those whose lives he touches.

Ed Olson

(January 20, 1997)

Ed Olson, 59, is a diversity and organization development consultant living in Columbia, Maryland. I interviewed him in his home on Martin Luther King Day. His rectangular house has wood paneling on the outside, making it feel both modern and suitable for the tree-filled yard behind it. Most of our conversation took place next to a cozy fire, though our last half hour of talk was over soup in the kitchen. Ed's major transition into advocacy began in the mid-1980s, when he read widely in both feminist literature and depth psychology in order to explore and work gender issues.

Ed was born and spent most of his early years in a suburb outside Detroit until his 7th-grade year, when his family moved to a farm in southern Minnesota near his mother's parents. He was an only child and he describes his family as working class. His dad was first a lumberjack in northern Minnesota, before moving to Detroit to be an automobile workman and finally to the farm in southern Minnesota. His religious upbringing was Lutheran. He still considers Minnesota his home, where he owns a lake cabin, and where he visits in the summer and on various holidays.

Ed remembers being aware of class when he was growing up because he remembers his family looking down on people who lived in a trailer park across the street. He also remembers visiting cousins in Detroit during the race riots of the late '40s, and hearing racist stories through his time there.

Ed's academic studies began at St. Olaf in Minnesota and concluded with master's and doctorate work in government at American University in Washington, D.C. He noted that graduate school was his first significant contact with people-of-color. His career began in Philadelphia working in survey research. Then, between 1968 and 1980, he was a professor at the University of Maryland in Library and Information Services. In 1973, he took his first workshop at NTL and became exposed to behavioral science as well as to issues of racism and sexism. He continued to pursue learning through NTL and became a member in 1978. Shortly afterward, he attended an NTL member workshop on racism in Cincinnati, one he remembers as an important step in his learning on diversity:

> I think that was probably the first time I really began to understand the complexity . . . the levels of diversity . . . the issues of discrimination and prejudice, and the systemic parallel with that.

NTL provided opportunities to co-train and work with people-of-color, though his learning focus was more on group dynamics than on diversity issues. The late '80s and '90s would be the time he came to capitalize on the learning available in working with diverse colleagues.

In 1980, Ed made a career move to become a professor of management and organizational behavior at a college in Ohio, where he noticed gender issues in his classes:

> And, it was really . . . while teaching there, teaching organization behavior classes, that I remember particularly [that] what began to come up [was] a lot of issues around gender, [and] issues around the conflict between men and women. As women began to come more proportionately equal in numbers in the class, it came up as a topic. They were willing to take a stand, to voice their pent-up frustrations, and, of course, the males were in deep denial and did not want to have anything to do with it. . . . The conflict, it was as if it was so deep or so long lasting that people weren't interested in resolving it, really. I would try various things that I had learned . . . through NTL and do group interventions, images of one group

> or the other, and so on, but nothing seemed to work. And . . . I was dealing with it, it felt, superficially. And so that really sent me . . . out of the frustration of that and my own interest and awareness . . . into a deep exploration of issues of gender.

Ed read "pretty far and wide into feminist literature," along with Jungian studies of masculine and feminine principles. He found himself stepping up to gender issues and trying to make a difference, and feeling sometimes frustrated but also pleased with his effort. He saw this time as his initial crossing over into the advocacy role. He found plenty of women who were willing to participate in workshops and was invited to all kinds of women's groups to speak, but did not find many men getting involved:

> I wasn't reaching them and not necessarily even trying to because I was so focused on the rightness and the justice and the truth of what I had come to understand as issues that women had in this society.

Ed was aware that he was not doing much work on race issues, and later reflected that his diversity perspective was kind of one-sided. His expansion into race and other dimensions of diversity would follow in the 1990s.

In 1988, Ed left teaching and moved to Columbia to begin full-time consulting. Ed hoped his diversity focus would broaden to become full time. However, opportunities for diversity work in government decreased during the Reagan and Bush administrations.

The opportunity to partner with white women and with men and women-of-color to offer diversity consulting was instrumental in his development. These colleagues have been very important to him and have created a source of both support and challenge in the spirit of continued learning. He has been involved in many large diversity efforts in government, and other organizations, finding the work very "soulful":

> Well, the fact that in doing diversity work, the work, especially with the models I was following, was to help people get down to feeling level, which meant I had to get to feelings of my own. . . . I would tell stories and go through who I was, and where I came from, and . . . engage people . . . either in a confrontive way or in a supportive way around tough issues. That I found very rewarding. That I could see, I could actually see the results. T-groups have been always rewarding because over a week's time you can really see some change happen and personal development take place. Well, [the] same thing could happen in diversity workshops, people by the end of the time were just different and had a new paradigm.

This work continues to be a source of passion and growth for him.

Ed notes in his consulting that "white men is where I do not have a lot of contact," and he expressed a sense of loss and regret about this. His colleagues are primarily across categories of difference. When asked about white male role models, he mentioned Michael Brazzel, whose open, vulnerable style of consulting he appreciates. Ed wishes he could see more white males work in order to learn from their styles, but admits he has not initiated contacting others to exchange ideas. Much of his consulting work is done in coalitions across categories of difference. In both choosing his project teams and waiting to be chosen for others, he feels it is sometimes reminiscent of being at a high school dance, with all the joyfulness and wonderment about being chosen.

Ed sees how to be with white males from client systems as one of his growing edges. He relayed a story of a large project that eventually stopped because of white males whom he thought were on board but were not:

> They saw, or felt, that I did not understand them or their situation or their fight. So, that was a huge learning for me there, that even though I thought they were coming along, [and even though] we did what we could, I hadn't done enough. I felt personally responsible as the white male leader of the project to do more to keep them in the tent, you know, but somehow they did not buy that this was for them, or that this was inclusive of them as well. So, I really felt bad about that, and I think . . . I resolved from that that if I'm doing a project I pay more attention to the white men than I did [and] at a deeper level.

Recently, he has found himself "more accepting of white men wherever they are on their journey." He feels less nervous about how he presents himself and less uptight. He is successfully experimenting with telling more stories earlier and showing his vulnerability.

Ed has also been successful in seeking ways to initiate advocacy with those close to him, such as with his son who is involved in running a bank which is not yet diverse. Also important is his community in northern Minnesota, an area with a high population of Native Americans. He recently attended a workshop there on undoing racism in order to connect with that community. He is exploring what it means to be an advocate on these issues with other whites: During our discussion he was exploring the possibility of pulling together the white members of that workshop as one possible approach.

Many white male advocates I know often focus primarily on race, with gender a secondary learning. I was struck by Ed's reversal of that path, first diving heavily into gender issues and then moving to other elements of diversity. He has successfully moved to advocacy on a full spectrum of diversity issues during the last 9 years, and seems excited to find new ways to be with white men on diversity issues.

Mark Chesler

(January 21, 1997)

Mark Chesler, 60, is a sociology professor and a part-time consultant on issues of diversity and oppression. I interviewed him in his office on the campus of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Mark began his advocacy early in the civil rights era of the '60s, making his transition to advocacy the earliest of the eight members of this study. Indeed, many of the other men mentioned him when asked about other white males doing this work. He is recognized both for his long-standing voice and for excellent writing on the topic. He describes his advocacy as "a core part of my identity."

Mark was born in New York City as the only child in a middle-class Jewish family. His father practiced law, while his mother was a schoolteacher. He grew up learning to be a bridge for his parents, who were often in conflict. Mark quietly rebelled against his Republican, authoritarian father, and identified primarily with his more liberal mother. He described himself as a bridge between his parents, a role and skill later useful in bridging racial differences. While in his family, he felt psychologically torn; outside of the home, he felt culturally alienated because of his Jewish background. Thus, his early background gave him experience in feeling isolated and challenged from several dimensions.

Mark remembers being involved in interracial events in high school and college, but felt his involvement was passive and relatively unconscious. After completing college at Cornell, he spent 2 years in the Army. Following this, he began graduate school on Long Island, then relocated to finish school at the

University of Michigan. It was during these years after college that he began to build the foundation of his advocacy:

> After I graduated from college, I think, through experiences in the army and in coming back to graduate school, I began to develop a coherent, intellectual and ideological framework that would support this. [I] became active in the civil rights movement, made those issues a part of my graduate training, worked in the northern student movement, as well as linked to the southern civil rights movement. I learned a lot during that time, understood very clearly in the early '60s at a deep psychological level, as well as intellectually, what Carmichael and Hamilton meant when they said that white folks should go back and work in their own back yard. That made immediate sense to me -- vibrated psychologically, because that's where my anger was. That's where my sense of political target was. I think all during that time I had some ability to build bridges to people in oppressed communities. Why? Because of my early psychological experiences in my family; because I was a Jew in America. All those reasons. So, then, in the civil rights movement I had learnings about working with whites, about the need to target whites.

Thus, Mark learned early in his career the need for focusing on whites. Mark used this period of time to move from having a naive political and intellectual position to "becoming clearer on who I was." He expanded his graduate learning with NTL training in groups and organization development. His involvement with NTL coincided with the organization's initiatives in diversity, and he gained recognition there by diverse members as an advocate on issues of race. Through this time and into the 1970s, Mark found himself continually challenged as he discovered his own prejudices. He described himself as not very good at denying, and very willing to mull over things and learn from mistakes he made. He found these experiences painful, but utilized them as learning tools. Three things helped him live with this pain. One was external: the strong validation he received from his black, Latino, and female colleagues who sent affirming messages inviting collaboration and coalition. He was one of the few whites they were willing to work with. The second area of support was internal: Being in such a continuous

learning mode meant that he owned his baggage and was constantly moving from input to insight. The third area of support was both internal and external: his wife and life partner.

Mark went on to identify a second major transitional period in his advocacy: a 5-year period beginning in 1976, when one of his daughters -- 11 years old -- was diagnosed with cancer. He withdrew from the diversity work scene to focus on this crisis, having to learn to advocate for and attend to the needs of his daughter and her sister, and to deal with other families similarly challenged. Doing this required a whole identity shift which resulted in significant personal learning:

> I think I came back with a much deeper level of maturity and a substantial resolution of what I described before as imbalance driven by unfinished psychological drives and intellectual, ideological drives. . . . I had a much better balance on those issues as a result of being forced to do some very significant personal learning and a couple years of therapy. I came back as a much more mature person, working much less out of a psychological drive, although it was still part of my basic identity.

Mark described this transition as movement away from a "reacting-against mentality," and toward an "acting-for mentality." This involved a shift of motivation away from a base of anger, and toward more love, compassion, and faith:

> I came out of that much more balanced psychologically, much gentler, much [more] able to embrace white men in their struggle, much less likely to trash white men. . . . [I was more able] to embrace and enter, because I could enter myself in a new way, so I could enter other people in a new way.

Mark believes making some kind of peace with our fathers and mothers is pivotal in this kind of transition.

Another event during this same time was a delay in being promoted. Mark was doing social science that was seen as "activist and not quantitative enough [or]

objective enough." Mark had to struggle with that stigma and come to terms with it, and in doing so realized the risks of being an advocate:

> I practice a form of social science scholarship that I think is fine even if it's not main stream. That's okay. It took awhile for that to be okay. It took a while to not see myself as not just deficient or inadequate, but different. It was a struggle -- to convert deficit into difference or to watch others convert our difference into deficit and then try and reconvert it -- the feedback on deficit -- into valued difference. Obviously that's part of what people-of-color and women go through all the time -- confronted with what the majority system tells them is a deficit, [they] try and articulate that into difference and a valued difference.

During this period, Mark actively built support networks outside the department and university, an action he sees as pivotal for white male activists. He received strong acknowledgment from these colleagues who respected him and his work, for the very same reasons his department did not.

Currently, Mark also has a number of "good, tight white male colleagues" in this work, from whom he receives acknowledgment. He feels it is important to find ways for white men to do this work without depending on those from other categories to do the education. One of the learning triggers he sees for white males involves tapping their wives and children as "an enormous window" into seeing oppression by getting in touch with the experiences of those close to them. He relayed a story of one workshop where the white men went home and did this, returning the next day angry at some of the realities of sexism of which they had not been aware. This process also allowed these men to pursue another avenue which Mark sees as invaluable: White males need to discover the sources of pain in their own lives and have a chance to talk publicly about these sources. Mark also considers it important not to allow white men to utilize metaphors like war and "there being blood all over the floor" in diversity work. Rather, he helps them

recognize that the conversation can actually be calm, civilized, and honest. He identifies this dynamic as "calling the fear"; he wrote a wonderful poem about this which illuminates this dynamic in both a humorous and serious light.

I was inspired when Mark suggested I ask what motivates white males to do this work, laying out the three different areas he sees: anger, love, and faith. He tied anger to righteousness; faith to hope, ideology, and vision; and love to gentleness and shared pain. He believes being able to flex and shift among these motivations makes the most effective advocate. He identified his own journey as moving from anger toward love and faith, citing love as part of the only way to really touch other white men. In speaking about faith, he sees this work as a long journey which is measured by the nature of the struggle rather than the outcome. Mark finds himself constantly learning how deeply different life is for people-of-color, recognizing insensitivity but discovering that it is difficult to fully comprehend "the pool of decades of pain and anger into which that pebble dropped." He wants to do more work on gender, sexual orientation, and class.

Mark notes that he is now at a third major transition in his advocacy. He is working toward training another generation on how to intervene on social justice issues. He wants to do this in the university, whereas much of his previous advocacy has been outside this work scene. He thus describes this transition as one of "coming out," facing the risks again of advocating on his home turf. He is a veteran of this journey and, because of previous transitions, he brings "wholeness and alignment" to the struggle as it relates to his core identity as an advocate. The students he works with will receive a powerful gift.

Dennis DaRos

(January 22, 1997)

Dennis DaRos, 53, is a consultant with the Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group (KJCG), a firm which develops high performing inclusive organizations. They are a strategic change firm. I interviewed him in his recently built home, a house full of beautiful wood and sunlight that overlooks a coastal bay near Brunswick, Maine. Dennis' lifelong calling has been to help people, initially through teaching and now through working with organizations to create more human systems.

Born in Brooklyn, New York into a blue-collar, Roman Catholic family, his father was a bricklayer and a "traditionalist," while his mother sometimes worked as a payroll clerk. He reflected that his lower-class background "keeps my feet on the ground" because "I'll never forget where I came from." Dennis described his mother as extroverted and gregarious and a "Shirley MacLaine of the 1940s and 1950s, 10-15 years ahead of her time." He never saw his mother attend church, but she "was into crystals and palm reading and spiritualism." He relayed a story which displays the impact his mother had on him:

> Saturday I went to confession, and I had my new sneakers on my bike. I went into confession and I came out and someone stole my sneakers. . . . I got home and . . . thought my parents were going to be really mad [but] my mother said, "well, whoever took them probably needed them more than you." I had two reactions. One was, "wow, I'm not going to get in trouble"; [the other was] "what the hell are you talking about . . . why are you making that person. . . ." I felt discounted, like those were my sneakers, you know. In retrospect, when I look at that . . . that's a pretty unique way of viewing. . . the haves and have-nots. Although we were pretty much have-nots in some ways. I think it was things like that. I must have got a lot of messages about "look at it a different way". "Think about the other person's perspective." "Think about where they're coming from." My mother was one of those people that would advocate for people that

were different.

Today, Dennis really enjoys working with lower level workers in an organization, like folks on the factory line, and others whom his mother taught him to respect.

In his teenage years, Dennis made choices about his schooling which led him to join the Marist Brothers, a Roman Catholic Religious Order of brothers for the next 10 years:

> There was a lot of stuff going on in public schools at that time in my mind's eye, and I did not want to do it, so I went to this Catholic high school where I thought I would get a better education. I met these Brothers and they impressed the hell out of me. They were my coaches . . . they lived in community so I could see the bond and connection between them. And I loved what they did. I mean teaching was always something I thought I would like. They became my heroes and so I followed. . . . I thought I had a calling at that time really, really, strongly from God to dedicate my life and, at that time, to work with kids, because that was the mission of the religious order that I belonged to. It was to teach kids and teach poor kids. So, that was my first [experience] of really being aware that I was called to do something higher.

Feeling called to do important work was a theme that continues through Dennis' life.

Dennis spent 10 years in the Order, including the last two spent teaching poor youth. There was a small percentage of gay brothers whom he remembers knowing: "I never had a real issue with it, ever. I never remember recoiling from it." During this time, he also remembers the racial awakenings of the 1960s. After 10 years, Dennis moved out of the Order and taught for 2 years on Long Island. He left the Order because he found the celibacy hard, as well as the lack of permanence, since kids were constantly coming in and out of his life.

In the early '70s, Dennis left his teaching on Long Island to become an assistant dean of students at Holy Cross in Worchester, MA. This is where "I

started my grounding as a trainer, because I did a lot of work with residence hall staff." He remembers wanting to be successful with gender issues in his work:

> I remember when I worked at Holy Cross we brought women into the college for the first time, an all-male college. . . . We had a class of about 20 or 30 transfer students who came. . . . I just remember wanting them to be successful, but I did not understand any of the gender dynamics that were going on.

After 3 years at Holy Cross, Dennis moved to Maine to become dean of students at Thomas College. There, he gained 4 years of significant experience in leading staff training and staff development.

In 1979, Dennis moved to Digital Equipment Corporation to become a management development trainer. He spent 10 years at their plant in Maine, serving as an internal OD consultant, working in personnel, and eventually becoming the personnel manager. He had no formal training in OD, but learned on the job. Through exposure to consultants, he found a calling in that work:

> I think as the personnel manager, hiring consultants . . . really turned me on to a life and an approach that reawakened, I think, a lot of my sense of calling. . . . I was fascinated by what they did and how they lived. And so I said, I want to do that. And so I left and I started my own business as a solo practitioner for about a year.

Dennis also joined NTL in 1989, which helped support his networking and continued learning. After a year as a sole practitioner, Dennis was invited to join the Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group where he has worked for about the past 7 years.

His work with KJCG was primary in catalyzing a major shift in his perspective from interpersonal to thinking and working at the systems and strategic levels:

> I think it was a big shift for me to go from interpersonally focused "helping people" to systems thinking and strategic thinking about change. I come

> from a therapy model. . . . My master's is in counseling and education. I know therapy really well. And that's some of how I did a lot of what I did. . . . My early education for residence hall staffs, listening skills, and conflict resolution and working stuff. That's why I think I gravitated towards NTL. . . . I think the shift that I had to make was that this was not going to be successful in organizations if you just come from an interpersonal model. That was big for me.

Through seeing others operate at this level, he came to value strategic thinking and systems orientation and moved toward that orientation, which helped him understand oppression.

> Understanding oppression . . . was a big one. I [had] never thought of that. You know, 10 years ago, I couldn't have talked about oppression, that we're in a system that seems to feed on itself and build on itself regardless of what we do. That was a big jump for me, [as was] the notion of the difference between individual, group and system. I mean, I couldn't understand as an individual, how [anyone could] think I was racist. . . . And yet, my colleagues would see me as a white man. I couldn't understand that. So, at a group level I worked to understand it. On a systemic level I understand it very well now. Until I made that shift I couldn't be successful.

Thus that last seven years have resulted in a much broader focus in approaching diversity and the elimination of oppression. It is work Dennis feels a strong connection to:

> Definitely it's a calling for me . . . it's about how do I help people be more human in this world. Because I feel like that's a gift I have to not only connect, but to be seen as very human and to help people to be real and authentic. And, you know that's how I frame a lot of it. And, some of it is about people not being treated humanly because they are different, or disenfranchised, or . . . they can't survive in an oppressive system. And so I see myself as being able to focus people on that and help them be different around it. So that's how I frame the work. And I think if someone would say to me, "would you do anything other than diversity work?" [I'd say] I do. I do team building, I do that kind of stuff. But, there's something about this work, about oppression and about oppression in this world that I feel very strongly about and I feel like even though I'm privileged in almost every aspect that I can think of , there's not a case of sort of social identity where I'm not one up. I live with people who are one down. And, I also know it could happen to me, depending on where I was, and so this notion of oppression is pretty powerful for me. And I would not do diversity work if I couldn't work and do oppression.

Six years ago, Dennis' son came out as gay, an event which took Dennis farther along in his journey as an advocate:

> Well, it took me to another place of internalization of this work. By that, I mean I thought that I was living inclusion until I had to deal with my own homophobia and my own struggles around integrating my son being gay and what changes that meant for us. So, I remember that clearly. It kind of like woke me up to -- I'm not quite as far along on this and, I assume on all the other dimensions, as I like to think I am. It made me more human, I think, to my clients because I could talk to people who were struggling with that issue and I [understood]. . . . I've been more real to them because I can not just talk about it -- I can talk from the heart on something.

Dennis spoke of the many people he knows of who reject their gay or lesbian children: "I bet it's above 90 percent." "The real core is, do you love your kid and does your kid feel comfortable being at home."

Dennis finds his relationships with other white males sometimes a struggle:

> I think my relationship with white men has been the most troublesome for me in some ways. I think that comes from the fact that I know a lot about connecting to men on a level that most men have never experienced and that comes from being in the Order. I mean . . . 10 years living with guys with no women around, where we basically did not have to act macho or do any of that. I mean we got close . . . and that's my model of what a relationship ought to be. So, when I go into the world, I never find that, or hardly ever -- it's rare. So, [to] most of my clients who are white, successful men. . . . I'm different.

Dennis has been in many sessions "where people thought I was either a person-of-color or gay, gay mostly." He isn't seen as a typical white male and people think "how come he talks about his feelings all the time, well he must be gay." He has occasionally found strong connections with white males in his work:

> Yet, some of my richest experiences have been with white men that have connected with me on a level they probably haven't done with anyone else before.

He did not identify any other white males as role models around diversity work, though he has some in the field of OD. He connects well with women, and his

closest working relationships are with people-of-color. Like others in this study, his relationships across categories of difference have been the most important in his development as an advocate.

He recalled that most of his learning and confrontation takes place in the context of safe relationships with others who are committed to him for the long term. In thinking about what facilitates white male learning, Dennis believes one must create a safe context:

> I do not think you can do the work with white men unless they feel safe, so I think it takes an enormous amount of stage setting and environment setting and they have to believe that it is safe to be here. And I think that it's through stories that white men will never hear [unless]they are feeling safe and their ears [are] open -- that they'll hear them and then be able to tell everyone and that's how the work happens.

He recognized a dynamic in some white males where "they are at some unconscious level playing a game around staying 'stupid'." He believes we have a fundamental responsibility to understand these issues: "It isn't just love or safety, it's accountability, to be smarter than you're acting." We need more white people to "just in general learn how to observe and learn about these skills and be more curious and question"; to move from debate to true dialogue.

Dennis sees his work on oppression as a calling, not just a job. "You're always working it, I think you have to." Still, he finds it isn't always possible:

> I always size up, what's this going to get me? I'm sure I collude all the time because it's either not worth it, or I'm tired, or I just do not think it's going to do any good, or I'm scared, or I do not know what to say. I just try as much as I can to [ask]: Is my voice going to make a difference here when I do not have the structure and the sort of the authority and the platform to do it, which I do when I'm working in an organization. . . . But I'm very concerned about people who do this work and turn off at 5:00 or 6:00 and do not live this. Because then I think it's a job.

Dennis does not see himself as an activist: "I do not see myself as I saw myself in the 1960s, going out and marching." He noted that his wife, Margaret, is more politically active than he is, mostly on gay and lesbian issues. He does not recall going through a stage of being motivated by anger in his diversity work, though he acknowledges anger at homophobic activists. More so, he comes from a sense of hope, love, and compassion. Indeed, he used the word "love" 33 times in our 2-hour interview. His presence incorporates expressing what he loves, bringing positive energy to his interactions. He drew on the philosophy that "those who are given, much is required." Dennis is driven by a calling to make the world a more humane place.

Rob Neal

(January 22, 1997)

Rob Neal, 45, is President of New Directions, a small consulting firm providing training, consultation, counseling, and mediation, based in Portland, Maine. I interviewed him in the living room of his Victorian-style home in Portland. After being brought up in Atlanta, Rob spent his college years being exposed to "the cutting edge of radical activities" through religious youth organizations. This exposure led him to a life path of social justice work.

Rob grew up with two older sisters and a younger brother in Buckhead, an upper-middle class section of Atlanta. He grew up Christian, though he currently describes his religion as Unitarian Universalist. He remembers at 13 that he wanted to be either a professional golfer or a New York Yankee. His parents were from the North, but they came to Atlanta for Rob's father's career. In describing his parents: "The message I got from them growing up was [that] everybody should be treated equally. In the meantime, we had this black woman maid working for us 2 or 3 days a week." His movement toward advocacy did not occur until college.

During his freshman year at college, Rob found many new connections:

> I was involved in a youth religious organization, called Young Life, where I got exposed to really the cutting edge of social activists. It certainly wasn't through where I was living, but it was indirectly through this organization. During my freshman year of college, I was doing some work for Young Life, in fact I was a student worker, and I met a couple of black guys who had started the African American Cultural Center in Jacksonville, Florida. These were older black men, probably in their 30s at that time, who were willing to spend time with guys like me and just talk, and discuss. This was 1969, '70, so it was like all the sudden, the world started to change in terms of what's out there.
>
> I was pretty much on a track to become a minister of sorts, either through Young Life, or whatever would happen. But Young Life had been this

> organization that had gotten involved, besides in sort of its evangelical efforts, had gotten involved in some urban, inner-city, black stuff, all over the country -- starting in New York. And I met a lot of these people, both black and white, who were involved in that. I was really lucky. I was in the right place at the right time because my particular Young Life minister leader was well connected to that group of people. They were all a good 10 years older than me or more. . . . I could list off a whole series of things that I got exposed to in the early '70s that dramatically changed my life. . . . I was encouraged by people to go out and explore. You know, go out and see what's different about the world besides this upper-middle class background that you have. . . . I was exposed to a place that I actually lived at for awhile -- used to call it a Christian commune or Christian community, in South Georgia -- a place called Koinonia Farms. Koinonia is about 3 hours south of Atlanta in Americus, Georgia . . . Habitat for Humanity essentially grew out of Farms. . . . The world just kept opening up from this sort of country club life I'd led, and all the sudden, boom, here's race, [and] here's many other issues: class, poverty. . . . It's like I got turned on. And it was a collection of people. It wasn't like I was out there on my own.

Rob was "captivated by social justice," and in the process, found both mentors and role models in the people who led the activities of Young Life, the African-American Cultural Center, and Koinonia Farms. He, unlike others in this study, seemed to have an abundance of other white males who were mentors, role models, and "fellow journeyers" working on social justice issues.

Rob eventually dropped out of college for a while. After living at Koinonia Farms, he returned to Atlanta and moved into an inner-city Christian activist community:

> There were about 25 of us, whites -- living in this all-black neighborhood in Atlanta, which was very poor. We were doing either street work or running schools for high school dropouts or a pre-school cooperative. The people who headed the community started an alternative school for kids who dropped out of high school, which later became a national program called Cities in Schools.

Rob eventually earned an undergraduate degree in counseling in 1974, followed by a master's in counseling in 1981. His initial counseling work was with court-mandated kids before moving to couples and families. This inspired him

to work on issues of domestic violence in the mid-1980s, and "all the while I was still very much involved in social justice issues. I wasn't being paid for it professionally, necessarily, but I was definitely involved in it." Rob was part of a collaboration in Atlanta which set up a foundation to provide seed money for social change projects, thus continuing his advocacy in new arenas.

His early exposure to social justice and his work in family therapy helped him understand how oppression works at a systems level:

> I've been fortunate to be around people all my life, informally and formally, who thought systematically, saw the bigger picture, saw the connections between things. And that goes way, way back, before I ever had any . . . therapy training. That was the way people were seeing the world and the roots that I was living and working with. So, that's been easy for me in terms of just understanding it. How you intervene on it is another whole process!

In the mid-1980s, Rob met Elsie Cross and began working for her consulting firm, a national firm focused on eliminating oppression in the corporate workplace. He continues that work along with his own consulting work. Shortly after making this shift, he relocated to Portland, Maine:

> I was married and I'm divorced now. But we wanted to get out of the big city. I had family roots up in New England, including Maine, and we just sort of did it. Here we are.

Rob has returned to family therapy work by teaching therapists about use of self and diversity issues. He has woven his way from social justice to individual counseling to corporate consulting and now finds himself "inching back" to continue to work at the level of individual change.

He is excited about creating a book about white males:

> The basic idea here is to present a book of alternative white-male role models and heroes. The theme is breaking rank. I'm not looking for saints, but just white men who in some aspect of their lives, have veered off

> from the usual expectations and pressures that most of us were socialized to follow.

He talked about why he wants to write:

> It's driven by my need to both legitimize my own personal journey in life as someone who has broken rank quite a bit, and for young, white men coming up to say: "Here are some alternatives for you." Not that necessarily the traditional ones are bad. If that's your choice, go down that road. But here are some alternatives and I do not think that's clear enough. I may not have a lot of material wealth to show for what my life has been about: I live way below the means that I grew up in. But I have many other things. So, I know that's a personal motivator for me in this particular project -- to add some sort of legitimacy to what I'm calling the breaking-rank way. So, I think there are external motivators, but the developmental process becomes more personal. I'm motivated by having two sons, aged 10 and 13, and by the other sons that are out there.

Rob described his current learning edge:

> I guess what pops into my mind is the piece around how, as a white man, can I be doing this type of work, advocacy in some form and feel good and powerful and strong and things like that? That feels like a difficult piece. I think I've made some real progress the last few years on that. I alluded to it earlier around when white men are doing work with . . .women-of-color or men-of-color or white women on these issues -- you're colleagues, you're working together, etc. How do white men grow, me as a white man, grow to the point in that collaborative process of feeling like a full-fledged peer. . . . I've noticed [that] a lot of white men who do this work, tend to hold back. . . [they] sort of make themselves small: diminutive in the face of these powerful people-of-color or women. I think there's developmental piece where white men have to learn a lot and be powerful without being dominating and oppressive, and that's a tough piece. That's a life-long trek, I believe.

I asked Rob where he found the emotional safety required to gain awareness and move toward advocacy:

> I think some of the safety clearly came from that I was never alone in this process. I always felt like I was amongst friends who were also involved in similar activities. When you're living in . . . a community, a commune-type thing, you're all sort of doing that. But even without that sort of structure, I have had a whole number of fellow journeyers who were exploring and learning and pushing the limits on some of these issues and also going through a lot of this themselves. So, that provided a lot of safety.

He sometimes found people who were doing social-justice work who were self-righteous. He had to sort out their feedback based on their motivation:

> Why are they giving me this information? Is it feedback from hell, or is it built on our working relationship and a mutual care and respect for each other? [If it's the latter,] then it seems to work pretty well.

Rob sees being challenged as part of this work.

Rob believes white males need to recognize their personal investment in creating change and changing themselves. He identified himself as an advocate in thinking, feeling, and passion, and noted that "the real test of advocacy is the behavior demonstrated in an interactive environment with other people, when it's your turn at bat, so to speak, in whatever situation you're in, personal, professional or community" Rob has made excellent use of his many learning experiences, and displays his advocacy in many different arenas, passing the behavior test that is at the heart of advocacy.

Michael Burkart

(January 26, 1997)

Michael Burkart, 50, is an organizational and diversity consultant living in Amherst, Massachusetts. We talked in his home, which is located on a wooded street a few miles from the town center. I was struck by how much Michael has read about cultures and history: His strong intellect complements his passion for addressing oppression in organizations and communities. Michael's boyhood exposure to a tough, macho culture sensitized him early to issues of exclusion and power. This experience was later complemented by exposure to cultural and class differences present in third-world cultures.

Michael was born in Los Alamos, New Mexico into a middle-class family. As the oldest, he has a brother who is 3 years younger, and a sister who is 8 years younger. His father, a strong Catholic of Irish and German descent, was a scientist at the local government laboratory. As an adult, Michael would come to learn of the Protestant persecution of Catholics which his father and grandfather had experienced: "Somebody burned a cross across the street in Newton, New Jersey, from my grandpa [and] my dad's house, because my grandfather was a prominent Catholic." Michael's mother was Italian, and he remembers a particular trip to New Jersey:

> I must have been either 6 or 9 -- we were back visiting New Jersey and driving around some exclusive area, and I heard the adults who were in the back seat talking about how they do not let Italians live here. And I was like what, what?

Though exposed to religious and ethnic persecution, back in Los Alamos his family lived in a nice neighborhood: "They call it the hill. People who live on

the hill. . . . Back in the '50s and early '60s, it was the wealthiest part of New Mexico." Even in this setting, though, Michael stated that "living in Los Alamos, you knew growing up that there were different kinds of people." He remembered always noticing Indians selling things along the highway. " I was attracted by it, but did not understand it." Michael talked about a visit to the home of a Spanish janitor who worked in his father's lab:

> I really was unaware that there was heavy class/race stuff going on. But I remember going down to visit him and he had a whole different kind of life. Adobe home and the chickens and all. . . . I remember the turkeys attacking us. Now, this was exciting, but it was not where I lived. So, I knew that there were a lot of things going on, but they were behind the class wall.

He also remembered learning from TV:

> I remember we were watching . . . it was, of course, all in black-and-white on TV, but they were showing the concentration camps [which] I had never seen before, and I was really impacted by that.

Michael continued to have experiences which sensitized him to power dynamics. He remembers a specific experience of witnessing violence when he was growing up:

> Well, I've always been sensitive to exclusion. . . . I was always bothered by it. When I was a kid, I remember, I must have been in 2nd grade coming back from school, and I realized that on the side. . . . going down into a gully, these kids were having a rock fight -- three or four boys. I think there were three of them, and for the life of me I did not understand violence. Not that I did not get into fights with kids, but it was so raw. And I remember going down and I asked the kids, What the hell's going on here? And I think the energy kind of went away at that time, to tell you the truth. Now, this is grammar school, so they looked old. I was in 2nd grade so they couldn't have been more than 5th at the time because they weren't much bigger than me. It was horrifying in a lot of ways. And there wasn't really anybody to process that with. . . . But I knew early on that you could be on the wrong side of the power curve.

Michael found it challenging to be with tough boys because he was small:

> I was a slight kid because I had allergies so I never weighed a whole lot. And I knew that for the boy stuff, my only chance was to fight with my

> fists, but I did not have enough behind me in stature to make a difference. But I knew that the way boys work things out is that big is dominant. So that was clear to me that that [was] a fact of life.

His dreams at this age were shaped by his exposure to the fighting culture of boys and men: "If my eyes hadn't changed, I knew from age 5, I was going to be a fighter pilot. . . . I knew about the Green Berets before 99 percent of people in America did." Michael's lessons from being around dominant boys only intensified when he moved to what he described as one of the toughest towns in America.

When he was 9, Michael moved to Syracuse, New York and began fourth grade there. His exposure to raw, physical, male power continued:

> It was a rough town. The social intercourse for boys was fighting. And sucker punching was a fine art. We had a verb for it -- to Jap somebody -- he's got a good Jap, or something. So, that was hard for me because I'd been taught. My parents were very naive in a lot of ways about . . . working-class life. I think the culture was more that way, even though the kids were from families that were at least lower-middle or middle income. . . . It's not rational -- you just bash the guy. But I never could get into that. I'd always have to wait to get hit first. But I knew a lot about fighting. And I knew when I walked at night I had to have shoes I could kick or run in, and I knew [that] if a car [stopped], there could be a group that could get you. And I remember, in 6th grade, the bullies in my class fighting one of my friends. . . and the humiliation and shame of not being able to intervene. . . . I started 4th grade there and went through high school. It was a very macho, homophobic place. So, anything that wasn't like that, I learned, through a lot of embarrassment, that you hide. I knew when I left there I was never going back.

Michael was thus exposed to strong male peer pressure toward violence.

When Michael moved from Syracuse, he went into the Catholic seminary for 6 years. The school was based outside Chicago, with parts of the program based in Massachusetts and New York. He ended up leaving the theology program after the first year, and eventually left Catholicism, but before leaving the seminary he was involved in some international experiences:

> I did this thing in the end of my freshman year. It was this Catholic thing called Amigos Anonymous where kids from Catholic colleges in the US and Canada were coming down to Mexico -- like a mini-Peace Corps thing -- the priests in all these places would set you up to do stuff. That really confronted us and forced us to acknowledge we weren't going down to help them: we were going down to learn for ourselves. That was a very heated thing. I remember all the turmoil around that. It was powerful living in a village where nobody spoke English. There were six of us gringos, the rest were all Spanish. . . . It was this poor state in Mexico -- Tlaxcala, 4 hours east of Mexico City -- and we had Indians who spoke Nahuatl, the original Aztec language, come down from the mountains barefoot. . . with donkeys and big old cans to get water. So, here's people living like they did 500 years ago at the same time. So, this was a real kind of mind boggler for me. . . . This would have been in '66. It made a big impression on me. I used to think everybody was just American with different skin and talked differently. And I realized then that if mankind washes their clothes in the river, they do not live like I do.

These insights had a powerful effect on Michael, and he continued to learn through the experiences of a friend who continued overseas work:

> He was with the left-wing, community-organizing group in Santiago when he was picked up, thrown in the stadium, heard the machine gun, and fully expected to be killed. So, I got a good knowledge of the way it really goes down. I did not understand then like I do now how much the US was involved, but I knew. . .the wealthy run everything in Latin America. I've since learned that it's no different here.

Michael's seminary work allowed him to see behind-the-scenes power dynamics and living styles throughout the world.

Michael returned to Chicago and was involved in "some stuff in the west side of Chicago which was all black." Some priests were doing community work there. "What I learned from that was stuff that really struck me, for instance, blacks were buying houses, but they couldn't get mortgages." They were stuck with a "contract house system," where "you pay this exorbitant rate, and [if you] miss one payment, you lose everything." He also noticed when he traveled to the neighborhood, there was this "terrific smell of plastic." "So, I began to see another side of life that I hadn't seen." He also saw how the police mistreated

those who confronted officials about the names of dead people who were included on the voter list.

Michael left the seminary in 1971 and moved outside of New York City to work at Lincoln Hall, a home for delinquent kids. He did not like the system there, "the school was run by a racist, ex-marine corps guy." From 1972-1976, he did drug rehab work in a nonprofit, followed by 2 years as a contract manager for the Department of Mental Health in Massachusetts. In 1978, he went to Boston University School of Education to earn his doctorate degree in what was then called Humanistic Education and Behavioral Studies. There, he ran into "OD people," and discovered the field of organizational development.

Upon finishing school he was part of a team consulting to nonprofits and agencies. Then, between 1984 and 1990, Michael was a half-time professor of organizational management at Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene, New Hampshire. Eventually, he served as acting chair between 1988 and 1990. During his Antioch time, he also consulted on the side. In 1984 or 1985, he hired a white woman colleague to work with him on racial issues with a client in the housing authority of a large, vibrant city in the South. This gave him exposure to new perspectives:

> I knew they had some race stuff they wanted time to work, and I did not know how to do it. So, I brought her in and I got to see her do it. And the concepts made a lot of sense to me . . . the institutional racism is the thing that really got me. Yeah, you know, you can be a nice person, but you're still riding on the system.

He began to understand the issues, but "I did not have a technology or a set of concepts about how to engage." As he was coming to understand institutional racism, his understanding of gender was still developing:

> I did not get the gender thing as well. Sixty percent of our students were women at Antioch in the graduate school. . . . So, there were times I knew things did not go well with some of the women. . . . We were doing [a] professional seminar, which was kind of like a t-group around what's going on, [with a focus on] professionally integrating all this stuff. The women were getting pushed around and screwed over. It just [got to] me. So, I would really ally with them about how to fight back, which I'm good at. But in many ways, in retrospect, I was teaching them how to fight like a man. So, there were a lot of women who appreciated that, but there were other women [for whom] it just did not connect. . . . That was because I was so into my male stuff. I did not learn that until much later. So, gender was not a high screen for me because I had had the experience because . . . I'd always worked on staffs that were half men, half women. So, for me, at the individual level, I was not giving gender its importance.

In 1990, he left Antioch and joined the network of Elsie Y. Cross Associates, Inc., where his understanding of gender dynamics grew:

> There were women in Elsie's system who would really hold me accountable around that. But at the institution level, I could see the practices were totally against women. I remember we did a 5-day thing, just us in Elsie's network, working on our own race and gender [issues]. It hit me that -- [she] said it -- "look, we have to be fluent in your world, but you do not have to be fluent in ours." What really struck me is actually they're more competent. So, in spite of my arrogance, they can do what I can't. So that was January '91. That had a major impact on me. And I saw women who had more guts than I do. [I] can't discount that. So, in a way, when it comes to courage, they have a lot more than [me].

Michael finds this network supportive of his learning. He treasures his colleagues:

> Part of what keeps me on the road is these colleagues. I've never had colleagues like this. I've had maybe two out of eight, but here it's a whole group and it's just very rich. There's no other word for it, the respect and the care and fun. Wherever we go, the limo drivers we use love to pick up our crowd because of the high energy and the fooling around we can do. . . [the] major compensation for doing this work is the people I get to do it with. As you well know, a lot of OD you do alone, which is always a down side. But if you're doing diversity alone, you're just getting drained. So, having that comradeship and the synergy is really critical.

Given this support, he says, "it still took me 4 years to get clear how to operate."

Thus, he believes this learning journey is not a quick process.

In asking Michael about white-male role models, he mentioned the work of Mark Chesler, Orin South, and Myles Horton. He also spoke of an older man at Antioch who was a strong role model and taught him how to enact participative management. However, his most important relationships have been across categories of difference:

> I'd say the people-of-color taught me more. . . . For me they've been role models. If you can show me the way. . . I've not had white male role models. I've had women- and men-of-color who were real clear role models and some white women who were role models. And given who I am, the women, both of color and white, had strong masculine sides . . . they had more guts and smarts than me, so they got my respect there. And then they do all this other stuff which I'm dumb as a stone about.

Michael's experiences have strengthened his compassion for white men:

> White men need a lot of support. I mean, they train us to be these monsters, and we're in a lot of pain. Now, it's tricky to get guys not to flip into their homophobia, so they can't deal with some of the stuff [that] we're carrying, but [that] we do not feel we can talk about. But I think there's a lot of room and I think some of that's down the pipe for me, just to do some more stuff with white men. . . . So, I'm moving from anger and competitiveness [with] white men, to a lot more compassion. You take anybody and train them the way we've been trained, and they'd end up like this.

He believes in learning through an environment of support: "I think you move fastest when you have the challenge and the safety." In thinking about his colleagues, "if they're people I trust, and I trust them if they walk their talk and they're authentic, people can really push me and I'll take it to heart." He learns from these friends "because I knew they did not have any agenda with me other than pushing me to live by my own values."

Michael sees his current growth edge as an effort to reclaim more of his feminine side:

> I had to learn that I have to give up some of this masculine and actually adopt more feminine on many levels that I've never dealt with. . . . I've got major work ahead of me around owning the feminine.

Part of this, for him, is being gentler on his body, which is more fragile from asthma and allergies then he would like. "I have to learn to treat my body as a partner and not get so pissed, because I have a very delicate body."

Michael brings a broad perspective to his diversity work, including questions of the spirit:

> I also think oppression is not going to disappear . . . as long as we as individuals are cut off from our own source, divide and conquer works. . . . We're not connected to the oneness. So, spiritually, if you do not have a sense of being with the all, you will always get a hierarchy in a nanosecond.

The environmental world has always had an impact on Michael:

> In Syracuse I spent a lot of time in the woods. . . . [I have] been very wounded emotionally by what [I have seen] happening, but I did not end up for whatever reason as an environmentalist. It's more the spiritual thing that was key. . . . That added to my depression, what I saw happening. Another dream I had in high school was to be a fur trapper in Alaska. But I also knew inside that . . .that was not my calling. That's old stuff for me. I had to be out in the world. But, anyway, it's been in the last couple years, really, that I've found a way to engage in a spiritual life that makes sense.

He also questions the limitations of capitalism in creating a just and equitable world.

In working with others on diversity, Michael focuses more now on reaching the people who are ready to learn: "Our work is to keep the pilot light lit, and eventually maybe the heat will come on." Some of his best work has been what he calls "stealth diversity," coming in to do OD and finding diversity issues arise to work before people's defenses kick in.

Clearly, Michael puts a high degree of passion into his thinking and work around diversity. He has kept working his own issues, which has helped him

utilize the resources he's discovered along the path: a broad base of exposure to issues, and strong, collaborative partnerships.

Joseph Potts

(February 3, 1997)

Joseph Potts, 54, is an organizational consultant with Elsie Cross & Associates, Inc. Joe focuses on diversity issues by combining his scientific background with organizational data analysis in order to help organizations gain insight into how people view things differently. I interviewed him at his home and at a local restaurant in his hometown of Canmore, Alberta, a small town nestled in the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

Joe moved into advocacy while on a quest to become a better manager for a large pharmaceutical company. In the process, he found colleagues whose mentoring helped him see and work with oppression from a systemic perspective. He has continued to collaborate with these colleagues in this work.

Joe was born in the small town of Kendallville, Indiana to middle-class parents of German and Irish decent. His hometown was segregated. He only remembers one black living there: a boy named Moses who visited for a year and a half as an exchange student from Africa. During college, Joe learned from his mother why the town was all white.

> I found out later [that] my mother was the kind of person that, if I would have ever used the term "nigger" in our house, which I wouldn't have, but if I would have, she would have probably had me hung upside down and . . . [pounded] my rear end, no matter what age I was. She just wouldn't have tolerated that. I came back home when I was in graduate school and I . . . mentioned to her that I saw black people in town. It was the first time I'd ever seen any black people there. I said, "What a surprise." She said, "Well, you know why there weren't any black people here?" I said, "No, I never did, because Fort Wayne was pretty close and there were a lot of black people there." And she said "They were never here because the locals wouldn't serve them in any of the restaurants in town, and none of the hotels in town would serve black people." This is in Northern Indiana. So, they couldn't find a place to stay to apply for jobs. I said, "How do you

> know that?" She said, "Your uncle ran a grocery store, you remember, well, they all had an agreement." Now this is my mother, who at the individual level wouldn't have allowed anything, [but] at a systemic level, [she] turned her . . . head.

Joe speculated that his mother lived this kind of individual/system dichotomy because she did not know how to raise the issue or effect change.

In his childhood, Joe had a traumatic experience which he remembers as an early trigger on his journey:

> I guess the earliest trigger that I can remember [was when] my father died when I was 13. He was a pretty young man -- he died of cancer. I remember feeling so different from all my friends, all the sudden, because they all still had fathers and I did not. And I hated that feeling; I just hated feeling different. I knew it was in me, but I also knew it was in them. . . . I got treated different for awhile while everybody was sort of being careful.

Joe also remembers learning to fear crossing in front of the Catholic church in town because somehow he got the notion that "the Catholics might grab you and convert you, make you do something." He had Catholic friends, which he considered exceptions, but he remembers "something was wrong with being Catholic," and he often crossed the street so he wouldn't walk right past the church. Joe also remembers he and other kids making fun of people in town who were different:

> In an all-white community, I guess what you do is find a different way to distinguish who's good and who's bad. We had a bunch of people who came from Kentucky, who lived up in the hills in Kentucky, what we called hillbillies. They worked mostly in the foundry, did a lot of hard physical, menial labor, made good money, and sent it back home. They'd usually work for 2 or 3 years and then go back home and live down there. We used to make fun of them about the way they talked, [about their] poor education, [about] how stupid they were. You did not want to go down to that side of town because the hillbillies might get you -- you know, all that ugly kind of stuff.

Thus, Joe's childhood contained events which made him feel different, such as his father's death, as well as participation in perpetuating stereotypes and making fun of others.

In 1960, Joe attended the University of Purdue where he studied engineering before changing his focus to experimental psychology. He remembers there were about 50 blacks on campus, mostly athletes, out of 20,000 people. He joined a fraternity that was unique:

> I joined a fraternity that actually recruited black kids, had a couple of South American kids, had a couple of Asian kids, had any number of Jews. . . . You know, I never thought a thing about it. To say I was interested because of who they were recruiting or who was in the fraternity would not be true. I just liked the people I met. . . . I did not even realize that they were different.

One Christmas, he brought home a Japanese friend who was from Hawaii and could not afford to go home over the holidays. His mom was happy with this, but later found out that her friends were not. As Joe describes the event:

> She said, fine, bring him home. So, I took him home with me. We had a great time. And I remember being floored when I came back at Easter and my mother told me what a bunch of her friends had said. . . . I guess they were still fighting WWII in Kendallville in 1961. I did not get it. . . . I just washed it off and said, "they're stupid." I did not defend him, did not advocate, just thought, how stupid.

Another eye-opening event occurred in graduate school, when a female office mate could not get a successful professor to be on her committee:

> She wanted desperately to work with this guy who was probably the best known professor on the experimental psyc faculty. And he wouldn't let her. And I knew about this but I never paid much attention to it. I'd been in graduate school for 2 years and I finally asked her one day . . . why she wanted to work for him, and why he did not. She couldn't even get him on her committee, let alone have him be her main professor. She said to me, "He doesn't like women." I thought, well, that doesn't sound right. Well, it turned out that there were no bathrooms in the labs that he had . . . so he liked to be able to stand there and pee in the sink. He did not want a woman around, walking in and out the way graduate students do. So, it was true, he did not like women. Well, somehow out of my sort of asking around about this, eventually I get this data. And I remember thinking to myself at the time, how stupid. Now what I did not realize until many years later, as I think back on it, here [was] a woman who was very talented, very bright, and was deprived of being able to do the kind of study she wanted to do. I do not know whether that made an impact, but theoretically it could have

> made a huge impact on the kind of research, the kind of grants she could get, who she could be connected with the rest of her life, to the extent that she was going to continue to research, and all because he wanted to pee in the sink. So, it . . . struck me enough to remember it.

Joe graduated and went to work for Searle Pharmaceuticals in the Chicago suburb of Skokie. He was a "hot-shot young comer" at Searle because he published 30 papers in the first 3 or 4 years he was there. A few years after he began, he had some rapid turnover in his staff from which he pulled pivotal learning:

> First . . . a white woman, and then a black woman . . . came and left within months of starting to work for me. When the second one left . . . I asked her, why are you going? And she said, well, personally you're nice enough, but you're just awful to work for, just terrible. I said, well, why? She said because you're always meddling and fussing and trying to tell me how to do stuff. You do not trust me and I can't work for somebody like that. Oh, shit, I said. Well, just then I hired a . . . black man and a black woman and I started going through a training program which was sponsored by NTL -- and it dawned on me that people actually did know something. . . . About this time, I started to learn that if you involve people and tell them what you want to do, they'll help you figure out how to do it and you can do it better. And stuff started to magically happen, things that I never could have appreciated.

At the same time, Joe was exposed to more examples of oppression through the lives of his staff:

> Johnny was his name, he used to come in late every now and then. I wasn't a particular stickler for time, but one time I asked him, I said, John, I think that's . . . the second time this week you've been late by . . . an hour. He says, it's because the police stopped me. What? Yeah, he said, when you get to Skokie if you're black and you're driving a nice car, they tend to look at you suspiciously. I said, what? I believed him, but I did not do anything.

Simultaneously, Joe became involved in setting up the testing of street drug samples for anonymous testers because street drugs were getting poisoned. "So, I was perfectly willing to go out and be an advocate for something like this, but it

never dawned on me that I'd do anything about John . . .being stopped because he was a black man."

Joe used his time at Searle to build his management skills. He moved from being a researcher to running a matrix, and eventually headed up development. During this time, he continued his training with 3 years at the Gestalt Institute of Chicago, and a year and a half at the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland. In doing a workshop, he met a colleague, who invited him to join her in doing gender workshops. Later on, he also met Elsie Cross in another workshop, and eventually, while still at Searle, began to work with her company on race and gender workshops for a large organization in Tennessee. Meanwhile, he began to gain insights into issues of oppression at the group and system level:

> I started to see that it wasn't just at the individual level -- that there was something else going on. So, I would take these insights back to my organization because I was still working at Searle and I . . . [would] think about [them.]

One of the first times he remembers exerting influence and beginning to advocate, was when there was a position that opened in his organization. They wanted someone with strong team skills and there were three candidates. The one with strong team skills was an African-American woman, but they weren't going to hire her because her grade average was lower.

> I finally said to a guy who reported to me . . . you're right, you can do whatever you want. But I want you to know this, if that woman isn't made an offer given what I have said to you, I'm going to hold you accountable for not meeting affirmative action goals. And that will cost you. Now, it's your choice, you're right. You can hire her if you want to, but this is the consequence to you.

He later found out that "it turned out that one of the pieces of the investigation [was that] yes, she had a straight C average, [but] she also was a single mom and worked full time while she got her degree."

It was in this period that he became an advocate:

> I would say probably the place I turned a corner around beginning to be more of an advocate would have been 1979, 1980. Somewhere in there would have been when I really got it in me in a way that said: This is something worth fighting about.

At the same time, he recalls the chairman of his company saying: "I do not care what our logo says, our real objective here is to make money." He began to find his desire to stay dwindling:

> I remember . . . saying to myself, when I die, do I want to say that how I spent my life was helping this organization make more money? Because I was convinced that what I was doing at this point was helping them make money.

Acting on his desire to move, he landed the position of president of NTL when it opened in 1983. There, he arranged to have unpaid time available to continue to do race and gender work, and also worked hard on those issues within NTL. Through his race and gender work, he "got quite familiar with levels of system." Within NTL, he hired a number of black colleagues to fill key positions. These colleagues were willing to confront his behavior, thus providing Joe with essential feedback. Speaking about one particular colleague:

> When I hired her, part of the contract was, I'll work [with] you if you'll help me see how white men operate -- if we can have that kind of dialogue. . . . I'm not necessarily going to tell you I agree, but I want to hear it.

These arrangements worked well, contributing to a vibrant learning environment for Joe and his staff.

As any advocate does, Joe still finds himself surprised when unpredictable events occur, such as the following incident which happened while he was buying a cup of coffee in Bethel one day:

> [The server] poured the coffee and said, do you want cream or sugar, and I said, no I'll just have it black. Ah, he says, hot and black, just like you like your women. Well, somebody could have knocked me over. I was so floored that this little old white guy would say something so outrageous -- I was so unprepared for it that I did not respond. I did not dump the coffee upside-down. I did not throw his money back at him. Nothing, you know. And to this day it haunts me.

Asked whether he's had any white-male role models for this work, Joe's response was "Never, never." He knows of the work and writing of Mark Chesler and Clay Alderfer, but he does not know them. Joe considers four or five close colleagues, who are men and women-of-color and one white woman, to have been the most important influences for him. I asked him how he experienced their challenges and confrontation:

> I think it's fair to say, yeah, I got challenged. In some ways the challenges always came out of a relatively supportive place. I got plenty of feedback about things that were inappropriate. . . . I would say the most effective challenges came from the people that were most supportive and probably vice versa -- the most supportive people were also challenging.

He finds his anger toward other white men still present, but diminished:

> I spent a lot of years really being angry at white men and sort of up on my own soapbox about how good I was and how stupid they were. And I still find myself being really angry sometimes with white men. But I think as time has gone on what I realize is that we are so deeply, as my son would say, psychologicalized, around our dominance, and our importance, and the arrogance which isn't seen as arrogance, that it's very hard work to undo your own work, and then to begin to change the system. . . . So, I think part of what I decided, some time ago, was if you hang in there and at least treat people with respect, even though I get angry and sometimes say to them, you know, you are the problem . . . I say that in a way that it doesn't just piss them off and alienate them about doing anything.

The last 4 years, Joe has primarily worked on analyzing diversity-issue data for organizations. He has found that using the data has helped because it's "a structure for me to talk to white men, without having to be on a soapbox, which I know in my heart doesn't do me any good." He feels more angry at white women sometimes "because I see them as being probably behind white men -- the second biggest reason that stuff doesn't happen, [is] that they subvert the system." Reflecting overall, "I think I have more compassion than I used to have. I still do not see myself as a very compassionate person, but more than [I] used to be." Joe's approach does include humility: "I've often said to people, you know, when I do work with you, the thing you can believe is that I've made every mistake that you've made."

Joe lost his sense of hope when the verdict was read in the Rodney King trial:

> So, I hear the verdict and I'm really distraught. Because this is all white people. This is my folks who are saying folks like me aren't guilty just because you beat up some motorist. It took me about a week of having this just fester in me. I just felt sick. At the end of it I said, you know, in a way this is very helpful, because the truth of it is [that] there really is no hope. What I realized was that I kept hoping that if I did enough, or if other people did enough, then things would change. What I also realized was that just because I do not have the hope doesn't mean I do not make the effort. Hoping, or believing it's going to change, is really irrelevant around doing whatever work you have to do. So, it was very interesting because I had attached the effort to hope of change. And I think part of what pissed me off more than anything else as I did the work was, I would put all my hope in there. I'd work like a dog, and not much would change, and then it'd leave me angry.

As a result, Joe continues to advocate but detaches his work from expecting certain outcomes:

> I just know that if I'm going to do myself the way I think needs to be done, and if I'm going to walk my talk around what I believe, then I need to do this work. And if nothing changes, then nothing changes.

In defining himself as an advocate at the beginning of our interview, Joe struggled because he knows he does not live in a very diverse place:

> So, yeah, I think I'm an advocate, but I think I've in some ways taken the easy way out. I can do it when I choose to do it. Also, I've chosen to do a lot of it in the last 4 years through data and confronting organizations with information about how people see things differently.

However, Joe has made his mark on many organizations, both as an executive and a consultant. Today, with the wisdom of a more detached view, Joe continues to influence individuals and organizations through his "virtual advocacy" efforts.

Patterns Within Thick Descriptions

This section provides an analytical link between the individual thick descriptions and the themes which emerged from this study. The emerging themes themselves are elaborated on more fully in the next chapter. This section summarizes initial patterns of commonality and difference which emerged after comparing and contrasting the preceding thick descriptions of the advocates' journeys. At the risk of simplifying the advocates' journeys, I have summarized the links between journeys which comprise the most important themes. The patterns listed below are more simplified than the detailed lifeline charts and index cards of patterns and themes used to do the analysis. Nevertheless, this section serves to assist the reader in linking patterns between the individual stories.

Early Context

The first patterns tracked between thick descriptions revolved around general background, such as religion, class, and family upbringing. Religion played a variety of roles for different advocates, ranging from no impact, to being a window into oppression, to being a major educational pathway. Four advocates, Brazzel, DaRos, Neal, and Burkart, all grew up Catholic. Alternatively, Razak came from a Methodist background, whereas Olson and Potts were raised Lutheran. Chesler, in contrast, grew up Jewish and became sensitized to persecution partly through his religion. Burkart also experienced persecution of his Catholic religion, primarily against his parents and grandparents, while Potts remembers suspicion against Catholics growing up. Finally, religion was, for DaRos and Neal, a major educational pathway: DeRos was a Brother for a time, while Neal was in a Christian activist community. I am only aware of two

advocates for whom religion changed (Brazzel became a Pantheist, and Neal a Unitarian Universalist), though I suspect religion may have diminished in importance over time for some advocates.

Turning to class, all advocates currently see themselves as either middle class or upper middle class. Most experienced themselves as staying in the same bracket, or moving upward in class. Both Olson and DaRos were raised in lower class contexts and moved into middle and upper middle class contexts, respectively. In contrast, Neal began in an upper middle class context, but currently lives a middle class lifestyle. Burkart and Chesler have remained in the middle class, while Brazzel and Potts have moved from middle class to upper middle class. Essentially, all of these advocates live today in a middle class world. Most considered class as an important and often unmentioned aspect of diversity. Those who shifted their own class learned from this experience.

Patterns varied with regard to other aspects of family background. Presence of siblings varied from Chesler's experience as the only child, to most others having multiple siblings. One clear pattern was that all advocates were married, with the exception of Neal who had recently been divorced. Correspondingly, all have raised or are raising children. While the impact of being married may have been a source of support for many of the advocate's journeys, this dynamic was not explored in the interview. Chesler did acknowledge this support for his journey from his wife. The impact of having children appeared to have been to raise the importance of helping to create a just world. The importance of teaching their children positive values around diversity was mentioned by Razak, Potts, and Neal, all of whom have young children. Reflecting on parental impact, three advocates

remembered reacting to negative role modeling toward diversity from their fathers. By the same token, Razak remembered his mother telling him not to date black girls, while DaRos and Potts remembered their mothers as modeling values of inclusion and equity. Still other advocates, such as Olson and Burkart, recalled witnessing discrimination against others in their childhood. Thus, early background created a context for advocates to learn, either in the moment or through later reflection, about discrimination and diversity.

Close Contact with Difference

At some point, all advocates found themselves exposed to people who were different then they were. For Razak, this happened through Peace Corps volunteer work in Iran and later work in Washington, D.C. Similarly, Burkart traveled through Mexico. Neal was involved in college activist groups which were racially diverse. Chesler was involved in the civil rights movement. Brazzel found that his work with government-run poverty programs brought him exposure to lower class. DaRos worked in inner-city schools. Olson first engaged issues of diversity in his classroom, while Potts discovered diversity at work. For Brazzel, DaRos, Burkart, Olson, and Potts, organization development training also led to work with a diversity focus, which created a rich learning environment for them. Neal and Chesler seemed to head directly into diversity-focused work, while Potts, Burkart, DaRos, Olson, and Brazzel entered diversity work through the field of organization development. In contrast, Razak entered diversity work through the fields of management and intercultural training. It appears that all advocates understood the systemic issues of oppression only after diversity and oppression had become a specific focus for them.

Readiness for Learning

A number of aspects surfaced as critical for some advocates in their journey to advocacy. These aspects included being ready to focus beyond self, gaining core values and/or an intellectual framework, and building a systems perspective. In reflecting on why they did not move toward advocacy sooner, Brazzel recalled being focused on his own career success. Chesler noted that developing an intellectual framework was an important step for him. Razak spoke of gaining clarity around his own values, after separating from his parental environment. Moving to a group and systemic perspective was catalyzed for Brazzel when he was treated with mistrust because he was a white male. All advocates found that coming to see themselves as a member of the white male category was a critical step for them in illuminating the dynamics of oppression. Beyond Brazzel's experience mentioned above, Neal's college activism, and Chesler's civil rights movement involvement, most advocates came to understand the white male category through immersion in diversity workshops or diversity work. Thus, systemic perspective came from being treated as a member of the white male category, involvement in diversity work or workshops, or exposure to broader social movements.

Lack of White Male Role Models

Most advocates did not have any contact with white male role models in the area of diversity. The exception to this is Neal, who was exposed to strong white male role models through his activist community involvement. It is interesting to note that he is, at 45, the youngest in this group of advocates. Chesler acknowledged that he has close white male colleagues today. Potts was mentioned as a role model by Razak. Brazzel was mentioned as a role model by Olson.

Chesler was mentioned as a role model by Potts and Burkart. However, in all these cases there was no close relational connection established: it was more of a distant knowing about each other. Most advocates mentioned they had white male role models in organization development, but not in the area of diversity. For all advocates, with the exception possibly of Neal, their relationships across categories of difference were their primary source of learning and support.

Actively Building Support Across Categories of Difference

All advocates found themselves moving into a more active role of connecting and building relationships across categories of difference. These relationships played a critical role in the journeys of all advocates studied. Chesler called them "pivotal," finding these connections to be a strong source of validation. Brazzel, in a similar vein, found the friendships and colleagueship to be a source of affirmation, encouraging him to be vulnerable and take his learning to a new level. He found he was more comfortable with himself and thus more willing to let others see who he was. Burkart proclaimed this colleagueship to be the best part of doing diversity work. Razak found himself endorsed for his integrity. Potts went so far as to hire a woman-of-color and ask her to constantly challenge him on his white male assumptions and patterns of behavior. With support systems in place, advocates were even more open to experiences which would further learning: Razak spoke about the impact of returning to his high school reunion, while DaRos grew from his son's coming-out process. All advocates actively built relationships across categories of difference as a source of both challenge and support.

Crossing Over to Advocacy

The overall pattern was more of a general time period of crossing into advocacy rather than a specific moment. Most advocates first began advocating with regard to race (or both race and gender) before expanding to other dimensions of diversity, with the exception of Olson who began his focus on gender. Two individuals had personal transitions which catalyzed their journey; Brazzel experienced his vision quest, and Chesler responded to his daughter's bout with cancer. Still other advocates relayed key insights from foreign travel, specifically, Burkart in Mexico and Razak in Iran. Potts' advocacy began while he was simultaneously filling a senior management role in industry and working diversity programs as a consultant. Neal and Chesler began their advocacy during their social activist years. Working as staff in diversity initiatives was a major transitional time for many of the advocates, including Razak, Olson, DaRos, Burkart, and Potts.

Redefining Identity as an Advocate

Advocacy looked different in different individuals, but all eight of the men studied have in common an integration of understanding, work, and commitment to diversity issues at a deep level. Chesler defined his advocacy as "a core part of my identity." Olson said, "This work is very soulful. It is supportive of who I am." DaRos noted that "It's a calling for me." Brazzel stated clearly that "It's about living fully." This last comment strikes me as about being true to oneself and fully alive. Others focused more externally on the vision of social justice. Chesler says he no longer pays attention to the outcome but values the struggle itself. Potts similarly feels a loss of hope. Burkart mirrors these two, feels his job is to keep the

pilot lit until something or somebody in the future fuels that flame to spread. Most have moved toward compassion as a primary motivator. As Chesler summarizes, "The only way to really touch other white males is through love."

Current Learning Edges

The areas which advocates described as their current learning edges shared a number of commonalities. Potts and Burkart described similar moves toward what Potts identified as building patience, and what Burkart described as owning his feminine side. Brazzel and Razak both identified the challenge of keeping oppression integrated into OD, especially when working alone. Olson and Neal recognized the dilemma of being able to be a strong team member in a cross-race and gender team without reinforcing the dynamic of white male dominance at the group level. Razak, Olson, and DaRos also noted the ongoing struggle of dealing with old friends or family who disagree with the stands which they take as advocates.

Perhaps the most common challenge for these advocates is finding ways to connect more deeply with other white males. Razak noted that he wanted to find more ways to be more present with other white males. Olson says that how to be with white males in client systems is a growing edge. DaRos is challenged by this because he brings high expectations of relating with men from his experience as a Brother, yet he shared that some of his richest experiences have come from connecting with white males at a level deeper than any they had experienced before. This challenge, trying to create deeper and more authentic connection with other white males, is compounded by the fact that most advocates did not have other

white male role models, making it seem as if there is a separation from white males and white male culture.

Closing

The above names the key patterns which link together the journeys of the individual advocates in this study: building on one's early life context and exposure to difference by actively building relationships across categories of difference, lack of white male role models, and focusing on diversity to gain a systemic view of oppression. In the next chapter, these emerging themes and others are explored in greater detail.

CHAPTER FIVE: EMERGING THEMES AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will begin by covering the themes which collectively emerged from the analysis of thick descriptions. Later, I will return with implications for the literature on learning, change, and transformation, as well as literature on white males and diversity.

Emerging Themes

Themes which emerged in reviewing all the participants' stories include: early context, close contact with difference, readiness for learning, lack of white male role models, actively building support across categories of difference, crossing over to advocacy, redefining identity as an advocate, and current learning edges. Each of these themes are explored below. These themes are also diagrammed in Appendix E, a Map of Emerging Themes. This map serves as an example of the mapping techniques important in the generation of thick descriptions as well as emerging themes.

Early Context

The early context of each of these advocates' lives triggered learning and set the stage for later reflection. Important highlights of this context include parents, religion, class, and family background. Many advocates saw or heard their parents discriminated against, or saw or heard their parents discriminate against others. In their "youthful innocence," not yet hardened to discrimination, it struck them; they did not forget. In some cases, it was hearing the racist language of a relative. In other cases, it was learning about the persecution of their parents' religion or ethnic

heritage. Still others remembered looking down on others who appeared economically disadvantaged. Another advocate remembered his mother warning him not to date black girls. Some advocates seemed aware and able to name these prejudices at the time of the experience. For others, these moments served as memories to reflect on later in life when integrating values of inclusion and equity into their lives. Later experiences would come to give new meaning or context to what seemed ordinary during adolescence, such as employing a black maid while growing up in a wealthy suburb.

Religion also played a role in some advocates' formative experiences. For the one advocate with a Jewish upbringing, this served as a window into oppression. Religious organizations served as important educational pathways for two of the Christian advocates, one becoming a Brother and another moving into advocacy through involvement with a religious youth organization. A number of advocates noted that currently they do not practice a religion. Some have ventured from the religion of their upbringing toward one of their own choosing, including a Unitarian Universalist and a Pantheist.

Another factor was change in economic means. While all advocates currently are middle or upper-middle class, two saw their early backgrounds as lower class, and another as lower-middle class. Still another began as upper-middle class and currently lives as middle class. The other advocates have remained consistently middle class throughout their lives. In traveling to advocates' homes to do my interviews, I was struck by how many of the homes were in upper-middle class neighborhoods, three of which appeared to be recently built. In this sample, being an advocate and being recognized as an advocate for inclusion

and equity clearly can be done while living in an upper-middle class lifestyle. The advocates who shifted in class level were able to utilize this shift as a window into diversity issues. Many of the advocates commented to me that they thought class was emerging as a critical component in the future of diversity issues in our country. However, much of these advocates' work today is focused within the middle-class world of managers, along with some executives who may be upper class.

Reflecting on family background, advocates ranged from being the only child to having multiple siblings. They all declared themselves straight, and all are married, or have been married at least once. I noticed that all have raised or are raising children, leading me to wonder about the impact of parenthood in becoming an advocate. Some of the advocates talked about wanting positive white male role models for their sons and about how they have worked to instill values of inclusion and equality in their children.

Close Contact with Difference

All of these white males found themselves in contexts where they were exposed to differences. This occurred through Peace Corps volunteering, involvement with the Civil Rights Movement, college activism, and travel in third world countries. Other important sources included networks such as the NTL Institute and professional work focusing on organizational development or diversity. All advocates had a period in which they realized they were working more frequently with people from other categories, especially regarding race and gender.

I found an even split in tracking whether this close contact with difference came from the advocates' pursuit of organization development versus direct pursuit of diversity issues. Half of individuals in this sample entered the diversity field through OD, which speaks to the importance of organizations such as NTL that value diversity in their board structure, membership, and trainings. These types of organizations provide exposure to difference and diversity issues for those initially attracted to increasing their facilitation or consulting skills.

This variance in the pathway toward advocacy reflects a major dilemma in the field: Does one approach diversity as a specific issue to work, or does one weave it into a broader focus of cultural change? The variety of paths taken by these advocates suggests that a broad focus serves initially to attract others who may not otherwise move directly into personal and professional work around diversity. This suggests that both a special focus on diversity, and diversity that is woven into a broader framework of cultural change and enrichment, played roles for these advocates. Connecting diversity to broader issues served to draw more white males in this sample into closer examination of diversity issues. In examining the stories of those advocates whose journeys began with an OD focus, all came to understand the systemic issues of diversity after it had become a special focus for them.

Readiness for Learning

In asking advocates what prevented earlier transitions toward advocacy, it became apparent that at some point there was a certain readiness to move beyond a focus on self. Some advocates spoke of being too focused on their own career success to see beyond themselves earlier in their lives. Others talked about needing

clarity around "who they were." For some, this meant developing an intellectual framework, while for others it meant identifying their own values. There appeared to be a need for a degree of personal strength to separate from one's early context as well as from the prevailing white male culture.

Moving beyond the individual level in ways of knowing was precipitated for some by being treated as a group member, as when one advocate found himself treated with mistrust and suspicion while evaluating poverty programs. Other catalysts included both attending or staffing workshops on "isms" (e.g., racism, sexism), as well as connecting with broad social perspectives through civil rights and related activism. One important element of this shift shared by all advocates was their individual acceptance of themselves as members of the white male category. This was a sign of gaining a more systemic understanding of issues of oppression. It also signaled a move from either/or logic to both/and logic in seeing one's self as both an individual and a member of the white male category. While the timing varied widely across advocates as to when they made this adjustment, it was shared by all of the advocates, though it often took extended time to fully comprehend a systemic view of oppression.

Overall, readiness to learn was catalyzed by being able to move beyond self to a systems perspective. Also important to continued learning was the finding of sources of support to endure the challenges present in an intensive learning process. Clear patterns showed up around where that support system was built, which are explored in the next two sections.

Lack of White Male Role Models

One of the strongest themes that emerged in this study was the lack of other white male role models influencing the white men in this study. One exception was the youngest advocate, who had both white male peers, who were "fellow journeyers," as well as older white men who were strong role models. But even for this individual, these relationships with other white males did not eclipse relationships across categories of difference as the primary source of learning and growth. The other seven white males simply did not have close white male mentors who helped them learn about diversity issues. Although they were able to identify role models in the field of organization development -- some of the advocates identified other white male advocates who are in this study by their writing or by their style of working with diversity issues -- these were distant role models to whom they rarely reached out. Rather than rely on close relationships with other white males, most of them focused on relationships across categories of difference for support, validation, and learning. With advancing generations, perhaps this dynamic will shift to create more white male role models and mentors for upcoming white male advocates.

Some advocates eluded to a sense of competition with other white male advocates for the white male slots in coalitions formed across race and gender to do diversity consulting. While none felt themselves or others reacting in a competitive way, they indicated an awareness of who was being picked, similar to the atmosphere at a high school dance. There was a mark of regret shared from numerous advocates at not having had more connections with other white male

advocates. Overall, I sensed a degree of separation from other white males and aspects of white male culture in general.

Actively Building Support Across Categories of Difference

Another clear theme that surfaced was a transition from passive exposure-to-difference, to actively building relationships and support that strengthened connection to difference. This transition appeared universally for this group. Exposure led to actively seeking out and structuring more connection into their lives and work. The key change was the movement from passive exposure to increasing activeness in building continued avenues for learning and growth.

Beyond building exposure, these advocates actively cultivated relationships across categories of differences, primarily of race and gender. These relationships generated a strong source of support, validation, and affirmation. This, in turn, created the support systems necessary to engage in the challenges and confrontations required for the depth of learning essential to move toward advocacy. I cannot emphasize enough how strong an impact these relationships had in furthering their journeys toward advocacy. Advocates described these relationships as pivotal. They felt validated for the integrity they brought. This, in turn, allowed them to be vulnerable, to show who they were, furthering the depth and significance of their learning journey. A number of advocates described this colleagueship as the best part of doing the work they do. As one advocate put it, “Safety came from never being alone in this process.”

I found what I call the *challenge / support polarity* to be key in the advocates’ journeys. Advocates actively built support networks, allowing themselves to accept challenges as learning opportunities. Both support and

challenge were interdependent requirements for the learning journey that complemented each other. Because of support networks, advocates were more open to allowing the surprises in their lives to serve as teachers for them. This included a son's coming out, returning to a tenth high school reunion, and the hiring of a woman-of-color to continually challenge one's own white male assumptions. These advocates continually put themselves in challenging contexts in order to further their learning.

Crossing Over to Advocacy

Most advocates did not have a critical turning point. There was not a specific moment in time when they saw themselves becoming an advocate. Instead, their stories indicated general periods of time in which they began to advocate for inclusion and equity from a systemic viewpoint. Most began advocating on issues of race, later expanded to gender, and then eventually opened their spectrum to include other dimensions of diversity.

There were key personal moments in some journeys around issues unrelated to advocacy. Examples included a struggle with a daughter's cancer, and an individual's vision quest to overcome low self-esteem related to child incest. Though different, these transition points seemed key in advocates' maturation processes and, in turn, played key roles in building advocacy. The first example listed above resulted in the advocate engaging in significant personal growth work, moving him away from a reactionary posture of advocating against and toward a position of advocating for. His compassion for others while advocating increased. As he recalled, he was able to enter himself in a new way, and thus, was able to connect with others in a new way. In the case of the second advocate, his vision

quest led to a fundamental view that he had to give voice to what he experienced: His advocacy was born out of this insight. Still others remembered key moments of learning from external events such as travel in Iran and Mexico, or participation in college activism.

Redefining Identity as an Advocate

While words and signs vary, this group as a whole has woven advocacy into the core of each of their identities. Here are some of those words:

"It's about living fully."

"This work is very soulful. It is supportive of who I am."

"Advocacy is a core part of my identity."

"It's a calling for me."

Thus, advocacy has become an ongoing process: For the participants in this study, advocacy is a journey, not a destination. The way each advocate goes about this work is a reflection of who he is on his journey. Some motivations are internal, such as the empowering of oneself to live fully. Others are external, working toward social justice or a vision of a new world. The former indicates the need for strength to speak and to take action. The latter speaks to the necessity of being committed to a purpose such as the values of inclusion and equity. For these advocates, each of these two elements feeds and supports the other, creating growth through the ongoing process of advocating.

One of the advocates suggested I ask about the motivations of other advocates around three specific areas: faith, hope, and vision; anger or rightness; and love. I found the advocates seemed to have varying relationships with hope and faith. One said he had lost hope, while another no longer paid attention to the

outcome but rather had learned to value the struggle itself. One advocate sees his job as keeping the pilot lit amongst those ready to keep the flame, until something or somebody in the future fuels that flame to spread. Most advocates saw themselves as moving from motivation based on anger toward motivation based more on compassion. Some have learned to temper their anger so that it is a more productive intervention. In moving toward compassion, one advocate said, "The only way to really touch other white males is through love."

Current Learning Edges

Advocates expressed a variety of areas where they currently feel challenged. The difficulty of being with other white males stood out the clearest. It appears that this continues to be a challenging task. Some advocates talked of situations in their work where diversity projects failed partly based on their struggle to connect with the white males in the system. Most talked of needing to find new ways to make this connection. A few identified a pattern one called "dumbing down," where white males lose touch with the wisdom and common sense they have when the topic is diversity. The advocates spoke of the need to deal with their fear and believe in their own abilities, thus highlighting the need for affirmation and compassion, which these advocates themselves found primarily in relationships across categories of difference.

I mentioned earlier that these advocates in some ways separated themselves from other white males and elements of white male culture. Now the challenge appears to be how to reconnect with that from which they have separated. These advocates have had varied success in this endeavor through approaches founded on anger as well as love. One advocate identified a need for a sense of oneness, or a

recognition of how interdependent we all are in order to create a context where inclusion and equity appear as an obvious necessity. The challenge of connecting with other white males seems to remain as an unanswered question.

Another challenge highlighted was retaining a focus on elimination of oppression as part of OD work, both in personal practice and in contributing to theory development. Advocates spoke about their diversity work in mixed gender and racial coalitions, and the dilemma of being an equally strong member without reinforcing the group dynamic of playing the dominant white male. Yet another challenge mentioned was to train a new generation of advocates. Other current growth edges involved patience and owning their feminine sides, which, to me, involves owning the diversity within all of us.

Numerous advocates gave examples of family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues from whom they continue to be exposed to blatant prejudice. Their responses varied from withdrawal or avoidance to confrontation. Often, the contract to intervene as they would in a consulting process was not there, so the effort to challenge became stalled. What is apparent is that there has been no clear resolution, just recognition that this is an ongoing struggle. For those in this study, becoming an advocate does not take away the smaller battles.

Summary

The journey of these eight white male advocates thus began when they moved from their early context of upbringing to increased exposure to differences. Their advocacy began to grow as they actively built support networks across categories of difference in order to face the challenges of the journey. With this safety, their learning continued as they found more and more challenging contexts

to grow from. At some point, their sense of advocacy became redefined as a core part of their identity. They now see their journey as a continual process of ongoing action and reflection. Growing their advocacy has thus become a part of growing themselves.

Discussion Introduction

Having discussed themes which emerged from the experiences of the eight white male participants in this study, this section reconnects the results of this study with the literature reviewed earlier. Connections with learning and change theory are explored before revisiting literature on the topic of white males and diversity.

Learning, Change, and Transformation

A significant portion of my literature review on learning and change focused on closely examining Jack Mezirow's transformative learning theory. I was initially attracted to his work because his theory incorporated changes in awareness and consciousness, as well as the reexamining and shifting of previously learned assumptions. These fundamental aspects of his theory certainly proved to be true for the white males in this study. However, closer examination reveals several critiques of his theory, some of which are not original and were mentioned in the literature review. These critiques are identified and explained in detail below, at times contrasting his theory with the other theories of learning and change incorporated in my literature review.

The first aspect of his theory which did not fit this study is that his theory does not acknowledge the central role relationships play as key to all phases of the learning process. Secondly, I did not find the learning process of white males in

this study to follow the 11 linear steps of Mezirow's learning theory. Thirdly, I found his theory too focused on rational aspects of learning, leaving behind the many emotional components of learning experienced by the white males in this study. Finally, while Mezirow's theory is based on constructivist assumptions, his attempt to build a universal theory of learning is by definition not a constructivist orientation.

Relationships Play a Key Role

For the white males in this study, relationships across categories of difference provided both the context for learning and the support necessary to face the challenges inherent in learning about issues of diversity and oppression. In contrast, Mezirow believed the individual is the center of change: "We must begin with individual perspective transformations before social transformations can succeed" (Mezirow, 1990, p. 363). Mezirow did not acknowledge or articulate the central role one's social context plays in transformative learning. Thus, the focus on individuality in his theory does not resonate with my observation of the white males in this study. I agree with Clark and Wilson (1991) that Mezirow's theory uncritically incorporates the American values of individualism and autonomy. Collard and Law (1989) also were correct in noting that the social environment is unacknowledged in Mezirow's theory.

Regarding the importance of the social context of relationships in learning, research on the white males in this study supports two other groups of theorists visited earlier in the literature review. First, Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar (1995) addressed this directly when they recommend that we:

> decenter the individual and instead begin to view "relating" as the place where meaning is made. In other words, instead of seeing meaning

> centered in the individual's head, we should view meaning as occurring in our relatedness with each other. (p. 353)

This notion explains that it is the exposure to difference and relationships to people who were different that truly allowed awareness and meaning to shift in the white males of this study. Furthermore, Barrett et al. based their views on social constructionism, which focuses more on the social construction of reality rather than the constructivism's focus on internal cognition (Gergen, 1994; Pearce, 1995; Schwandt, 1994). Because of the importance of relationships in the learning process for white males, a theoretical basis of social constructionism may prove more illuminating than the constructivist foundation of Mezirow's theory.

Secondly, Benne also contrasted with Mezirow in stating that: "Self-patterns are sustained by norms and relationships in the groups to which a person belongs or aspires to belong" (Benne, 1985, p. 273). Benne's colleagues, Chin and Bennis (1985), stated this crisply by saying that, "Intelligence is social, rather than narrowly individual." This could explain both the shift away from other white males and traditional white male culture as well as the active shift toward building connections across categories of difference. The white male advocates were shifting their social context and relationships to those which supported advocacy and exploration in issues of diversity.

As I predicted in the literature review, those learning and change theorists mentioned above served well to extend beyond Mezirow's individual-centered theory to illuminate the important social dynamics at work. In addition, other seemingly unrelated theories may add to understanding these dynamics as well. For instance, it is interesting to note that one of the most effective ways of transcending culture shock in cross-cultural living is the establishment of a close

relationship with a colleague of the host culture (Weaver, 1986). In a similar vein, the white males in this study relied on close relationships outside of the white male category in their journey to broaden their knowledge beyond the world of white male culture.

Learning is Not a Linear or a Rational Process

The white males in this study had widely varied pathways to advocacy. My sense is they are closer to models of chaos and complexity rather than a theory of a rational and linear process. Mezirow's theory, however, relies on linear and rational assumptions. The linear aspect is most clearly demonstrated by his 11 phases of transformative learning. Below, this aspect is critiqued first, followed by an examination of a bias toward rationality.

Taylor, in his (1994) application of transformative learning theory toward understanding the process of developing intercultural competency, found a different process than Mezirow's phases of perspective transformation. I found all his adaptations of Mezirow's phases to apply to my study as well. He added an initial phase called "setting the stage," which corresponds to my emergent theme of "early context." He found Mezirow's disorienting dilemma phase to be impacted by factors he called intensifiers and muters. Related intensifying factors in my study include the presence of a support network, and an ego strength or readiness to move beyond the level of self in ways of knowing. Taylor found additional learning strategies beside self-reflection, that of experiential participation and utilization of friends. These strategies move beyond Mezirow's bias toward an individual focus and were strategies heavily utilized by the advocates in my study.

Finally, Taylor found the process to be nonlinear, with several steps repeating themselves.

In addition to Taylor's adaptations of the transformation phases, I found that Phases 4-10 do not necessarily happen in that order or as separate activities. Phase 9, "renegotiating relationships and negotiating new relationships," happened all throughout the advocates' journey and often set the stage for future cycles of the learning process. Mezirow's theory is more applicable to this study when the phases are seen as nonlinear elements of the transition process that interact with each other in a self-evolving order.

On the topic of a bias toward rationality in Mezirow's theory, Clark (1993) stated that, in Mezirow's theory, "rationality determines what is reliably known" (p. 51). This stems from his reliance on rational discourse as a validator of truth. An inherent assumption here is that rationality is associated with truth. Kochman (1992) identified Anglo culture as believing rationality signifies truth. He also noted, by contrast, that in African-American culture, the presence of emotion is seen as signifying truth. The white males in this study waded through a wide variety of emotions in their learning process. Their emotions seemed integral to the learning process, rather than nonrational elements to be filtered out. It is interesting to note that Mezirow defined rational discourse as reflection made public. I do not see reflection as purely rational, without emotion, and would find it more accurate in this study to drop the term "rational" and simply use the term "discourse."

Other researchers and theorists point to the need to include a broader recognition of emotion in the learning and change process. Taylor (1994) found other emotions present in the learning process, in addition to Mezirow's recognition

of guilt and shame. These included frustration, fear, loneliness, anxiety, and over-excitement. Results from my study would suggest adding anger, love, and a sense of hope. Clark (1991) also found that "affect plays a prominent role" in the transformative learning process (p. 145). Returning to the discussion of the importance of the social context for learning, behavioral scientists have well documented the impact of socioemotional needs in group dynamics and social interaction (Napier and Gershenfeld, 1989). All of these indicators point to the central role of emotion as a complement to the rational aspects to include in any model of learning and change.

Constructivists Do Not Believe In Universal Models

In finishing this critique of Mezirow's theory, I was struck by a paradox. On one hand, Mezirow clearly based his theory on several constructivist assumptions: "Meaning exists within ourselves rather than in external forms such as books" (1991, p. xiv). On the other hand, he was attempting to build a theory which serves as a universal theory of adult learning (and has published it in a book). He said specifically: "Transformation theory seeks to elucidate universal conditions and rules that are implicit in linguistic competence or human development" (p. xiii). But, by claiming a universal theory, he has placed his work into the positivist framework, in search of absolute truths that reside outside one's self. This mode corresponds to Habermas' technical knowledge and what Mezirow himself referred to as instrumental learning, specifically a focus on controlling and manipulating the environment. I find these different elements of his theory incongruent.

In resolving this incongruence, I do not see Mezirow's theory as universal. Rather, it is a theory closely tied to western cultural assumptions of rationality and individuality, and I encourage continued efforts to localize his theory to different cultures.

White Males and Diversity Literature

The fit between the literature previously reviewed on the topic and the themes of this study is briefly illustrated below, followed by a discussion of the unique contribution of this study. This section ends with questions for the future research of myself and others.

Current Literature

The current literature on this topic seems to fit well with the experiences of the white male advocates in this study. It should, since several of the white males in this study contributed key articles: Mark Chesler, Joe Potts, and Rob Neal. Also noteworthy is Alderfer's (1994, 1984) writing, which successfully utilizes intergroup theory to move issues of diversity and white males to a systemic viewpoint. More research and writing continues to build the critical mass of literature on the topic of white males and diversity and closely related topics (Cates-Robinson, 1996; Loden and Schultz, 1996; Powell, 1996; Scanlon-Greene, 1996; Thompson, 1996; Tschudy, 1997; Welp, in press). The Center for the Study of White American Culture examines whiteness, and also posts resources on their web site at http//:www.euroamerican.edu. Additionally, Rob Neal and Cooper Thompson are working to publish books that share the stories of positive white male role models with regard to inclusion and equity.

Regarding how white males learn about diversity, overall themes that were reinforced include the core notions of building increased awareness and moving to a systemic level of understanding diversity issues. These two aspects are quite interdependent. Understanding the systemic issues allows one to see oneself in a new context. But, to move beyond the individual level in ways of knowing seems to require a certain level of ego strength, confidence, and a relational support system that encourages the exploration. There is a theme of needing to penetrate the shell of denial, leading to reinterpretation of past experience from a broader perspective. To learn about diversity requires, for white males, a journey through a place of not knowing the answers. Finding ways to work through emotions as learning tools rather than blocks is another key aspect. One final note on these general themes is that it seemed to take most of the white males in this study an extended time to move to a systemic framework on diversity issues. The first step was on the level of awareness, followed by the building of professional skills to intervene in diversity issues from a systemic viewpoint.

Unique Contribution of This Study

The unique contribution of this study is in recognizing the importance of how actively these advocates built relationships, primarily across categories of difference, which served as support networks necessary to face the learning challenges on the journey toward advocacy. This relational aspect of the learning journey is not emphasized in the literature. The emotional safety within these relationships appears to have increased the likelihood that challenging moments result in learning rather than denial. Furthermore, the emotional safety from these

relationships contributed to learning beyond the context of these relationships as well.

In terms of related research, Chesler and Crowfoot (1996, 1994) have done the most extensive exploration of the dynamics of white males in multicultural coalitions. In discovering the critical importance of these types of relationships, I find their work of increasing importance. Scanlon-Greene (1996) found, for white males doing diversity work, the issue of establishing credibility of primary importance. He differentiated between individual credibility and group level credibility, attributed in this case to the white male group. His study revealed that white male diversity workers tend to start out with negative credibility at the group level, and work at the individual level to overcome this challenge. This may be one reason relationships across categories of difference are so critical. Many of the advocates in this study mentioned these relationships as a strong source of validation, affirmation, and support.

Closing Thoughts and Questions for Further Research

Seven of the advocates, who are between the ages of 50 and 60, believed that multicultural coalitions had been the major source of their learning. Meanwhile, the 45-year-old advocate had several white males who were mentors and role models regarding inclusion and equity. Perhaps the older advocates represent the first wave of today's white male advocates. Younger generations, such as my own, now have more older white men as positive role models. Perhaps less of our learning environment will be dependent on women, people-of-color, and others who have carried the burden in the past.

This research has served to develop my own advocacy on several fronts. First, it has been an avenue to demonstrate my passion and concern for this topic. Secondly, my development has been catalyzed by connecting with eight white male role models. I saw reflections of my journey within theirs, as I listened to them struggle with the same challenges that I face. This study found that these white males need plenty of support to face the challenges on this journey. Recent research into human consciousness recognizes the power of love, acceptance, and reason as more powerful than elements of force, such as anger, guilt, and shame (Hawkins, 1995). White males need to find better ways to affirm, validate, and support each other to create the safety necessary to transfer challenges received into positive growth and learning.

I would like other white males wrestling with these issues to experience the connection and support which I discovered in the process of doing this research. Therefore, I continue to be troubled by the challenge voiced by these advocates in connecting with other white males. There seemed to be an early separation in many of their journeys from the white male culture. Most advocates relied on women and people-of-color to support and challenge their learning. Many are still searching for a way to reconnect with white males as a group. It almost seems like a spiritual challenge to reintegrate and reclaim wholeness. Learning how to connect to other white males is an ongoing challenge for all white male advocates in this study. As one advocate said, “The only way to connect to other white males is through love.” How this happens, and how it incorporates the critical aspects of support *and* challenge, is still being discovered.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A: Operational Characteristics of Naturalistic Inquiry

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Appendix C: Interview Framework

Appendix D: Confidentiality Release Form

Appendix E: Map of Emerging Themes

Appendix A

14 Operational Characteristics of Naturalistic Inquiry which reflect naturalistic inquiry in operation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 39-43):

1. Natural setting. Because naturalistic ontology suggests that the context is crucial to both understanding and transferring notions about a phenomenon and because causation involves mutual shaping items, not linear strings of items, naturalistic inquiry takes place in the natural setting.
2. Human instrument. Because all instruments--human and nonhuman--interact with respondents and because only the human instrument can understand and evaluate that interaction, naturalistic inquiry uses humans as primary data-gathering instruments.
3. Use of tacit knowledge. Because multiple realities require expression both as a propositional knowledge and as intuitive or felt (tacit) knowledge and because tacit knowledge more accurately reflects values of the investigator, naturalistic inquiry argues for more legitimization of tacit knowledge.
4. Qualitative methods. Because they are more adaptable to multiple realities, because they reveal directly transactions between investigator and respondent, and because they respond to mutually shaping influences and value patterns, naturalistic inquiry depends predominately upon qualitative methods.
5. Purposive sampling. Because random or representative sampling suppresses the deviant cases and because it lacks the full spectrum of diversity, naturalistic inquiry opts for theoretical or purposive sampling.
6. Inductive data analysis. Because deductive data analysis may miss multiple realities, because it does not reveal and account for the investigator-respondent interaction, and because it is less likely to describe fully the setting, naturalistic inquiry supports inductive data analysis.
7. Grounded theory. Because a priori theory could not possibly anticipate the range of multiple realities which emerge from an inductive process, because a priori theory is based upon a priori generalization, and because the investigator needs to enter into the experience as neutral as possible, naturalistic inquiry leads to substantive theory which emerges--or is grounded in--the data and is responsive to contextual values.
8. Emergent design. Because what emerges as a function of the interaction between inquirer and phenomena can seldom be predicted, naturalistic inquiry allows for mutual shaping of the design.
9. Negotiated outcomes. As the inquirer reconstructs the human sources' construction of reality, additional interaction between inquirer and source about emerging themes and working hypotheses verify and confirm the meaning of the data.
10. Case study reporting mode. The naturalist prefers the case study means of reporting because it allows for multiple realities, reveals the investigator's interactions with site and source, openly reflects values, unfolds the process of mutual shaping and provides a base for generalizations.

11. Idiographic interpretation. A naturalistic inquirer tends to interpret data based upon the particulars of the case (idiographically) rather than based upon lawlike generalizations (nomothetically).
12. Tentative application. Because realities are multiple and different--shaped in many ways by the investigator, the time, and the place--the inquirer remains tentative about making broad application of findings.
13. Focus-determined boundaries. The inquirer sets boundaries to the inquiry by reference to emerging focus. The focus is often established by the overlap of multiple realities rather than by the preconceptions of the inquirer.
14. Special criteria for trustworthiness. Because the underlying philosophy and methodology of naturalistic inquiry remain inconsistent with conventional criteria of trust worthiness (internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity), the naturalistic inquirer uses analogous criteria which both support naturalistic values and the need for trustworthiness. These criteria are referred to as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

The principal investigator for this study is:

Michael Welp
3612 46th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55406
(612) 722-7610

I, Michael Welp, M.S., am a doctorate student at the Fielding Institute, Santa Barbara, California, in the Human and Organizational Systems Development Program. I am conducting research for my dissertation.

The purpose of this research is to study the learning experiences of white males in becoming advocates for inclusion and equity. This research is intended to document the learning experiences of white males and may be utilized in designing materials and activities that will help other white males become advocates for inclusion and equity

You were identified by a racially and gender diverse coalition of at least four practitioners / consultants in the field of diversity and organizational development as being an advocate of inclusion and equity.

Your participation in this study will involve an initial interview of 1-2 hours. During this time I will ask open ended questions about your learning experiences which led you to become an advocate for inclusion and equity. There may be a brief follow-up phone call of 15-30 minutes for clarification, if necessary. In the next step, I will set up a phone interview with you for 1-2 hours to share emerging themes along with a summary of your data. You will have the opportunity to correct/delete material from your transcript summary. In recognizing your role as a co-researcher, you will be invited to add your input to your transcript summary and emerging themes. There may be an optional opportunity to then participate in a 1-2 hour focus group with other study participants. In this case you will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the study results with other white male advocates. In this setting, confidentiality may be limited, although focus group participants will be asked to agree to confidentiality of information disclosed within the group. Total time commitment for this study is a minimum of 2 1/4 hours and, if you choose, a maximum of 6 hours.

Procedures are in place to maintain your confidentiality as a participant. I recognize that you may prefer to forgo confidentiality in order for this research to serve as another opportunity for public expression of your voice and advocacy on issues of inclusion and equity. If this is the case for you, my committee has requested a signed waiver of confidentiality form. This form will be available during the second interview. I will be happy to discuss and think through with you the implications of your choices around confidentiality.

I will tape the interviews and transcribe your comments in order to review them along with other interviews. Tapes will be destroyed once transcripts are produced. All transcripts of interviews will be coded and confidential. Research materials will be kept in a secure file cabinet for five years then destroyed. Some responses may be quoted in the results but, if you choose to maintain your confidentiality, information that may identify you will be deleted and a pseudonym will be created for you.

There are no specific benefits to you in participating in this study, but some may occur. The interviews may increase your level of self reflection and you may experience affirmation in being recognized as an advocate. You will have access to the results of this study for use in your own work. There are also no specific risks for participating. However, if it should happen that participating in the interviews causes some discomfort and concern for you, and you want to discuss it, I can be reached at the number above.

There is no payment for your participation in this study.

It is your right to choose to not participate or withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice or negative consequences. You need not explain your choice. If you choose to withdraw during the interviews, the tape will be erased, notes destroyed, and any data gathered will not be included in the study.

The results of this study will be published in my dissertation. They may also be published in a book or in professional articles.

****

I have read and understood the above and agree to participate in this study. Please sign both forms and keep a copy for your records.

Name ____ Date ___________

Additional Information:

1. Please send me a copy of the results. _____

2. I am interested in being apart of a focus group with other white male advocates to hear and discuss the results of this study. _____

Appendix C

Interview Framework

• Begin recording and cover Informed Consent Form. Recontract time for today's interview.

• You've been nominated by a coalition of diverse OD practitioners as an advocate for inclusion and equity in organizations. Do you regard yourself in the same manner? If not how would you describe your role in ____?

• As you know I am studying the learning experiences which resulted in your becoming an advocate for inclusion and equity. I want to give you some time to tell your *story*, starting wherever the beginning is for you.

• *Prompting Questions if necessary:*
1. What were key learning moments which catalyzed this shift? Wake-up calls, disorienting dilemmas. How did you deal with the feelings which arose?

2. Think of a time when you learned the most. Who was there? What happened? Why was this a key experience? What did you do to contribute to this learning?

3. How much confrontation was involved in your learning journey and in what form? How did you create or where did you find a safe place for you to continue your learning?

4. In retrospect, what were earlier versions of wake-up calls you could have awaken to but did not?

5. What were some of the highs and lows throughout your learning journey?

5. If you were to paint a picture or create a graph of your journey what would it look like from an overall perspective?

6. What do you see as your main role now in being an advocate and what is your current learning edge? What does success look like in your current advocacy role?

7. What do you see as major triggers which create learning for other white males in building awareness and advocacy toward inclusion and equity?

8. Is there anything else you wish I had asked you, or you came here wanting me to know?

9. Ask for demographic information they are willing to share. Age, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, education, family of origin.

• Closing: Talk about follow-up phone interview, and focus group times. Thanks!

List of things I will also be paying attention to in the interviews:

• What changes occurred in self awareness and what previous learning was revised?
• Notice passive learning versus active learning mode. What strategies were used to pursue the learning process. (Presence of role models. Cross-category coalitions...)
• Recognition of white male category and dynamics at a system level. Recognition of own privilege.
• Where does/did he draw the emotional energy and strength required to face down this issue? Why do it? What is the sources of his courage and confidence in taking stands?
• How does he frame the issues and does he know where he is now on his path of learning and action? What metaphors and frameworks does he use? Are they clear?
• What contradictions exist for him in advocacy and how does he live with them? Did his shift include a movement from either/or to both/and thinking? Are any polarities articulated?
• What created the safety in his learning process to transcend denial and face the issues? How did he cope with guild, depression, and helplessness?
• Role of generating increased news about difference?
• Location in change adapting model framework.

Appendix D

CONFIDENTIALITY RELEASE FORM

I have decided to waive my right to confidentiality in the dissertation research which is being conducted by Michael Welp. The scope and potential application of this research was explained in the Informed Consent Form, which I signed during my initial interview.

I would like my name and personal information, as written in the transcript summary, to appear in the writeup of the research. I also understand that I currently have the opportunity to edit material in the transcript summary draft which was recently sent to me.

I understand that if there is any other material not in the transcript summary which Michael would like to use, he will contact me for permission.

Signature ______________________ Date __________

Appendix E

Map of Emerging Themes