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Reflections on the complex, misunderstood and overused idea of diversity.

Are We Really a Diverse Society?

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diversity

From lat.
diversĭtas, -ātis.

1. f. **Variety, dissimilarity, difference.**

2. f. **Abundance, lots of various different things.**

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About Diversity? Why Talk

In the last few decades, many people have struggled for equality and freedom. Most recently, the anti-racist, LGBTI+ and women's rights movements, among others, have achieved historic victories that have paved the way for great advances in civil liberties. Against this backdrop, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation would like to ponder what the next step in the fight for freedom and progress will be. The answer is to introduce people's intrinsic individual diversity into the conversation. In other words, to break with the labels so often attached to communities. To release individual potential and personal diversity.

Diversity encompasses all the dimensions that make each person unique, such as ethnicity, race, age, sexual identity or orientation, gender, nationality, style, romantic attachments, education,

Diversity is a concept and idea that is currently in vogue. There is no sector in society that is not working in some way to incorporate it, from private companies to public policies, including art or the media. It has become a central issue in today's societies and constitutes a major challenge for life in a democracy.

This publication aims to approach the complex, broad and controversial idea of diversity from the framework of anthropology, sociology, political science, education, private enterprise, artistic expression, activism and communication. The various analyses and expressions offered by the people who work on this publication intend to offer a perspective—if not exhaustive, then personal, accurate and challenging—of diversity in order to answer the question of why it is necessary to talk about it in modern societies.

employment, the job or the type of organization for which you work, personality, religious or political beliefs and life experiences or perspectives, among others. In short, the psychological, physical and social variety that exists in each of us. There is no single aspect that defines a person's identity: we are the sum of all of them. Each of us is a vast, unique universe.

The new normal is to face the prejudices and stereotypes that surround groups and accept the diversity of the individual. We must avoid generalizing and labeling an individual based on a small differentiator such as sexual orientation, the party for which they vote, the religion they profess or the color of their skin.

Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Madrid Office.

DIVERSITY

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read our
manifesto
using this
QR code

DIVERSITY

Diversity means variety and plurality and, therefore, contributes to enriching an open society. Diversity should convey the idea that people can be completely different and still be treated the same. Diversity is the rejection of any form of discrimination. All people deserve the same opportunities. That is what diversity means.

Sexuality, skin color, origin, political opinions, cultural preferences or the profession that is exercised are characteristics of diversity, and yet we are more than a "visible" or "exceptional" trait. People are as unique as our fingerprints: intrinsically diverse!

People are often reduced to a single characteristic, perhaps because pigeonholing reduces the world's complexity to a comfortably simple binary: white/black, lesbian/straight, academics/workers, politicians/the people. This distorting simplification usually entails great disadvantages for those affected. They are excluded, insulted or even physically attacked.

The case of Alan Turing, who cracked the Nazis' famous "Enigma" machine and thus played a decisive role in the Allies' victory in World War II, is a good example of the extent to which discrimination can punish the individual and, subsequently, also inhibit progress and freedom in societies. After his heroic feat (he is still

FOREWORD

Sabine Leutheusser–Schnarrenberger

Vice-President of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and former Federal Minister of Justice of Germany.

considered the father of artificial intelligence), Turing was sentenced in 1952 to prison or chemical castration in Great Britain for his homosexuality. The chemical treatment he decided to undergo caused him to become depressed and he committed suicide shortly afterward. Rather than being celebrated as a brilliant scientist who could have produced more innovations, he rather was discriminated against for his homosexuality.

Today Britain is, of course, a liberal country in socio-political terms, but this is—as everywhere else—the result of a long struggle for civil rights and equality before the law. As Federal Minister of Justice, it was only in 1994—122 years after its creation in 1872—that I was able to achieve the suppression of the infamous "gay paragraph" 175 of the Criminal Code in Germany, which punished homosexual acts with draconian penalties and brought many people unimaginable suffering, sometimes even the erasure of their existence. They were reduced to their homosexuality, which was judged deviant, unacceptable or dangerous. Unimaginable.

But this discrimination is far from over. This vile thinking is still present in many countries and is displayed especially by nationalists, right-wing extremists and fascists. Autocrats and dictators use sexual orientation to incite and propagandize. In quite a few nations, homosexuality remains a crime and is punishable with heavy prison sentences.

Diversity is the rejection of any form of discrimination.

But people with a different skin color or political convictions than the respective majority in the state are also targeted, oppressed or even arrested and sentenced to prison. Racism exists in many forms.

When the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom signed the Diversity Charter in 2020, I said the following: "Establishing a sign of appreciation for diversity is, therefore, a human-social imperative, but also an economic one. In addition to discrimination, the Diversity Charter is also directed against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia". Today, this imperative is more urgent than ever. Currently, we see how our freedom, our way of life, our universal values are denied and attacked by illiberal regimes. We must boldly oppose these regimes and defend these values, both externally and internally. This requires a multidimensional understanding of diversity. It requires that we accept, live and promote the diversity experienced in everyday life.

People are as unique as our fingerprints.

Because the discrimination experienced can also lead the respective groups to turn against themselves. They may well separate themselves from the rest of society and identify themselves by the criteria that unites them. This so-called "identity politics" threatens society with collapse.

Therefore, in the sense of liberal individual responsibility, each and every individual is called to work for union, mutual understanding, and enlightenment. The law cannot initiate this, but it can and must determine what constitutes a violation of someone's character.

Education, nurturing, and role models help young people achieve and encourage others to do the same. When I think of Germany or Spain, I am not kept awake at night, to use the words of Heinrich Heine. So, I am not overly worried about liberal democracy. But the story is different for other European Member States.

This publication constitutes an important contribution to strengthening the concept of intrinsic diversity in political and social discourse.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, I would like to thank all the authors for their extraordinary contributions, and I hope you find this article stimulating.

Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger

THEREFORE, ESTABLISHING A SIGN OF APPRECIATION FOR DIVERSITY IS A HUMAN-SOCIAL imperative, BUT ALSO AN ECONOMIC ONE. IN ADDITION TO DISCRIMINATION, THE DIVERSITY CHARTER IS ALSO DIRECTED against RACISM, ANTI-SEMITISM AND XENOPHOBIA.

Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger

Vice-President of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

She studied Law in Göttingen and Bielefeld, passing her first state law exam in 1975 and her second in 1978. Between 1979 and 1990, Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger worked at the German Patent Office in Munich, most recently as a government director. In 1990, she was elected to the German Bundestag for the FDP and two years later she became Federal Minister of Justice. She resigned from this post in 1996 following the coalition's decision concerning the Manchester bombing and concentrated on her work as an MP. Here she was, among other things, spokesperson for legal policy of the parliamentary group in the Bundestag, and between 2001 and 2002, as well as from 2005 to 2009, she was vice-president of the parliamentary group. In the 17th parliamentary term, Leutheusser-Schnarren-

berger was reappointed Federal Minister of Justice.

She was involved in state politics from 2000 to 2013 as chair of the Bavarian FDP, and in federal politics from 1992 to 2013 as a member of the FDP executive committee, most recently as federal vice-chair.

Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger was a member of the board of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom from 2014 to 2018. Since 2018, she has been Vice-President of the Board of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

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WE SHOULD ACCEPT, LIVE AND **promote** THE DIVERSITY WE EXPERIENCE IN DAILY LIFE.

ETHNIC MINORITIES IN SPANISH POLITICS: THE FIGHT FOR A MORE DIVERSE COUNTRY

Sara Giménez

In the following lines, I am going to share my experience and opinion on the importance of the political participation of minorities. In an advanced democracy like Spain, progress in real equality for all population groups should be reflected in their active participation in all spaces, up to and including circles of power. To achieve this, it is vital to combine work in two areas: providing equal opportunities for these groups and acknowledging them.

The reality that I know and that I have personally faced has made it clear to me that, even though the Roma community has advanced in Spain, inequality of opportunities and social marginalization continue to weigh on our people. Some data is appalling: our unemployment rate has tripled and 64% of Roma students do not complete Compulsory Secondary Education. In addition, as stated in the 2021 Annual Report on Discrimination and the Roma Community of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, social marginalization translates into discrimination in areas such as access to housing, employment, goods and services. In the case of Roma women, we experience situa-

tions of intersectional discrimination due to our dual status as women and Roma.

This summer, we suffered discrimination in the south of Spain in response to an alleged criminal act by a Roma person in Peal de Becerro (Jaén) and in Granada, the people reacted by collectivizing responsibility and burning the houses of Roma people, forcing several families to leave the village with their children. These types of reactions tend to happen when the alleged offender belongs to a minority. Criminal responsibility is individual, not collective, and the tendency to blame an entire group shows us that there is much progress yet to be made.

In this context, it is essential to consider the reality in which Roma women live. Each one of us is different and we must respect the path that each person wishes to follow. I do not

think feminists should impose models on anyone. Many gypsy women must break through internal barriers; we want full professional and personal development, to go beyond a role linked to being mothers, wives and caregivers. And I am aware that we are causing a transformation both within our community and in society. However, these advances in freedom and equality are cut short on many occasions when we continue facing social rejection based on prejudices and stereotypes associated with our ethnic condition. It is an arduous road that we must continue traveling. And in this journey, it is essential to have benchmarks.

This first reflection should help us understand that achieving real equality for the Roma people will require public policies that ensure that their fundamental rights can be exercised, and that the Roma community is recognized. For this reason, it is vital to continue raising awareness in society and join forces with the aim of ensuring that the political sphere reflects the true representation of diversity in our society. The political scientist Jane Mansbridge referred at the time to the importance of "descriptive representation" in society. That is, that all citizens can see themselves

I DO NOT THINK
feminists
SHOULD IMPOSE MODELS ON ANYONE

Peter Horree - Alamy

reflected in their political institutions, especially those belonging to minority groups. That is why it is vital that the Spanish Congress of Deputies, Senate, regional parliaments, city councils and the rest of Spain's institutions exhibit a diversity that reflects our plural society.

In turn, both our legislation and our public policies must conform to the existing diversity within our society. The construction of our country should not be based on a perspective that on many occasions has only reflected the position of majority groups, excluding minorities. In this regard, in 2019 in Spain we faced a historic moment given that, for the first time,

three Roma national deputies

came to the political fore from different political parties. In my case, when I decided to make the leap into politics in 2019, after working as a lawyer and for more than 18 years at the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, I could sense the responsibility and opportunity that this change represented for my people and other vulnerable population groups, given that a window of opportunity was opening to influence legislation.

For me it is a true honor to be a national member of the Spanish Congress. As an expert

THE IMPORTANCE NOT ONLY OF BEING A **Roma woman** BUT ALSO AN EXPERT AND PROFESSIONAL

lawyer in **anti-discrimination law,** I can provide legislative improvements to make our legal framework more consistent in the fight against discrimination. In fact, I am proud of championing the elimination from our Penal Code of the possibility of forced sterilization of women with disabilities and of anti-Roma prejudice in the Penal Code. I have presented parliamentary initiatives to combat school failure in the educational field—which mainly affects children from vulnerable socioeconomic backgrounds—and make the unfortunate fact of school segregation a topic of debate. I also proposed the inclusion of Roma women in the renewal document of the state pact against gender violence, presented initiatives in favor of the depathologization of LGTBI and transsexual people, achieved unanimous support for the publication of the cognitive accessibility law, continued defending the need for a Law for ALS patients, argued

for a guarantee of treatment for patients with spinal muscular atrophy, have actively participated in the creation of the subcommittee of the state pact against anti-Roma discrimination and for the inclusion of the Roma people, all while continuing my parliamentary work linked to the third sector of social action to nurture political action and meet real needs beyond political loyalties.

I am experiencing firsthand what the participation in politics of Roma people means: the awareness that you generate among the rest of the parliamentarians of the Chamber, the importance not only of being a Roma woman but also an expert and professional in certain subjects. I believe that this last aspect is one of the most important and personally it is what I perceive when interacting with my fellow members of parliament. From my point of view, it would be a mistake to incorporate people from minorities simply because they are members of

that minority. They should also be incorporated due to their high professional quality, a reflection of their work in today's multicultural Spain. In addition, I believe that we must be benchmark MPs for our people and the whole of society. And we must do it with a broad view, without establishing clichés linked exclusively to social work, but rather contributing

to the fabric of our country from other perspectives such as economics, justice or education.

A diverse country is a country with great wealth and an inexhaustible source of talent. It is time to continue taking steps forward in equality for minority groups, just as we have been doing in terms of gender equality.

OUR DEMOCRACY IS MATURE ENOUGH TO CORRECT CERTAIN structural discriminations

WITH A BROAD VIEW, WITHOUT ESTABLISHING **clichés** LINKED EXCLUSIVELY TO SOCIAL WORK, BUT RATHER CONTRIBUTING TO THE FABRIC OF OUR COUNTRY FROM OTHER PERSPECTIVES SUCH AS ECONOMICS, JUSTICE OR EDUCATION.

It is a question of sharing the spaces of power, expanding the perimeter of rights and recognizing the diverse nature of our society. To achieve this, we need benchmarks as well as allies to support us in this fight.

I believe that our democracy is mature enough to correct certain structural discriminations. It is time to grant real space to social groups that have not enjoyed full citizenship until recently. It is time to create an intercultural society that will be rewarding for all of us.

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Sara Giménez

LAWYER AND MEMBER OF THE SPANISH CONGRESS (CIUDADANOS)
PRESIDENT OF FUNDACIÓN SECRETARIADO GITANO

@SaraGimnez

She holds a Law degree from the University of Zaragoza and was the first gypsy woman from Aragon to graduate in Law. She is currently president of Fundación del Secretariado Gitano (FSG), representative of Spain before the European Committee against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe and national deputy for *Ciudadanos* (Cs) in the Congress of Deputies, acting as spokesperson for the liberal grouping on the following commissions: Equality; Vocational Education and Training; Social Rights and Comprehensive Disability Policies; State Pact on Gender Violence; and Rights of Children and Adolescents.

She is an expert in anti-discrimination law and has extensive experience as a trainer for various key professional agents in the fight against racial discrimination (prosecutors, judges, police forces, lawyers, technicians in the social field, university students, etc.). She also has a postgraduate degree in Human Rights from the University of the Basque Country and has completed an expert course in management of NGOs from ESADE.

At the institutional level, she coordinated the Assistance Service for Victims of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination of the Equal Treatment Council. She was part of the advisory group of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) between 2012 and 2014.

She received awards in 2014 from the Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Aragon in the Social Responsibility category and in 2018 as a Roma woman of note in matters of Equality by the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. In 2022, she was presented with the 'Action for the benefit of Women with Disabilities' award from the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities (CERMI).

EDUCATE FROM A PERSPECTIVE OF INDIVIDUAL DIVERSITY

Rafael Feito

The current school model is clearly a product of the first industrial revolution, a time when education's main goal was to train people to adapt to the requirements of factory production. It was a question of incorporating, voluntarily or by force, the bulk of the population into the world of industrial production, radically separating the family environment from the workplace. Until then, the peasantry—the majority of the population—learned to make a living alongside their relatives, and craftsmen did so alongside other craftsmen. Universities—then so very different from today—were responsible for the training of state officials—from administrators to the military—and clergy.

This entire panorama changed radically when workers from the country were brought into the factories, as their outdoor lifestyle involved following the natural sequence of the cycles of day and night and the year's four seasons. Schooling introduced them to the world of discipline, schedules, concentrations, monitoring and confinement in a physical space. This idea of submission, of annulment of personality, is very present in the origins of the Prussian school of Frederick the Great— which historically can be considered the first mass school—, the goal of which was to create a feeling of national belonging: obedient soldiers and officials for the state bureaucracy.

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that classrooms were organized following the model of simultaneous teaching

proposed by the founder of the Christian Schools, Jean Baptiste de La Salle: a classroom in which a single teacher imparts the same knowledge to groups of passive students. Here there is hardly any possibility of promoting diversity. It is a model that should work for everyone: one size fits all. Only the aristocracy was left out of this standardizing scheme thanks to its recourse to private tutors (in the style of the protagonist of Rousseau's *Emilio*). The labor movement was partially successful—and only for a short period in some localities—in constructing a school system that was separate from the one that was being created by the bourgeois state.

Our current school model favors privileged social groups from a cultural and economic point of view and this is clearly observed in each and every one of the PISA reports: being born into a family of low socioeconomic status considerably increases the chances of leaving school early. Good students are those from families with the cultural capital to which the school is accustomed and, if this is not the case or is not sufficient, there is always the possibility of resorting to private classes to adjust to the system. In a world in which it is considered that the minimum educational level to function comfortably in the labor market is an upper secondary education credential (be it the Baccalaureate or intermediate vocational training), school failure is intolerable. It is difficult to become a free person without attaining this minimum educational certification and the knowledge behind it. This is why Max Weber considered that school, like the Church, is a hierocratic institution, that is, an institution that dispenses goods of salvation: access to heaven for the Church, educational credentials in the case of schools.

In this scenario, those policies that emphasize combating social inequalities at school are welcome. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that, beyond the group to which each one may belong, the school deals with individuals whose behavior, concerns, aspirations... are not fully explainable based on structural factors such as—among others—social class, sex, immigration status, or belonging to one ethnic group or another.

Charles Robertson - Alamy

THE SCHOOL DEALS WITH INDIVIDUALS WHOSE BEHAVIOR, CONCERNS, aspirations… ARE NOT FULLY EXPLAINABLE BASED ON structural factors SUCH AS—AMONG OTHERS— SOCIAL CLASS, SEX, IMMIGRATION STATUS, OR BELONGING TO ONE ETHNIC GROUP OR ANOTHER.

As Howard Gardner already described in his theory of multiple intelligences, our school enshrines two types of intelligence: logical-mathematical and linguistic. And it does this at the price of denying other types of intelligence at least as important as these two. There are different types of intelligence that people possess to varying degrees. In addition to the two mentioned, Gardner speaks of the following: musical, spatial, bodily-kinetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal. This diversity of intelligences allows us to appreciate virtues that the school traditionally disdains. That the school has a tremendous propensity to exclude everything that is outside the two intelligences that it privileges is explained very well by Ken Robinson, in what is perhaps the most famous TED talk, when he cited the case of the dancer Gillian Lynn. At six years old—we are in the thirties of the last century—her teachers could not take care of her since she could not sit still. At that time, fortunately, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder had not yet been discovered. Her parents took her to a pediatrician. After talking with them, they left the girl alone in the office with the radio on and the parents could see that the girl mo-

ved her legs to the rhythm of the music. The doctor recommended that they enroll her in a dance school. From that moment, the rest is an undeniable success story. Examples like this show that in reality each student—regardless of their social class, sex or place of birth—is a world unto itself.

Fortunately, we have schools—although not many—that by attending to both individual and socioeconomic diversity can put an end to the "normalization" imposed by the educational system (teachers were trained by what were known as "normal" schools). These are, among others, the so-called democratic schools, as defined and analyzed by Michael Apple and James Beane in their famous book of the same name.

That this type of school is called democratic means that its will is to create a democratic citizenship, an essential condition for the existence of individual freedoms. That is why these schools promote the free circulation of ideas, the use of critical reflection and concern for the welfare of others and the common good.

There are three main aspects that could be highlighted in these centers: the adventure of research (which translates into project work and implies the intensive use of very diverse libraries and information and communication technologies, as well as a fluid and constant relationship with the environment), the creation of deliberative scenarios (through assemblies, the presentation and commentary of the news and, in general, cooperative learning) and the promotion of a democratic coexistence (through the consensual elaboration both of the rules of coexistence and their application). This mode of operation ensures sufficient attention to diversity.

As regards the adventure of research, it is hoped that students will be capable of working in the same manner that scientists do, learning how knowledge is produced and rejecting dogma. This is what is called epistemological knowledge. In democratic schools, students are encouraged to choose topics on which to develop projects, which

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THAT THIS TYPE OF school IS CALLED DEMOCRATIC MEANS THAT ITS WILL IS TO CREATE A DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP, AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR THE EXISTENCE OF individual FREEDOMS.

Martin Shields - Alamy

in the first year of this level and then present both in writing—a text of between 25 and 50 pages—and orally. This project is programmed as a subject in and of itself and involves seventy hours of work (a little less than half the time of a university Final Degree Project of six credits). It must be done under the supervision of a teacher from the student center. In addition, Catalan universities offer to collaborate with these research projects.

usually implies breaking with the rigid framework of the compartmentalization of knowledge in subjects that do not dialogue with each other. It is, in short, the commitment to curricular globalization.

The student body should be encouraged to work autonomously, as in the case of the so-called International Baccalaureate monograph: a research project that the student has to complete. Along the same lines, we can mention the research work that high school students in Catalonia have to conduct. This is an activity that all students start

In college, the problem is similar. Completing a university degree is usually synonymous with passing around forty subjects (in the case of Spain, it involves taking about 240 credits).

The point is that, except for the end-of-degree projects, there is hardly any space—or credits, if you prefer—that might allow the individual's intellectual concerns to be explored. We should be wondering how many books our university students will have read in order to obtain the relevant diploma.

The second aspect is the creation of deliberative scenarios. Our school sentences students to silence and passivity. It is as if we believe that lear-

Some centers work with so-called interactive groups. This activity consists of forming academically heterogeneous groups in each class, comprising some four to six students, in which those who know the most are encouraged to teach their classmates. There will usually be guests—for example, students, university students—in charge of promoting interaction within each group.

The most effective way

to attend to diversity is to give students the floor, allowing them to express their opinions in a classroom that acts as a space to discuss, create and recreate knowledge from the most diverse environments. There is always the risk that only a few will speak while others remain silent. Here the work of the teacher, in collaboration with the whole student body, is absolutely fundamental. Activities such as so-called assemblies—so fre-

quent in early childhood education—are a favorable setting for the particularities, points of view and emotions of each student to emerge at the beginning of the school day. This activity consists of each student explaining a piece of news to their classmates, whether this be something from the media or their own experience. In this manner, each student must orally communicate their opinion on this news.

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And, finally, there remains the question of the democratic settlement of disputes between students. We often take for granted that schools are safe environments. However, there are students who silently suffer due to being socially excluded by their classmates for reasons

as diverse as their physical appearance, the way they dress, the way they speak, envy... in short, because of their diversity. Once again, the institutional organization of conflict resolution is the solution. Open and democratic dialogue is usually the best tool to settle disputes that could jeopardize some students' ability to remain in school and that may even lead to suicide.

For a few years now, clearly since the beginning of the current century, we have had tools that would allow a radical change in the way schools teach. The teacher is no longer the main source of access to knowledge. With the simple use of a mobile connected to the internet, it is possible to access a whole world of explanations—with very different styles—concerning any school subject. The COVID-19 crisis has meant that teachers, students and parents have access to educational content—in the style of the Khan academy—that shows that it is possible to learn in a more autonomous and personal way. We could take the

example of ESO Mathematics, where students can easily find the solution to the inevitable problems of trains that are going to meet at a certain point or containers that are filled with water with several taps open while emptying through a duct. These are statements so extremely trite that one has only to type "tap problems" into Google or the first words of the problem statement to bring up dozens—if not hundreds—of pages that will allow you to succeed in such tasks. This could translate into a creative and innovative redefinition of the role of the teacher. It would no longer be necessary to spend so many hours at school and, especially, in the classroom. Likewise, the university should take advantage of having more means and a student body more connected to the network than the rest of the educational levels, to undertake a profound transformation of its teaching, endeavoring to promote the individuality of its students.

In short, if the school does not want to become a mere dispenser of credentials, it must undertake substantive changes that will turn it into an institution that, in addition to certifying qualifications, provides relevant knowledge and experiences for a world in which we do not know what jobs will exist in just a few years and there is no choice but to constantly renew our practices, which involves wanting to know. *Sapere aude* continues to be the challenge.

afael Feito Alonso

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He is the author of *Born to Lose. A Sociological Analysis of School Rejection and Dropout* (Madrid, CIDE. 1990), *Contemporary Social Structure. Social Classes in Industrialized Countries* (Madrid, Siglo XXI, 1995), *Social Classes and Political Behavior in Spain* (Madrid, Entinema, 1998), *The Challenges of Compulsory Education* (Barcelona, Ariel, 2000), *A Quality Education for Everybody. Educational Reform and Counter-Reform in Today's Spain* (Madrid, Siglo XXI, 2002), *Another School is Possible* (Madrid, Siglo XXI, 2006), *Building Democratic Schools* (compiler along with J.I. López, Hipatia, Barcelona, 2008), *The Challenges of School Participation* (Madrid, Morata, 2011), *What Does a School Like You Do in a Century Like This?* (Madrid, La Catarata), *Social Class Inequalities in the 21st Century* (Valencia, Tirant) and numerous articles in specialized and general magazines.

He was a collaborator of the Movement for the Quality of Education in the South and East of Madrid, member of the executive of the Federation of Fathers and Mothers of Madrid (Francisco Giner de los Ríos) and president of the Association of Sociology of Education.

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FOR AN INCLUSIVE DIVERSITY

Western society began as a hetero-patriarchal culture where a homogeneous model of thought, behavior, life models and attitudes predominated. A culture where minorities of any type: gender, sexual identity, race, etc. were considered inferior and even persecuted.

During the 1970s and 1980s, movements that struggled to awaken society became stronger. A titanic struggle ensued, in which feminists and the LGBTQI+ collective fought to open the minds of their fellow citizens and convince them that women, homosexuals and transsexuals should have the same rights as other citizens. These movements have achieved things that would have been unthinkable decades ago and today, despite their imperfections, these movements have given the word DIVERSITY an even broader and more impressive meaning than the etymological one. In today's Western culture, diversity is the symbol of equal rights, respect for all individuals and the freedom to be, believe, think, love and feel as each person considers most appropriate.

In parallel, we are witnessing numerous socio-economic developments that contribute to making our cities and our societies more plural and more open, both out of conviction and necessity.

A technological globalization of those markets and logistics chains that require companies to be open to different cultures and societies to

Eva Díaz

maintain high standards of operation. This, together with social networks, contributes to making society more open to coexisting with other nationalities, other models of society and other personal realities.

An increase in life expectancy as well as a decrease in the birth rate in Western societies force us to rethink our models of coexistence and work.

In this new demographic scenario, the elderly have become more important economically and socially; let us not forget that, in Spain, they are the group that possesses the greatest economic capital.

And migrants are essential for compensating for the lack of productive capacity, ceasing to be a solely social issue and becoming a key element in our competitiveness.

And there is an increase in social awareness for people with disabilities, which leads us to seek their full social and labor integration, breaking down previous barriers and stereotypes that considered them socially irrelevant.

We are therefore facing a major challenge for our western society, both social and economic. A time when we must be able to integrate and strengthen all these forces to achieve a society where

integrate

freedom and respect for the individual stop being dreams and become realities. A moment that asks us to review how we have gotten here and the right path to continue deepening plural and diverse societies where coexistence is based on respect and freedom.

Society in 2022 is radically different from that of the 1970s or 1980s and, therefore, movements for diversity must adapt to the new reality in order to continue advancing. The premises that were valid in its origins have ceased to be so, and only a repositioning to the new reality will allow us to achieve that goal of justice, freedom and equality for all. What was valid and valuable has ceased to be. We have to reinvent ourselves.

Until now, these movements have been characterized by three elements.

The first is the "**struggle**" for the rights of the collective; a fight that, regrettably, has often involved a literal fight, since "privileged" groups tend to resist equality, considering it detrimental to their interests. In this model, the movements grouped and sheltered their people and organized themselves in closed and cohesive structures within the group for the objective of equal rights.

The second key element is the **leadership** of

these movements exercised by social and cultural organizations. "Feminism", the "LGBTQI+ collective", NGOs for the inclusion of immigrants, etc. The economic importance of diversity was never acknowledged in the past, so the "struggle" has always been led by these social and highly political groups.

Groups that all too often distrust each other, not seeking synergies and becoming highly politicized and polarized.

This concept of struggle and the social nature of these movements has been key to getting to where we are, but in recent years it has generated pernicious situations for the very struggle for diversity.

From clashes between the groups themselves—the most obvious example is the conflict between classical feminism and its TERF variant and the queer movement—to a "rebound effect" in those we could call non-diverse, due to the sometimes overbearing pressure of diverse communities. A rebound that manifests itself, just to give a few examples, in the political populism of the extreme right against immigration, women or the LGTBQI+ community.

While these important problems require that we rethink the movements for diversity, the most important thing to remember is that the socio-economic reality in 2022 is very different from the one that existed when the diversity movements were born. We either adapt to the new reality or we will not achieve what we have set out to do. It would be sad if after so much effort from so many people we were to stall or even moved backwards.

Gay Bumgarner - Alamy

What
has changed
in our society?

Socially, unlike the 20th century, today there is an awareness of the importance of diversity. Obviously it is not complete and does not reach all individuals. But it is dominant. Spain is one of the most LGTBQI+ friendly countries in Europe, it is one of the countries with the most advanced legislation on both women's rights and the LGTBQI+ community, it actively works for the inclusion of people with disabilities, in the care of the elderly and we are an important hub for immigrants, who are then incorporated into our economy. In short, we have a social conscience.

Economically, we live in a globalized model where talent is the key to competitiveness. What companies require is to be able to understand the diverse realities of their clients and their teams and capture and retain talent wherever they are, regardless of their social environment or personal diversity.

As individuals, we are aware of and proud of our "individuality" and our importance as individuals. We are less gregarious, more rational, more aware of our individual values and of our reality as people, which is multi-faceted. For this reason, we want the multiple dimensions encompassing multiple diversities to be acknowledged.

And faced with this new reality, what is the path to achieving full acceptance of diversity in our societies?

As a precursor of success, we must change the apriorism on which we establish this "struggle" for diversity. Until now, we have worked for the acceptance of diversity and equal rights. As we have seen, without being perfect, both objectives are achieved to a high degree.

The new challenge must be the integration of diversity in our society and our scheme of values. The difference between acceptance and integration may seem subtle and irrelevant, but it is not.

Many of you who can read this article know my personal story. And if not, it's easy to find me on social networks. I transitioned over seven years ago. And I learned something very simple during the process: accepting diversity is relatively easy as long as it does not affect your immediate environment: family, friends or colleagues in the workplace; but it is complex when it affects you in your environment. The reason? We accept diversity but we do not understand it and, therefore, we do not integrate it into our life patterns.

UNTIL NOW, WE HAVE WORKED FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF DIVERSITY AND **equal rights.**

THE NEW CHALLENGE MUST BE THE INTEGRATION OF **diversity** IN OUR SOCIETY AND OUR SCHEME OF VALUES.

Alberto Sibaja Ramírez - Alamy

And therein lies the difference between *accepting and integrating.* Our society accepts diverse people (homosexuals, transsexuals, women with power, immigrants, our elders, disabled people...) until they enter our comfort and trust environments and then our atavistic biases kick in.

Integration

means more than just acceptance. It means being aware of people´s own reality. Being aware of its importance in our society and our economy. It means embracing that diversity as a generator of value for all of us.

And we are that other element of radical change necessary for achieving diversity from this moment onwards. Until now we have seen diversity as a problem "of them". But it is not like that; it used to be, but not anymore.

Diversity has ceased to be a problem for only one part of society and has become an opportunity for everyone in a plural and global world. An opportunity to build a different and better society. Let us never forget a basic tenant: in essence, we are all diverse in some way and we all have common basic values and needs as human beings.

Integrating diversity implies a society open to others; to everyone. A society where equality and respect for all is a basic principle of coexistence. A society where we all work together to advance and progress.

I have never been in favor of posing challenges without proposing solutions. These may be mine, may be imperfect, but they are based on my own experience. So, I am going to propose what, in my humble experience, is vital to achieving solutions.

How can we achieve the *integration* of diversity in our society? Basically, with three tools:

- *Transversality;*
  We must abandon the concept of communities isolated from each other, focused on their particular struggle and we must abandon their politicization. Only if we are able to understand diversity as a value for everyone will we be able to integrate it into our societies.

- *Empathy;*
  If we do not understand the other, the female manager, the sexually diverse person, the elderly, the disabled, the immigrant… how are we going to be able to integrate their reality into our lives?

- *Coexistence;*
  Biases about "the other" disappear when we live with them, and we verify that all the biases we had are not necessarily true. When we find that almost everything we believed only existed in our minds.

Transversality

It is necessary that we address diversity in a transversal and universal manner; that we abandon the niches of diversity (women, LGBTQI+, the elderly, etc.) to reach a broader concept of diversity. A concept that includes all varieties of diversity and, most importantly, is multifaceted (where do we consider women, immigrants, Latinas, transgender individuals, and the elderly?) and encompasses those who until now have been considered "not diverse". To go to an extreme: heterosexual white men, who could be considered a dominant group, need to reformulate their position in society. We ask them to abandon the behaviors and attitudes of the past, but for this to happen, they need to define their role within a new scale of values in society. And for this they must abandon the scheme in which they were educated and grew up. Gender equality requires a new masculine role in harmony with the new society and women are key in this process. And similar analyses can be made of each of the diverse communities.

We must therefore advance towards a transversal and integrating diversity, where we all fit in and where no one is encapsulated based on one of its dimensions.

It requires that the organizations that are leading the "struggle" of the communities move from an attitude of struggle and confrontation to an attitude of integration and understanding. Where confrontations are eliminated (us or them) and their leaders can collaborate with a broad and collaborative perspective.

And, above all, it is necessary for the movements to distance themselves from politics. Stop being the instruments of the political parties that you have become part of. Because in a political environment polarized between ideologies, integration is impossible.

Empathy

Until now, the communication of the communities has been, for the most part, from the perspective of struggle. For respect, for rights, for recognition.

For society to integrate it into its values, we must stop speaking only of rights and instead start speaking from the heart. And there, the most responsible, are not the NGOs or support organizations. It is the people, as individuals who live each diversity, who must step forward and capitalize on the messages. Society needs references, it needs people, who tell of their reality employing feelings and experiences. Because only from one heart to another can we understand, can we integrate the reality of everyone in our lives and beliefs.

It is key, therefore, that the role of communication passes to the referents and is carried out from authenticity.

Coexistence

The main way to eliminate our biases is experience. Friction with the other. And it is a great tool for integration.

And the best environment for this is work; when we must spend a significant part of our time with immigrants, or disabled people, or any other diversity, is when we can really verify that their value as a person is different from what our beliefs had led us to.

For this reason, the great engine of the integration of diversity in our global and technological society are companies. As organizations, they understand the economic and social need to promote diversity in their teams. As we mentioned at the beginning, in a talented and global society, companies cannot afford exclusive environments where diversity is not present and active. It would be giving up talent and not understanding society in its plurality.

The business movement for diversity has evolved from a fad, as it might have been in certain settings a few decades ago, to a strategic imperative and for the most part they are actively working to incorporate it into their values and culture.

When in a work environment, where we must collaborate with people who are alien to what we consider normative, we begin to understand, we begin to accept, and we begin to integrate their reality into our daily lives. And there is no better way to integrate diversity than to expose ourselves to it and check, on a day-to-day basis, how wrong our beliefs were.

For this reason, the company, so reviled in many environments, has become and is the great engine of diversity and its integration into our culture.

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In short, diversity is the great cultural, social and economic asset of our society in the 21st century. And it must encompass all of us and must integrate and permeate our value scheme. Because diversity is the right of everyone to live and feel in freedom.

We have advanced, we have grown. Let's take the next step together. Let's integrate it into our values.

Because in integrating diversity we risk our coexistence, our economy and, above all and ultimately our future as a society.

Marek Uliasz - Alamy

DIVERSITY HAS CEASED TO BE A problem FOR ONLY ONE PART OF SOCIETY AND HAS BECOME AN opportunity FOR EVERYONE IN A PLURAL AND GLOBAL WORLD.

va Díaz

CEO SHAPING NEW HUMANS AND
#FEMALEFORWARDINTERNATIONAL AMBASSADOR

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Eva Díaz is a woman with an extensive professional career, trained in Mechanical Engineering and with more than 30 years of experience in senior management; committed to society and its environment on issues as relevant as gender equality, diversity and the impact of technology on society and business.

She founded Shaping The New, a new organization focused on working with senior managers in the dissemination and implementation of new leadership models in the digital technological scenario and their impact on new organizational models (neuronal, liquid, etc.) and enhanced talent management.

She is currently CEO of Appogeo Digital, a Spanish company focused on the development of innovative mobility solutions based mainly on IoT and AI. The company was founded in 2019 and specializes in bringing technology closer to less digitized sectors and communities.

Due to her own personal experience and professional development, Eva actively participates in activities outside her profes-sional environment, oriented to the empowerment of women, diversity and the development of new leadership in a digital world through various organizations.

As a member of REDI (Network of Companies for Diversity and Equality) she has participated in corporate empowerment activities for Diversity; both disseminating her own gender transition experience and working with senior executives on the Diversity Strategy.

Since August 2020, Eva has been an ambassador for the #Female Forward program for southern Europe and the Mediterranean region of the Friedrich Nauman Foundation for Freedom.

antropology antropology

DIFFERENCES, DIVERSITIES AND IDENTITIES

José Ignacio Pichardo

My name is J. Ignacio Pichardo, and I am a social and cultural anthropologist. This is one of my identities, in this case a professional identity. Perhaps there are people who mistakenly think that I specialize in looking for fossils or that I assist in forensic investigations analyzing bones. Some people do not even know what anthropologists are or what they do. Social and cultural anthropology is the science that studies human diversity. Investigating and systematizing the very diverse manners in which human beings organize their lives in groups: gastronomy, languages, traditions, housing, clothing… as well as worldviews related—among other issues—to the conceptions of time, spirituality, power or the family.

Human beings are different, and each person is unique and unrepeatable. At the same time, as social beings, we share some characteristics with other members of society. Characteristics that have to do with phenotypic issues: skin or eye color, body features such as nose size, hair or eye shape, etc.; but also, others that are related to ethnicity, with shared cultural values and ways of understanding the

world that we have learned and incorporated through the processes of socialization and enculturation: such as our language or beliefs of all kinds.

Certain traits mark us and end up defining all or a good part of our social interactions, while others hardly have any social relevance. For example, some of my friends who have a certain skin tone are sometimes asked for documentation when they leave the metro in Lavapiés, while this has never happened to me. We could say the same of having a penis or a vagina, which socially identifies us as a woman or a man from the moment of birth and which constitutes the first element of social organization. In our society we do not show our genitals on the streets, in the workplace or in our social interactions, so we use various cultural markers that allow others to clearly identify us as men or women: hair length, makeup, wearing skirt or heels or not wearing them.

There are other biological traits that, at least in our society, do not generate social consequences, such as having the earlobe attached or separated. That is why we do not pay attention to whether the people with whom we speak or with whom we interact are from one group or another. But imagine a culture in which people are assigned an identity according to the shape of their earlobe: some colors, some supposed characteristics, some expectations and roles, etc. Having the earlobe attached or separated would be something very relevant for everyone.

I make this introduction to relate various elements that, in my opinion, are intertwined: individual diffe-

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CERTAIN **traits** MARK US AND END UP DEFINING ALL OR A GOOD PART OF OUR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS, WHILE OTHERS HARDLY HAVE ANY **social relevance.**

rences, social identities and the recognition of diversity.

That human beings are diverse is something that becomes clear simply by looking around us and verifying this diversity not only on a physical level, but also with regard to our ways of being, thinking, loving and many other personal characteristics. But this diversity is often not socially recognized. This was traditionally the case, for example, in the educational field. Students were treated as if they were the same. The phenomenon of immigration made us aware that there are cultural differences among our students. These cultural differences did not arise when students from migrant families arrived but were already there in the classroom. There were differences that had to do with issues of ethnicity (has the school ever considered the specificity of the Roma student body?), but it was also present in relation to cognitive abilities, physical abilities, social class, etc. In our research group "Anthropology, diversity and coexistence", we have been working for

years on the issue of diversity due to sexual orientation and gender identity in the classroom. It was a topic that was barely talked about a couple of decades ago. Everyone knew that there were students who were not heterosexual or who were trans and that they were in the classrooms. But they were not being given that recognition. It was not even recognized that these boys and girls suffered situations of harassment, exclusion and discrimination.

There are societies that, culturally, are more open to the acceptance of diversity within themselves and that celebrate these differences between members of the group. Others, on the contrary, only give legitimacy to some ways of being and to some identities or, if others are recognized, the former are considered better or superior to the rest. The anthropologist Dolores Juliano reflects on the way in which cultures that embrace diversity provide their members with more legitimate ways of being and thinking, providing greater possibilities of obtaining recognition for most of

their members and making them more egalitarian. Those other cultures that tend towards homogeneity, on the other hand, are more unequal societies, in which only some members of the group gain recognition, prestige and, ultimately, power. In this manner, it is not that diversity is something new or a challenge for democracy, but it is the recognition of that diversity that makes a true democracy possible.

Beyond recognizing diversity, it is necessary to be aware that there are characteristics that different societies connote in a positive way, others in a negative way, and others that have no social relevance. As we have pointed out, socially, the fact of being heterosexual is not valued in the same way as being gay, lesbian or bisexual. Just as there are different social consequences for being a man or a woman or having skin of one color or another.

In many forums I hear very strong criticism against identities. Against what many people call "labels". They are said to limit us individually, as well as our

I DEFEND THE IDEA THAT labels, THAT IS, IDENTITIES, ARE NECESSARY PRECISELY SO THAT WE CAN CHOOSE AND challenge limits.

freedom or ability to choose. I do not agree with this premise. On the contrary, I defend the idea that labels, that is, identities, are necessary precisely so that we can choose and challenge limits. I am going to give a couple of examples that I think show the need for socially recognized and recognizable identities that expand our capacities for being and, by extension, our freedom. Both have to do with my fieldwork in the field of gender diversity with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people.

During the fieldwork for my doctoral thesis, I interviewed many people of different ages, sexual orientations and situations. There was a similar experience relayed to me by a couple of older women (over 65) who had sex with other women and who had experienced their awakening to sexuality during the 1960s and early 1970s. Remember that at that time there was neither the internet nor the access to the mass media that we now have. On the other hand, there was never any talk on the radio, in the movies, or in documentaries and the

news about realities beyond heterosexual marriage. One of the older women I interviewed told me that at that time she had sexual relations with other women, but that her life changed the day she found, quite by chance, the word **lesbian** in a dictionary, since she did not even know that such a word existed. When she read its meaning, she realized that what was happening to her was something that existed and had a name. And besides, if it was in a dictionary, that meant she was not the only person in the world who felt that desire towards other women. This anecdote today may seem surprising. But ethnography has shown us how in many cultures, today, there is no concept or word to refer to sexual and loving relationships between women, which remain unthinkable and invisible.

Another similar case was told to me by a much younger boy. He grew up in a small town and in his childhood and early adolescence believed that only **hetero-sexuality** existed.

In his own words, it was like going to the supermarket and seeing that there is only one brand of milk and that, furthermore, you do not like that brand of milk. Thanks to what he was exploring and learning, one day he said he realized that there was not only the possibility of marrying a person of the opposite sex, but also that there were people who fell in love and had desires towards people of their own sex: gays and lesbians. According to him, it was like realizing that there is not just one brand of milk, but also looking at the entire supermarket shelf and seeing that there are many different brands of milk. And that he could

Joerg Boethling - Alamy

IDENTITY POLITICS HAS COLLECTIVIZED OUR UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICE OF OUR freedoms, AND THAT HAS BEEN A NECESSARY AND POSITIVE STEP THAT IS PART OF A PROCESS IN WHICH, PERHAPS, THE NEXT STEP INVOLVES OPENING

UP TO A MORE FLEXIBLE **understanding** OF IDENTITIES, SO THAT THERE ARE NO GROUPS OR POLICIES THAT RIGIDLY PIGEONHOLE AND RESTRICT THE **new emerging identities.**

choose the one he liked the most, in this case, being gay because he felt attraction and sexual desire towards other boys.

The individual and collective work of many people, both in their daily lives and as part of spaces for social transformation, has been necessary for naming, making visible, making available and valuing these identities. Identities that have been used, likewise, to demand and obtain rights. The reflections and questions that we make and ask today regarding "labels", as well as the need to demand social recognition of personal diversities, constitute a political horizon that would not be visible today if it had not been for these identity-based struggles and demands. Identity politics has collectivized our understanding and practice of our freedoms, and that has been a necessary and positive step that is part of a process in which, perhaps, the next step involves opening up to a more flexible understanding of identities, so that there are no groups or policies that rigidly pigeonhole and restrict the new emerging identities.

Today we are seeing how, as regards gender diversity, thanks above all to the internet and social networks, a breakout is taking place that goes beyond the limits of LGBTI. Other identities are emerging that provide new possibilities about how to think of oneself. People who identify as non-binary, pansexual, demisexual, agender and many more account for the wide diversity of experiences of sexuality and gender that we can find among human beings.

Identities and labels are important, because they allow us to think about ourselves, to know that we are not the only people in the world who are living this experience and to feel recognized by our society, generating belonging. That is why I believe that they do not limit or restrict us, but rather, on the contrary, increase our chances of living our diversity and being happy. After all, the different identities with which we identify are often a very important source of meaning in our lives. And, in a globalized world that runs the risk
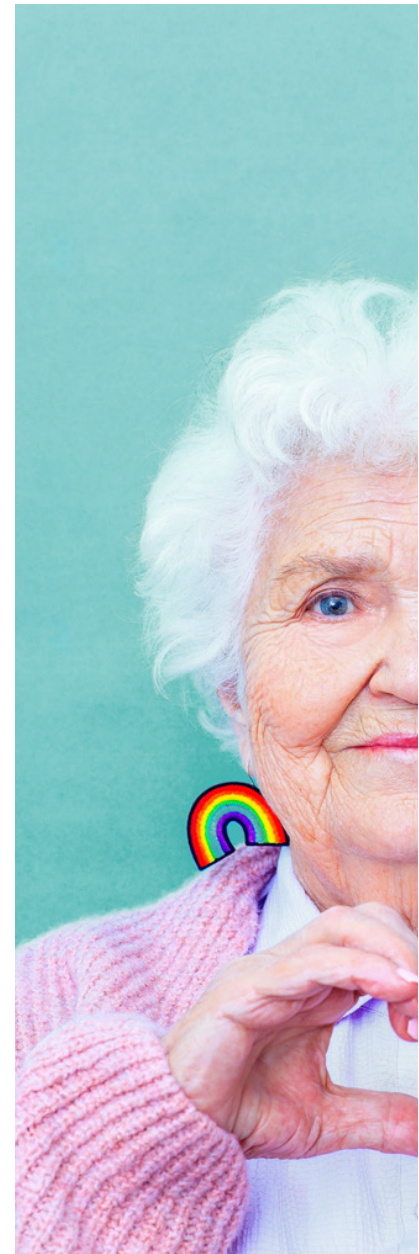
of pushing us towards homogenization, identities constitute, for many people, the anchor with which to hold on and defend their right to be different.

Of course, identities also have limitations. Identity is always social and has two components: how I identify myself and how others identify me. If both are consistent and aligned, there is the potential for enrichment and satisfaction. The problem comes when there is a dissonance between the way I identify myself and the way others view me. Going to a situation that refers to sexual and gender identities, for example, I have students who define themselves as non-binary people, but who are clearly read by others as men or women. This leads to situations of "misgendering", which is the term used for situations in which a person is assigned a gender identity with which they do not identify. This dissonance can also occur in reference to other vectors of diversity, such as belonging to a cultural or geographical identity. Thus, I could have been born in Ma-

drid and go to live in Maj orca, feel Majorcan and present myself as Majorcan. But there may be people who deny my identity as a Majorcan for not having been born there and not having been shaped by that culture.

Some identities also place us in situations of risk of exclusion or discrimination. There are Latin American or Andalusian people who have been told at work that they have to "**improve**" or chan-

ge their accent in Spanish if they want to move up in the company, showing that there are accents that are accepted and others that suffer from negative connotations. In the European ADIM project (https://www.adimlgbt.eu/), we have confirmed how many LGBTI people hide that they are LGBTI in their workplaces because they do not want to have to give explanations, they are afraid of losing their job or this identity might erase other personal or work characteristics.

Yura Krasilnikov - Alamy

In the case of stigmatized identities, people not belonging to that group often generalize the group's characteristics using stereotypes that have little to do with reality or with the intrinsic diversity of that group. These stereotypes often degenerate into prejudice. This does not mean that the label should not exist, but rather that, on the one hand, this label must be de-stigmatized and, on the other, generalizations and stereotypes must be avoided that nullify the rich internal diversity of each group since, effectively, diverse vectors of diversity converge in each person. Giving visibility to people who are different from oneself and, above all, promoting meeting and interaction spaces between different groups is the most useful tool in challenging these stereotypes: I thought that redheaded people were like that, but I have met a red-haired person and they are not like that. Living together, being interested and knowing people and realities different from ours allows us to learn, question ourselves and enrich ourselves intellectually, emotionally and personally.

There is a dynamic that I work on with my students at the university called "**the star of diversity**": a circle is drawn in the center and people stand around this central circle. Different characteristics are named, and each person has to approach the center of the circle if they think that they will not suffer any type of exclusion, discrimination or comment for that specific characteristic, and move away if they think that trait is further away from what is considered "the norm" in our society. Characteristics are named such as: what I like to eat, the music I like, my hair, my body size, my sexuality, my cultural origin, the color of my skin, my religious beliefs, my political ideology, my social class, my age, my gender, etc. In the end, we realize that there is always some characteristic of ours that does not fit into what is considered "normal" and that all people are part of diversity. We are diversity. This raises awareness of so-called intersectionality: there are traits that are stigmatized and in some people several vectors of discrimination converge, creating negative synergies. It is also interesting to see how, if you are not part of the group that is at risk of exclusion, you are normally not aware of these situations because you do not experience them in your body or skin.

Eikewise, while some identities remain more stable, others are transformed according to the context (I can be the oldest person in one group and the youngest in a different group) and life paths (age, changes, decisions, etc.). For this reason, identities are changing. Recognizing all diversities and seeking their respect constitutes a political option, because it has to do with the model of society that we want to build.

In this framework, although identities probably do not constitute an essential reality, I find the proposal to speak of strategic identities interesting, allowing us to move towards that model of coexistence in which our differences do not constitute a reason for prejudice or exclusion, but

Diane Diederich - Alamy

are simply individual charac-
teristics of who we are. But
until we get there, we pro-
bably need identities and la-
bels to claim the respect all
diversity deserves. Of course,
not forgetting that all people
share universal human rights
regardless of who we are: we
are equal and we are different.

Ahna Tessler - Alamy

Full Professor in the Department of Social Anthropology and Social Psychology of Madrid's Universidad Complutense. He holds a degree and PhD in Social Anthropology from the Autonomous University of Madrid. He teaches the subject Anthropology of gender in the Degree in Social Anthropology; the subject Cultural Construction of Sex, Gender and Family Diversities in the Master's Degree in LGBTIQ+ Studies and the cross-cutting subject Diversity Management, offered to all UCM students.

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Doctor in Social Anthropology. Full Professor in the Department of Social Anthropology and Social Psychology of the UCM

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He was Vice Dean of Students and University Extension and International Relations of the Faculty of Social Work of Madrid's Universidad Complutense and Coordinator of the Office of Sexual Diversity and Gender Identity of Madrid's Universidad Complutense.

He has carried out research and/or teaching stays at national and international universities: University of Barcelona, San Francisco State University, Laboratoire de Sciences Sociales de Paris, Université du Québec à Montréal, Universidade Estadual Paulista of Sao Paulo, Federal University of Santa Catarina, Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, Università di Foggia, Western Sydney University, La Trobe University Melbourne or University of Buenos Aires, among others, and has worked as a professor at Syracuse University in Madrid.

He is Director of the Research Group "Anthropology, Diversity and Coexistence" and his research work focuses on issues of kinship, family, sexuality, gender, masculinities and interculturality. He has carried out and published various research papers on sexual diversity; lesbian women and human rights; on families made up of gays and lesbians and, especially, on the situation of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual adolescents in educational settings.

He has been coordinator at the Complutense University of the European project "ADIM Advancing in LGBT Diversity Management in the Public and Private Sector", focused on the recognition and appreciation of LGBT+ diversity in companies and universities in Spain and Portugal. He is a member of the Management Committee of the European COST network "LGBTI+ Social and Economic (in)equalities".

Clara Cebrián

She was born in 1991 in Madrid and lives and works in Madrid, Sicily and Mexico.

Cebrián approaches abstraction in her works. They reflect her own creative universe inspired by her daily life, with figurative details mixed with phrases, which narrate places of memory, passing emotions and the reality of her own studio.

Clara seeks to show her ideas through deliberately simple procedures that draw attention to ordinary objects or ideas.

She graduated in 2013 with a BA in Design for Interactive and Moving Image at the London College of Communication.

claracebrian.com
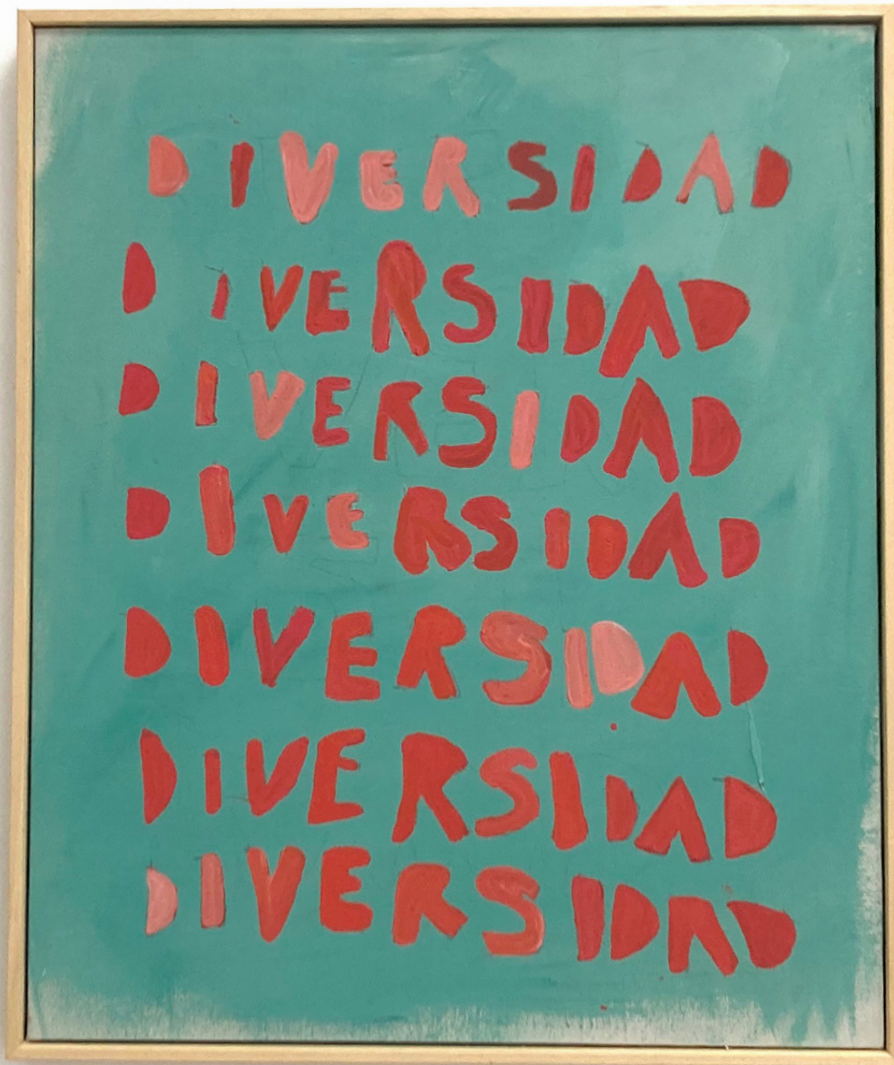
2022

diversi-dad

Madrid

Gesso, and pigments
on canvas

THE COMPANY AS A FACTOR OF SOCIAL CHANGE TOWARDS THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PERSON

Sylvia Jarabo

The company, like all living beings, needs to continuously adapt to the environment to survive. One of the most powerful movements that we have seen in the corporate world in recent decades has been the emergence of sustainability as a responsibility of the company, and within this, a great concern and demand about the role and impact that organizations generate in its social aspect. And it is in this aspect that the importance of the diversity and inclusion of the workforce stands out, which even extends to all fields in which the company can have influence, such as its products or services, suppliers and customers or sector.

It may be useful for us to classify the influence of this environment under two factors, following the interesting line of reasoning of a team of researchers from Harvard University. In a country or in an industry we could analyze, on the one hand, what is the degree of regulatory legitimacy of diversity; that is, the acceptance of this practice as established by regulators, through policies, standards or legislation. An example of this case would be the laws in our country regarding gender equality, equality plans, etc., a clear factor of external pressure that

IN ORDER TO ADVANCE IN TERMS OF DIVERSITY, WE NEED to act ON THESE TWO FRONTS: WITH POLICIES AND STANDARDS, BUT ALSO ON THE CULTURE AND VALUES IN AN ORGANIZATION.

workforce or their management teams, as is the case, for example, in Japan or South Korea. Therefore, let us remember that, in order to advance in terms of diversity, we need to act on these two fronts: with policies and standards, but also on the culture and values in an organization.

The company has been responding to these environmental pressures, either of a regulatory nature, or caused by emerging values in society or by the growing demands of investors and market analysts. For historical reasons and social demands, these pressures have been formulated in favor of different groups, such as groups of individuals with common characteristics, different from the dominant group, who have suffered discrimination or disadvantages of various kinds in a business environment. The most evident, the woman; but also others such as the LGT-BI+ collective, older workers, foreign workers, those belonging to other ethnic groups, those with disabilities, etc. A striking example of the enormous pressure that social movements can exert in favor of communities in the corporate world is reflected in the fact that 40% of the companies in the Standard & Poor's

companies have had to comply with. On the other hand, the normative legitimation of diversity would mean its acceptance this time as an appropriate and desirable practice, based on shared social norms and organizational values. According to the research, both legitimations are necessary for diversity to bear fruit in a business environment. Moreover, if there is only the regulatory aspect, without a support in the social norm, that is, in those behaviors and values that are considered appropriate and accepted by the society (or social entity) in question, companies will not be able to reap results arising from the diversity of their

500 index, in the United States, discussed their actions on diversity, equality and inclusion during their quarterly earnings releases to the market in mid-2020, immediately after the death of George Floyd; a sensational increase compared to 4% at the beginning of the year and 6% during the same period the previous year.

This vision towards communities is not only justified by historical evolution. Daniel Kahneman, the famous psychologist and Nobel laureate in economics, shows us in the *dual theory of thought* that stereotypes that automatically classify people into groups are an inherent part of the way our brain thinks, which cannot be avoided and are often not even noticed because they occur unconsciously. And it is this automatic classification that leads to biases, because we attribute certain characteristics to a person by virtue of belonging to that group, and not those that could correspond to them due to their intrinsic or personal worth. For example, the stereotype of women is communal, encompassing attributes such as concern for others, empathy, deference and emotional sensitivity, attributes that, although very positive, conflict with those characteristics that we associate with leaders, thereby disadvantaging them in the business world. Much scientific literature and countless studies tell us that the biases derived from stereotypes of people constitute a formidable barrier to the advancement of women and minority groups in the business world. Knowing the existence of biases and their social functioning is essential in being able to combat them, since they are the main culprits of the inequality of opportunities and treatment received by people who are different from the dominant group, in those com-

MUCH SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE AND COUNTLESS STUDIES TELL US THAT THE biases DERIVED FROM STEREOTYPES OF PEOPLE CONSTITUTE A FORMIDABLE barrier to the advancement OF WOMEN AND MINORITY GROUPS IN THE BUSINESS WORLD.

panies that have not worked to neutralize them. We should pay attention to this idea: the default mode of operation of a company is biased; because we human beings are biased. Therefore, if the company has not actively designed its processes, criteria, tools, with an effective and proven methodology to create an unbiased environment, this is the default situation.

The most advanced companies in this area, generally large, listed or multinational companies, know this and have been working on it continuously for some time. However, the vast majority of the business fabric is just comprehending or beginning to comprehend these ideas, and is applying them timidly and superficially, generally due to lack of knowledge, conviction or enough pressure from society.

How can companies move forward decisively in achieving a diverse workforce that promotes equal opportunities and is fully integrated? Why should they take this path?

First, I believe that it is necessary for companies to be *convinced* of the strategic relevance and return that an investment and focus of action around diversity and inclusion in an organization would provide. I suggest two main reasons for this:

- An **ethical reason,** since well-managed companies must worry about achieving equal treatment and professional opportunities for all the people who work in them, and ensuring the fairness of their decisions regarding people management, promotion or advancement

on the basis of merit. And I want to remind you here that the fact that they think they are doing so is not enough if they have not actively designed or revised their organization to dislodge stereotype biases.

- An **economic reason,** since a myriad of analyses and studies show us that diversity and inclusion produce better economic and business results in many dimensions (better financial results; greater innovation; better ESG results; a more humane and collaborative business environment; greater attraction and retention of talent; greater satisfaction and bonding of the employee, etc.).

If companies can generate internal conviction, they will have the necessary determination to undertake the essential project of freeing all the processes that manage people and determine their progression from stereotype biases, such as selection, hiring, performance evaluation and, above all, all of the potential, feedback, mentoring, promotion, assignment to projects and succession plans, and the like. I note that few companies in Spain decide to undertake this path, due to the lack of conviction or ignorance mentioned above. Once again we see multinational companies, especially in the English-speaking world, leading these initiatives. There are proven tools and methodologies for this, with behavioral techniques being those that offer the greatest potential, making

interventions in the processes and tools, which make it possible to ensure the neutralization of gender biases and other profiles, to achieve real equality of treatment and professional opportunities.

In addition, it is clear that the company would have to act on its **culture, values and attitudes,** to promote those that favor open and equal treatment. For example, I insist that it is very important to write down the characteristics that an organization wants to see in its leaders and evaluate them on these characteristics. What values does it want to promote, what attitudes are appreciated and what skills is it rewarding. It should be ensured that, on the one hand, they are **universal**; that is, they should be independent of the stereotypes of any profile and therefore could include them all; and on the other, that they should be in line with the inclusive and diverse culture that it wants to

build. Both elements, the *hard* ones (processes, criteria, tools; that is, regulatory legitimacy) and the *soft* ones (culture, values, attitudes; normative legitimacy) are necessary to achieve effective equality, since intentions have proven insufficient to overcome biases derived from stereotypes, which are deeply embedded in

our brains and act automatically and involuntarily. And we have already said that without normative legitimacy, that is, the protection and coverage provided by the social norm, it is very difficult for projects of a regulatory nature (based on norms, policies and systems) to progress in terms of diversity.

khwanchai phanthong - Alamy

f companies were able to go down this road, I think the ultimate answer to the diversity question is *inclusion*. Because inclusion, at its best, focuses on individuals, seeking their full integration. Because it seeks to build an environment where all people feel that they belong equally to the organization; where they understand that they are respected and valued; where they clearly see that they can act naturally, without having to adopt behaviors that are alien to them to fit into a standard; where they can freely express their opinions and these are taken into account; and where, ultimately, they are able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

In these companies, differences are valuable. In them, all the characteristics of the individual would be considered, always positively, to achieve the greatest contribution. The most advanced organizations know that they need to have diversity in their teams from multiple dimensions. Considering *visible diversity*, they would form their teams looking for a balance between both sexes, also including ethnic diversity and experiential diversity; because studies show that these teams are more intelligent and better able to solve problems. But they would also work on *invisible diversity*, which resides in the different perspectives, approaches or ways of processing information that

we carry out when facing an issue to be resolved. It is a question of *cognitive diversity*, an advanced and fascinating step in personal diversity that leading companies have begun to explore in order to enhance the individual capabilities of their workforce. There was an interesting analysis carried out by a group of North American consultants in a business strategy exercise, where the groups with greater cognitive diversity, objectively measured, were able to more quickly solve a new, complex and highly uncertain problem. In contrast, a team made up of research scientists

inclusion, AT ITS BEST, FOCUSES ON INDIVIDUALS, SEEKING THEIR full integration.

from a leading biotech company was unable to solve the problem, because they all approached it in the same way, without any diversity of views. This way of approaching and thinking about an issue is formed in adolescence and is independent of our education, social environment or demographic profile, constituting an internal characteristic of the person.

I would like to end by talking about the social responsibility of the company to which I referred at the beginning of this article. I believe, like many others, that the company has a fundamental role in the way societies treat people. When organizations have the will, they will find the means to establish rules of conduct that allow for the comprehensive and equal consideration of any person, so that they might be valued, not only, or at least mainly, for those characteristics natural to the corporate world: their talent and competence. If companies, through the steps that have been described here, achieve equal treatment and professional

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opportunities, in such a way that their workforce advances mainly based on merit, and not by belonging to groups favored by their social profile, they could overcome groups and individuals would appear. The person would prevail, with all his or her personal characteristics, qualities and ability to contribute to society. As we have seen, some companies at the forefront are moving in this direction. In addition, companies can extend the influence of their values and ways of acting beyond their internal sphere, through relationships with their suppliers, with their customers, through their position in the sector, through their institutional communication and even through the design of what they offer in terms of products and services. Probably, if any entity in our society is in a position to move towards considering the person as the main bulwark of diversity, it is the company.

Derek Meijer - Alamy

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AND equal consideration OF ANY PERSON, SO THAT THEY MIGHT BE VALUED, NOT ONLY, OR AT LEAST MAINLY, FOR THOSE CHARACTERISTICS NATURAL TO THE CORPORATE WORLD: THEIR TALENT AND COMPETENCE.

Sylvia Jarabo

MANAGING PARTNER OF PROMISING WOMEN. MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE DIVERSITY FOUNDATION AND OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN SPAIN OF THE EU DIVERSITY CHARTER

in sylvia-jarabo

With nearly thirty years of professional experience, she worked at McKinsey & Co. as a senior consultant in Spain, Portugal and Latin America, and at Vodafone, first in strategy and later in operational positions, reaching the Executive Committee as Director of Customer Service and Online channel. He has also developed digital entrepreneurship, as well as consultancy for SMEs and start-ups in the field of telecommunications, internet and digitization.

She is currently the Managing Partner of Promising Women, a company dedicated to the advancement and development of professional women, through which she acts as a consultant, speaker, mentor and trainer on this issue. She is a director at Adamo Telecom, a fiber operator owned by the Ardian international fund; member of the Board of Trustees of the Diversity Foundation, the official representative in Spain of the EU diversity charter and member of the McKinsey Alumni Council in Spain.

She has a degree in Economic Sciences and Business Studies from CUNEF in Madrid, International MBA from I.E. Business School and Certified Executive Coach from Columbia University, NY, USA.

She is the author of the book *Es la hora de las directivas: por qué las mujeres no ascienden en la pirámide corporativa y qué hacer para conseguirlo* (It's time for directives: why women do not rise in the corporate pyramid and what to do to achieve this).

She is happily married and the mother of three children.

I'm a queer, I'm left-handed, I'm Basque, I'm a Libra. I'm effeminate, have a boyfriend, rent to pay, a dog, and a tendency to gain weight. I'm a journalist, DJ, artist representative, university professor and I work in television. I am cisgender, mythomaniac, feminist, sensitive, indecisive, empathetic, somewhat insecure and somewhat transvestite. I like to eat, Eurovision, Spanish cinema, Maribel Verdú, pop divas and cartoons. I am a white, middle-class male born in a civilized country. I am an employee and self-employed. I am a dreamer and a clown…I am homosexual, I am gay. I am effeminate, an invert and a sodomite. I am privileged and persecuted. A loose verse and a crooked line. A disappointment and someone to be proud of. I am sensitive to my own pain and that of others. I am committed to myself and to the world and I am fed up. I am inclusive and supportive. I am diverse and unique.

I am many things, but not all of them define me equally, nor am I willing for them to do so. In an ideal and forgetful universe, gender, race or sexual orientation would classify us in the same way and with the same weight as marital status, eye color or the preference for Spanish

THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION ON THE INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM OF BEING

Diego de la Viuda

omelette with onion over the one without. But no one was ever persecuted for having green eyes and yes, I am Diego, but I am also Samuel Luiz, Marsha P. Johnson, la Otxoa, Lorca, Ocaña, Violeta la burra, Manolita Chen and Carmen de Mairena. I am the people who could scream and those who had to hold their tongue. Those who waved flags and those who threw stones and for them, I am gay, but I do not want to stop being a fagot, effeminate, queer. The historical memory contained in these insults cannot be diluted by the historical advances of our collective in recent years; The trend towards the heterosexualization of gays, forcing them to comply with increasingly normative standards, is nothing more than a way of taming the fierce fagot to turn him into a meek homosexual. Because the transvestite bite, the scratch and feminine mannerisms were the engine of change and also a mark of brotherhood for those persecuted due to a difference that was not ours but that we felt as our own. A difference that was different but also the same as that of black people, overweight people, women, and the disabled.

Before turning the page, we must read it well, etc. and even learn it by heart and recite it as a corrosive mantra to those who "grant" us the right to conventionality with the condescension of someone who does an act of charity. For all those who insist on sponsoring a fagot, let us viciously declaim the list of dead queens and denounce society's outrages towards us.

I AM MANY THINGS, BUT NOT ALL OF THEM define ME EQUALLY, NOR AM I WILLING FOR THEM TO DO SO.

And none of this "Oh how boring. What a bore, always thinking about the past." No, the past is there to be brought right under people's noses and its colors are there to paint our rainbow, because now we can. The perspective, the years and the achievements of our community have brought us the ability to read those terrible pages of our recent and remote past; but the gay children of 15, 20, 30 years ago could only read their present through the lense of illness or vice. Guilt and shame acted as corrective and distorting lenses at the same time and produced a guilt-ridden generation.

I was five years old when the WHO decided to remove homosexuality from the list of mental illnesses, ten when the Arny case became the most applauded hunt for pink witches in the country and I had to wait until I was twenty for gay marriage to be legalized in Spain. I am one of the

fifth of those who had to laugh at the **sissy** jokes during prime time so as not to be exposed, of those who lived with the idea that AIDS was a divine punishment for the depraved, of those who who grew up seeing that the gay of the series and movies was a trope, comic relief or ended up alone, dead, ridiculed or "cured".

The first representatives of our group that my audiovisual memory remembers are Antonio Gala, Terenci Moix and Pedro Almodóvar, gentlemen whom I revered and whose effeminacy was forgiven by society because of their literary or cinematographic talent. But who would esteem someone who

Richard Levine / Alamy

THE CURIOUS AND DISGUSTED WAY IN WHICH SPANISH TELEVISION PORTRAYED SUCH monstrosities WAS MY SENTIMENTAL EDUCATION AND MY PUNISHMENT.

was mediocre? Who would respect you if you did not have a minimum of talent? These thoughts were pervasive and stayed with me for years. The first slabs began to weigh on the responsibility of being.

These geniuses were no longer put up against a wall like Federico. It was the 1990s and Spain was too "modern" for that. Instead, they were invited to cathodic soirées like the well-to-do lady who brings a poor man to the table or the group of friends from Logroño who sleep with a transvestite at a bachelor party.

The curious and disgusted way in which Spanish television portrayed such monstrosities was my sentimental education and my punishment.

Despite the mixed feelings that this stale 1990s television caused in me, ever since I was little I felt an irresistible attraction to that Pandora's box that dominated the living room at home. In my domestic mythology, the ills and my curiosity were outside the box and inside, the indecipherable medicine cabinet for my wounds.

The shrill outburst of "The Great Game of the Goose" anesthetized me against the grayness that surrounded me. The complicit look of Isabel Gemio descending the ladder, rose in hand, neutralized society's disapproval, and I even hoped that one day the heifer of the Grand Prix would escape from the 625 lines to gore the children who insulted me at school while the water that drenched Anita Obregón in the shower of "*Qué Apostamos?*" could purify how dirty I felt for being different.

That frivolous television did not educate me in diversity but it molded me. It did not provide me with

references to be proud of, but it made me dream. It drew me like a monstrosity and at the same time, it licked my wounds with its colorful escapism. Who does not crave calm in the absence of answers? The crux of the matter is to find out the degree of guilt of this medium in those childhood pains that it later alleviated, that it did not cure, based on narcotic programs and, going further, to ask what television should be: Candy or medicine?

It was inevitable that, 25 years later, I would go into television, specifically into entertainment and here I am: part of the debate, of the problem and perhaps the solution. Reality shows, competitions, talent shows and talk shows are my field of action, they are my work dream come true and I am going to focus my reflection on them. What role should these programs play in creating benchmarks for the LGTBIQ+ community? Has television entertainment been guilty, a necessary collaborator or just a catalyst for the prejudice from which the community suffers? What obligation do you have in eradicating that prejudice? Obviously, I do not have THE answer; my biased gaze as an audiovisual worker is intermingled with that of the avid consumer, almost a "couch addict", and with that of the gay man who sees himself drawn on the screen, when it comes to cataloging how we have been seen, how we are seen in the middle and how we should be represented. In short, I am art and part, but that does not detract from my speech or give it greater legitimacy.

For decades, gays, lesbians and transsexuals have been shown on television in the following ways:

• Tame
• Clichéd
• Victimized

Jorge Saavedra - Unsplash

Before, being tame meant being in the closet or playing a certain innocuous and TV-friendly role; now, as I said at the beginning, it has to do with the heterosexualization of behavior, conduct and ways of life, the frontal rejection of effeminacy and the abandonment of the struggle, alluding to the theoretical equality of rights. We are all capable of naming those gays domesticated in traditionally masculine ways who are applauded before millions

TALKING ABOUT **clichés** AND NOT STEREOTYPES MEANS EMPHASIZING THE NEGATIVE CHARGE THAT THIS WORD CARRIES AND SPEAKS OF THE MOCKING LOOK WITH WHICH THE MEDIA HAVE PORTRAYED INDIVIDUALS WHO RESPONDED IN A PROTOTYPICAL WAY TO WHAT IT MEANT FOR SOCIETY **to be gay, trans or lesbian** (...)

of viewers for leading a "normal life despite their limitations", in an exercise in television tolerance that conveys contempt. Their theatrical manner of coming out of the closet, with a whiff of "mea culpa", are usually accompanied by the presentation of a stable couple and the declaration of intentions to form a white, traditional and ideal family that erases any suspicion of a licentious and promiscuous past. In this manner, the lost sheep returns to the fold and the presenter on duty will investigate with a paternalistic tone the first world dramas of the unmasked gay. He will ask in which country the surrogacy is going to take place and if the wedding banquet will be standing or sitting. On many occasions, the returned prodigal sons suffer from a kind of Stockholm syndrome and are the first to ignore, if not revile the transvestite, the tormented or the affected person who appears in the media; Their argument is that these people do not represent them as homosexuals and allude to the burden and discredit that comes from being identified with these stereotypes. In the first place, it would be necessary to ask, for example, how many women feel identified with other women who appear on television such as Kim Kardashian, Mila Ximénez or Anna Nicole Smith and, secondly, remind them that if these characters from whom they are so keen to distance themselves are on TV, it is because they exist no matter how much people might want to condemn them to extinction. Turning the argument around, we can say that those figures traditionally considered marginal somehow exist for the world because they are on television thanks to the social recognition granted by such a powerful medium. The misunderstood pride of belonging to the predominant group makes it impossible for these tame gays to coexist on television with those "others": those who respond to the "**cliche**".

Talking about clichés and not stereotypes means emphasizing the negative charge that this word carries and speaks of the mocking look with which the media have portrayed individuals who responded in a prototypical way to what it meant for society to be gay, trans or lesbian; that is to say, the identification of the homo-

marc macdonald - Alamy

sexual with **promiscuity** or **effeminacy,** implicit in the hackneyed "sissy" jokes with which we have grown up or the transsexual/ prostitution/marginality equation present in mocking late-night shows. Obviously, television in general and its workers in particular must work to create audiovisual content that reflects the reality of LGTBI people. It is our obligation to try to capture diversity in all social spheres and also the diversity that exists within our group, assuming that those who fit into the cliché deserve the same respect as those who distance themselves from it and condemn it. The construction of positive references that honestly reflect what we are should not lead to the marginalization once again of those traditionally mocked or marginalized. Effeminate men exist, transvestites who work the streets exist, but they are not just characters in a joke, they are part of the diversity that represents us, and they must exist on television, either narrating themselves in the first person as owners of their own story or being narrated in a respectful way. The cis-hetero gaze towards the community has for years confused mockery with

humor and the border between one and the other is that I, as part of the community, can burst out laughing at the end of your joke. Another traditional television inertia towards the community has to do with the reductionism to a sexual orientation of the members of the community: the flat gaze of someone who presents a talk-show as if he or she were a guide at the zoo. Emphasizing our condition as gays, transsexuals or lesbians makes sense when it is linked to vindication, struggle or celebration and yes, it is a label that defines me, but I will be the one who chooses to wear it as part of my speech and of my story.

The third categorization has to do with the victimization of the community because yes, we have been victims, etc., but we have also been reduced to the status of victims. **Television sensationalism** has had the bad habit for years of placing more emphasis on the fear of the victims of attacks against the group than on the fight and the denunciation to combat them; the misguided flavor of the shows that recount the most morbid details of a transphobic or homophobic crime has a dangerous effect on potential victims because it leads us to perpetuate a fear that sometimes seems a part of who we are. But no, we are not victims; As Boris Izaguirre, possibly one of the people who has done the most for the community on television, used to say, "**we are superheroes**". We have the superpower of difference, and we must not lose it for the sake of a uniformizing diversity.

Dom Slike - Alamy

For the LGTBI community, the representation of our struggle and our diversity in a world of television that is not informative, but is educational through fun, escapism or laughter, is not only the recognition of our reality, but also of our possibility to express ourselves equally to the others… to have, as they do, the right to mediocrity and error, to be able to be a cliché and a surprise, a victim and a warrior…

The years go by and the future is infinitely more encouraging than years ago. Respect for identity, the opportunity to be and the freedom with which the current post-modernist standards of a changing society are defined make the media a showcase for new icons and referents.

An opportunity to narrate our own history and to be able to establish the bases of a foreign narrative from respect and the opportunity to be almost a public service from which we can take references at our whim in order to build our own identity.

An advance halfway between the acceleration brought about by the urgent need to make room for new realities and the duty itself as a society not to fall into yesterday's mistakes. However, history is cyclical, and the human being tends to stumble twice on the same stone, but when you know how to fall, it never hurts as much.

I now watch television with pleasure, with enthusiasm, for the sake of learning more about my own group. I watch series and programs that bring me closer to new realities. Experiences far away from my immediate environment. And, as a result, there is no day when I do not also watch this new television without longing. A remembrance and a longing for NOT having been able to have access to those stories and those references that could relieve me at some point of so much stigma and guilt.

I admit that it is a strange feeling. I suppose that I am mixing feelings, traces, memories and thoughts as dark as they are human. The hope and happiness of realizing that history has changed

and that there are signs of hope for the new generations that are making great strides. New communities that know what they want thanks to the amalgam of options as equally valid as they are stigmatizing but that with judgment and courage they can bravely carry with pride.

It is difficult to assume that I am a victim and a result of shame and guilt, but above all from another time not so long ago. Perhaps life would have been easier for me being born 15 years later. Who knows?

The paternalistic look that I offer to these new generations also makes me realize the age and the situation of privilege with which I currently live. Do not get me wrong. I do not regret what I could have been and was not. It is increasingly restorative and healing to know that possibly few will relive the dark episodes that I went through in the first 20 years of my life.

I guess that is life too. Look to the future with glassy eyes and glimpse that another life is

possible, and that television will always be that catalyst for dreams, realities and projections of being. Because nothing soothes and repairs more than the freedom to be, and for this we need references and realities to build our DNA almost "to measure".

In his work Gianfranco, Jean Paul Sartre said that we should acquire the courage not to be like everyone else. And over the years I have come to the determination that there is no greater freedom than that.

As a television professional, making things possible and making them visible is my greatest and strongest commitment.

If you are authentic, you must assume responsibility for being what you are and feel free to be what you are. We should not waste time; because there may be more beautiful times, but this one is ours, Sartre also said.

Let us be the references we needed when we grew up. Building a community is creating a safe home, a refuge, a mattress to fall on and get up from. Mitigating the pain of those who suffer today means healing the deepest wounds of our own being.

For those who were, for those who are and for those who are yet to come.

IF YOU ARE authentic, YOU MUST ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR BEING WHAT YOU ARE AND FEEL free TO BE WHAT YOU ARE.

A Basque journalist who graduated from the University of the Basque Country. He grew up during the harshest time of the Basque conflict, and feasts his eyes on the color and fantasy that Spanish television offered him in the early 1990s. A medium that aroused his interest in being and forming part of a world in which entertainment and show business predicted a life away from that post-industrial gray of his city.

Diego de la Viuda

JOURNALIST SPECIALIZING IN TV CASTING PROGRAMS, TALENT SHOWS AND REALITY SHOWS. PROFESSOR AT NEBRIJA UNIVERSITY

@diegodelaviuda

He began his professional career in local Basque media and television, and in 2007 made the leap to Madrid to fulfill his childhood dream of being part of national television.

With a career linked to the media, he has more than 15 years of professional experience and more than 35 television programs behind him as deputy director, coordinator, editor and recording scriptwriter.

Specializing in casting, talent and reality shows, he has had success in programs and formats such as Masterchef, Maestros de la Costura, Insiders, Love Island, The Bachelorette, Big Brother, Super Shore, El Puente or Married at First Sight. He has also been part of programs such as Hormigas Blancas, dating programs or political and social current affairs programs.

The journalist combines his work in the media with teaching at the Nebrija University where he gives classes for the audiovisual communication degree.

His link to social causes and his activism for LGTBIQ+ rights has made him a prominent speaker for human rights on social networks.

activism

activism

ADRIANA
BOHÓRQUEZ

PONTE EN
MI PIEL
...ÍA PARA COMBATIR
EL RACISMO COTIDIANO

CÚPULA

BLACK

Five letters that, when looked up in the dictionary, describe the color black as representing darkness, mystery, death, evil, sin, illegality and the undesirable. In the West, black is the color of mourning, so it denotes sadness and is associated with death. It is also associated with darkness and night, so it is sometimes associated with danger and with the unknown. Black is also associated with feelings such as loneliness and sadness. With a presentation like this, we start from a base of a pre-established negative image and a stigma, from which it is very difficult to break away. At the mention of the word black, the immediate associate is with negative situations. On the other hand, with the word white, the opposite happens, since the color white is described as light, purity, goodness, happiness, etc. something that most of us yearn for, and that, therefore, we accept with open arms. We need to start changing these descriptions to remove the negative connotations from the word black, since it is not a pejorative, and, therefore, it does not make sense to use it as such.

It is incredible that in a society that perceives itself as advanced and civilized, there is still such an archaic and illogical stigma as the undervalued treatment of any person, due to their skin tone. In both powerful business people with the best educations and in people who cannot read and write, we can find certain racist behaviors and thoughts.

Adriana Boho

Robbie Boyd - Alamy

And what is racism?

It is a word that, years ago, I described as the maximum expression of ignorance. But in the middle of 2022, with digitalization and the ease of access that almost all of us have to information, it is simply an inadmissible act. Like everything in this world, racism has been reinvented, and it is unwise to trap ourselves in very square definitions of the term. I have the feeling that traditional racism—the racism we think of

as soon as we here the word—has been camouflaged over time and today it has many ugly faces that allow it to show its paw or claws at every moment, despite the efforts of so many people, over many years, to eradicate it.

Trying to find an explanation as to why this phenomenon continues, I realize that there is no reason, just the simple fact that human beings often tend to unconsciously prejudge everything that we do not know, that is different from us or moves away from our established parameters. But that only brings to light once again the ignorance of those who refuse to accept that there may be a reality foreign to theirs, and therefore prefer to take refuge in their comfort zone.

In history, there are people who did not act like that, but went beyond labels and imagined a better society, like the Reverend Martin Luther King. In his legendary speech, he literally said "I have a dream, that my four little children will be able to live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." He was a non-conformist black man, who fought for equal rights for all human beings. An equality that highlights the values of each individual, regardless of skin color. What a pity to look back and remember that mythical speech that the reverend made on 28 August 1963, and see that today, in the middle of 2022, we are still fighting for a just society without racism; because that means that we have a long way to go as a society. As I write these lines and remember that sentence, I also realize that I am concerned that my sons and daughters in the future may be discriminated against for something like the color of their skin, or the texture of their hair, and I feel sick to my stomach at the thought. That is why I make a call, once and

for all, for blacks and whites to unite to achieve this feat of the eradication of racism, since it is up to all of us to achieve a better society and a peaceful co-existence based on respect and

tolerance.

In fact, if we analyze it carefully, one of the terms that generates the most confusion is "race". It annoys me so much when describing me that, among so many features that could be used, people always begin by saying the "black" girl. This is a historical-social construction that lacks scientific foundation, since it is more than proven that all people have the same biological and genetic origin. This is enough to dismantle the basis of racism, which assigns to "races" invariable physical and mental characteristics that are inherited and are what generate the substantial differences between them (superior and inferior races). The reality is that there are no differences between us—as there may be between a horse or a dog—, so if someone says otherwise, they must have failed biology with zero marks. The only possible category to designate people as a whole is that of "human species" or "human race". To be more specific, there are "ethnic groups": groups of people with very similar physical features and who live in a geographical area.

Black is a word that I have heard throughout my life, and always with a negative connotation, as derogatory or an insult by people who addressed me, not by my name, but by this word. I heard this word so often that I came to hate my skin color and everything that it represented, since I felt that it did not fit within the parameters established as normal, either at school, or later in my adult life. When so many people say something negative to you for so long, in the end you end up internalizing it and believing that you are the problem, when they are really just dumping their own insecurities on you and displaying their ignorance.

Fortunately, today I can say that after a lot of personal work, not only do I love being called black, but I have understood and accepted that far from being something negative, as described in the dictionary, and as many would have me believe, black skin color is a wonderful trait.

It is true that many may treat me differently because of the color of my skin, but far from seeing it as something negative, I love it, because for me to be different is to be special, and therefore unique. At the moment that I analyzed all this, I reconciled with my origins, in what we call the "black awakening", which is accepting and wanting everything related to my roots as something positive that is part of my identity, which is something that nothing nor anyone has the right to take away from me or ignore me for. Nobody but me can convince me that there is something negative in being black, because by accepting myself and loving my differences, I protect myself from any external damage, and I feel empowered by it.

Racism is a complex reality that needs a global approach, that is, in all areas of life. This becomes much more necessary when we talk about children and young people, because it is known that prejudices are installed in our brain at a very early age, and it is difficult to get rid of them.

That is why education in values is essential from a very young age so as not to be afraid of what is different and of the unknown, which is the basis of racism. Racism is one of the worst evils we face, and experience tells us that racism is to blame for the fact that, sometimes, it is not so easy for many people like me, to set foot in a school, a high school or university, because of the stigmas that have been associated with our skin color or origin for many centuries. Institutional racism, those practices and policies that disadvantage a racial group, pushes many black people to live in inequality if not marginalization. Something that inevitably happens if their access to education is hindered or denied. For example, this is the case of the sons and daughters of black immigrants who arrived in Spain "irregularly".

Raising our voice to denounce micro-racism is important. Not only that, but if we start speaking against racism in public debates and discussions or in spaces like this platform, or on social networks, this will help transform the image of black people, which in turn will change in the collective imagination. Reflecting on the use we make of words when describing black people is a good start to stop having racist attitudes.

In matters of racism, there is still a lot to be done, and without having solved it yet, we should address another issue: diversity.

Diversity is described in the dictionary as a set of diverse things; It is a notion that refers to variety, the abundance of different things or dissimilarity. When we talk about diversity, we can divide it into different areas, but in this case, I am going to focus only on

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IN MATTERS OF racism, THERE IS STILL A LOT TO BE DONE, AND WITHOUT HAVING SOLVED IT YET, WE SHOULD ADDRESS ANOTHER ISSUE: diversity.

MORE AND MORE TALK ABOUT diversity,

cultural diversity, which consists of understanding humanity as an immense set of cultures, each one endowed with a historical context and a valuable tradition. That means not valuing some people above others or pretending that some are more "advanced" and others more "backward", but simply different.

If this statement were true, racism and other racial discrimination should not exist, but as I have indicated at the beginning of this article, it is evident that it is latent in society. There is more and more talk about diversity, which is a word that I continually hear, not only in the media, but in the sector I work in, which is fashion, to such an extent that it seems to be just that; a buzzword, used by many brands and agencies to publicize their products, and I have to say that, in my opinion, this is most often done for profit purposes, since, when push comes to shove, that diversity is just a farce. By nature, I am a very positive person, so I think we have to start somewhere. So, if in order to change things, certain people believe that you have to strictly comply with the diversity quotas so as not to be singled out, it is a step in the right direction, but we can and should go much further.

I once read that diversity is thinking, while inclusion is acting, and that is where we all come in. Inclusion and diversity for me will only be a reality when a racialized person goes to rent an apartment and they are not hindered because of their origin or skin color. Diversity for me would be racialized people taking part in everyday situations, like driving a bus, for example, as it is rare to see non-white people engaging in such activities. Diversity would be going to the doctor, and not seeing only white people in the posters. For example, a pregnant black woman should be able to see a sign at the gynecologist that

she can relate to. Along these same lines, I would like to see more racialized doctors or nurses. Diversity would be to turn on the television and see several racialized people, and not just one or two as usually happens, just to fill the "color" quota. Using the expression "colored" to address black people is inappropriate, since it is used in order not to directly say the word black, and in this way, a negative connotation is indirectly given to this word, when it does not have it at all, as you saw at the beginning of this article.

As the great Leopold Senghor said, black people are always black, even if we sunbathe, get sick, play sports, etc. our color does not vary; while white people turn red when sunbathing, yellow when sick, or blue when cold, i.e. the color of their skin varies on each occasion. So, taking this premise into account, it is clear that the expression of color should never be used to address any person or group, but if so, it would be for white people, not black people!

I could give endless examples why I feel that when we talk about diversity, there is still a lot to do, since it is something that goes hand in hand with the fight against discrimination and racism. We all need representation in all walks of life, and it is about time that the diversity and inclusion that is preached about so much became real and visible.

To end this article, I want to emphasize that, as a positive person, I firmly believe that, just as Martin Luther King and other great activists raised their voi–ces against racism, you who are reading these lines can also become micro activists, not just by not being

A **buzzword,** USED BY MANY BRANDS AND AGENCIES TO PUBLICIZE THEIR PRODUCTS, AND I HAVE TO SAY THAT, IN MY OPINION, THIS IS MOST OFTEN DONE FOR PROFIT PURPOSES, SINCE, WHEN PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, THAT DIVERSITY IS JUST A **farce.**

racist, but being anti-racist, which means being an active part of this fight. But how to do it? The first step is deconstructing yourself; that is, to sincerely analyze all those internalized micro-racisms over the years. Become aware of the privileges acquired by your skin color, and from there listen, learn and analyze by reading articles by people like me, who continue to experience racist situations, and once you become aware of all this and correct it, do not stay there, but also correct it when you see it in your environment.

In my recently published book

"Put yourself in my shoes: a guide to combating everyday racism"

, I call for empathy, which for me is essential in the fight against racism. Before doing or saying something harmful to another person, think about whether you would like

them to do the same to you, in everyday situations, just because of your skin tone.

Finally, when you acquire that capacity and commitment, then you will be doing something to change things, and you will become one more micro activist against racism, who advocates for equality, diversity and social inclusion.

driana Boho

TV STYLIST, WRITER AND ACTIVIST.
THE FIRST AFRO-DESCENDANT INFLUENCER IN SPAIN

Hello! I am Adriana Boho, the first Afro-descendant influencer in Spain. Strange, right? The truth is that I am proud of my origins and also of my last name, as it defines my style: bohemian, free, genuine and somewhat eclectic.

Almost 10 years ago, I created my blog to make known my vision of fashion and, why not, of the world. Today I continue with it 100%, in addition to being a coolhunter, stylist and personal shopper by profession and vocation.

I graduated in administration and finance, although shortly after I created my fashion blog, which allowed me to devote myself to the fashion sector, which I am so passionate about.

I recently published my first book, a guide to combat the daily racism that many of us suffer, and for me, it is important to raise awareness as much as possible, through my social networks, where day by day, I tell of my experiences and advice on beauty, fashion and lifestyle.

I am a fighter by nature, that is why my maxims are to defend my ideals, pursue new goals, and, above all, always do it with the best of smiles.

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ponte en mi piel

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our mission

The **Friedrich Naumann Foundation** is present in more than 60 countries around the world, spanning Europe, Africa, Asia and America. Within these project regions, our teams work to support liberal democracy, the rule of law, human rights, free trade and a favorable environment for private business. To achieve these goals, the foundation offers conferences, debates, study tours, seminars, publications and documentaries, among other means.

about us

The **Friedrich Naumann Foundation** for Freedom is the liberal political foundation in Germany. The goal of the foundation is to promote the principles of freedom and dignity for all people in all areas of society, both in Germany and abroad.

#fnfmad #freedompartners

what do we do

The Madrid office in Spain, Italy and Portugal seeks to strengthen cooperation and political dialogue between representatives of liberal political parties, scientific institutions and civil society organizations from Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany and the European sphere. We are committed to contributing to the search for solutions to regional challenges in Southern Europe and highlighting best practices from this increasingly important region for the European integration process. In addition, through the Mediterranean Dialogue project, we establish a geostrategic dialogue to change the approach to the region's problems towards a positive one oriented towards opportunities. By connecting liberal-minded individuals and institutions from across the Mediterranean, West Africa and Europe, we help find cross-regional solutions in the areas of migration, economic cooperation, energy, human rights, the rule of law and integrated security.

What is the next step in the fight for freedom?

THE ANSWER IS TO BRING PEOPLE'S INTRINSIC INDIVIDUAL DIVERSITY INTO THE CONVERSATION.

With the collaboration of Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Sara Giménez, Rafael Feito, Eva Díaz, Jose Ignacio Pichardo, Clara Cebrián, Sylvia Jarabo, Diego de la Viuda, Adriana Boho.

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