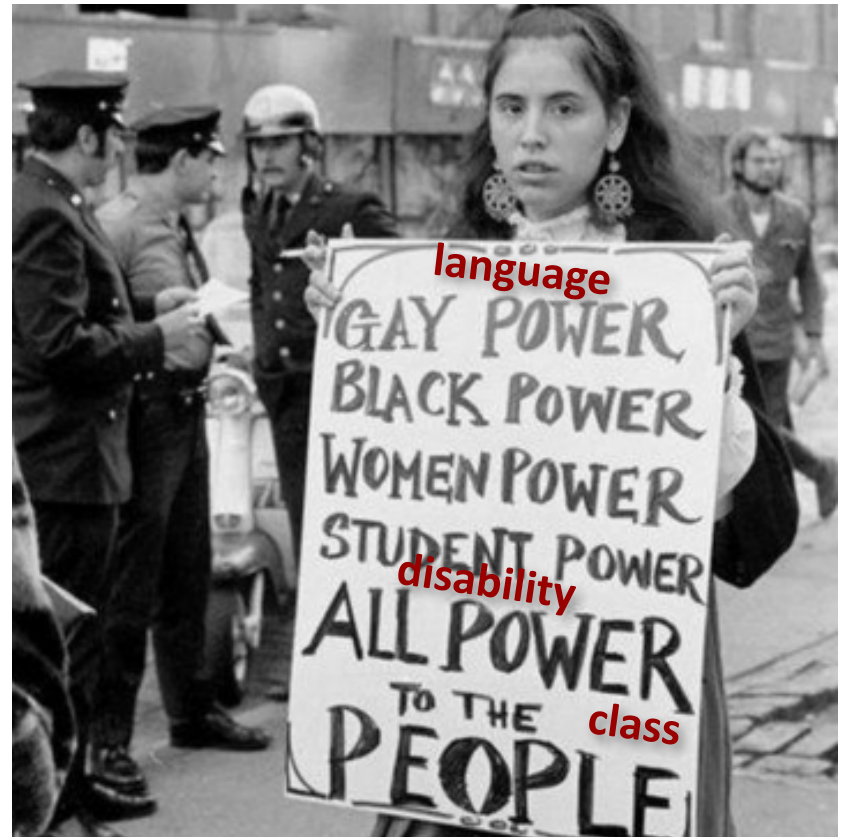


Why Representation Matters: Teaching Toward Consciousness

➤ we are one

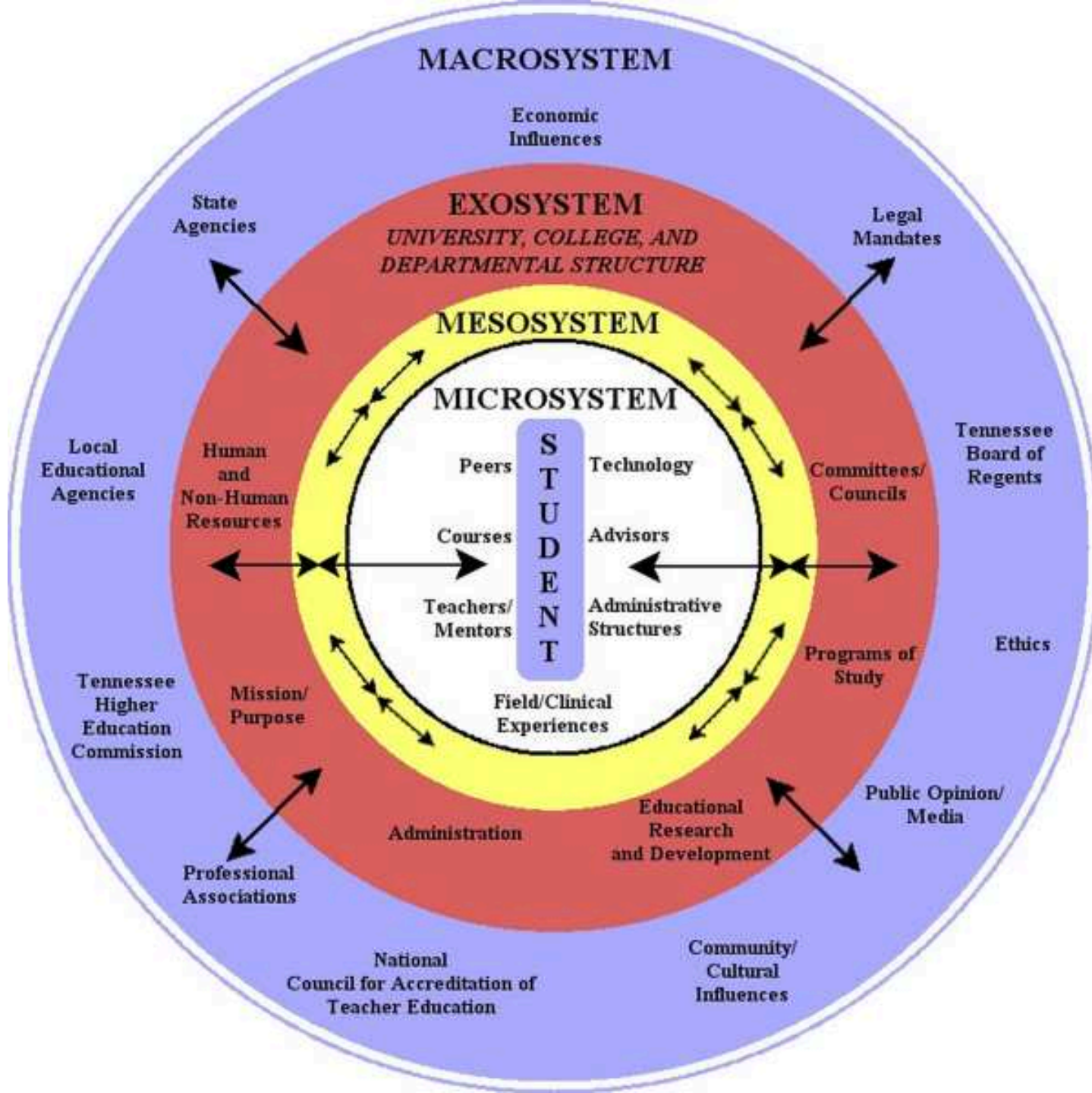


Rationale

- Education is an arena of struggle as well as hope – struggle, because it stirs in us the need to reconsider everything we have wrought, to look at the world anew, to question what we have created, to wonder what is worthwhile for human beings to know and experience, to justify or criticize or bombard or maintain or build up or overthrow everything before us – and hope, because we gesture toward the future, toward the impending, toward coming of the new.

➤ William Ayers and Therese Quinn


Bronfenbrenner Model




Word Pair

➤ Represent


➤ Re-present




*[When I was seven] I wrote exactly
the kinds of stories I was reading:
All my characters were
white and blue-eyed,*




*they played in the snow, they ate apples,
and they talked a lot about the weather,
how lovely it was that the sun had come out.
(Laughter)*



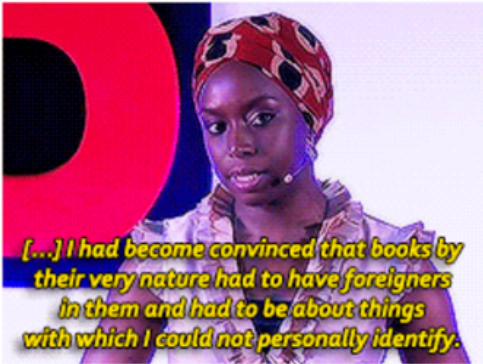
*Now, this despite the fact
that I lived in Nigeria.
I had never been outside Nigeria.*



*We didn't have snow, we ate mangoes,
and we never talked about the weather,
because there was no need to.*



*[...] What this demonstrates, I think,
is how impressionable and vulnerable
we are in the face of a story,
particularly as children.*



*[...] I had become convinced that books by
their very nature had to have foreigners
in them and had to be about things
with which I could not personally identify.*

theysayimpsychodiaries:

beyonceremix:

Chimamanda Adichie - The Danger of a Single Story (TED Talks 2009)

Tell me again, what did you say about representation not being important?

Questions

- Have you ever systematically considered how you developed your identity?
- How are your identity and expression still informed or affected by your experiences?

Questions

- What messages do you send to others regarding what it means to be _____ or _____ or a _____ or a _____?
- How did (has) your schooling play into your understanding of what it meant (means) to be a _____ or a _____ or a _____ or a _____?

Consciousness

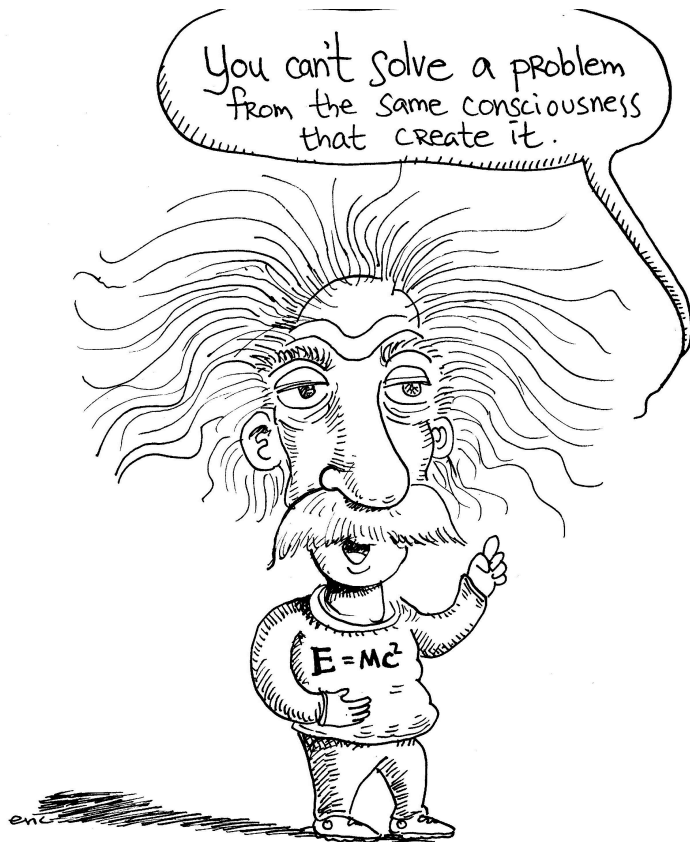
➤ conscious·ness

➤ Definition of CONSCIOUSNESS

- the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself
- the state or fact of being **conscious** of an external object, state, or fact
- **Awareness**; *especially*: concern for some social or political cause
- the state of being characterized by sensation, emotion, volition, and thought
- the upper level of mental life of which the person is aware as contrasted with unconscious processes

➤ Source: Merriam-Webster.com

-consciousness



- Un
- Super
- Sub
- Hyper
- Semi
- Unself



Imagine

➤ “trash the monolithic and homogenous in the name of diversity, multiplicity, and heterogeneity” – Cornel West

➤ Diversity tends to replicate diversity

Where are we going

Creating moral and civic habits of the heart

- Engage in dialogue about multiple perspectives
- Creativity and to think critically about problems
- Fostering a classroom community of conscience
- Global and visual perspective

Where are we going

**Change the conversations –
Pose complex, real-life
problems**

- Relevance of the subject as it relates to everyday life
- Working in groups
- Active learning or project-based tasks

Where are we going

Help them build expertise

- Social justice in the real world: classroom discussions that help students critically engage with issues that affect them
- Helping students see each other co-learners rather than adversaries
- Including diverse experiences and backgrounds in classroom materials
- Turning social justice learning into community service and action

Closing

- In *Between the World and Me*, Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote to his son, “I did not want to raise you in fear or false memory. I did not want you forced to mask your joys and bind your eyes. What I wanted for you was to grow into consciousness.” We should wish – and create – the same for our students.