

Colonial Legacy Webinar 2, September 17, 2020, Roger Bertschausen

“Who’s the We?”

“Colonialism often begins with a religious incursion, with a subtext of religious mandate, in which Indigenous beliefs are suppressed by missionaries from the conquering culture, and continues with economic oppression and dispossession of cultural tradition and values through aggressive trade backed by military force, overt conquest, and forced education in the dominant language and educational structure.”

---from *Widening the Circle of Concern: Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change*--Distinctions and Definitions chapter definition of Colonization

- From “Why Consider Using the Intercultural Development Inventory” by Mitchell R. Hammer:
“Minimization is a transitional mindset between the more Monocultural orientations of Denial and Polarization and the more Intercultural/Global worldviews of Acceptance and Adaptation. Minimization highlights commonalities in both human Similarity (basic needs) and Universalism (universal values and principles) that can mask a deeper understanding of cultural differences. Minimization can take one of two forms: (a) the highlighting of commonalities due to limited cultural self-understanding, which is more commonly experienced by dominant group members within a cultural community; or (b) the highlighting of commonalities as a strategy for navigating the values and practices largely determined by the dominant culture group, which is more often experienced by non-dominant group members within a larger cultural community. This latter strategy can have survival value for non-dominant culture members and often takes the form of “go along to get along.” When Minimization exists in organizations, diversity often feels “not heard.” When responsibilities and tasks in an organization or educational institution can be accomplished successfully using commonality strategies without the need to attend to difference, Minimization mindsets are reinforced. The intercultural competence developmental strategy for Minimization is to increase cultural self-understanding, including awareness around power and privilege as well as other patterns of cultural difference (e.g., conflict resolution styles), culture-general frameworks (e.g., individualism/collectivism), and culture-specific patterns.”
- From Robert S. Heaney, *Post-Colonial Theology: Finding God and Each Other Amidst the Hate* (p. 38)
“... common in colonizer narratives was the idea that they were involved in civilizing backward peoples.... Depicting the [insert a colonized people] as superstitious, uncivilized, backward, and technologically underdeveloped reinforced a belief that [insert a colonizing nation] was a beacon and agent of progress. Beliefs in the transformative power of human reason, the inexorable move toward progress, and at the conviction that technology and science would liberate were, thus, not only *drivers* of colonialism, but *effects* of colonialism.” (This was in last week’s handout, too.)