

D on't Spit O ut B eer:

We, the Melting Pot:

SMU's Cultural Intelligence Initiative


Corey Rogan

Racist. Misogynist. Bigot. Insert-something-o-phobe. These are all powerful words in our current cultural lexicon. He who publicly suffers such a label is ruined—his career is over, his friends become distant, and his life is forever altered. Negative labels like these often leave people utterly afraid to express their values to those of different backgrounds.

The political climate we live in suggests that offending someone different from ourselves—whether intentionally or not—is the purest measure by which we should be judged. For many years, this kind of non-traditionalist thought has been the focus of academia. The active celebration of minority cultures, better

known as “multiculturalism,” has been synonymous with “inclusion” at virtually every educational institution in the nation. Given the amount of divisive, ethnocentric rhetoric that pervades American society today, however, many educators are considering a more reconcilable approach to inclusiveness.

One such educator is Dr. Maria Dixon



“tribes,” or groups of people who share similar backgrounds, and often alters that list by choosing whether to associate with various cultural groups. CIQ encourages people to see past these particular tribes, whose sole uniting factors are often morally inconsequential (such as race or national origin), and instead focus on individuals as unique reflections of the many cultural frameworks that shape their worldviews. The whole person is always greater than the sum of his or her cultural parts.

Imagine pulling together a group of people united by one common “tribe.” Gather them around a dinner table, and they will be jovial as they celebrate their common background. Introduce an entirely different topic (such as politics, religion, or even sports), and they might be at each other’s throats! It is human nature to seek out peers with similar backgrounds, but every individual is ultimately unique. No two people see the world the exact same way or agree on everything. It is therefore wise to not seclude oneself in a particular “tribe,” but instead



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9/11 is the New Normal

Nicole Kiser

When international flights first became common, hijackings happened all the time. During the Cold War, many hijackers sought political asylum; Cuba was a typical destination for commandeered American flights. Other hijackers were convicts looking for a deal or rogues looking for riches, the most famous being the mysterious (and still uncaught) D.B. Cooper. People rarely got hurt, and subsequently airport security was fairly lax. Even minimal airport security was not in place until the 1970s, and no one searched for explosives until after the Pan-Am explosion (Clark).

Like a Fire Nation attack, everything changed after 9/11. Cockpit doors were reinforced, tweezers became security risks, and security lines transformed into everything short of a cavity search. According to John Pistole, the former head of the TSA, we have likely gone overboard. During his speech at the Alpha Chi Honor Society Research Convention in 2018, Pistole discussed how the United States spends millions of dollars and hours in manpower confiscating small pocket knives from ordinary citizens. Yet when the TSA tried to allow these pocket knives back on board, the entire country went wild; it was a top headline for over a week.

The TSA eventually had to retract the announcement.

Recently, we are discussing 9/11 differently. There is a sense that upcoming generations view terrorism with growing apathy (Bonin, Dastagir). It has been clear from the “Bush did 9/11” memes that my peer group does not impart the same gravitas to the event as our parents. And why would we? Many of us were toddlers when 9/11 occurred. It makes up part of our first memories; it was part of our lives before we even fully understood what it was. We do not impart the same panic to planes, instead viewing danger with a mounting sense of inevitability.

is is our norm.

Those just now entering college have even less connection to the event. Many were not even born when the planes hit the towers. They have never had a “before” 9/11; they have grown up in the age of terror. They understand that those older than them think it is important; they feel the atmosphere of grief and sadness, and they feel insincere for not feeling the same. But terrorism and violence are simply no longer earth-shattering for them. They form the foundations of their world, the background of their belief system.

They grow up in a world where random terror attacks do happen, where high school shootings outnumber the months in the year. When Paige Curry, a student at Santa Fe High School, was asked if she was surprised a shooting happened at her school, she answered no. She told the New York Times reporter: “It’s been happening everywhere. I felt — I’ve always kind of felt like eventually it was going to happen here, too” (Fernandez). The generation born in the aftermath of 9/11 has no carefree before. They only have the heart-numbing after.

When I was in middle school, my school went into active shooter lockdown. Luckily, there was not an actual school shooter; the active shooter was an unrelated murderer who seemed to have quickly realized his mistake of killing someone within the area of several schools that each had rapid response units from the police, and he seemed to be running away from all school children as quickly as possible. That was exactly how it was

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Remember when I stayed up all night waiting for you to come home, when I went through your old childhood journals and photo albums for some clue about where we went wrong? Remember when you opened the garage and simply stood there, in the empty space where your car should go, smelling like sweat and rain because you walked miles and miles home from work?

What if, instead, you had come home smelling like another woman's perfume, like Janie's husband did last spring? What if, when we went to couples therapy, I could be the one who


Narcissistic Atruism

Alexander McNamara

There are some names which the American, no matter how hermetic, hears every week, if not every day. These names inundate the political and social conscious of their epoch, like words so often repeated that they lose their meaning. To feel as I do about celebrities, say "eggshell" 47 times, no more no less. By number eight, you'll get the effect and by fifteen, you'll feel nauseous. By thirty-two, I will give up my charade and recognize that no one is going to say "eggshell" thirty-two times just because I told them to.

Kanye West is one such name. One cannot seem to escape the swirling censure of his politics, the ambivalent and uproarious mix of admiration/contempt for his family and its wealth, and the interminable theories about his mental health. Celebrity of this magnitude necessarily breeds weariness, a collective desire to "move on". To be blunt, most of the time this impulse is correct; it normally is better to swim away from the vortex that is American fame (see MBDTF). But the fact of the matter is: Kanye is still making wonderful music.

"I ought About Killing You" is the greatest song on the album *Ye*, the



that even in the most selfish of acts we cannot escape the immeasurable damage it does to those around us. Secondly, that murder is itself a product of deep passion, so much so that what is often rightly thought of as a deeply dehumanizing action can also be deeply personal.

redemption and perseverance. Observe the contrition of "Wouldn't Leave" or the defiance of "No Mistakes". Yet Narcissism remains the antecedent state. Without gratuitous

Finally, the dizzying circle above embodies what I shall call Narcissistic Altruism. It is imperative to the song's themes, and indeed those of the album, that the Kanye of the work does not end his own life. Indeed, the other tracks on the album build the larger arch of

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E xecutives

Editors in Chief.....Alex McNamara | Drew Sneed
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C ontributors

Drew Sneed
Nicole Kiser
Sydney Sagehorn
Corey Rogan
Lorien Melnick
Alex McNamara

I mages

Cover ArtStejara Dinulescu

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