



The Invisible Thumbprint

How Unconscious Bias and White Culture Affect Public Media

Minal Bopaiah | Brevity & Wit
PMDMC Summer Series 2020





Why Are We Here?

- Understand bias
- Explore how bias affects marketing and fundraising
- Understand what White supremacy culture is
- Explore how White supremacy culture affects public media

A Little Bit About Us...

- Mission to bring diversity to design and a design mindset to DEAI
- Clients span public media, international nonprofits, and professional services firms



Expectations & Ground Rules

- This may be uncomfortable. Lean in.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Don't use dehumanizing language.
- No one is a diversity expert.
- Be willing to hold two conflicting ideas in your head at once.







Automatic
System

Deliberate
System



Automatic
System

The Neural Pathway



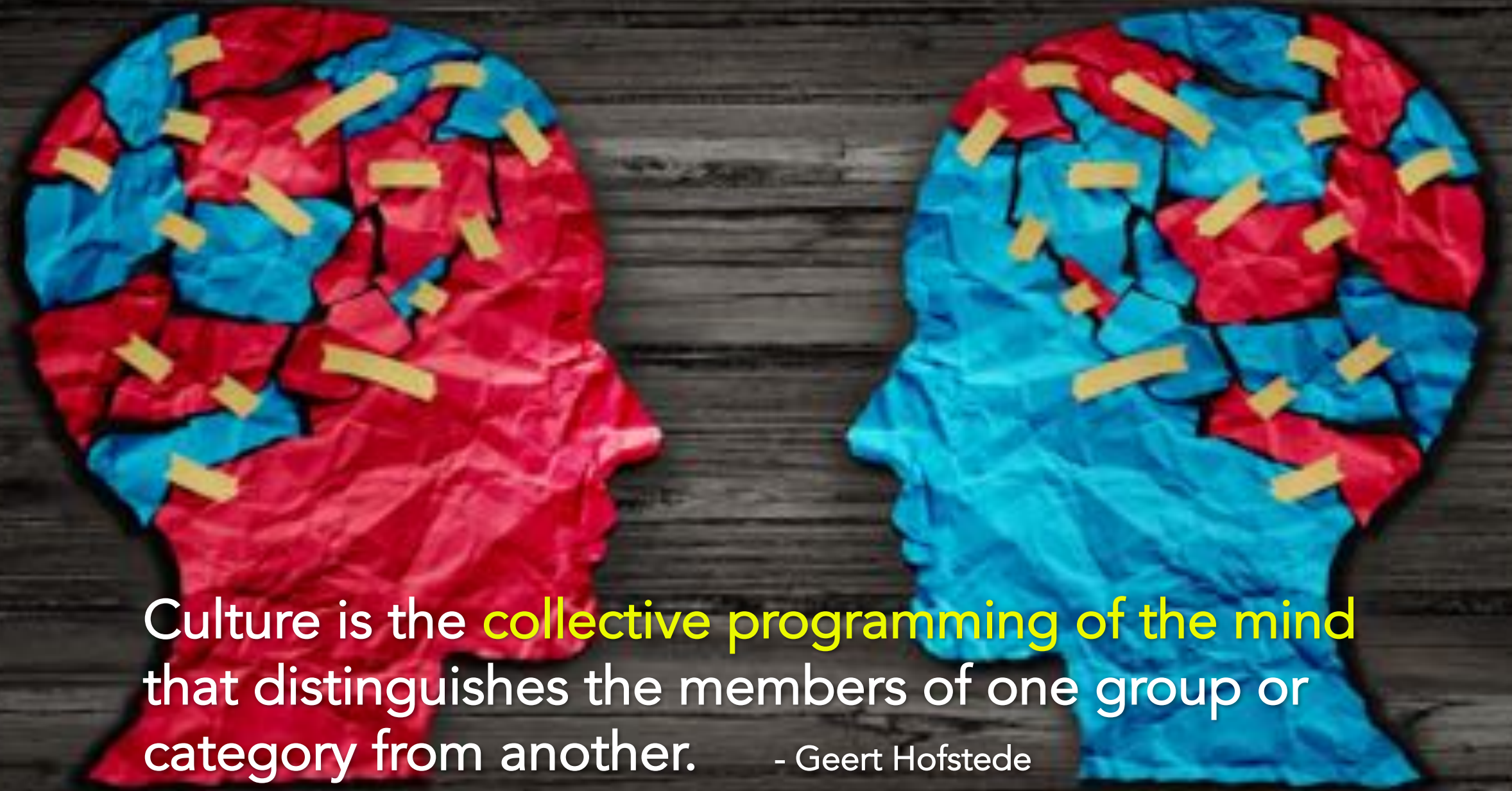
Increased Awareness





Bias is the thumbprint of culture on the brain.

- Mahzarain Banaji



Culture is the **collective programming of the mind** that distinguishes the members of one group or category from another. - Geert Hofstede





CultureLens

A Thought Exercise to uncover your associations. There is no right or wrong answer – we're just going to activate word associations so that you can become more aware of how your brain works.

Imagine you're going on a trip to attend a conference...

- At the airport, and a woman on a business trip is in line in front of you to get her boarding pass.
- You say hi to the pilot as you board the flight.
- You sit next to a nurse on the flight.
- Once you arrive at your hotel, you pass an adorable family on the sidewalk and wave.
- At the conference, a CEO gives an awesome keynote.
- You meet a famous professor at the conference and talk for a while.
- At dinner, the restaurant manager comes over to see if you enjoyed your meal.
- At a nearby table, a couple gets engaged. AWWW. You congratulate them!
- The next day you go for a run, and see a young athlete running sprints in the park.
- On your way to the airport, you stop at a bookstore, where some teenagers are studying for SATs.
- You arrive home, and as you're walking to your front door, a construction worker smiles at you.























What did you learn?

What associations did you make?

Enter your thoughts into the chat. Remember – no shame!

How Bias Affects Marketing & Fundraising

Philanthropic Donor
Community Leader
Community Member





*How does this photo uphold
white supremacy?*

••••••••



@spottingracism

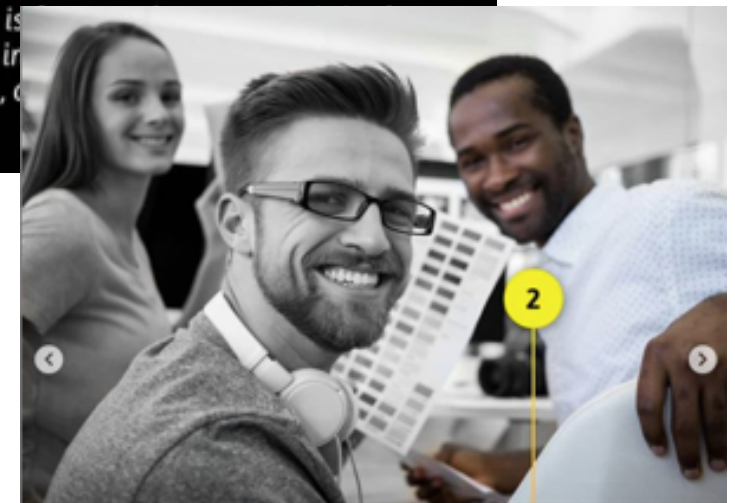


*How does this photo uphold
white supremacy?*

••••••••



The white guy is
foreground, is in
the others, c




The Black guy is several feet behind the white
guy. He's off to the side, smaller in the frame,
and out of focus. He's a supporting character.

••••••••

@spottingracism



A close-up photograph of an American flag draped over two historical documents. The flag's stars and stripes are visible in the upper left and right corners. The document on the left is the opening of the US Constitution, featuring the words 'We the People' in a large, elegant script. The document on the right is the Declaration of Independence, with the title 'In CONGRESS, July 4, 1776. The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.' clearly legible. The parchment is aged and slightly wrinkled, and the overall lighting is warm and focused on the text.

We the People

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.
The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.





**Design is the intent
behind an outcome.**

**Systems of inequality
are by design,
therefore they can be
redesigned.**

TED

Look at the outcomes
to uncover the bias.

Equality



Equity



BREVITY  WIT

White Supremacy Culture

Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun of Dismantling Racism Works

White Supremacy Culture

1. Perfectionism
2. Sense of Urgency
3. Defensiveness
4. Quantity of Quality
5. Worship of the Written Word
6. Paternalism
7. Either/Or Thinking
8. Power Hoarding
9. Fear of Open Conflict
10. Individualism
11. Progress is Bigger/More
12. Objectivity
13. Right to Comfort for those in power

Equitable Cultures

1. A culture of appreciation
2. Realistic work plans
3. Understand the link between defensiveness and fear
4. Values statements that speak to *how* you want to do work
5. Valuing lived experience
6. Transparency in decision-making
7. Both/And language; Slowing down decision-making
8. Power sharing
9. Learning how to address conflict openly; Not using "politeness" to silence
10. Interdependence and collaboration
11. Seventh Generation thinking
12. Valuing emotions in decision-making
13. Seeing discomfort as growth

The “isms” and phobias are bias backed by power

- Racism
- Sexism
- Homophobia
- Islamophobia
- Xenophobia
- Ableism
- Heterosexism
- Anti-Semitism
- Transphobia
- And other systemic injustices...

What if
Chris
Cooper
had called
the cops?

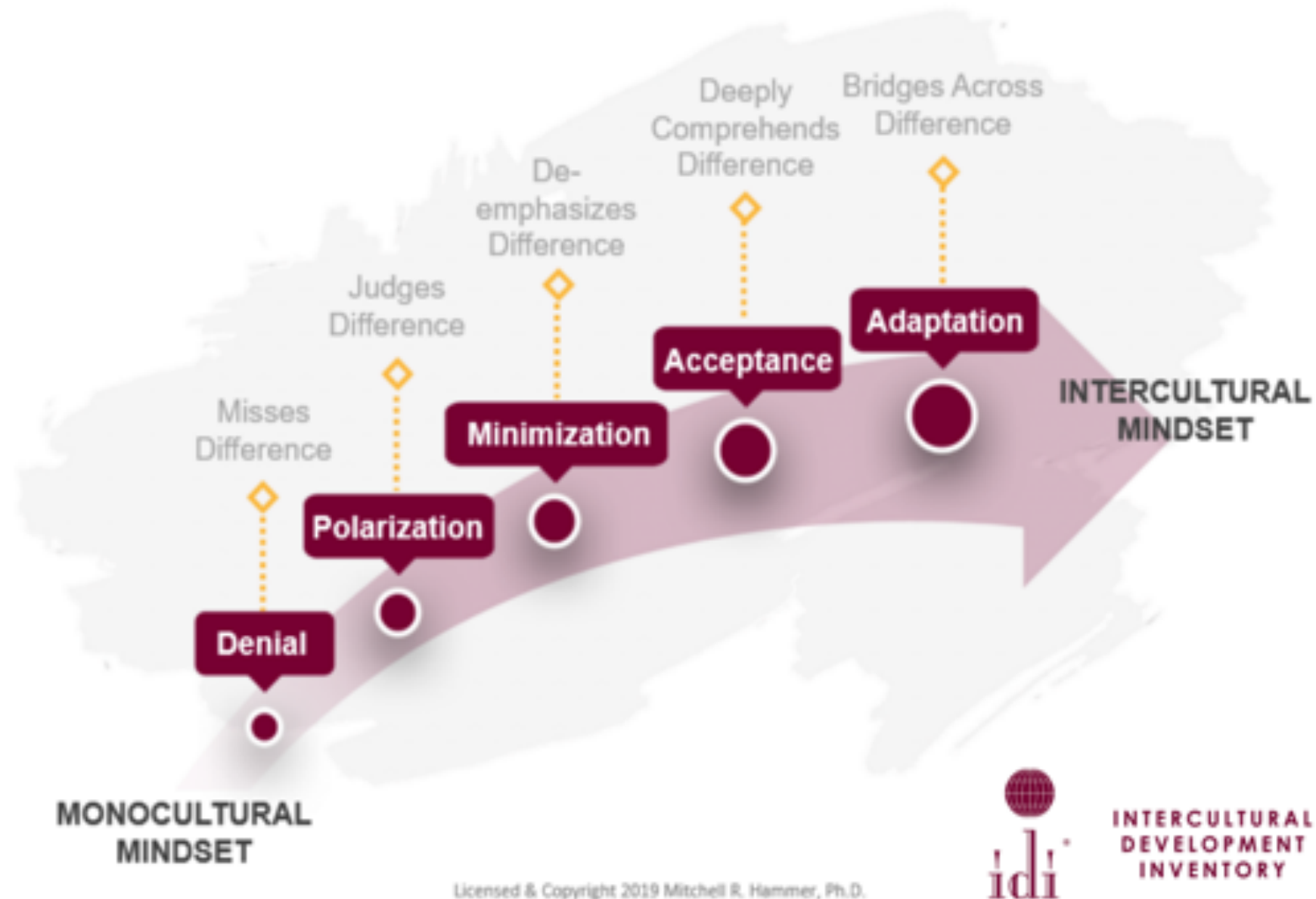


Accent Bias & Code Switching

Do we believe/trust/pay people more when they use a certain accent?

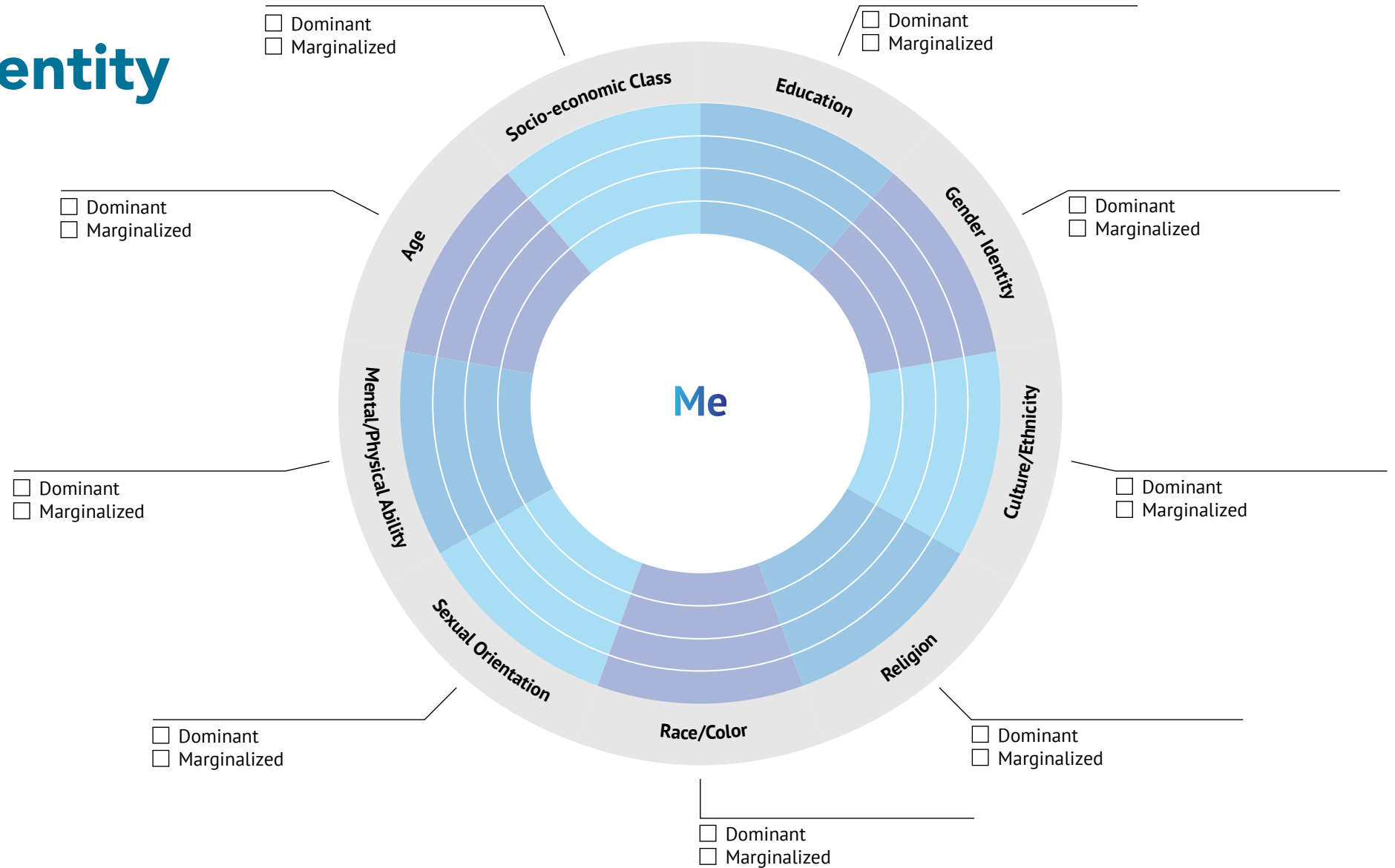
“Professionalism”

Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC™)



How do we do this?

Group Identity Wheel



Get to Know Your Biases.

What cultural biases are leading you to devalue the contributions of BIPOC and other marginalized communities? There are enough talented people out there. But they may not talk like you or think like you or work like you.

Who are your professional heroes and sheroes?

Which BIPOC thought leaders do you follow?

Operationalize DEAI

What observable behaviors of inclusion and equity do you want to see at your station?

Commit to a long-term strategy.

Establish a function that stewards equity.



riveralwaysknew

I took my father to see Rogue One today. I've wanted to take him for a while. I wanted my Mexican father, with his thick Mexican accent, to experience what it was like to see a *hero* in a blockbuster film, speak the way he does. And although I wasn't sure if it was going to resonate with him, I took him anyway. When Diego Luna's character came on screen and started speaking, my dad nudged me and said, "he has a heavy accent." I was like, "Yup." When the film was over and we were walking to the car, he turns to me and says, "did you notice that he had an accent?" And I said, "Yeah dad, just like yours." Then my dad asked me if the film had made a lot of money. I told him it was the second highest grossing film of 2016 despite it only being out for 18 days in 2016 (since new year just came around). He then asked me if people liked the film, I told him that it had a huge following online and great reviews. He then asked me why Diego Luna hadn't changed his accent and I told him that Diego has openly talked about keeping his accent and how proud he is of it. And my dad was silent for a while and then he said, "And he was a main character." And I said, "He was." And my dad was so happy. As we drove home he started telling me about other Mexican actors that he thinks should be in movies in America. Representation matters.

You have the power
to change culture.

@brevityandwit



Thank you!

Minal Bopaiah
Founder & Principal
minal@brevityandwit.com