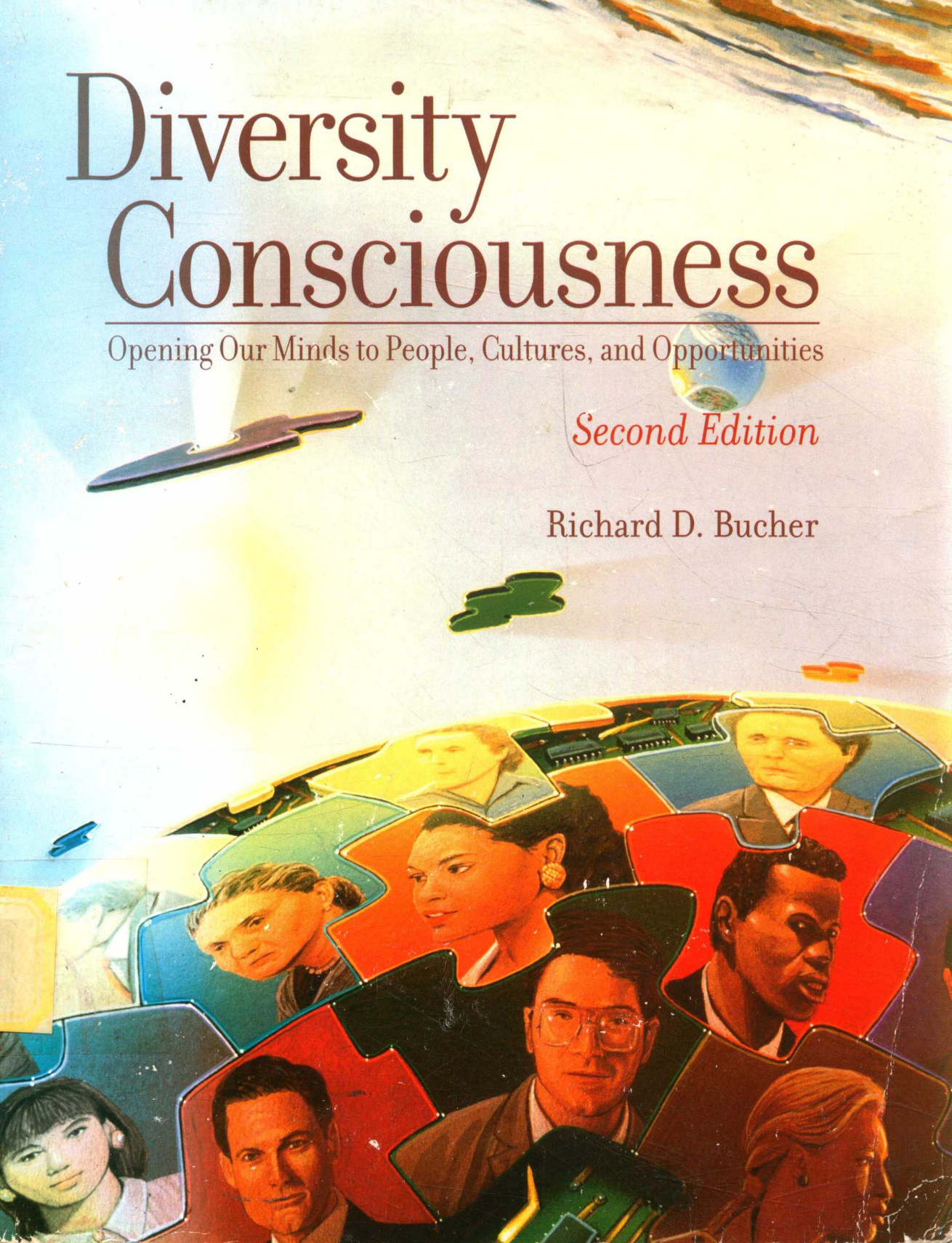


# Diversity Consciousness

Opening Our Minds to People, Cultures, and Opportunities

*Second Edition*

Richard D. Bucher



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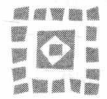
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*With contributions from*

**Patricia L. Bucher**



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# Foreword

By the year 2050, almost 50 percent of the population will be minorities and 50 percent will be women. These U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics paint a very clear and convincing picture of why diversity must be viewed for what it truly is: a core corporate strategic initiative that directly affects the bottom line, not the latest human resources initiative or fad.

In order to compete in today's highly competitive labor market for skilled, creative, dedicated employees, leaders must achieve a diverse workforce at all levels of their organization. They must also create a corporate culture that will effectively utilize and retain the diverse talents they bring into their organizations.

At Fannie Mae, we made a serious long-term commitment to "look like America." We have discovered that when you broaden your employee base, then utilize that expanded pool of talent, experience, and insight, you let loose in your business a tremendous force for the creation of innovation and change. Our experience is that this leads to competitive advantages. In essence, diversity becomes a powerful tool you can use to create a positive impact on your markets and better capitalize on business opportunities. We know that our unwavering commitment to diversity is one of the key elements that has made it possible for Fannie Mae to achieve 12 consecutive years of double-digit earnings.

The cornerstone of any successful diversity initiative must establish and create a core culture and environment in which:

- employees are treated fairly
- employees are recognized and rewarded based on ability and merit for their contributions
- employees have equal access to opportunity for growth and advancement
- employees respect each other and are free from harassment, discrimination, and intolerance
- the diversity of American society is represented at all levels throughout the company
- the management and development of employees is viewed as crucial to the success of the business

On an individual level, developing a high level of diversity consciousness is an absolutely essential part of a student's preparation for entering the workplace. Students who hone these skills will find they have a distinct advantage when they look for jobs or seek advancement.



The single most essential element necessary to creating an environment in which diversity will thrive is the unwavering commitment and active, visible involvement of senior management, starting from the very top of the organization. Like any successful corporate initiative that affects the profitability and survival of an organization, diversity must be interwoven into every aspect of the organization. Results cannot be achieved overnight. There is no quick fix or panacea. It is hard work that pays big dividends.

The way America will be able to excel in the increasingly competitive world market of the twenty-first century is to utilize the incredible wealth of untapped, diverse talent in this country. Those companies that maximize their utilization of our greatest natural resource will be the ones who emerge as the global leaders of the next millennium. Diversity is an essential fact of life for everyone, every day in America. It is an issue that will never go away.

Richard Bucher's work makes a major contribution to a clearer understanding of how and why diversity is crucial to the basic prosperity and future survival of our country.

Franklin D. Raines  
*Chairman and CEO, Fannie Mae*

---

Franklin D. Raines is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Fannie Mae, a New York Stock Exchange company and the largest non-bank financial services company in the world. Fannie Mae is the nation's largest source of financing for home mortgages. He became Chairman and Chief Executive Officer on January 1, 1999. He is the first African-American to head a Fortune 500 firm.

Under Raines' leadership, Fannie Mae was recently honored by *Fortune* magazine as one of the 50 best companies for Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics. *Working Mother's* magazine included Fannie Mae in their "Top Ten List" of family-friendly firms.

Raines serves as a member of the congressionally mandated Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces. He has also served on a number of federal and state public policy advisory groups regarding tax equity, education, poverty, and welfare reform.

Raines was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Social Insurance, and the Council on Foreign Relations.

Raines graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. degree from Harvard College. He graduated cum laude with a J.D. from Harvard Law School. He also attended Magdalen College, Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar.

# Preface

Not long ago, I happened to pick up a magazine that featured this advertisement: "Life without technology isn't an option." As we begin the twenty-first century, it is becoming increasingly apparent that life without diversity is not an option either. Our personal worlds are expanding as people and cultures throughout the world become more and more interconnected. Human diversity, in its many shapes, forms, and colors, is an integral part of our everyday life. As a result, each of us desperately needs to develop our *diversity consciousness*: our awareness, understanding, and skills in the area of diversity.

Diversity consciousness is important for a number of reasons. It allows us to appreciate and enjoy the infinite variety of people and lifestyles that are part of our expanding social world. More specifically, we will increase our knowledge and stretch our thinking. By learning to interpret events through different cultural lenses, we will be able to think critically and adapt to a large variety of situations. Because of our ability to communicate and team with different kinds of people, we will be more successful at work, school, and in other realms of life.

This book is an outgrowth of my personal and professional experiences during the past 35 years. From the beginning, I have wrestled with the subject of diversity intellectually and emotionally. I attended Howard University, a historically black institution, to pursue my studies in the area of race and ethnic relations and earn my doctorate degree. As a white male, this experience radically altered my thinking about diversity. My experiences as a college professor have also been invaluable. For the past 28 years, I have taught students from a rich variety of cultures and backgrounds at Baltimore City Community College (BCCC). More than anything, this experience has taught me the importance of listening carefully to my students and appreciating their diversity. It has also made me look inward, into my own thoughts, feelings, and behavior. In addition to my teaching, I served as the first Director of BCCC's Institute for InterCultural Understanding (IIU). Nationally recognized for its work in diversity education, the IIU nourishes an inclusive, international learning community of students, faculty, staff, and community members. On a more personal level, my work with the IIU makes me more aware of the difficulty and importance of making students as well as educators more conscious of diversity and its central place in a high-quality education.

Another extremely important dimension of my own diversity is my family life. I am the father of a son who has a disability called autism. My son, as well as the rest of my family, provides me with daily reminders of the joys and challenges of diversity.

Jimmy has enriched our lives and brought our family closer together. Because of Jimmy, my family and I see and experience life differently. My daughter Katie, who is a recent college graduate, was asked to write about someone who has had a profound influence on her life. She wrote about Jimmy. "Growing up with my autistic brother, I have discovered more and more about myself and other people. He has shown me that not everything wonderful seems wonderful at first sight. When you have someone so different that is so close to you, you develop an uncommon compassion for others."

The aim of this book is two-dimensional. First, it examines the relationship between a person's success and his or her ability to understand, respect, and value diversity. Success, as defined in this book, means to achieve your goals. A second aim is to explore how people can develop diversity consciousness. Subjects such as teamwork, conflict management, communication, and flexible thinking are discussed in a style that promotes self-reflection and dialogue. A wide variety of real-life student experiences and perspectives appear throughout.

*Diversity Consciousness* introduces a perspective that is largely absent in college courses. Many of these courses avoid diversity issues or treat them as an afterthought. For example, it is a common assumption that students share the same perspectives and life experiences. Some instructors assume that students will learn about diversity "on the side" or "on their own." Unfortunately, students may interpret this to mean that diversity is not central to their education or their success. This interpretation is not borne out by numerous studies in the fields of education and business. These studies, cited throughout the book, reveal that a wide range of diversity skills, such as teaming, communication, and conflict resolution, are directly related to success in college and beyond.

Throughout the book, I have used different terminology to refer to certain groups of people. For instance, I use the term Black as well as African-American, and Latino as well as Hispanic. Using a variety of terms is one way of acknowledging that we do not all agree regarding the labels we attach to human differences.

*Diversity Consciousness: Opening Our Minds to People, Cultures, and Opportunities* possesses five key features that make it relevant and meaningful to students. This book is:

1. *Student-Oriented.* It is infused with genuine anecdotes and perspectives from a very diverse population of students. Too often, educators do not really listen to students when we teach and write. We do not actively collaborate with students in the process of learning and sharing. This book provides a sounding board for a large number of college students from a wide variety of educational, social, and ethnic backgrounds. One distinguishing feature is the integration of real-life "student perspectives" throughout each chapter. They provide a wealth of insight that we need to digest and share. As you read this book, you will recognize everyday struggles, stories, and achievements.
2. *Success-Oriented.* More and more employers are realizing that diversity awareness and skills are crucial because they result in greater teamwork, creativity, productivity, and profit. Students who have a solid grounding in the area of di-

iversity have more to offer their employers. Research shows that diversity is not some feel-good issue. Only now are we beginning to realize that education in the area of diversity relates strongly to success.

3. *Focused on Personal Growth and Empowerment.* The book emphasizes the importance of educating oneself in the area of diversity. The process begins with one's own background and culture and then extends to others. In addition, the book views diversity education as an ongoing process rather than an event—a process that requires self-reflection and evaluation, patience, and commitment. Although education of this nature is hard work, it pays off regardless of who you are or where you come from.
4. *Grounded in Research.* A growing number of studies have examined the impact of education or training in the area of diversity. For example, research indicates that college students who are exposed to diversity issues are more apt to be culturally sensitive and satisfied with college life. Similarly, a number of companies report that diversity education programs are making a measurable difference in worker creativity and productivity. These kinds of studies are important because they move us beyond anecdotal evidence. Research can help us evaluate the impact of educational strategies and plan for the future.
5. *Oriented Toward the Value of Diversity.* Throughout our lives, we have been taught that diversity is a problem rather than a valuable resource. Traditionally, the focus has been on minimizing or denying differences rather than rethinking how we approach differences. To be successful we need to develop a new kind of thinking that enables us to appreciate diversity and use it to benefit ourselves and others.

The second edition of *Diversity Consciousness* has been revised extensively. New features include:

*Case Studies.* “Running” case studies appear at the end of each chapter. Three individuals are followed throughout the book. After reading about their personal experiences dealing with complex issues and situations involving diversity, you are asked to assess each specific case study.

*Diversity Links.* A number of excellent Web sites are listed, including an Internet address and a short description of the information available.


*Instructor's Manual.* This manual provides teachers with concrete suggestions related to pedagogy. Included are possible test questions, teaching resources, and guidance regarding subjects such as difficult dialogues and classroom climate.

In addition, there is a new section on diversity education in the workplace. Numerous issues, such as globalization, the Internet, and U.S. population trends and their implications, are discussed in more detail.

Throughout each chapter, an abundance of information has been updated. Numerous new research studies and relevant information from Census 2000 are cited. The events of September 11, 2001, have been integrated into a number of chapters. A variety of issues that relate to the social ramifications of the terrorist attacks—such



as religious identity, harassment and profiling, cross-cultural communication, and globalization—are addressed in this new edition.

As you read the book, remember that it is designed to help you do more than just learn about diversity. Regardless of your feelings about diversity, try to approach the book with an open mind. Rather than simply taking in what you read, get involved and stretch yourself intellectually and emotionally. One way to do this is to respond to journal questions. Whenever you see  or any time you feel a need to record something in writing, place an entry in your journal. Writing in a journal reinforces your learning, provides you with a record of your thoughts, and provides a basis for further reflection.

Try to open your thinking to different points of view. Take time to reflect on what you read and how it relates to you. Imagine how the world might be viewed by people who do not look, think, and act like you. Wrestle with the subject matter. If what you read makes you feel uncomfortable, that is OK. It is an inevitable part of the learning process. Finally, share your thoughts and feelings *and* learn to listen carefully and respectfully to others—even when it is difficult.

I welcome feedback from students, faculty, employees and employers, or anyone else who might read this book. You may e-mail your comments to me at [rdbucher@aol.com](mailto:rdbucher@aol.com); or write me at Baltimore City Community College, 2901 Liberty Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215. Furthermore, you may access my Web site at [diversityconsciousness.com](http://diversityconsciousness.com).



## ABOUT THE STUDENT EDITORS

Lisa Richards is a native of Trinidad and Tobago, where she resided for 25 years before emigrating to the United States. She is a graduate of Baltimore City Community College (BCCC). At BCCC, she was president of the International Students' Club as well as president of the Student Governance Board. Lisa is currently enrolled at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), where she is studying political science with a minor in International Relations. Lisa says, "I am most passionate about equality, social justice, and bridging the gap that exists among us as individuals, communities, and nations. This is an area in which I see myself being most effective in the future, because from my perspective it is not simply a profession, but a divine destiny. It is a cause to which I foresee devoting my entire life." Upon completion of her B.A. degree in Political Science, Lisa plans to enroll in a joint degree program in law and diplomacy or international affairs. Her goal is to become a U.S. diplomat.

Lauren Storms recently graduated magna cum laude from James Madison University (JMU) with a bachelor's degree in Social Work. She completed an undergraduate honor thesis at JMU entitled "An Invisible Population: Fairfax County Homeless Families." In the course of this study, she examined barriers that homeless families in Fairfax County, Virginia, encounter in accessing services. Lauren is currently working toward her master's degree in Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Lauren's past experiences include work with the mentally ill, the mentally retarded, homeless families, pregnant teenagers, the elderly, health clinics, and schools. To quote Lauren, "The social

work profession gives me an opportunity to work with individuals whom I never would have worked with or met otherwise. I truly believe that even a very small improvement to a person's life, such as making them smile or helping them learn a skill, leaves a lasting effect; it is important in some way in the entire scheme of things."

Patrick Henderson is currently a student at Baltimore City Community College (BCCC). Among his many activities at BCCC are serving as student representative to the Board of Trustees and president of the Student Governance Board. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. Returning to school at age 51, he says, was a little scary. Prior to attending BCCC, Patrick pursued his love of music, which he describes as the common language for all people. Besides being nominated for four Grammy Awards, he has earned a number of gold and platinum records. He has written music for the Doobie Brothers, Michael Bolton, and Aretha Franklin; played piano with the Edwin Hawkins Singers for the pope; and has gone on world tours with Leon Russell and Nils Lofgren. According to Patrick, he is driven by the belief that "those of us who have gained much are required to pass it on, so that others might know they can reach their dreams and ambitions; they have only to believe, work hard, and stay focused."



## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

---

Patricia L. Bucher is a graduate of Skidmore College and received her master's degree in Mathematics Education at Western Maryland College. She has over 60 additional hours of graduate work in the areas of learning differences and behavior management. She currently works for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) as a teacher, curriculum writer, and trainer. The student population of MCPS, located in suburban Washington, D.C., is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse in the nation. MCPS serves approximately 137,000 students who speak over 120 different languages.

Pat is an experienced, highly innovative educator. She regularly presents workshops on *Teaching Mathematics to Diverse Learners*. She has also received local and national recognition for her teaching excellence.

After graduating from Skidmore, Pat had a brief career as a music teacher, which included teaching children with severe emotional and behavioral problems. She soon found out that those years would prove invaluable to her after giving birth to her first child, Jimmy, who has autism and mild cerebral palsy. The next 14 years she spent at home teaching her own son whom many labeled as unteachable. Jimmy can now read a newspaper, watch over his finances, and hold a job. Pat says, "Those years of trying to reach and teach my son taught me more about flexible thinking and creative pedagogy than any other experience of my life."

During that time she also became a passionate advocate for children with developmental disabilities. She created a camp in Carroll County, Maryland, where none existed for children like her son, started a parent support group, and lobbied locally as well as nationally for better educational opportunities for children with disabilities. She was the recipient of the "Carnation Volunteer of the Year for Central Maryland."



## IN APPRECIATION

This book has been a true team effort, from its inception to the final product. I am indebted to so many people.

First, I want to thank all the students from many different colleges and universities who have taught me so much and are such a big part of this book. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of students I have taught at Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) for the past 28 years. I would be remiss if I did not mention my three wonderful student editors, Lisa Richards of the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Lauren Storms of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and Patrick Henderson of Baltimore City Community College (BCCC).

In addition, the help of my colleagues has been invaluable. These people include numerous colleagues at BCCC. Particularly, I am indebted to former Board of Trustees member Sara Taylor, as well as a number of faculty and staff: Walter Dean, Karen McClaskey, Schuzan Yang, Sukuntella Dhanesar, Meintje Westerbeek, and Betsy Mackey.

My job has been made that much easier by an extremely strong, supportive team at Prentice Hall. While I cannot name everyone, there are a number of people to whom I am deeply indebted. They are Sande Johnson, Acquisitions Editor; Cecilia Johnson, Assistant Editor; and Amy Gehl, production coordinator at Carlisle Publishers Services. Each member of this team has given me the encouragement and guidance I needed, but also the freedom to explore and create. For that, I am extremely appreciative.

As a writer, I have had the luxury of working with a very diverse and knowledgeable group of reviewers. They have put in countless hours and their input has been invaluable. The reviewers include

Ted Atkinson  
Eastern Oregon University

G. Maxine Beatty  
Thomas Nelson Community College

Glenda A. Belote  
Florida International University

Charles R. Frederick  
Indiana University-Bloomington

Jean Gordon  
St. Thomas University

Elizabeth L. Harris  
University of Houston-Downtown

Bahaudin Mujtaba  
University of Phoenix—Tampa Campus

T. Y. Okosun  
Northeastern Illinois University

Laura Riolli-Saltzman  
California State University, Sacramento

John A. Rushing  
Barry University

A number of other people have also made significant contributions. Regina Bryan, an accomplished photographer, provided advice and contributed one of her photographs. Kathy Calderazzi, a lawyer based in Virginia, has shared her expertise

regarding a number of questions dealing with diversity and its relation to conflict resolution and the law. Additionally, I have corresponded with a large number of educators and businesspersons throughout the country. Their insight was extremely helpful, and in some cases their comments appear in the book.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to members of my family. Every day they teach me something new and different about diversity. My son, Jimmy, and my daughters, Katie and Suzy, help me laugh at myself and keep my priorities in order. My mother, who is living in the San Diego area, and my late father, a teacher as well as a prolific writer, provided me with my first lessons in valuing diversity.

Finally, my wife, Pat, has been the person who has supported me the most. While writing this book I have continually asked questions of her. Somehow she always found the time to help, whether it was providing another perspective, helping me with a computer question, or pushing me to probe deeper. Without Pat's help, this book would never have been written.

*Richard D. Bucher*

***To my mother and my father***

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**Note:** Every effort has been made to provide accurate and current Internet information in this book. However, the Internet and information posted on it are constantly changing, so it is inevitable that some of the Internet addresses listed in this textbook will change.

# Diversity: An Overview

# 1

## Chapter Objectives

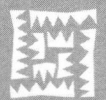
Upon completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Define diversity.
- Explain what is meant by our *changing cultural landscape*.
- Describe and give examples of demographic, social, and cultural changes that are responsible for the growing importance of diversity.
- Contrast assimilation and pluralism and give an example of each.
- List and explain three dimensions of diversity.
- List and explain five diversity myths.
- Define diversity consciousness.
- Define diversity education.

Many cultures contribute to the richness of our world community. Just as every culture has time honored traditions that make its heritage unique, each of us has individual qualities and characteristics that make us special. Let us learn more of one another . . . in knowledge there is understanding; in understanding there is respect; and where there is respect, growth is possible.<sup>1</sup>

*Diversity* is defined in the dictionary as “a state of unlikeness” or “the condition of being different.” Diversity can be viewed and defined in many different ways. In this book, **diversity** refers to *all* of the ways in which people are different. This includes individual, group, and cultural differences.

Today, diversity is getting a great deal of attention. We don’t have to look far to see why. Imagine a group of employees at work or a class of students at college. Then imagine how that same group might have looked, thought, and acted differently two or three decades ago. Now picture how this same group might change by the year 2050.





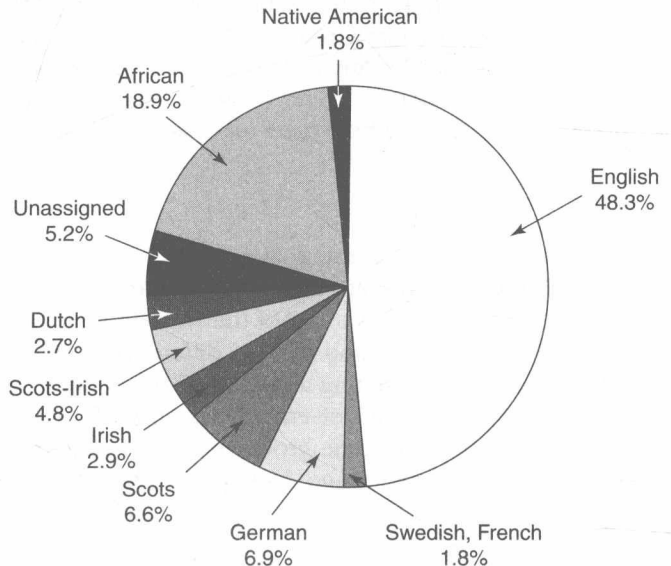
## OUR CHANGING CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Traditionally, the concept of diversity is most often used in relation to culture. **Culture** refers to our way of life, including everything that is learned, shared, and transmitted from one generation to the next. Language, values, rules, beliefs, and even the material things we create are all part of one's culture. *Landscape* means a scene or a setting. When we talk about **cultural landscape**, we are referring to the different lifestyles, traditions, and perspectives that can be found in the United States and throughout the world. Our cultural landscape is changing constantly.

### Demographic Changes in the United States

Diversity is not a new phenomenon. If we look back at the first U.S. Census in 1790, we see some interesting differences and similarities with today's society (see Fig. 1.1). The first U.S. Census revealed our rural character. Only 3 percent of the population lived in settlements of 8,000 or more.<sup>2</sup> In 1790, almost one of five residents (about 19 percent) was African-American. It is interesting to note the cultural diversity among Whites at that time. About 75 percent of the White population were white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (English, Scots, Scots-Irish); 25 percent were mainly Dutch, French, German, Irish, and Swedish.<sup>3</sup> These statistics show that early inhabitants of this country were not monocultural. In other words, they were not all culturally alike.

Since 1790, the cultural landscape of the United States has continued to change. We are no longer a rural society. Approximately 75 percent of our population lives in



**FIGURE 1.1** Total U.S. population distribution in 1790. (From the U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Part II, Series Z 20-132*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.)