

**100 Defensive Tactics and Attributions:
Dodging the Dialog on Cultural Diversity
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Introduction

Current battles against multicultural education are being waged on different fronts in the United States. In local schools and communities, culturally responsive teachers, serious parents, visionary administrators, and courageous students, themselves, reject the alienating formulas and hegemonies of suppressive systems of schooling.

Correspondingly, a resurgence of revolutionary scholars and researchers participate in this war, the battle for the minds of our own children. This article echoes the voices of many of those transformational leaders as well as well presents their standpoint about hegemonic voices in U.S. society.

As a professional educator who prepares future teachers for America's K-12 classrooms, I have come across a wide range of diverse conversations and discussions on topics of cultural diversity, multicultural education, and social justice in the U.S. The topics, terms, and definitions that are listed below are by no means terminal, but are my attempt to create a foundation for *rhetoric sovereignty*¹ by exposing rhetoric hegemony that best express my holistic experiences as a male, Indigenous teacher educator. There was an explosion of xenophobic-coded terms (e.g., politically correct, reverse discrimination, etc.) created when I became intensely involved in trying to eliminate American Indian mascots from school-sanctioned events. Thirty years of working on "Indian" mascot issues have helped me understand the social consciousness of many people about cultural diversity, multicultural education, and social justice in the U.S. The following list of defensive tactics and attributions is a direct result of my personal and professional experience with individuals in higher education having the tendency to blame victims for their misfortune, so that one feels less likely to be victimized in a similar way.

To better organize my thinking of these defensive tactics and attributions, I sorted these actions into four categories: 1) Avoidance, 2) Disavowal, 3) Dismissal/Patronization, and 4) Re-centering. I started this list almost twenty years ago when I was a kindergarten teacher on the Navajo reservation in New Mexico. Moreover, it is a list that I have compiled throughout my professional career as an elementary teacher, principal, educational specialist, and teacher educator.

As I chronicled the terminology over the years, I began to compile and integrate this list into many of my professional workshops and conference presentations. Because of these presentations, many colleagues across the country volunteered their contributions to this list, to which has helped to affirm these tactics and attributes, many of which have contributed to experiences similar to my own. One hundred terms is a list of sufficient length to demonstrate hegemonic educational (linguistic) practices in our society. However, this list is by no means complete. It is only a jump-start to naming the tactics that educators confront when engaging into social justice education. My prediction is that this list of hegemonic practices will continue to grow so long as there is resistance to social justice in this country.

Analytical tools that consist of looking at how systems of oppression interlock differ in emphasis from those that stress intersectionality. Interlocking systems need one another, and in tracing the complex ways in which they help to secure one another, we learn how underrepresented groups are placed in positions that exist symbiotically but hierarchically.

Avoidance

1. **The Sensitive Type:** Espouses sensitive racial and cultural issues, yet behaves discordantly. Contributed by Debbiesui Lee, doctoral student at Arizona State University.
2. **The Confused:** Cannot quite “grasp” the culture issues being raised regardless of how clearly they are presented. Just does not get it. Contributed by Debbiesui Lee, doctoral student at Arizona State University.
3. **The Color Blind:** When educated individuals say “*I don’t see color*” in my students, staff, faculty, or organization.
4. **The Cultural Schizophrenic:** When individuals are in a constant state of confusion about their cultural identity, characterized by individuals who vacillate about their ethnic or cultural identity for long periods of one’s life. Contributed by Sonia Nieto, University of Massachusetts.
5. **The Ethnic Cheerleader:** Good minded individuals who bring in ethnic speakers, celebrate ethnic holidays, share ethnic foods, listen to ethnic music and so forth. This method of multicultural education never seriously infiltrates into the core discussions of cultural diversity and curricula in schools.
6. **The Nonengagement Type:** Classroom nonengagement embraces a process by students and teachers that can simultaneously be unconsciously conscious and/or consciously unconscious when entangled within the temporal and spatial dynamics of the pedagogical process. The term “*nonengagement*” suggests a single/dual/multiple process—the act of an individual withdrawing from a discourse that focuses on race and/or ethnicity. The word’s simple identity that presupposes the ontogenetic desire to engage or not engage with the **Other** within a multicultural education terrain is apparent. A simple duality that is linear and deterministic in construction. Contributed by Rudolfo Chavez Chavez, New Mexico State University.
7. **The Trickster:** Persons who mask themselves from racial and cultural issues knowing full well of their intent to fool their opponent by pretending to be someone they are not.
8. **The Hard-of-Hearing:** Says, “*Speak up, I’m hard of hearing!*” Pretends he/she cannot hear, but can hear well enough to understand the complexity of racial and cultural issues.
9. **The Blind-Man’s Bluff Theorist:** Pretends to have no visual perception and/or vision that is extremely limited, but can see well enough to get from one location to the other without any assistance.
10. **The Shouter:** Consciously elevates one’s voice and volume trying to drown out racial and cultural discourse.

11. **The Double Agent:** Works underground for both hegemony and counter hegemony in racial and cultural discourse.
12. **The Staller:** Outwardly speaks of diversity convincingly, but in the power structure stalls any meaningful change toward cultural diversity. Contributed by Denise Henning, Loras College.
13. **The Performance-engager:** “Acts” multiculturally for the acquisition of a course grade . . . after the course is over, the multicultural behavior disappears. Contributed by Jeanette Haynes Writer and Ruldolfo Chavez Chavez, New Mexico State University.
14. **The Ostrich:** Individuals who consciously choose not to engage into the discussions of race and diversity and would rather bury their heads in the sand or ground to avoid any serious discourse of this nature.
15. **The Faculty Will Just Be People:** Response by a college Dean about how faculty respond as people to issues of cultural diversity.
16. **The Hopeless:** Individuals who consciously believe that working toward a pluralistic society or social justice is absolutely hopeless or is never going to happen. They say “*so why try?*”
17. **The Arrogant Innocent:** Individuals who are well informed and versed in many issues of cultural diversity, yet they play “*opossum*” pretending that they don’t know anything about the topical discussions.
18. **The Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell:** President Clinton’s answer to gays in the military was this policy saying, because if you don’t ask about gays in the military, you won’t be able to report them to military officials.
19. **The Why Should I Learn About Multicultural Education, I’m Not Going to Teach Where There Are Any Minority Kids:** Common saying by monocultural teachers and/or teachers education students who don’t plan to teach in communities where there are ethnic minority students.
20. **The Playing Dumb:** Individuals who say, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
21. **The Drama King/Queen:** Individuals who have their eyes averted, and actually have physical convulsions (I’ve seen it happen!). People who are so distraught by the accusation (even when there is no accusation made) of being a racist, that they are physically unable to discuss race issues. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
22. **The Toe-Tapper:** Individuals who are so afraid of offensive behavior that they avert their eyes and are overly nervous when they attempt to be respectful. They don’t talk about or confront themselves about issues of race, but they will speak softly, look down, and not speak unless they are spoken to. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
23. **The Neutral Discussion Leader:** Individuals who are busy leading the discussion so they can’t participate in the discussion of cultural diversity. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
24. **The Chameleon:** Attempts to fit in diverse cultural groups by attempting to be “just like” the members of the group. Contributed by Margery Ridgeway, University of Kansas.

25. **The Comedian:** Individuals who take advantage of the stage light by engaging in racial humor and making people laugh at the expense of underrepresented populations rather than immersing themselves into a serious, articulate discussion on the topic. (The Rodney Dangerfield/Jay Leno style of cultural diversity).
26. **The Why Can't We All Just Get Along?:** Individuals who dismiss race as a factor in race relations in the United States. The perpetual attitude is that race doesn't matter in this country. It's the Rodney King response to cultural diversity, "why can't we all just get along?"

Disavowal (refusal to acknowledge)

27. **The Cognitive Dissonance Theorist:** When an individual finds himself/herself in a situation where he/she is expected to believe two mutually exclusive things, the subsequent tension and discomfort generates activity designed to reduce the dissonance or disharmony—individuals are faced with incompatible personal or professional beliefs.
28. **The Why Now?! Status Quo-Iphile:** Person who constantly asks why people might contest a particular school-related policy/curriculum/pedagogy in the present day when this policy has been in place for a long period of time without any previously perceived criticism. "We've always done things this way, so why is there a problem now?" The underlying assumption is that current criticisms of a particular policy/curriculum are unfounded, unwarranted, and/or unnecessary. Contributed by Jeff Corntassle, University of Victoria.
29. **The Mathematician:** Says, "Do the math, I wasn't born yet!" Dismisses racial and cultural issues by saying that historical cultural events happened before he/she was born—thereby letting themselves off the hook for oppressive histories before they were born. Contributed by Tony Clark, University of Kansas.
30. **The Crab Theorist:** Uses unkind words and negative rhetoric language trying to tear down someone's personal character—usually of the same ethnic group (e.g., apple, coconut, banana, oreo, zebra, cracker, etc.)
31. **The Dodger:** Tries to hide behind religion or other philosophical beliefs to maintain justification for various oppressions. Contributed by Jeannette Haynes Writer, New Mexico State University.
32. **The I Can't Believe You Played the Race Card:** Colleagues who usually retaliate by saying this as a defense mechanism for being challenged for something they said or insinuated as culturally responsive. Contributed by Colleen Reed and Debra Ortiz, University of Kansas.
33. **The Traditionalist:** Individuals who strongly believe in tradition, meaning that customs and attitudes have stayed constant so long that to change these elements would be conflict. Therefore, the traditionalists remain firmly grounded in their standpoint on certain multicultural issues.
34. **The But We Are Honoring You:** Individuals who's standpoint is to keep their "Indian" mascot for sports teams because they honestly and consciously

feel that using Indian mascots for sports teams is truly honoring Indigenous Peoples. From a consciously tribal perspective, this way to look at and honor “Indian” mascots for sports teams is culturally schizophrenic.

35. **The Polite Avoidance:** Individuals who display polite mannerisms in public spaces, while consciously trying to block out and/or avoid serious conversations on issues of cultural diversity.
36. **The Chip on the Shoulder:** Individuals who respond with this saying when they feel someone from an underrepresented group has a grudge against them and/or mainstream society and is therefore waiting for someone to say the wrong thing in hopes that they can instantly retaliate with heated vengeance. *“Unfortunately, I know many students who walk around with the ‘chip’ because they feel their own category (say poor rural whites) are not properly included in benefit programs and scholarships and public awareness of their own hardships.”* Contributed by Annette Trefzer, University of Mississippi.
37. **The Mix-It-Up:** Individuals who contradict themselves hoping to muddle the topic. These people start talking about race, hoping that the questioner is so confused that he/she will change the topic. If the questioner persists, the questionee will say, “I just TOLD you, don’t you get it?” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
38. **The Qualifiers:** The idea that people are not racist, they just don’t believe in “mixing races, or just aren’t attracted to other races.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
39. **The Accusers:** Individuals who say, “You don’t know what you’re talking about.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
40. **The Social Climbers:** People who won’t speak about race with you unless you’re some sort of authority on the issue. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
41. **The Trader:** Individuals who play on the same sounding word “traitor.” The trader/traitor defends racist mascots and institutions in return for crumbs tossed her/his way. Contributed by Tony Clark, University of Kansas.
42. **The Victim:** Individuals who go into a discussion on the defensive (everything gives the impression that they are under attack; their cowering stance, averted eyes, beaten expression, etc.) so it discourages anyone to disagree. Therefore, an honest discussion cannot be held because anyone who might make the “victim” look bad by disagreeing with him/her will make the “victim” appear to be under attack. This tactic tends to make any people that disagree look like accusatory shrews and promotes sympathy for the victim. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
43. **The You Don’t Look Indian:** Individuals who impose their cultural values and perceptions upon Indigenous Peoples by saying “you don’t look Indian.” This statement suggests that certain individuals have the authority to judge one’s tribal identity based upon their self-proclaimed ethnic criteria of phenotype, lifestyle, spoken language, and overall general look. Most of the time, this ethnic look is referred to as the manufactured “Indian” image of something wild and inferior and their use implies a value judgement of white

superiority created by Hollywood scriptwriters with the intention of burning a psychological image in the American cultural imagination.

Dismissal/Patronizing

44. **The Intellectual Analyzer:** Capable of discussing issues of race and culture from an intellectual standpoint, but withdraws if there is any indication of affect or emotion. They feel no collective guilt about marginalized groups. Some will even evade and/or rationalize guilt. Contributed by Debbiesui Lee, doctoral student at Arizona State University.
45. **The Dysconscious Racist:** Accepts dominant white, middle class norms and privileges. It is not the absence of consciousness (that is, not unconsciousness) but an impaired consciousness or a distorted way of thinking about race and ethnicity as compared to, for example, critical consciousness. Contributed by Joyce King, Santa Clara University.
46. **The Multicultural Cop:** Individuals that take on the role of policing discussions of race and cultural diversity. Contributed by Carlos Cortez, University of California, Riverside.
47. **The Ethnic Fraud Police:** Individuals who take on the role of telling others that they don't belong in prescribed race boxes and/or tribal enrollment categories.
48. **The Racial Profiler:** When authority figures consciously identify a particular ethnic group as a target of suspicion. For example, this incident usually occurs when mainstream police target and/ suspect ethnic groups as alleged lawbreakers.
49. **The Labeler:** Labels students of multicultural education "savvy" and lets those students carry the ball (conversation).
50. **The Cultural Critic:** Attacks comments made about racial/cultural issues without consideration of any other cultural perspective.
51. **The Patronizer:** Assumes superiority and advises strategies for someone not in his/her ethnic group to "get ahead" in life.
52. **The Cultural Appropriator:** Person who engages in some cursory "research" on a particular group (other than their own) and then "enlightens" friends and colleagues with his/her own perspective on that group's history, cultural practices, identities, etc. The indigenous voices of ethnic group members are deemed less important than this person's perspective regarding cultural diversity and multicultural education.
53. **The Older Boomer:** Retells or relives the Civil Rights Movement and violence without recognizing that state of racism and diversity today. For example, these are people who may have lived through turmoil regarding change of racial and cultural issues, but cannot move along the continuum of transformation from there. Frequent comments are "been there—done that" or "in my day . . ." They never can get beyond the past to see the racial situation as it stands now. Contributed by Denise Henning, Loras College.
54. **The Sufferer:** A privileged individual who tries to invoke pity by proclaiming, "But I've been discriminated against too!" in very superficial

- situations. Contributed by Jeanette Haynes Writer, New Mexico State University.
55. **The Colonizer:** Justifies oppression by saying “But where would you people be if this happened? It was good for you. So just get over it!” Contributed by Jeanette Haynes Writer, New Mexico State University.
 56. **The Director:** Works aggressively to gain control of the discourse and set a hostile climate within the group so no one will challenge him/her. Contributed by Jeanette Haynes Writer, New Mexico State University.
 57. **The Wise-One:** Dismisses the voices of others due to her/his acquired wisdom through years (age) and/or experience in life. Contributed by Jeanette Haynes Writer, New Mexico State University.
 58. **The Savior:** Places themselves always in a “superior position” to their partners and are “always trying to help” those people. Frequently boast “I’m not prejudiced, I treat all cultures in the same way.” Always reaching “down” to grasp the hand of someone whom they believe is below them—helps them “rise to the top” or “elevates” them because “the savior” believes they can.
 59. **The Please, Give Me a Break!:** Individuals who have already passed off or dismissed the opportunity to seriously engage in a conscious, intellectual discussion about cultural diversity. Like Barbara Walters, they will say, “please, give me a break” as if to suggest that your cultural diversity agenda is totally irrelevant to them.
 60. **The We Want to Hire the Best Qualified:** In hiring practices this saying is used by individuals who dismiss the issues of affirmative action, distribution of wealth in this country, white privilege, cultural genocide, and legalized apartheid.
 61. **The Tokenizer:** Individuals who can literally count on one hand that they know people or are friends of people of different cultures so that they don’t have any “issues” with cultural diversity, and therefore, they don’t need to expand their multicultural consciousness. Contributed by Gloria Ng, University of California, Davis.
 62. **The Rhetoric Shot-putter:** Individuals (probably schooled in higher education) who knows the throws all the multicultural rhetoric around, but has no concept of how the dirt thuds on impact—how the rhetoric masks the trauma of others’ lived experiences. They get lost in the meanings of words and negate the feelings behind the words, especially when they haven’t lived through the experience themselves. This is somewhat akind to the intellectual analyzer. Contributed by Gloria Ng, University of California, Davis.
 63. **The Speak English, You’re in America:** Common saying by individuals who feel English should be the official language in the U.S., dismissing voluntary and involuntary immigrant languages in this country. They also dismiss all the Indigenous Peoples’ languages because their mindset is programmed for monolingual English as the norm for language discourse in this country.
 64. **The Race Umpires:** Individuals who say, “They’re just pulling the race card because they didn’t get their way.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate students at Carnegie-Melon University.

65. **The Exotificationer:** Individuals who subscribe to the idea that if you present cultures as exotic, you are paying homage to them, when, reality, you are characterizing and objectifying them. Contributed by Sonali Mishra, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
66. **The Historians (His Story):** Those who will rewrite history and change the facts around so they won't look like a racist, and will try to belittle any opposition. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
67. **The American Loyalist:** Regards non-English speakers as "the foreign problem." Espouses the English-Only Movement with "sink-or-swim" teaching practices. Completely disregards the fact that non-English speakers are often American-born U.S. citizens. Contributed by Margery Ridgeway, University of Kansas.
68. **The Segmenter:** Celebrates Black History Month, Hispanic Awareness Month, Native American Month, etc., but never mentions any culture other than white the rest of the time in the classroom. Contributed by Margery Ridgeway, University of Kansas.
69. **The Socially Polite Put-down:** When confronted with anything different from white upper-middle class culture and values they say "how interesting," while really insinuating the meaning, "how weird." Contributed by Margery Ridgeway, University of Kansas.
70. **The Multicultural Sidekick:** Individuals who are in positions of authority and power in cultural diversity who assign (and must have) an individual or two who accompany them at all official multicultural functions.
71. **The Hidden Agenda:** This phenomenon occurs when a mainstream media interviewer has a preconceived (hidden) agenda when interviewing someone about cultural diversity. Many times they already have written their story (draft form), but have to go through the official interviewing process for the validity of their publication schedule.
72. **The Rock and the Hard Place:** When individuals in power, authority positions impose their ethnic stereotypes on their clients and/or subordinates. For example, I know a clinical psychologist (white male) who assigns homework to Indigenous clients by telling them to inquire about their tribal role with spirit animals and sweat lodge ceremonies, completely dismissing their client's tribal specific nature of this assignment.
73. **The Strategy of Innocent Gestures:** Individuals who say, "I don't understand how my innocent gesture could be perceived as racist, homophobic, etc., and with this strategy again, the rules have been established, the tables turned and one is now suddenly not acceptable for what one releases from one's mouth or for how one chooses (makes a choice) to act." Underlying the innocent gestures are really dangerous assumptions that everyone around will agree with the statement or the action. But it is IMPOSSIBLE to see or comprehend that someone could possibly disagree because the majority culture like to "know it all." It is incomprehensible not to "know" something or "to be wrong." Therefore all they say is what they "know" and they assume that everyone else knows or should know in the

same manner they know it. Contributed by Sandra Rios Balderama, The American Library Association.

74. **The Selective Endorsement of Ethnicity:** Individuals who may act like your best friend (who are usually racists whom you only see every ten years), always patting you on the back, telling all their friends how you are “not like the rest of them,” and that you are a “good (Indian) minority.” This individual reinforces tokenism and quickly reverts back to being a racist as soon as you leave the room. Contributed by Richard Williams, American Indian College Fund.
75. **The It’s For Your Own Good:** Individuals that see their actions as serving the critical mass, therefore, knowing what is good for selective groups and/or individuals. There is no rationale for their decisions other than patronizing.

Re-centering

76. **The Silencer:** Ignores comments raised concerning race and culture by changing the topic or by not responding at all. Contributed by Debbiesui Lee, doctoral student at Arizona State University.
77. **The Interpreter:** Re-interprets messages about racial/cultural issues in a way that reduces the power of the original message. Contributed by Debbiesui Lee, doctoral student at Arizona State University.
78. **The Questioner:** Asks a continuous barrage of questions regarding race/culture without consciously absorbing the original, centered content materials.
79. **The Minimizer:** Accepts comments about racial and cultural influences, but minimizes the impact of such influences. Contributed by Jeff Corntassle, University of Victoria.
80. **The Compromiser:** Person who is anxious to find a compromise on any given topic of cultural diversity and/or multicultural issue. He/she desperately seeks people out who can “meet in the middle” on an issue so that it will somehow be “resolved” in his/her own mind. Contributed by Jeff Corntassle, University of Victoria.
81. **The Politician:** Trivializes racial and cultural issues by making it political and/or using xenophobic-coded language like “politically correct,” “politically incorrect,” “reverse discrimination,” “racial quotas,” etc.
82. **The Distracter:** Deflects the diversity discussion by moving the conversation off center or to another topic.
83. **The Devil’s Advocate:** Individuals who immediately take on the role of the opposing voice in racial/cultural issues without fully analyzing and/or processing the original content.
84. **The Projector:** Projects that the multicultural “problems” lie within the instructor/facilitator/speaker (individual) rather than owning the internal issues that he/she is throwing off. Contributed by Jeanette Haynes Writer, New Mexico State University.
85. **The Let’s Talk Sports:** Individuals who engage in discussions of cultural diversity only when it pertains to sports and/or athletics. Once the discussions

shift outside of the sport/athletics discourse, these individuals become very uncomfortable and attempt to disengage from their original sports/athletics conversation. Contributed by Scott N. Brooks, doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania.

86. **The Passer of the Buck:** Individuals who choose to pass on the conversation by consciously referring the discourse of cultural diversity on to someone they feel is better qualified to continue the discussion. Another popular tactic used is directing the issue on to another ethnic group like “well, Latinos are racist too,” “Blacks don’t like Asians,” “Indian fight amongst themselves” and so forth. They fear that their standpoint on cultural diversity issues is too threatening to them, therefore being too dangerous to openly discuss in public spaces. Contributed by Nocona Pewewardy, University of Kansas.
87. **The There’s More Important Issues to Discuss Than...:** Outsiders who tell target groups that their issues are not important or do not have priority in cultural diversity discussions. These individuals are unaware of the target group’s major issues and have never been seriously involved in their group’s struggles. They would rather pass judgment (as outsiders) on target groups and their efforts toward liberation.
88. **The Great Negotiator:** Individuals who would rather negotiate cultural issues and quickly come to a settlement rather than invest a lot of time and energy in a debate or discussion about cultural diversity. Contributed by Annette Trefzer, University of Mississippi.
89. **The Re-definer:** Individuals who say, “I’m not racist because I don’t hate ALL races.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
90. **The Time-Liners:** Individuals who say, “That happened ____ years ago (going on the principle that because something happened in the past and was acceptable, that it is OK, but not discussing that it happens today.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
91. **The Reverser:** Individuals who say, “What about ME and MY race? X culture was racist against my culture.” Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
92. **The Transmitter:** Individuals who say, “I’m not from the majority race, therefore I can’t be racist.” It’s the idea that racism is restricted to white elite, and therefore they don’t have to address issues of racism. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
93. **The White Washers:** People that aren’t comfortable with other cultures, but use white-washed alternatives. With the El Dia de los Muertos, the Committee was not comfortable with true Mexican culture, so they “offered a compromise” of Cinco de Mayo, which is celebrated in America, but not in Mexico. It’s more white culture than Mexican culture, therefore, they were comfortable with it. Contributed by Jill Stark, graduate student at Carnegie-Melon University.
94. **The Family Pride Advocate:** “My grandparents came to this country with nothing and spoke no English. With hard work they succeeded.” Regards lack of economic and social success in this country as purely the result of

- laziness or mental defect. Contributed by Margery Ridgeway, University of Kansas.
95. **The Intervener:** Individuals who “take the heat” or intervene in behalf of other people when someone in a cultural group challenges an assumption or cultural stereotype. They consciously try to deflect questions and/or inquiries that they know the original person being asked cannot answer or feels uncomfortable responding to. Contributed by Nocona Pewewardy, University of Kansas.
 96. **The Ethnic Jokester or Clown:** Individuals who shift into “funny” characteristics and behaviorisms when discussing issues of cultural diversity. These people do not represent traditional clown societies of some tribes whose task it is to make their tribal groups laugh during celebrations and ceremonies. But the clown born of American popular culture much like the European “jester” (or the fool), as the inferior one who was responsible for making his superior laugh. For example, many of these ethnic “Sambo” clowns were born out of the closed nature of North American slavery, in contrast to Latin American and African American slavery. These ethnic caricatures with their racial fantasies were portrayed as docile but irresponsible, loyal but lazy, humble but chronically given to lying and stealing; behaving with infantile silliness and inflated child talk and attachment. The racial fantasies of African American and First Nations Peoples’ backwardness characterized as incapable of technological advancement and by superstitious and humanly regressive acts of savagery were all constructed in Hollywood films. The engage in slapstick ethnic humor and many times play out their own internal ethnic stereotypes in public spaces: falling down the stairs, getting electrocuted, bumbling ethnic characters with heavy-slurred accents, stoic-broken English dialects, big-nosed figures, etc.
 97. **The Multicultural Groupie:** Individuals who “star-gaze” at known figures in the field of multicultural education. They chronicle their heroines and heroes’ publication record, conference speaking engagements, book signing tour schedule, and they keep constant track of their heroines and heroes’ accomplishments by benchmarking their favorite websites on the Internet.
 98. **The I’m OK, Your OK Diversity:** Individuals who make each other “feel good” about their cultural stories and diverse histories, thereby, diminishing “truth to power” issues in critical multicultural education. They never get to the core or main thrust of multicultural education: the interrogation of unequal educational structures and race superior ideologies.
 99. **The Answerer:** Individuals who are not serious about engaging into two-way discussions of cultural diversity, because they are always too busy analyzing and anticipating what the speaker will say next. They are too preoccupied with the formulation of a quick response to defend their own position (usually a position of social or white privilege). Contributed by Christine TenBarge, doctoral student at the University of Texas.
 100. **The Usurper of Language:** Individuals who change the meaning of words according to their moods (e.g., inclusivity became exclusivity, focus becomes narrow thinking and so forth. In Spanish we say “cuando conviene”

“when it is convenient”—meaning that you cannot count on someone who flip flops. Contributed by Sandra Rios Balderama, The American Library Association.

Today’s educators live in a culturally dynamic society, unimagined by former generations. We are at the crossroads of our multicultural history. The legacy of social justice continues because of those transformational leaders who embrace education and its vital connection to social change.

As a critical multicultural educator, I have struggled to understand and challenge the existing relations of Western patriarchal capitalist domination. In this article I have tried to name these defensive tactics and attributions and understand where they came from. Only then can I begin to challenge them structurally and interpersonally within a classroom context. I reflect upon my own successes and struggles as I teach at the predominantly white university. That said, I wish to contribute to a liberatory education, rather than act as a placeholder of colonization or imperialism. I know, however, that resistance to liberatory education remains possible in the face of domination.

By not educating about some people’s privilege, which is enacted economically, politically, and socially through dominant culture forms and through overt acts of supremacy, the hegemonic power of Eurocentrism is validated rather than challenged. In educational theory and practice we assimilated to these norms by imposing them on our students and then supporting people who adapt to these demands, rather than by introducing new paradigms of knowledge.

This article provides a jump-start to understanding defensive tactics and challenges at the theoretical level. With more critical multicultural educators, we can next develop a list of counter-hegemonic strategies to implement in our classrooms. With your help, we can strive for all of these elements to happen in our lifetime. The question really is—do we have the “will” to make it happen? As I see it today, we live in a multicultural society and when it comes to providing the best quality education for our children, we must provide an education for social justice.

Note

- 1 *Rhetorical sovereignty* is the inherent right and ability of Indigenous Peoples to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves the goals, modes of acquisition, styles of expression, and language of tribal dialect discourse.