

DEEP DIVERSITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT¹

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Organization development (OD) practitioners are being challenged to address diversity and social justice issues, because of social, economic, political, and environmental changes in the U.S. and world. While diversity and social justice have been part of OD's history and roots, we often do not have the understanding and approaches needed to address them.

This paper provides an overview of deep diversity and social justice concepts, explores how and where diversity and social justice show up in OD theory and practice, and identifies opportunities for deepening and expanding OD theory and practice to consider diversity and social justice.

DEEP DIVERSITY

Diversity is multidimensional and includes more than human differences. Understanding of diversity needs to be broader and deeper. Following Capek and Mead (2006), deep diversity is defined in Table 1 to include *diversity measures* and *diversity processes*. Diversity measures and processes apply, in turn, to

- *Multiple levels of human system*, including individual, group, organization, community, nation, and world levels,
- *Social identity groups and categories*: groups of people with common characteristics who are defined and set apart by socially-constructed boundaries, involving race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, class, spiritual practice, ability, age, and other social identity group categories. For example, men, women, and transgender are social identity groups for gender as a social identity group category.
- *Dominant social identity groups*: Groups of people with power in organizations, communities, and nations to control resources and establish rules, laws, policies,

Mary Ellen S. Capek and Molly Mead propose an expanded view of diversity, which they name "deep diversity." They define deep diversity as "diversity that goes wide...to include...gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, disability, geography, age, learning styles, and other physiological, social, cultural, and economically defined differences...[and] deep into an organization's DNA...[and] culture." (Capek and Mead, 2006, p. 7.)

Note: This is the summary paper of a conference session, prepared for the Conference on CD Proceedings, 2007 OD Network Conference, Baltimore, MD, October 21-24, 2007. It is a report-in-progress of my ongoing struggle, questions, and learning about how diversity, social justice, and organization development fit together. In this sense it is practice theory from more than twenty-five years' work as a diversity/social justice and OD practitioner who is a white, heterosexual man and US national. As a faculty member with the NTL Diversity Practitioner Certificate Program and AU/NTL MSOD program, I am indebted to the faculty and students of those programs for opportunities to share and learn with them. I am indebted, as well, for opportunities to learn from and with Cathy Royal, Brenda B. Jones, Rita Andrews, Elsie Y. Cross, Bailey Jackson, Fred Miller, Judith Katz, Delyte Frost, Rick Huntley, Jack Gant, Rita Hardiman, Marjane Jensen, Bob Marshak, Charles Seashore, Edith Seashore, Bryant Rollins, Patrick Jimerson, and many other colleagues and friends who deserve to be mentioned here and are not.

sanctions, norms, style, values, and expectations that match their perspectives and confer or deny privilege, power, recognition, and opportunity to individuals and groups.

- *Subordinated social identity groups*: Groups who do not hold power to confer or deny privilege, power, recognition, and opportunity to individuals and groups.

TABLE 1: DEEP DIVERSITY

DEEP DIVERSITY INVOLVES:	LEVELS OF SYSTEM	HUMAN DIFFERENCES/ SOCIAL IDENTITY GROUP CATEGORIES	DOMINANT & SUBORDINATED SOCIAL IDENTITY GROUPS
DIVERSITY MEASURES			
Human differences	Individual, group, organization, community, nation, world	✓	✓
Human experience	Individual, group, organization, community, nation, world	✓	✓
Elements of culture	Individual, group, organization, community, nation, world	✓	✓
DIVERSITY PROCESSES			
Cultural competency	Individual	✓	NA
Inclusion	Group, organization, community, nation	✓	NA
Pluralism	Organization, community, nation	✓	NA
Multiculturalism	Organization, community, nation	✓	NA

Diversity Measures

Diversity measures include human differences, human experience, and elements of culture. Diversity is often described in terms of human differences...race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, class, spiritual practice, physical and mental ability, age, and other human differences. (See, for example, Loden and Rosener, 1991, pp. 18-21.) Diversity is also expressed as human experience -- Ideas, behaviors, physical sensations, feelings, core values, and intuitive, spiritual, mythological and other knowing. These aspects of human experience are forms of intelligence and experience which are used to acquire and process information, make meaning, and define reality. (See, for example, Kirkham, 1990 and Gardner, 1993.) Cultural differences are a third way of viewing diversity. Elements of culture can include authority, leadership, power, status, language, time, space, intimacy, laws, regulations, rules, norms, standards, structure, values, beliefs, assumptions, ideology, aesthetics, rewards and punishments, individualism and collectivism, and religion and spirituality. (See Hofstede, 2001 and House, Hanges, et al., 2004.) Diversity measures are listed in Exhibit 1.

EXHIBIT 1: DIVERSITY MEASURES

HUMAN DIFFERENCES	HUMAN EXPERIENCE	ELEMENTS OF CULTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • Ethnicity • Nationality • Gender • Sexual orientation • Class • Spiritual practice • Ability • Age • Work experience/ background • First language / accent • Education • Physical height / size • Health • Family status • Military experience • Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas (thinking) • Behaviors (doing) • Emotions (feeling) • Physical sensations • Core values • Intuitive, spiritual, mythological, and other knowing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority • Leadership • Power and status • Language • Intimacy and sexuality • Laws, regulations, rules, norms, standards • Style • History, tradition, customs • Values, beliefs, assumptions • Ideology and ways of making meaning • Aesthetics: beauty, art, literature, architecture • Humor • Family, organization, community structure • Time space • Rewards and punishments • Spirituality and religion • Food • Dress • Individualism and collectivism • Rites and rituals: celebration, birth, transition, death • Other

Several perspectives emerge when human differences, human experience and elements of culture are viewed together with levels of system and social identity groups.

Individual and Collective Identity. Diversity measures examined at the individual level describe individual identities and answer the question, ‘Who am I’?, in terms of

- race, gender, sexual orientation and other human differences,
- ways of understanding and defining reality, like thinking, doing, and feeling, and
- aspects of an individual’s culture in relation to leadership, humor, structure, dress, religion and spirituality, and other cultural elements.

Diversity measures for group, organization, community, nation, and world levels of human system describe collective identities of these systems in terms of demographics, multiple intelligences, and cultures.

Social Group Identity. Many human differences are also social identity groups in that groups of people with common characteristics are socially defined, set apart by socially-constructed boundaries, and socially-designated as belonging to those groups. Dominant and subordinated identity groups are listed in Table 2 for nine social identity group categories, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, class, spiritual practice, ability, and age. These nine social identity group categories are sometimes referred to as the “big nine” because they are especially impactful for all levels of system.

TABLE 2: HUMAN DIFFERENCES AND DOMINANT AND SUBORDINATED SOCIAL IDENTITY GROUPS

Human Differences/ Social Identity Group Categories	Dominant Social Identity Groups	Subordinated Social Identity Groups
Race	White, Caucasian	Asian, Black/ African, Latino/Hispanic, First Nation/ Native People, Bi/Multi-Racial
Ethnicity	White, Western European Heritage	Arab, Filipino, Gypsy/Roma, Haitian, Indian, Jewish, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Turkish, and other ethnicities
Nationality	Nationals of US, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Russia, Australia, other European, white dominant and white settler nations	Nationals of Panama, Afghanistan, Iraq, South Korea, Vietnam, Somalia, Malaysia, Kenya, Guam, Granada, Bangladesh, other nations of color; refugee, legal/illegal immigrant/"alien," stateless
Gender	Men	Women, Transgender
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual
Class	Ruling, Owning, Upper Class; Upper Middle, Professional, Merchant, Middle Class	Lower Middle Class, Working Class, Poor, Homeless
Spiritual Practice	Christian	Agnostic, Animist, Atheist, Bahá'í, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Pantheist, Shintoist, Sikh, Taoist, Yoruba, and other spiritual practices
Ability	Able-bodied	People with Disabilities
Age	Adults	Children, Elders

Simultaneity. Individuals have both individual identities and they have multiple social group identities, which include race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, class, spiritual practice, ability, age, and other social group memberships. Members of a single social identity have common characteristics and experiences. Members of the dominant group, white people, and the subordinated group, women, are examples.

Multiple group identities have a characteristic of simultaneity. (Holvino, 2006.) Group identities are complex, interdependent, and cross-cutting. Full understanding of any one group identity requires considering multiple other identities. For example, full understanding of the experience of white people as a dominant social-identity group requires giving attention as well to their gender, nationality, class, sexual orientation, and other group identities. In another example, women as a subordinated social-identity group share the same gender identity....and women with different race, sexual orientation, class, and nationality identities have very different experiences in the world.

Diversity Processes

Along with diversity measures, deep diversity also includes processes of addressing diversity measures in human systems. Diversity processes are described in Exhibit 2 and include cultural competency, inclusion, pluralism, and multiculturalism. They apply to varying levels of system. Cultural competency describes the ability of individuals for effective, cross-cultural communication with other individuals. Pluralism and multiculturalism are often used as characteristics of organizations, communities, and nations. Inclusion, the process of including people with many differences, generally is used to describe organizations, but can be applied at other levels of system, as well. Diversity processes are generally focused on human differences, occasionally touch on elements of culture, and rarely address aspects of human experience. They seldom, if ever, consider dominant and subordinated social identity groups.

EXHIBIT 2: DIVERSITY PROCESSES

- **CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Individual ability for effective, interpersonal communication with people across cultural differences based in race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, religion, age, class and other human differences.
- **INCLUSION:** Involving people and their differences in the work and life of groups, organizations, communities and nations. Inclusion practices encompass assimilation, differentiation, and integration. (Thomas and Ely, 1996.)
- **PLURALISM:** Incorporating diverse groups of people in organizations, communities, and nations.
- **MULTICULTURALISM:** Incorporating the multiple interests, contributions, and values of diverse groups of people in the cultures of pluralistic organizations, communities, and nations.

Inclusion has become the newest catch phrase for diversity and is often listed as a goal for organizations. In practice, inclusion can mean different things for different organizations. Thomas and Ely identify three paradigms that organizations use to justify addressing diversity and suggest each is organized around one of the processes – assimilation, differentiation, and integration. (Thomas and Ely, 1996, p. 86.) These processes describe a continuum of inclusion practices for organizations and other systems. Assimilation means including people as members of an organization or other system and expecting them to adapt their appearance and behavior with the norms of the organization. Differentiation involves bringing people into the organization to match the demographic characteristics of clients and markets. Integration is including people in the work and life of the organization in a way that changes the work of the organization and how the organization does its work. Pluralism is aligned most closely with the inclusion practice of assimilation, while multiculturalism relates to differentiation and possibly integration.

A Continuum of Inclusion Practices

Assimilation—Differentiation—Integration

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Diversity and social justice are interrelated in a fundamental way. Groups, organizations, communities, and nations exist in a landscape of social identity groups, dominant and subordinated group memberships, prejudice, power differences among groups, and resulting systemic inequality and oppression. This landscape of social identity groups, prejudice, and power differences and the resulting oppression is the bridge that irretrievably links diversity and social justice. Diversity and inclusion efforts, by themselves, are important and they are not enough. Both diversity and social justice issues and concerns have to be addressed.

“...a level of social justice must be achieved before... diversity can be pursued.” (Jackson, 2006, p. 143.)

"Social justice issues must be addressed in order to achieve the potential of diversity." (Miller, 1994, p. xxvi.)

Social Justice is the elimination of oppression and the creation and development of systems and cultures that provide inclusion, equity, access, and opportunity for all people. Organizations have been unsuccessful in attempts to create a culture of inclusion without first addressing racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression and injustice. (Jackson, 2006, p. 143.) Social justice concepts and processes are listed in Exhibit 3.

EXHIBIT 3: SOCIAL JUSTICE CONCEPTS AND PROCESSES

SOCIAL JUSTICE: The elimination of oppression and the creation and development of systems and cultures, which provide inclusion, equity, access, and opportunity for all people.

OPPRESSION: A system of inequality, privilege, and dominance based on skin color and other human physical, anatomical, and mental characteristics, language, dress, roles, emotionality, sexuality, and spirituality.

- Benefits members of dominant identity groups and harms subordinated identity group members.
- Based in power and prejudice and manifests as racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, nationalism, ableism, and other forms of oppression.
- Internalized in individuals and institutionalized in the cultures, policies, and practices of groups, organizations, communities, and nations.

Oppression is a system of inequality, privilege, and dominance, which is socially-constructed to favor and benefit dominant social identity group members and penalize and harm subordinated group members. It is based in a combination of

- 1) prejudice about human differences, which supports beliefs that dominant group members are normal, fully human, desirable, acceptable, superior, productive, fit...and that subordinated group members are abnormal, less than human, undesirable, unacceptable, defective, inferior, unproductive, and unfit and
- 2) power exercised by dominant identity groups over subordinated groups.

Oppression manifests as the “isms” including racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, xenophobic oppression, colonialism, and other forms of oppression. Human

differences/social identity group categories and dominant and subordinated identity groups are listed in Table 2. Human differences/social identity group categories and the forms of oppression that impact them are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3: HUMAN DIFFERENCES AND FORMS OF OPPRESSION

HUMAN DIFFERENCES/ SOCIAL IDENTITY GROUP CATEGORIES	FORMS OF OPPRESSION
Race	Racism, Colorism
Ethnicity	Ethnocentrism, Xenophobic Oppression, Xeno-Racism, Colorism, Anti-Semitism
Nationality	Nationalism, Nativism, Colorism, Xenophobic Oppression, Ethnocentrism, Colonialism
Gender	Sexism, Transgender Oppression
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexism
Class	Classism
Spiritual Practice	Religious Oppression, Anti-Semitism
Ability	Ableism
Age	Ageism, Child Abuse, Incest, Elder Abuse

We live in a world that is racialized, gendered, sexualized, and classed. White people, men, heterosexuals, upper- and middle-class people, and citizens of colonialist and white-settler nations receive benefits and are privileged as a result of their dominant group identities, separate from their accomplishments as individuals. People-of-color, women and transgender people, gays, lesbians and bisexual people, working class people, and citizens of nations-of-color, are disadvantaged and penalized for their group identities, in spite of their accomplishments as individuals.

DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CURRENT OD THEORY AND PRACTICE

In a chapter describing OD as it is today, Bob Marshak concludes “Given the core values of OD and the increasingly diverse and multicultural organizational settings for its practice, it is clear that all professional practitioners need to fully understand and as appropriate address multicultural and diversity issues and dynamics...” (Marshak, 2006, p. 25.) This paper has provided an overview of deep diversity and social justice concepts and the ways in which diversity, inclusion, and social justice are linked. This section examines how and where diversity and social justice are represented in current OD theory and practice.

An overview of organization development theory and practice is shown in Exhibit 4. This description of OD builds on the “OD Map” created by Pauline Frederick Hicks, Mikki Ritvo, Ted Tschudy, and Leroy Wells in 1993. (Tschudy, 2006.) Key elements of OD In this overview are core theories, knowledge and use of self, and OD-practice theories and roles for working at individual, group, organization, community, nation, and world levels of system.

EXHIBIT 4: OD AS A FIELD OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

CORE THEORIES	Change theory Resistance and conflict theories Systems theory Action research / Phases of the OD process Power, diversity, and oppression theories Supplemental and practice theories			
KNOWLEDGE OF SELF	Self-awareness Use of self Values Ethics			
OD PRACTICE	Intrapersonal Individual Interpersonal	Group	Organization	Community Nation World
Working at Multiple Levels of System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness and personal development • Individual behavior and personal development • Interpersonal dynamics and communication • Leadership development • Stages of individual and social identity group development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group and team behavior and dynamics • Embedded intergroup dynamics, dominant and subordinated group dynamics, quadrant group behavior and dynamics • Group and team development • Stages of group development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization behavior and dynamics • Interorganizational networks and dynamics • Stages of organization development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing organizations from the outside • Community, network, coalition, and alliance development • Large social system change and development
Roles	Coach, advisor, mentor, counselor, teacher, facilitator	Trainer, leader, facilitator	Consultant, leader	Consultant, activist, organizer, convener, leader, advocate

Core theories and areas of knowledge for OD include change, resistance and conflict, and systems theories, action research, and knowledge and use of self. A review of the content indexes of current OD textbooks in these areas of OD theory and knowledge provides little mention of diversity and social justice concepts and dynamics.

Power, diversity, and oppression theories are largely peripheral to mainstream OD. They do appear in the form of supplemental theories (see, for example, Allen, 1999, Adams, Bell, and Griffen, 2007 and Miller and Katz, 2002) and practice theories of diversity and social justice theorist-practitioners (see Cross, 2000 and Cross, Katz, Miller, and Seashore, 1994). Several practice theories of diversity and social justice have been developed for working at the individual and organization levels. These individual- and organization-level models include stages of racial identity development models (see Wijeyesinghe and Jackson, 2001) and stages of multicultural organizational

development (Jackson, 2006). They too are mostly tangential to mainstream OD practice.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEEPENING AND EXPANDING OD THEORY AND PRACTICE TO CONSIDER DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Consideration of diversity, inclusion, and social justice is on the periphery of OD theory and practice. Key to integrating diversity and social justice more fully into OD theory and practice is recognizing that groups, organizations, communities, and nations exist in a landscape of social identity groups, dominant and subordinated group memberships, prejudice, power differences among groups, and resulting systemic inequality and oppression.

There are many opportunities for incorporating diversity, inclusion, and social justice perspectives into OD. Some of the opportunities include change theories and methods, approaches for understanding and addressing resistance and conflict, application of action research and the phases of the OD process, and understanding and use of stages of group development models and processes. Appreciation is needed for how

- dominant and subordinated group identity, power differences, prejudice and the isms can be included as an integral part of these theories, models, and processes and
- the use and implementation of these models can unknowingly mitigate against the inclusion and social justice of subordinated identity group members and negatively impact their life and work experiences.

In the case of change and resistance approaches, consider how often people seen as being for change efforts are dominant group members and those seen as resisting change efforts are members of subordinated identity groups....and consider the extent to which this may be due to the theories and methodologies being used to address change and resistance. Similar circumstances can apply to conflict situations, which some argue are often based in prejudice and racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. When conflict is based in oppression, conflict management approaches are not likely to be effective, if they do not incorporate the existence of dominant and social identity groups, power, prejudice, and oppression.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This paper explores deep diversity and social justice concepts and the extent to which they are integrated in OD theory and practice. Diversity, inclusion, and social justice considerations are mostly on the periphery of current OD theory and practice....or they are not incorporated at all. There are many opportunities for OD practitioners to deepen and expand OD theory and practice to consider diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

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