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Moral panic, youth and counter cultures

Training for teachers, youth workers and other youth professionals



Social
innovation

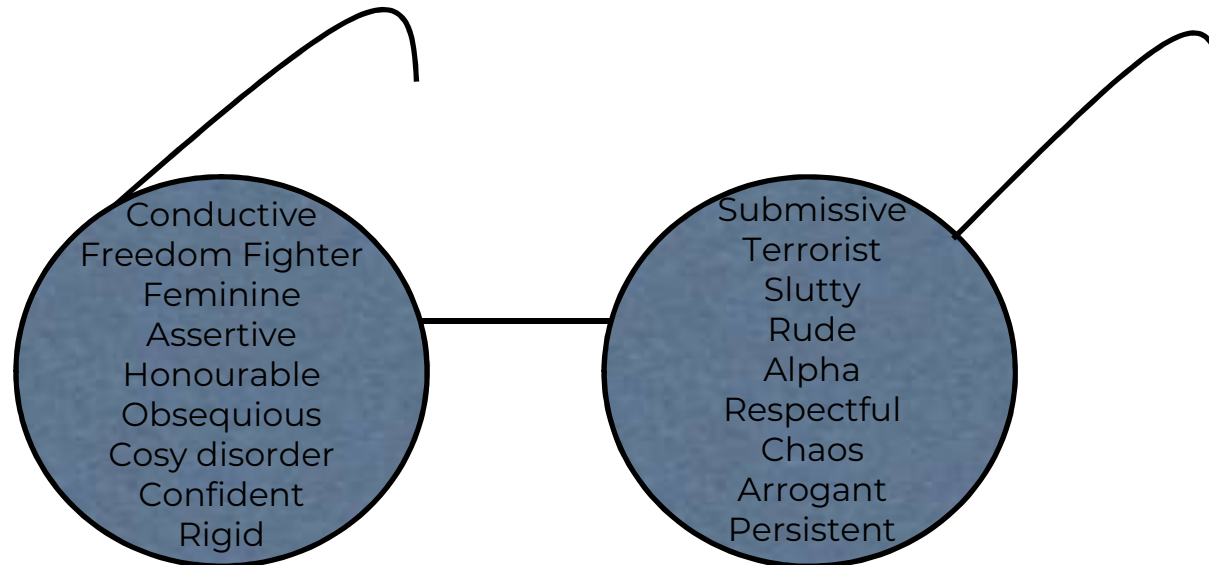
Aim of this training



- Recognizing unconscious bias
- Explaining what youth culture is
- Having a positive attitude towards youth culture
- Focusing on the positive elements of youth culture
- Encouraging critical thinking about youth culture
- Helping young people express aspects of youth culture in a constructive manner
- Coping with the countering elements of youth culture

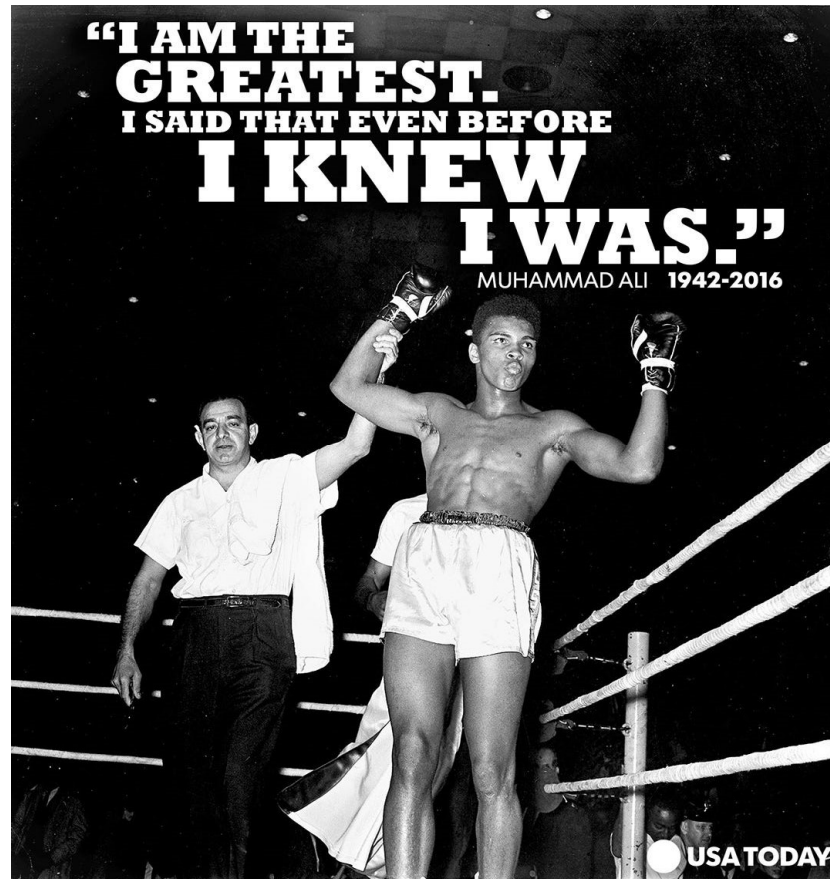


How do you look at the world?



- Communication is knowing yourself and the possible assumptions you have while experiencing the world around you.

Confident or arrogant?



Feminine or slutty?



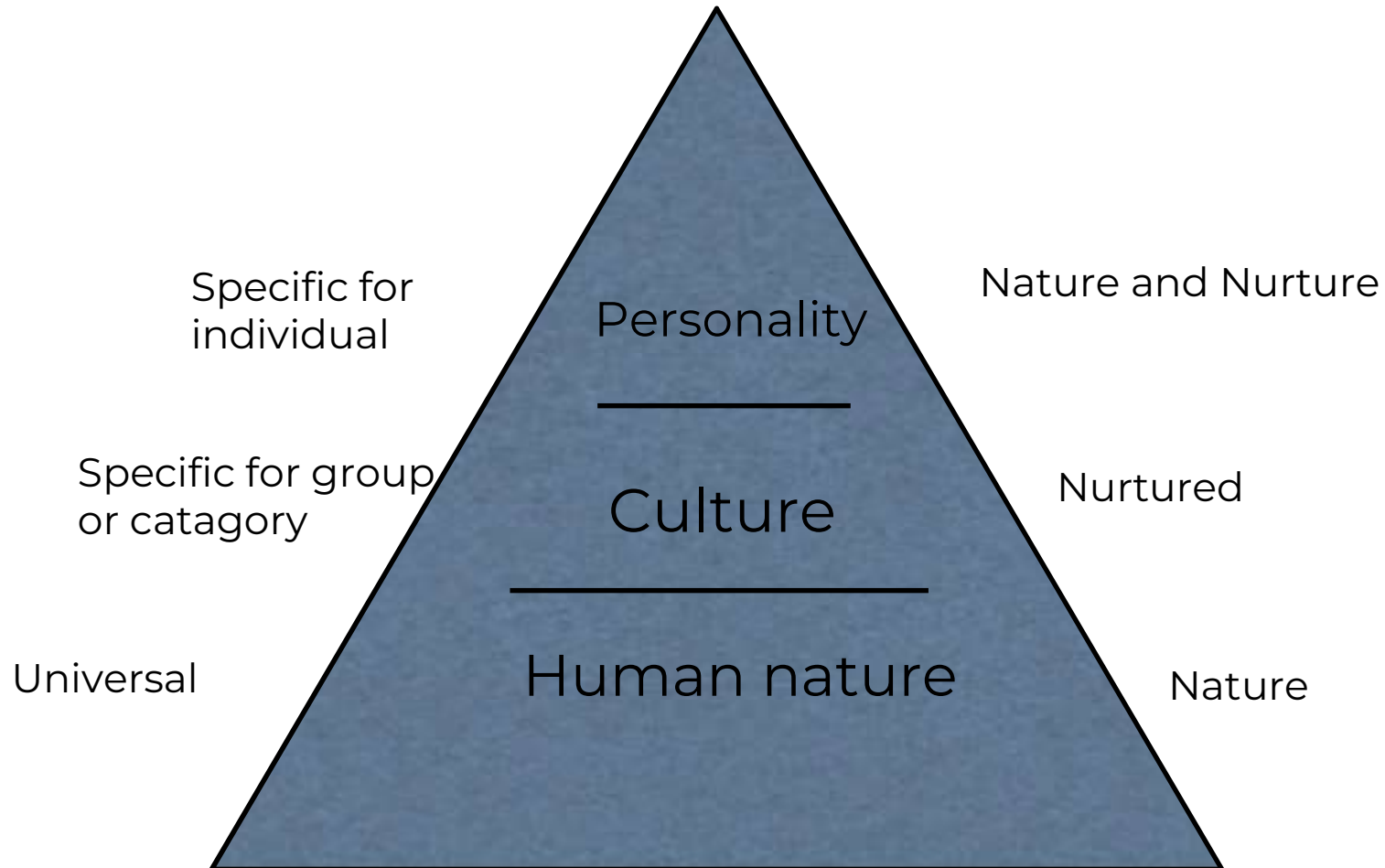
NICKI MINAJ
ANACONDA



Honourable or Alpha?



Cultural dimensions by Hofstede



What is youth culture?



- The societal norms of adolescents and young adults.
- Values, goals, behaviours, beliefs, forms of identity expression, and other shared practices.
- Processes and symbolic systems → distinct from those of adults in their community.



Characteristics of youth culture



- Diversity and fast change
- Group conformism
- Social development
- Extreme
- Paradoxical
- Idealistic and passionate
- Creativity and lucidity
- Mysticism and the search for meaning
- Experiment
- Globally oriented

Functions of youth culture



- Detachment
- Dealing with problems
- Partnership
- Social innovation
- Globalisation

Young people within countercultures



- Unconventional appearance
- Experimental behaviour
- Securing (forcing) a place in society
- Expressing grievances
- Vulnerabilities of young people (in countercultures)

Counter cultures



- A counterculture is a culture whose values and norms of behavior differ substantially from those of mainstream society, sometimes diametrically opposed to mainstream cultural norms.



Counter cultures



Social
innovation



Environmental movement



- Addressing environmental issues and climate change
- Climate movement is a subculture
- Different groups use different means: from democratic and nonviolent to violent actions
- School strikes for climate
- Radical branches such as Sea Shepherd
- Impact on society: consumption of meat, veganism, Kyoto Protocol, etc.



Punk subculture



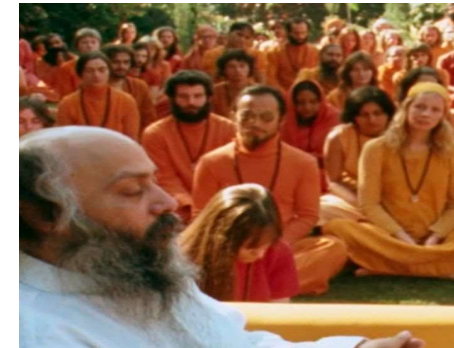
- Belief in individual freedom and anti-establishment views and anti-consumerism
- Fashion and clothes that stand out
- Cross dressing as a political statement to criticize the view of genders
- Development of the Punk piercing style
- Punk subculture often associated with anarchism



Hippies



- Youth culture from the second half of the years 1960
- Resistance to environmental pollution: Flower power
- Resistance to violence, e.g. The war of Vietnam
- Enjoying free sex and the use of drugs
- Challenging norms: Women wearing jeans and men maintaining long hair



Religious conservatism



- Applies the teachings of particular religions to politics
- Some merely proclaim conservative teachings <-> some influence laws
- Increase the role of religion in public life
- Upholding traditional family structures and social values
- Criticize modernity and liberalism
- Usually oppose abortion, LGBT identity, drug use and sexual activity outside of marriage



Counter cultures and mainstream society



Exercise

- What other examples do you know of counter cultures?
- How were they seen in society?
- How did this counterculture change certain views in society?



Primary and Secondary forms of counter culture



Primary socialization

- They value all the codes, the ambitions and the language

Secondary socialization

- Greater in number. A game and a temporary whim. "Switch" between different lifestyles.
- Not fully integrated into the counter culture
- Can not agree with some aspects
- They choose and pick

Moral panic



Cohen's stages of moral panic



- Someone, something or a group are defined as a **threat to social norms** or community interests
- The threat is then depicted in a simple and **recognizable symbol/form** by the media
- The portrayal of this symbol rouses **public concern**
- There is a response from **authorities and policy makers**
- The moral panic over the issue results in **social changes** within the community



Goode and Ben-Yehuda: Characteristics of moral panic



- **Concern**
There must be the belief that the behaviour of the group or activity deemed deviant is likely to have a negative effect on society.
- **Hostility**
Hostility toward the group in question increases, and they become "folk devils". A clear division forms between "them" and "us".
- **Consensus**
Though concern does not have to be nationwide, there must be widespread acceptance that the group in question poses a very real threat to society.
- **Disproportionality**
The action taken is disproportionate to the actual threat posed by the accused group.
- **Volatility**
Moral panics are highly volatile and tend to disappear as quickly as they appeared because public interest wanes or news reports change to another narrative.

Counter cultures and moral panic



Exercise

- What counter cultures have you experienced in this school/ youth organisation?
- What characteristics of moral panics do you recognize within the school/ youth organisation?



Practical vision

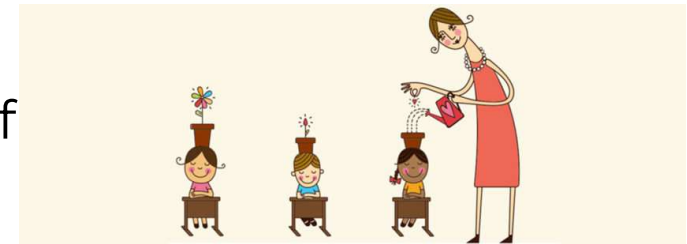


- It is about intelligent solutions to stay true to your core mission: to stimulate their personal and social development
- To give vulnerable young people the opportunity to grow into engaged, active and independent adults
- No plea for adopting counter culture in behaviour and codes nor a "militaristic", punitive "hard approach" that does not take into account counter cultures

Building relationships



- Each institution will formulate **different answers and limits to the relationship** between the repertoires of the organisation and their youngsters.
- Central: understanding the meaning of certain behaviours, gestures and statements that come along with it
- Understanding how a mismatch (school culture <-> counterculture) works and how it can be converted into a match



Social interaction



- **Misconception:**
"Respect" for a professional who behaves the way they behave.
* The "respect" for a **professional** takes shape by taking his or her own role "seriously" (authenticity) and having mastered his or her profession (skill).
- A **professional** who constantly speaks slang in the hallway with the students and certainly with a lack of skills, can hardly count on the functional 'respect'



Social interaction



- How do you think the following statements can be misunderstood? Could you rephrase it differently?
- A statement such as: "You don't do that at home with your mother!"
- Keep in mind the purpose of the lesson you are providing.

Respect through the curriculum



- Applying the curriculum so that young people are stimulated with regard to their inherent interests
- These interests are functionally "converted" or "deployed" within the school culture
- **Excercise:**
How can we build relationships between the interest of youngsters and the topics within the curriculum ?



What if?



What if pupils don't participate?

Examples of youngsters/pupils who don't want to participate in activities or assignments because of certain norms and values:

- A pupil doesn't want to dissect an animal during biology lesson;
- A pupil doesn't want to participate in singing a song;
- A pupil doesn't want to look at a naked picture.

Possible solutions



- Alternative assignment: using modern non-animal methods
- Writing assignment: challenging the pupil about his/her own convictions. Why does he or she not want to participate?
- **Exercise:** What are other possible solutions?



Conclusion



- Talk about the behaviour without condemning the person.
- Take the intentions and emotion of the other into account.
- Take the time to listen to their side before you address the issue.

