

Social Relativity in the 21st Century

$$D=Ec^2$$

A formula for human relationships in the 21st century

In this paper I would like to share my thoughts on the importance of two words that I believe summarizes the relationship and connectedness of our social interactions in this 21st century. The two words are Diversity and Education. It is also important to bring in the factor of the speed with which these two related areas are changing as we move forward now and in the years to come. To make my presentation or theory come together I would like to mimic the important *Theory of Relativity* that is essential in science. The equation for Social Relativity that I would like you to consider is $D=Ec^2$. Diversity and Education are forces that are primary to such a holistic view of social interaction. We must add the rapidity of light, or enlightenment, that will acknowledge and account for the lightening speed of change that is occurring now and in the future. As our world has grown smaller and smaller in the last one hundred years or so, we may be coming overwhelmed with the volume of diversity that invades almost all areas of our lives, especially in social interaction. We must also recognize the importance of education, at least in America, that we are falling behind the ability and prowess necessary to keep up with future opportunities. The imbalance or conflict in these two important aspects of social interaction effects us now and will continue to diminish our future well being.

Diversity:

This is one of the most amazing facts of our existence. With only 118 known elements in our universe we are blessed with untold variety in the animate and inanimate forms all around us. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_elements) There are only four letters (AGCT) that identify the essence of DNA and yet the pattern of their arrangements in the Genome establishes the immense variety of living things and their individual parts. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DNA>) With only 12 notes in the chromatic musical scale we can listen to an infinite variety of compositions and arrangements. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_scale) We are told, whenever we have snow, that there are no two snowflakes that are alike in their crystal patterns. (<http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/alike/alike.htm>) The diversity that exists in our universe seems to be inexhaustible.

The marvels of diversity however, seem to cause undo consternation for most people today, especially in social relationships. It seems that we have lingering patterns and ideas of human interactions and mutual respect that may be part of our problem. Could it be that the current ideas of diversity among human beings has been contrived and exaggerated over time? What makes us focus on our perceived differences rather than concentrate on how much we may have in common and likeness? How diverse are we in actuality as human beings? In the light of a lot of marvelous and seemingly inexhaustible diversity in our universe, yet coming from so few actual commonalities, could the same evidence be true of humanity? These questions are not easily answered without a lot of extensive study and thought, so the brevity of this paper will not allow such diligence. I will, however, be sighting several websites that will give those who wish to think profoundly the opportunity for such lengthy study.

Like the universe in which we live, humans also share a magnificent and coherent natural heritage. While there is a capacity for apparent inexhaustible diversity we share the same mystery and efficiency of elements and DNA. Where did the idea of RACE come from? Why are we constantly accosted with forms (medical, employment, etc.) that keep asking us our race? There is one website that can help a greatly to deal with this false evidence that is used to magnify a great variety of seeming differences that must be put aside. The home page of this website is: (<http://www.understandingrace.org/home.html>). I hope you will visit this website and spend as much time as you can to see the enormity of our long-standing false impression about RACE! This

website comes from an exhibit that tours to visit as many different places all about. It is a fascinating experience to visit personally as we did several years ago in New Jersey at the Liberty Science Center Museum. To see what this exhibit is like right now I encourage you to visit it here:

<http://www.understandingrace.org/about/virtour.html>

When I have to fill out one of these forms that ask me for my race I check “other” and explain that race is an artificial distinction that goes against the reality of what I know to be true. You can download the brochure of this exhibit and carry it with you and perhaps share copies with your family and friends to help them see what everyone should be aware of today.

<http://www.understandingrace.org/about/brochure.pdf>

Before you leave this site please be sure to visit their section on “Resources”, especially the articles under “Related Websites” with its first article called: “Race: The Power of an Illusion”!

<http://www.understandingrace.org/resources/weblinks.html>

Education:

I hope that no one reading this paper has the slightest doubt about the importance of education in our lives. Whenever I visit a library and see the manifold volumes of information available to us I realize the heritage and value to which we have access. With all the additional forms of communication growing before our eyes our resources continue to keep growing and accumulating. Few of us, if any, will be able to read, peruse, and absorb all of this knowledge available to us in our lifetime. Specialization may be the best way to deal with the quantity of resources and the increasing speed with which more keeps coming each year. Education is the fuel of diversity and diversity enables education’s realistic proliferation.

Education is the gradual process of acquiring knowledge and the activities of instruction. To educate is to teach or refine one’s discrimination in taste or judgment. With so much content and information available to us, education gives us the tools to certify, identify, and collate common segments toward an orderly and useful focus for application and beneficial use. If we wish education to be proficient we need to recognize that, because of our individual diversity, not everyone learns in the same way. We must be aware and sensitive to individual needs and capabilities if we wish everyone to share equally and participate fully. So, like diversity, education is also simple and complicated as well.

How do we learn? Here are some points to consider:

Do you ever wonder why some people are known as "straight A students" while other people struggle in school - even though they're smart?

Do you know people who didn't finish high school, and have found great success in their careers?

People learn in different ways. And no one has a better learning style than anyone else. Some experts say there are as many as seven different learning styles; but it's easier to narrow it down to three types of learning . . .

we'll call them:

- *Listening learners*
- *Seeing learners*
- *Touch / experience learners*

It's simple really. Think about one of life's earliest lessons - often taught by our mothers: The Stove Can Burn You.

- *Listening learners heard their mother, believed the information, and never touched a stove.*
- *Seeing learners watched their brother touch the stove, and never touched it.*
- *Experience learners touched the stove; but only once!*
(<http://www.worldwidelearn.com/education-articles/how-do-you-learn.htm>)

Another way to approach our ability to learn may be to look at some percentages:

How We Learn

- *10% of what we READ*
- *20% of what we HEAR*
- *30% of what we SEE*
- *50% of what we SEE and HEAR*
- *70% of what is DISCUSSED with OTHERS*
- *80% of what is EXPERIENCED PERSONALLY*
- *95% of what we TEACH TO SOMEONE ELSE*

William Glasser (<http://members.shaw.ca/priscillatheroux/Glasser.htm>)

With this awareness of the diversity in the way we learn as individuals is it really surprising that we have variety in our world views? Since we do not learn in similar ways we cannot assume that each of us will actually know and understand with uniformity. The differences in our locations and culturally established habits will have formed in their unique ways. The accumulation of a multiplicity of data from ever expanding resources will only add to our human diversity. More and more, I believe, we will have the need for some form of cooperation and coordination of educational systems if we are to aspire to world-wide unanimity and respect. We must also provide for an interdependence and sharing that will diminish a call for uniformity to protect the natural environment of diversity by some who seem to desire uniformity to bring a false sense of right and wrong.

As our world shrinks, because of improved travel and communication, we will need education to help us end our tribal instincts of the past toward a new global community of humanity. Without growing anxious about our diversity we can come to terms with vibrant interpersonal relationships that encourage life in all its fullness. As each of us, in cooperation with others in special groups, grows in education, the gradual process of acquiring knowledge, we can assume specialized partnerships that will enable us to handle the increase of information and data. Here are the words and thoughts of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. about the purpose of education.

The Purpose Of Education

by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,

Morehouse College Student Paper, The Maroon Tiger, in 1947

As I engage in the so-called "bull sessions" around and about the school, I too often find that most college men have a misconception of the purpose of education. Most of the "brethren" think that education should equip them with the proper instruments of exploitation so that they can forever trample over the masses. Still others think that education should furnish them with noble ends rather than means to an end.

It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society: the one is utility and the other is culture. Education must enable a man to become more efficient, to achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life.

Education must also train one for quick, resolute and effective thinking. To think incisively and to think for one's self is very difficult. We are prone to let our mental life become invaded by legions of half

truths, prejudices, and propaganda. At this point, I often wonder whether or not education is fulfilling its purpose. A great majority of the so-called educated people do not think logically and scientifically. Even the press, the classroom, the platform, and the pulpit in many instances do not give us objective and unbiased truths. To save man from the morass of propaganda, in my opinion, is one of the chief aims of education. Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.

The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals.

The late Eugene Talmadge, in my opinion, possessed one of the better minds of Georgia, or even America. Moreover, he wore the Phi Beta Kappa key. By all measuring rods, Mr. Talmadge could think critically and intensively; yet he contends that I am an inferior being. Are those the types of men we call educated?

We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character--that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate. The broad education will, therefore, transmit to one not only the accumulated knowledge of the race but also the accumulated experience of social living.

If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, "brethren!" Be careful, teachers!

Enlightenment:

This then brings me to share some thought about the "c²" in my equation - $D=Ec^2$ - a formula for social relationships in the 21st century. Traditionally c² represents the speed of light squared, so how does this fit into the topic of social relationships? With the growing preponderance and diversity and the essential of education in this century, we may truly need enlightenment squared if we are to keep up with our growing pace of life. A light that brings forth clarity and illumination to energize and embellish the diversity and education of our social relationships giving the power and facility to equalize the growth and development of all life.

Light is the portion of electromagnetic radiation that is visible to the human eye. Other wave lengths are not visible to the human eye that are at lower frequencies called infrared or at higher frequencies called ultraviolet. The speed of light is one of the fundamental constants of nature. Primary properties of light are intensity, propagation direction, frequency or wavelength, polarization, and phase, while its speed, about 300,000,000 meters per second in vacuum. Nothing in nature can travel faster than the speed of light. Light also exists in tiny "packets" called photons, so light exhibits properties of both waves and particles. This property is referred to as the wave-particle duality. Light, as we can see from this brief description, is comprehensive, diverse, and essential to the function of our universe.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Light>)

In general, according to the dictionary, enlightenment is "education that results in understanding and the spread of knowledge". In particular, according to the dictionary, Enlightenment refers to, "a movement in Europe from about 1650 until 1800 that advocated the use of reason and individualism instead of tradition and established doctrine". Without question today we need understanding and the spread of knowledge, but also, as earlier in Europe, we need to advocate for reason and individualism instead of tradition and established doctrine! It is this light that is essential to our growth and maturity and is increasingly more important with the exploding proliferation of available resources. In almost all Faiths light is central or important in many ways, especially for worship and understanding.

Light in Buddhism - Offering light signifies the stability and clarity of patience, the beauty which dispels all ignorance.

According to Ven. Norlha Rinpoche: "It is also excellent to offer the butterlamps, candles or light because this act of offering this light symbolizes burning away our mental afflictions of desire, aggression, greed, jealousy, pride and so forth. The other part of the symbolism is that it is a way to burn away our illness."

http://viewonbuddhism.org/general_symbols_buddhism.html

In Hinduism - "Why do we light a lamp?" - "In almost every Indian home a lamp is lit daily before the altar of the Lord. In some houses it is lit at dawn, in some, twice a day – at dawn and dusk – and in a few it is maintained continuously (Akhandā Deepa). All auspicious functions commence with the lighting of the lamp, which is often maintained right through the occasion. Light symbolizes knowledge, and darkness, ignorance. The Lord is the "Knowledge Principle" (Chaitanya) who is the source, the enlivener and the illuminator of all knowledge. Hence light is worshiped as the Lord."

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/70254/Rituals-and-symbolism-in-Hinduism>

In Islam, light is a symbol of knowledge and of faith. The Holy Qur'an describes God as the "Light of the heavens and earth."

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The Messenger described Allah, as "His veil is Light, if He unveils it, the Light of His Face will burn all what His Sight reaches (which is everything!)" [Muslim] The angels are created from light.

http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_does_light_symbolise_in_Islam

In the Judaic - Christian motif, Light is central to God, the work of God, and the revelation of God. The use of light or a reference to light is used many hundreds of times. What enlightenment did our forebearers have when they started to share their story of faith with us by saying, "In the beginning, God"? Was it only the earth "that was without form and void"? Why did our Sun become evident on the fourth "day" along with the moon to divide day from night? How long in time were the actual "days" in the myth of "creation"? How inspired were they to sense that the "days of creation" in their story would be similar to the eons of time in our Biological and Geological tables of evolution? Why was it not until the later days that life began to appear? How interesting is it that the simple forms of life appeared first and that several "days" passed before man and women were brought forth? From what source did early man sense this myth of Cosmology that we have only recently begun to fathom?

What informed our progenitors that God "has no form nor comeliness, ... no beauty that we should desire God"? (Isaiah 53:2) Why was God described as the light and strength - "God is my light and ... my strength"? (Psalm 27:1) - Why, in speaking about God, "the day is yours and the night is yours, ... you give us light and the sun"? (Psalm 74:16) Is God's light different from the Sun? What made them understand that "darkness does not hide God, ... because light and darkness are both alike to God"? (Psalm 139:12) Does this not sound similar to our understanding today about the brightness of the Big Bang and the singularity at the center of a Black Hole? How were they inspired to say these things and what is inspiration anyway?

What does it mean to be "created in the image of God"? How is it that light might be involved? Could that light be in us in a mythical way and bring us consciousness and free will? When we align ourselves with universal principles and choose freely to live into the light are we not the children of God who are called to share in that eternal song? Within the universal diversity and ability to learn from every available source should we not be active in sharing the light? Was not Israel called to "a light to the other nations"? (Isaiah 42:6) "I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6) In the Gospel

we are told that Jesus said, *"While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."* (John 9:5) Jesus, we are told, also informed those who were his followers that *"you are the salt of the earth, ... you are the light of the world"* (Matthew 5:13-14) Jesus explained that a light is not to be hidden, so *"In the same way, let your light shine before people, that they may see your good deeds and give praise to God"*. (Matthew 5:16)

May I suggest, therefore, that social relationships in this 21st century may be noted in $D=Ec^2$ as a formula for human relationships today. When we come to terms with the amazing variety of diversity that is in every facet of life and equally immerse ourselves in the ever increasing education available and conscientiously acquire the light that energizes everything in the universe, then we become the people who care and share in the relationship with people everywhere.

May the caring peace of God that goes beyond human comprehension, declare God's love for you in your heart and mind as we see it in Jesus Christ; and may the blessing of God, loving Creator, gracious Liberator, and life giving Spirit keep you steadfast now and always. Amen.