

Multiculturalism, diversity something to smile about

■ Dr. Dobson makes “appalling” statements.

Dr. James Dobson and I are on opposite sides of the debate: Multiculturalism and Diversity – What do they really mean?

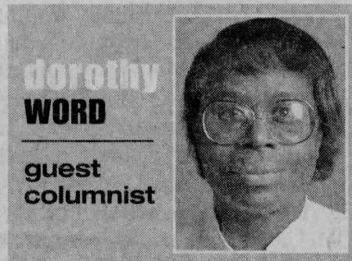
I view the words “multiculturalism” and “diversity” as positive terms that embrace all people and their cultures. Dobson has quite a different opinion of these two words.

In his July 2000 Focus on the Family Bulletin, Dobson said multiculturalism and diversity “are politically correct terms used to smuggle the concept of moral relativism into the heart of Western culture.” Dobson warned, “In the final analysis, anything goes....tolerance of anything and everything – except traditional Christianity.”

Another appalling statement: “Multiculturalism was the excuse for a curriculum written for children” about homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle....“to jam these concepts down the throats of children.”

Dobson’s closing statement: “Multiculturalism is all about moral relativism – not respect for differing cultures.”

I strongly disagree with Dobson snatching these words away from their original meaning and purpose. From the very beginning, multiculturalism and diversity



have been about race and cultures, and absolutely not about gender or gender orientation.

Caucasians of good will and people of color dismiss Dobson’s murky definitions and continue their multicultural and diverse activities.

Each year, the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities presents an award to one of the 70-member schools that send letters to the CCCU detailing their efforts in multiculturalism and diversity on their campuses. This year’s winner of the CCCU’s “Racial Harmony” award was Goshen College in Goshen, Ind.

Goshen College also received awards from the Indiana Civil Rights Commission for “Best Practices in Celebrating Diversity” and a “Spirit of Diversity” award.

Teacher Cleorah Scruggs of Flint, Mich., was drawn to “multicultural diversity” due to her Christian upbringing, and remembering her school days as a child when there were no minority role models in textbooks or on the school staff.

Her fourth graders and other

classes at her school began celebrating Diversity Day in 1993. Scruggs would encourage everyone to celebrate Diversity Days in October which is National Diversity Awareness Month.

American-born Shawn Wong endured his white classmates chanting: “No Chinese allowed.” He also endured the traditional Western culture education.

“In my public school education, I never learned that the Chinese built the Central Pacific Railroad over the Sierra Nevada Mountains, or that they were a major force in establishing California’s agricultural industry, or survived years of exclusion and anti-Chinese legislation.”

Wong got busy working to bring about multiculturalism and diversity. He became a college professor of Asian American Studies and an author, and co-edited a two volume multicultural literature anthology.

Gladys Mainya of Kenya, Africa, now living in Muncie, was one of the speakers at a special event in Howard County. Afterward, people mingled and socialized. With a big smile on her face, Gladys said to the people gathered around her, “I just love diversity!”

That was a “Kodak moment” and I hold that happy picture in my memory as just one more affirmation that multiculturalism and diversity are something to smile about.

Dorothy Word is a resident of Kokomo and retired teacher.