

## **Diversity Statement by Kirk Widra M.Ed**

The socioeconomically framed state of education today, and by extension the world of marketing and media design that in part supports it, has taught us how to view the world and identify with our possessions. This unfortunately has arguably become the way we gauge our self worth and place in society. Noted media authority Douglas Rushkoff goes as far as to say that marketing and media are, "the way people, cultures, and institutions create, share, and influence each other's values." He sees marketing and media as the landscape where this interaction takes place, and "literacy as the ability to participate consciously in it" ([http://www.edge.org/3rd\\_culture/bios/rushkoff.html](http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/bios/rushkoff.html)).

The challenge that multicultural education faces is how to help students from diverse groups mediate between their home, community, and the school culture to achieve a level of literacy both informational and technological that allows them to participate fully and equally in society. Students should acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in each cultural setting. They should also be competent to function within and across other micro-cultures in their society, within the national macro-culture, and within the world community (Banks & Banks, 2007, pg.8).

This is the value I see of education, regardless of whether students are simply just studying marketing and media design or participating in the development of it, to achieve literacy we must help students "...construct what they learn" (Orlich, et al. pg. 39) This process in affect asks students to challenge what they have learned, to break it down and see it for what it really is in attempt to build meaning and foster and a deeper understanding of themselves and others.

Sadly, many never bother to challenge the norms and behaviors the media has furnished them. In fact many unfortunately will look to the corporate entities for their very identity. My hope is that by challenging their views and choices, and most importantly the motivations behind them, students will begin to question the nature of their experiences. It is my further hope they begin to question the long-standing social constructs, economic and otherwise, that continue to divide us and in doing so gain a sense of personal and social empowerment that will serve them for a lifetime.

## **References**

Edge Online (2010). Douglas Rushkoff. Retrieved on March 5, 2010 from ([http://www.edge.org/3rd\\_culture/bios/rushkoff.html](http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/bios/rushkoff.html)).

Orlich, Donald C., Harder, Robert J., Callahan Richard C., Trevisan, Michael S., Brown, and Abbie H. (2007). Teaching Strategies: A Guide to Effective Instruction. 9th ed. Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning

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