

My community essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Cultural Diversity](#)



My Community Misty Eoriatti-Waymack ETH 125 03/14/2010 Five years ago I moved to a small town and it never crossed my mind about diversity. I am a white female and not a person who cares what race, sex, or social standing of the people in my community, but moving to a small town I just had not thought about ethnicity of my neighbors. When looking at my community from the outside it looks like just another little community. It was only when I started looking closely at the people around me that I start to see the differences.

Have I been so oblivious in the last five years to my neighbors and my community? I live in Enumclaw, which is a small farm town with a population of 11, 116 (U. S. Census Bureau 2000). Enumclaw is mostly Caucasian with some Hispanics, American Indians, and a few other ethnicities thrown in. A town with 11, 000 people seems like a good size town, but living here it feels small, especially once I started look into the racial characteristics of the people around me. The concerns that I see that are unresolved with the government in my town is that there are not many ethnic celebrations or programs for the ethnic groups in my community.

When I called to try to interview someone in the leadership offices, I was continually directed to voice mail and was could not get a hold of anyone in the city leadership office. I did talk to one person in the chamber of commerce that was able to tell me that she know of a Spanish to English class but no other actual cultural programs. I also talked to a couple of the Hispanic ladies that I work with and they said that they believe that the government of Enumclaw was not ethnic friendly. The majority of the people in leadership positions in my community are Caucasian like I am. I have yet

to meet a community leader who is from any ethnic group in my community. I see this as a problem. How are we supposed to educate our children and other people in the community, plus as leaders there is the need to set an example to treat people equally.

If we do not do it ourselves than how is ethnicity going to be removed from our thinking? It should start with our leaders. In order for this to happen we need more people from ethnic backgrounds to step up and want to take on a leadership position. This is not just one persons responsibility to bring awareness to the community it is the communities responsibility to bring awareness together as a group. Since most of my town is Caucasian there is a little if any of a visual difference in the day-to-day of my life. When I do run into someone of a different ethnicity they have darker skin, and sometimes talk with an accent; this is the only real difference that can be seen.

I mainly only see Hispanics and Indians throughout Enumclaw even though there are other ethnic groups these are the largest groups. When I see other people walking around my town, I do not see in color and from what I have observed neither do most of the other people of my community. No one is noticeably treated with disrespect and the ethnic groups which live here have been able to insert themselves into life in this small town. I have also found there are not any real differences in clothing styles, hairstyles or cultural clashes that may be found in a larger town. My neighborhood is mostly made up of Caucasians, older families living with a spattering of newer younger families like mine. We know most of our neighbors and are treated well by everyone with no lack of respect because of ethnicity.

Everyone in our town is laid back there have not been any racial problems in our town except between the children at the high school level.

Not to say that I have not on occasion noticed a non-white person treated rudely within the community. Once I witnessed a Hispanic woman in line at the grocery store to check out and the checker acted like he could not understand what the Hispanic lady was saying. When I could hear what was being said very clearly. I believe it is more about attitude on a personal level toward people which are different. That checker may have had a bad day regardless this was one of those rare occasions that I witness any kind of discrimination. I have seven Hispanic people who work at my job. All the manuals and paperwork at my job are all in English and is biased toward Caucasians.

We do have a computer training program that is available in either English or Spanish, and the actors on the programs speaking of our jobs are ethnically diverse. As for the paperwork and posters; they are all in English except for the posters the department of labor and industries send to be posted, they are in English and Spanish. Most of the paperwork that corporate sends us is in English unless specifically requested otherwise.

My work information is in English and most of it is either available in Spanish. We also have a bi-lingual gentleman that helps with translation from English to Spanish when needed. The Hispanic people who I work with do feel they get treated a little different by non-Hispanics they work with.

They are hard workers but are spoken down to sometimes or if they go to the boss with concerns he or she feel like his or her concerns are ignored. Anytime I have seen any media in Enumclaw there is never any focuses on any of the cultural diversity of this community. There are no announcements of happenings going on in any of the different cultural communities. Five years I have lived here I have never seen or read report that did not have someone from our town in it that was other than a Caucasian. I think that if the media started doing human interest stories on the different cultures it would bring more awareness to the community and the different cultures are so interesting.

This would do a little toward the inequities in my community and maybe others also. The more that a culture is put into the spot light, the more people become aware and learns that there are little and many differences between us. I would encourage public culture parties to bring awareness, if a community can celebrate America's holiday's maybe also get involved with trying out one of each culture's celebrations; this would also bring people together. The only way we will stop the inequities is through education and awareness.

This has to start with the communities coming together for each other then spreading out across the country. If I had to pick a description from my textbook, I would say that my town closely resembles assimilation concept. From observing my community it seems people here act like the ethnic groups are supposed to act like Americans, with no special considerations for the ethnic group's backgrounds or beliefs. With no programs recognizing the

different cultures in our community it is almost like it is said, that in coming to our country you have to live like us regardless of personal beliefs. This would explain why ethnic people have such a hard time fitting into a community.

Instead of being celebrated for their differences they are judged by them. I see in my textbooks, the news, television shows, and personal views about how prejudice, inequity and differential treatment should be stopped. When it comes down action verses talking, everyone is done talking he or she will just pack up and go their separate ways, no one wants to be the first to take the steps necessary to get started. Even in my own town which everyone lives peacefully we still live separately. Each ethnic group interacts with each other and does not step out of their comfort zone to get involved to make the effort to bond with someone outside of their group.

Resources City of Enumclaw (2010) Retrieved on March 11, 2010 from [http://www. ci. enumclaw. wa.](http://www.ci.enumclaw.wa.us/)

us/ Research a City (2007). Retrieved on March 11, 2010 from [http://profiles. nationalrelocation. com/Washington/Enumclaw/](http://profiles.nationalrelocation.com/Washington/Enumclaw/) R. T.

Schaefer. Racial and Ethnic Groups. Tenth Edition. Published by Prentice-Hall. Copyright © 2006 by Pearson Education, Inc. U. S.

Census Bureau (2000). Retrieve on March 10, 2010. [http://www. census. gov/](http://www.census.gov/)