

Cultural Borrowing Facilitated Discussion / STUDENT NOTES

Introductions, Welcome!

Group Questions

1. What is cultural borrowing/ appropriation/ mis appropriation/ sharing?
2. What are examples of mainstream cultural borrowing?
3. How does Colonialism/ Capitalism play into Cultural Borrowing?
4. What is the history of cultural borrowing? Did ancient cultures borrow technological advances from each other or food preservation/ farming methods? (example: agriculture.. Was this cultural mis-appropriation or growth and development of the human species and culture?
5. What would have happened if ancient societies rules did not allow the culture who invented farming to share with other cultures?

Break out group questions

1. What cultures do I borrow from?
2. How much do I know about this particular tradition; how do I respect it and not misrepresent it?
3. What do I know of the history and experience of the people from whom I am borrowing?
4. Is this borrowing distorting, watering down, or misrepresenting the tradition?
5. Is the meaning changed?
6. Is this overgeneralizing the culture?
7. What is the motivation for cultural borrowing? What is being sought and why?
8. How do the "owners" of the tradition feel about pieces of the tradition being borrowed?
9. If artifacts and/or rituals from other cultures are being sold, where does the money go?

Group Questions

1. How does cultural appropriation (borrowing) effect the borrowers? Pro/ Con
2. How can we acknowledge the contributions of all people?
3. How does is cultural borrowing or mis-appropriation played out within herbalism?
4. Does this need to change?
5. If so, how can we work to change this in a positive, non-shaming way?

RESOURCES

Books:

Conquest, Andrea Smith

Geographies of Privilege, Andrea Smith

Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance essay from:

Art on My mind: Visual Politics, Bell Hooks

Websites:

unsettlingminnesota.org

group in Minnesota of Dakota and allies who have put together compilations of essays on cultural appropriation

unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com

extensive, extensive resources for anti-colonial decolonization

www.tomaquagmuseum.com

Native cultural lectures presented by Lorén Spears, MsEd., (Narragansett/Niantic), Executive Director of Tomaquag Museum, Founder of Nuweetooun School, Educator, Storyteller, Artist, Two term Tribal Councilwoman, Traditional dancer, Narragansett Language Committee member and oral historian.

www.culturalsurvival.org

Take Home: Culture Borrowing Checklist

1. How much do I know about this particular tradition; how do I respect it and not misrepresent it?
2. What do I know of the history and experience of the people from whom I am borrowing?
3. Is this borrowing distorting, watering down, or misrepresenting the tradition?
4. Is the meaning changed?
5. Is this overgeneralizing the culture?
6. What is the motivation for cultural borrowing? What is being sought and why?
7. How do the “owners” of the tradition feel about pieces of the tradition being borrowed? (this is tricky, because there are varying opinions on this even among people who share the same culture).
8. If artifacts and/or rituals from other cultures are being sold, where does the money go?
9. Is this spiritually healthy for the borrowers?
10. How can we acknowledge the contributions of the culture we are borrowing from?

Checklist by Jacqui James Reckless Borrowing or Appropriate Cultural Sharing? UUA (Unitarian Universalists Association) adapted and edited by Radherb/2015