

# Diversity a 'strength'? Hogwash

## Exclusive: Lindy Daniel asks, does valuing similarity make one a 'hater'?



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Lindy Daniel is a freelance writer from Southern California.

Day in and day out we are told that diversity is the best thing that ever happened to us – our greatest strength. What a load of hogwash. There is no evidence at all to support this delusion; that’s why you never hear any more than just the short, dogmatic catchphrases praising almighty diversity. But if brainwashing works, then who cares about reality, right? Well, reality does.

Diversity is not a strength in this country. In fact, it is difficult to find diversity as a strength anywhere. Let’s get real. Diversity is a weakness. Anywhere you find war, anywhere you find conflict, anywhere you find division, you are very likely to find diversity at the root of it. Racial diversity, ethnic diversity, religious diversity, political diversity – diversity is a weakness. Homogeneity is a strength. Sameness is a strength. Unity is a strength, and unity comes from similarity, not from diversity. Diversity requires great sacrifice. To have it, we must give up our unity.

This has not always been the politically incorrect secret that it is today. Back in 1787, Founding Father John Jay rejoiced that America was made up of quite non-diverse people of the same ancestry, language, religion and principles of government, and “very similar in their manners and customs.” Despite what we’ve been told, the original motto, “E Pluribus Unum” (“Out of many, one”), never meant “out of many races, nationalities, religions, and beliefs, one people”; it meant “out of 13 like-minded states, one union.” The timeless truth is: Similarity is the glue that holds a union together; diversity is the crack that splits it.

The greater the diversity, the harder it is for a dose of similarity to pacify it. Similarity of one kind or another can only counterbalance so much diversity. The mostly Southern and Eastern European immigrants to (mostly Western and Northern European) America at the turn of the 20th century struggled with ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity to a point, but their overarching European cultural identity, shared Christian heritage and values, racial homogeneity, and a prevailing genuine desire to learn English and to become American (not for America to become like them) helped smooth out the differences and promote assimilation. The majority of today’s immigrants, however, share neither an ethnic heritage of Western society, traditional American ideals of limited government, traditional Christian societal values, nor linguistic or racial unity. In fact, they really don’t have much in common with America at large at all, and it’s not certain many of them want anything in common with us. This is not a promising mixture. Diversity was not what brought America through our first “Great Wave” of immigration. Similarity was. That similarity is lacking today.

However, we are assured today that diversity is meaningless – a mere difference in skin color, bedroom practices, or prayer time – and is completely irrelevant to our communal vision of what America is and should be. This is not true; diversity is not so trivial. People of diverse races, national origins, sexual identities and religions consistently tend to pursue vastly different and hotly conflicting political and social agendas. While individual exceptions abound, the diverse groups' average priorities and flagship causes are clear and recognizable and are key sources of political and social discord – year after year after year.

Diversity turns democracy into a disaster. Democracy is only pleasant when the majority is large. The smaller the majority, the greater the dissent. When barely half the population controls the other nearly half of the population, diversity is at its greatest and discord at its worst. When multiple diverse factions are each seeking their own diverse interests, then diversity is at its widest, and from there it's a straight shot to tribalism – the antithesis of unity and opposite of strength.

At the neighborhood level, harmful effects of diversity have been identified in many studies. Harvard professor and political scientist Robert Putnam's thorough study of 30,000 Americans found that (even after accounting for population density) "inhabitants of diverse communities tend to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbors, regardless of the color of their skin, to withdraw even from close friends, to expect the worst from their community and its leaders, to volunteer less, give less to charity and work on community projects less often, to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform more, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference, and to huddle unhappily in front of the television." In other words, diversity does not unite communities; it destroys them.

To counter this bleak prognosis, we might ask, does diversity create any societal strengths at all? Surely the strength most commonly imagined is that exposure to diversity fosters the ability to live peacefully and respectfully in a diverse society and a diverse world. The critical question, then, is: Does being raised in and living in a homogeneous community (a community of more similar people) make one a hateful bigot, incapable of seeing an issue from a different perspective, incapable of seeing diverse kinds of people as fellow human beings worthy of respect and fair treatment? Is every small town man, suburban mother, country girl and farm boy in greater homogeneous America a deplorable beacon of cruelty and hate? My answer: of course not! Now, repeated exposure to diversity may tend to make one feel more comfortable in a diverse society, but this is a reflection of desensitization, not of moral improvement. There is nothing immoral or unnatural in living or in wanting to live among others who are similar to ourselves in both identity and ideals. Some level of difference and disagreement in our lives is inescapable, but that doesn't mean we're obligated to seek it out, or that there is anything wrong with us if we try to avoid it.

Avoiding diversity does not mean one "hates" another group of people. One group does not need to be "bad" or "inferior" and another group "good" or "better" for *difference itself* to cause tension, either with a particular form of diversity as the actual dividing line in the argument, or with the presence of that diversity as the cause of the dividing line, splitting the other group and turning it against itself in an argument that would not exist if not for the presence of the diversity. Either way, avoiding the diversity avoids the division.

The benefits and value of diversity are vague, arguable and subjective and don't hold much water compared to the benefits and value of homogeneity or similarity. Compelling a community, a people or a nation to welcome growing diversity in their midst or across their border is pushing a both risky and arbitrary value on people who may have a different opinion on the intrinsic value of diversity. If homogeneity is not a flaw, then why is it treated as a problem that needs to be fixed? If diversity is a weakness, then why is it so worshiped? Why is it so pushed?

Diversity is a judgment call, and pursuing it in one's life and in one's society is a personal decision, but the fact that diversity breeds disagreement and disagreement breeds division is difficult to reconcile with the claim that diversity makes us stronger. Similarity breeds like-mindedness, like-mindedness breeds unity, and unity makes a people strong.

Sacrificing unity for diversity may be our nation's fate, but let's shake off the politically correct blinders before we surrender to it. Diversity does not unite us. Diversity divides us. The more diverse we become, the weaker we become – and singing “Kumbaya” in 12 different languages isn't going to change that. Enough of this “diversity is our strength” nonsense. Don't believe everything your senator read in a fortune cookie.

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