# Diversity and inclusion for Christian camping

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## Introduction/Abstract

Christian camping transforms numerous youth and children each year. In temporary community, campers play and explore Creation, nurture relationships with peers and caring non-parental adults, and have the space to consider important life decisions without everyday distractions. Black, indigenous, and people of color are, however underrepresented in camps in the USA. Moreover, most of the roughly 22% of the overall participating minority populations tend to attend camps that are almost homogenous to their own cultures, reflecting segregation like that encountered in the larger American church landscape. General demographic trends are, however, clearly shifting towards more diversity. Recent census results indicate that in 2020, minorities under 18 would equal their white counterparts in number, on the way to surpassing them in the overall population in 2045 (Frey, 2018). This paper wrestles with racial diversity, inclusion, and unity in Christian camping in the USA. It touches on barriers that stand in the way of racially diverse camps, some similar to those facing the larger Evangelical church (Smith & Emerson, 2000; Tisby, 2020; Jones, 2021), and others specific to outdoor ministry (Finney, 2014; Perry, 2018; Scott & Lee, 2018). The paper offers the discipline of lament landscape on which the journey towards welcoming marginalized minorities and achieving more diversity in Christian camping can be navigated.

## The power of camp

Christian camping has been described as “the most effective means of reaching the most receptive hearts” (DeGroat, n.d.). Every year, the discipleship journeys of thousands of young people around the world are deeply impacted through the ministry. Rev. Nick Korir, a long-time youth pastor who is now Senior Pastor of the Nairobi Chapel in Nairobi, Kenya, recently declared, “One week with youth at camp is more effective than 52 Sundays at youth group” (personal interview, July 23, 2021). Christian Camp and Conference Association (CCCA), a resource organization that networks camps in USA, would agree. In their “the power of camp” campaign, CCCA identifies several factors that make this ministry so effective (CCCA, n.d.).

Firstly, in the temporary community of camp, youth and children have the space to consider life transforming decisions away from the distractions of everyday life. A temporary community is a sociological phenomenon in which a group of people come together for a defined period of time with a common purpose and clear rules of engagement, often in a location separate from normal, everyday life (Miles, 1964; Slater, 1984). Camping, which has been described as “staying in temporary shelters” (Williams, 2002), is found in many forms and frequently in the Scriptures. Abraham, his wife Sarah, and an entourage of servants and relatives left their home in Haran and dwelt in temporary shelters for decades in response to God’s call and promise that he would transform them into a great nation (Genesis 12). Centuries later, his numerous descendants would embark on a 40-year temporary community that transformed them from slaves in Egypt into the nation of Israel (Exodus – Joshua). In the New Testament, Jesus called a group of 12 disciples and trained them, usually in temporary community settings, to become the eventual founders of the church. As they made final preparations to start the church after their Master physically left them, a temporary community of disciples retreated into the “upper room” for slightly over a week, waiting for the Holy Spirit to launch them off powerfully into a new phase of ministry (Acts 1-2). The “full immersion experience” away from the ordinary, newness of experiences, and ability to take risks within the bounded safety of temporariness, sets campers up for “powerful growth-producing opportunities” in temporary community (Ribbe, 2010).

Secondly, CCCA lists that camp offers opportunities for healthy play and discovery in the context of God’s Creation. Though the extent of outdoor activities ranges from 24-hour immersion of wilderness trips to a simple game of “catch” in between indoor sessions, getting outside is ubiquitous at camps around the world. The outdoors are known to inherently offer both generative and palliative effects to the healthy development of youth and children (Lane, 2014; Louv, 2008). Moreover, God’s very Word is instructed by Creation which “pours forth speech” without words (Psalm 19).

CCCA also highlights the power of shared experiences that set campers up for deep, positive, peer friendships, some that will last the rest of their lives. Camp offers young people opportunities to belong and matter, and to succeed among peers in enterprises that are meaningful (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 100). Although parents carry the primary responsibility of raising their young in the faith (Deuteronomy 6:7; Proverbs 22:6), friends at places such as camp are shown to powerfully and positively mediate this parental influence (Schwartz, 2006, p. 322). And finally at camp, caring, non-parental adults are available for life-on-life mentoring and modeling for extended periods of time. These camp counselors, if appropriately trained and vetted, can “provide an environment of reinforcement, good modeling, and constructive feedback for physical, intellectual, psychological, and social growth” (ibid).

## Marginalization in Christian camping

Christian camping in the US does, however, have a glaring soft underbelly. In 2010, CCCA published the “Waypoint Survey” on the state of American Christian camps. Among the findings was that out of all CCCA member camp attendees, only 22% identified as people of color, while the rest identified as white (Christian Camp and Conferences Association, 2010, p. 68). Ten years later, the Outdoor Industry Association’s “2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report” revealed that while in 2020 “53 percent of Americans ages 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once, the highest participation rate on record” likely due to COVID-19 lock-down cabin fever, about 75% of the participants were white (*2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report*, 2021). Meanwhile, a survey of Christian camps on behalf of CCCA in 2020, representing their status prior COVID-19 revealed that of 187 respondent camps, 89% had less than 25% of their campers representing racial minorities (Sacred Playgrounds, 2020, p. 12). This stands in stark contrast to the fact that according to the 2020 US national census, more than half (52.7%) of Americans under the age of 18 did not identify as white (Bahrampour & Mellnik, 2021). This is the demographic to which most campers belong, and over the next few years, will include the average camp counselor. Moreover, the overall number of under 18s dropped over the last ten years from 74.2 million to 73.1 million (1.4% drop), which predicts a smaller overall camping population (Mayes et al., 2021). At the same time, the overall white population in the US dipped to 57.8% (ibid).

All told, people of color are underrepresented in Christian camping, echoing the general US outdoor recreation world. General population trends are clear that the US is at the same time becoming more multicultural. Projections indicate that in 2045, the country will become minority white (with no one majority demographic), driven by youthful minorities (Frey, 2018). This paper argues that current disparities reflect a form of racial stratification in the Christian camping world, “a system of structured inequality, where access to scarce and desired resources is based on ethnic/racial group membership” (Verdugo, 2008, p. 70). Moreover, current trends, if unchecked, will weaken the impact of Christian camping in the US as fewer and fewer youths experience the power of camp (CCCA, n.d.) through continued marginalization of minority populations. How can Christian camping become more effective in inviting minority populations so that the ministry can reflect the ethnic blend of the country? What barriers stand in the way of inclusion, and how to tackle them?

## Denial

In the context Christian camps, demanding responsibility for the lack of diversity is likely to be met with some resistance. Is camp not a loving environment where counselors and staff pour out their lives and time to young people because they love them? Doesn’t the vetting that goes into staff selection and the subsequent training, weed out those who might have a lack of love towards others, and especially towards young people (Mark 10:13-16; 12:29-31)? Any insinuation that race is an issue is seen as a personal affront to one’s character and commitment to the faith and is thus offensive.

This kind of denial may be attributed to colorblindness. This is a well-intentioned yet insidious perspective that comes from the desire to see all people as equal and playing on level ground, despite clear demographic evidence to the contrary. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva writes that colorblindness “explains contemporary racial inequality as the outcome of nonracial dynamics … (such as) … market dynamics, naturally occurring phenomena, and …imputed cultural limitations” (Bonilla-Silva, 2017, p. 2). Michael Emerson and Christian Smith (2000) describe colorblindness as one of the “cultural tools” that fellow evangelicals use to explain away problems of racial divisions and structural inequalities in their world (Emerson & Smith, 2000, p. 170). Before the civil rights movement, explains educator Robin DiAngelo (2018), “it was much more socially acceptable for white people to admit to their racial prejudices and beliefs in white racial superiority” (41). After witnessing with horrors and violence meted upon black protestors during the protests, it was no longer acceptable to be associated with racism, which in any case became illegal, she continues.

One line of (Dr, Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream”) speech in particular—that one day he might be judged by the content of his character and not the color of his skin—was seized upon by the white public because the words were seen to provide a simple and immediate solution to racial tesnions; pretend that we don’t see race, and racism will end. Color blindness was now promoted as the remedy for racism, with white people insisting that they didn’t see race or, if they did, that it had no meaning to them. (DiAngelo, p. 49)

Likely at camps, this kind of denial might not always be a conscious choice, but rather the result of cultural socialization, inattention, lack of curiosity, and perhaps a hesitancy to reflect. It manifests itself in passive and subtle ways such as “the collusion of laughing when a racist joke is told, letting exclusionary hiring practices go unchallenged, accepting as appropriate the omissions of people of color from the curriculum, and avoiding difficult race-related issues” (Tatum, 1997, p. 91).The result, however, is minimization of factors that perpetuate the current general lack of diversity in the local Christian camping space.

In her study on, “Race evasiveness among camp staff,” Cole Perry documented some of the ways colorblindness manifested itself at camps, summarizing them as “commitments to sustaining hegemonic understandings of race and racism” (Perry, 2018, p. 16). They included downplaying visible racial disparities or actual reported microaggressions, as misunderstandings, overstating, or overgeneralizing “unrepresentative” occurrences. In other cases, the analysis of incidents that could be directly attributed to racism was diverted to focus on other seemingly ambient explanations. These strategies fit right in with Emerson and Smith’s evangelical cultural tools, which they summarize as tending to “(1) minimize and individualize the race problem, (2) assign blame to blacks themselves for racial inequality, (3) obscure inequality as part of racial division, and (4) suggest unidimensional solutions to racial division” (Emerson & Smith, 2000, p. 170)

Colorblindness, though perhaps well intentioned on the surface, is unbiblical. The truth that Christ breaks down the wall of separation making the many one in Christ (Ephesians 2:14-18) neither invalidates the esistence of ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity, nor does it somehow homogenize people’s experiences and erase historical and contemporary disparities. Unity in Christ is not a quick fix that sweeps the need for hard relational work under the carpet. Rather, it is a leverage point that invites us to participate the *mission Dei* in unity;to bring all thingsunder the Lordship of Christ (Ephesians 1:10). “Our goal in cultural intelligence, therefore, is not to erase cultural differences but rather to seek ways to honor the presence of God in different cultures” (Rah, 2010, p. 29). Ultimately, when Christ makes “all things new” on his return (Revelation 21:5), perfect diversity will be fulfilled, as people “from every nation and tribe … and language” come before the throne to worship God for eternity (Revelation 7:9).

## Acknowledging racial disparities

To be sure, matters of race are indeed on the radar of practitioners of Christian camping in the US. In the wake of George Floyd’s murder in May 2021, CCCA dedicated their end of year edition of *Insight* magazine which targets camp practitioners, to the theme of diversity. It highlighted “issue of race, and particularly, race as it relates to predominantly-white ministries that would like to serve a more racially-diverse community, including broader representation in leadership” (Hunter, 2020. p. 3). CCCA CEO Gregg Hunter, reported on informal conversations with “friends who are people of color and are intimately familiar with the ministry of Christian camping” (Hunter, 2020b, p. 20). Although there are no efforts to ascertain the validity or reliability of these conversations by empirical means, they offer insights that are consistent with the broader conversations on multiculturalism in the American church. Asked where to begin tackling the question of lack of diversity in Christian camping, one interviewee offered:

“I would ask the question: Where *could* racism show up in Christian camping? If we believe that there are possibly still some remnants, where could it actually exist? When you think about all the elements of Christian camping — from staffing to finance to worship to preaching to the attendees at your camps — when you look at all those areas, could it be that racism, or systemic oppression that started long ago, can find its way into different areas, in those specific areas that exist within Christian camping? (Hunter, 2020b, p. 22)

How do matters of race come in the way of multicultural camp ministry? Reasons are galore, and this paper will only touch on a sampling, recognizing the need for more thorough investigation.

The structural effects of historical injustices do indeed continue to plague the quest for multiculturalism in Christian camping, just as they do in the broader church (Emerson & Smith, 2000; Hill, 2017; Tisby, 2020; Jones, 2021). Specific to camps is the reality that the outdoors, which are easily seen as a place for recreation by majority white populations, are not so obviously so for people of color. For black people, the history of the violence, injustices and acts of terror experienced in the woods during slavery and later lynching in the Jim Crow era linger in collective memory. Memories “are not just our own; they are borrowed, inherited and learned and are part of a common experience kept alive by individuals, communities, cultures, and nations”(Finney, 2014, p. 55). Collective memory thus contributes to outdoor themed white dominated camp spaces not easily being received as places of consolation to people of color, but of desolation. This means that right from the start, it takes effort for non-white people to feel welcome at camp.

This does not mean that there is no interest in outdoor activities by racial minorities. The existence of Christian camps that target people of color—though only 5% according to the CCCA Compass survey (Sacred Playgrounds, 2020, p. 12)—is evidence of this desire. In the broader industry landscape, organizations such as “Black Folks Camp Too” work towards making the outdoors more diverse spaces (O’Connor, 2021). The deep desire to be in something different, something novel, in temporary community, to develop deep connections is universal. Growth of outdoor activities around the world, in places such as East Africa (African Christian Camping, n.d.), India (Indian Christian Camping Association, n.d.), and numerous other nations large and small (Christian Camping International, n.d.) is evidence that color, race or nationality, do not inherently contribute to the lack of diversity. “A white wilderness is socially constructed and grounded in race, class, gender and cultural ideologies” (Finney, 2014, p. 3).

Christian camps also tend to celebration activities and skills that were generally not part of the formative experiences of many kids of color growing up, as compared to their availability to majority white campers (Scott & Lee, 2018, p. 76). Many camps focus on activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, riflery, archery and fishing. These are useful activities that are powerfully used to point campers to Jesus and should certainly not be sacrificed carte blanche on the altar of diversity. Nevertheless, a swim-test on the first or second day of camp (as understandably required by many camps that offer water activities for the sake of safety) without careful thought and sensitivity can become an early point of alienation for campers who are not strong swimmers, or girls who worry that their African hair will not dry for the rest of camp. Though I have worked for almost a decade at a large camp in the Midwest that many of these activities offered, I have never participated in riflery, nor touched a firearm at the camp. As I reflect on this, I realize that as a black man, I am hesitant to openly carry a firearm even in a remote rural camp setting, due to dominant societal narratives that associate blackness with gun violence (Dierenfeldt et al., 2021). Many camp activities thus unintentionally end up becoming “tools of whiteness” (Picower, 2021) in the eyes of would-be camper families of color, discouraging them from attending majority white camps.

A final thought regards the symbols, artwork and architecture of camps, which in many cases inadvertently communicate majority white supremacy and the subjugation of minority cultures. In efforts to offer rustic, wild, adventurous spaces so as to achieve the sense of separation from urban or suburban life, many camps have appropriated symbols and motifs in their architecture that can trigger memories of oppressive racial histories. Camps will have, for example, Native American teepees, canoes, feathered headgear, face painting and the like, or go the way of historical frontier-conquering cowboys and wagon circles. These might be fun for majority campers and may indeed achieve the desired environment needed to foster relationships in temporary community, but to minority cultures, they can be harmful. When symbols from First Nations cultures are appropriated without their own participation or invitation, they can be harmful reminders of cultural genocide in American history. To add insult to injury, many camps occupy lands that originally belonged to indigenous peoples who were either forcibly removed or displaced through unfair treaties. Symbols such as these can not only be offensive to indigenous cultures, but also alienating to other minority groups who don’t feel part of the triumphalist pasts. Additionally, the architecture of buildings, cabins, chapels, meeting rooms and other structures at camps, and the interior and exterior art tend to reflect Euro American culture which can be further alienating.

## Forging Multicultural Christian Camp ministries

As earlier mentioned, numerous Christian camps are awakening to the need to engage diverse populations. Gregg Hunter asserts that this is important because “it’s God’s plan that His people worship Him in a setting of diversity,” citing Revelation 7:9 and Matthew 6:10 (Hunter, 2020b, p. 18). Failure to diversify means that “the fields are ripe for harvest, but entire people groups are somehow outside our reach” (ibid.). CCCA offers several suggestions which I choose to frame within a discipline that is critical to reconciliation and diversity: acknowledging and lamenting past and present structures and practices that perpetuate exclusionary practices.

Acknowledgment and lament are more easily said than done. This is because they can feel like admission of culpability by omission or commission. They can elicit feelings of guilt or shame, leading to defensiveness. Daniel Hill (2017), writing about equity and inclusivity in the church, refers to these feelings as “white trauma” (pp. 71-72). He joins those who propose the discipline of lament as the antidote to this resistance (Hill, 2017, pp. 105–107; Katongole & Rice, 2008, p. 90; Morrison et al., 2019, p. 39; Rah, 2015, p. 23). Lament, defined as a passionate expression of grief or sorrow, can without reflection seem a pointless enterprise of wallowing in regret and despair. But “lament is not despair or a cry into a void. Lament is a cry directed to God” (Katongole & Rice, 2008, p. 89).

Scriptures are replete with lament by perpetuators, victims, and witnesses to injustice, and by concerned parties who chose to become allies even when they bore no direct responsibility for the wrongs. Our Lord Jesus Christ, innocent of all sins, painfully lamented the words of Psalm 22 as he bore the unimaginable burdens of a fallen world. Nehemiah, though born in captivity, cried out to God regarding his forefathers’ disobedience, “I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned” (Nehemiah 1:6)! David, who was rebuked for demanding an unnecessary census of his people, publicly lamented by crying to God while dressed in sackcloth, accompanied by fellow leaders who had had no choice in the matter (1 Samuel 21:16-17).

Lament “is a liturgical response to the reality of suffering and engages God in the context of pain and trouble” (Rah, 2015, p. 21). The goal is not to fix things quickly to get rid of discomfort and move on. Rather, lament is the long, drawn-out process that “sustains and carries forth Christian agency in the midst of suffering” (Katongole, 2017, p. xvi). Lament leads to action in the face of complex and seemingly confounding odds. It becomes the place where all parties – the oppressor and the oppressed, the propagator and victim, the beneficiary and the alienated, the guilty and innocent – meet at the foot of the Cross, “arguing and wrestling with God” (ibid) therein finding hope.

Reconciliation scholars Emmanuel Katongole and Chris Rice (2008) highlight three enemies of lament: the temptations for speed, distance, and innocence. They argue that the urge to solve challenges with speed leads to superficial solutions that may be great for optics but lack depth or resilience. A mission trip may be impactful in the short term but is inadequate in and of itself to bring about change. Speed, an enemy of lament, is closely supported by maintaining distance from reminders that all is not well. Retreating to monocultural enclaves is easily excusable by the remote locations of camps, which tend to be in predominantly white parts of the country. Distance in turn supports innocence, making it ok for camps to be comfortable with being all white or all black, away from reminders that they do not reflect the Body of Christ. Katongole and Rice propose that in the face of these temptations, those who seek reconciliation and diversity should engage pilgrimage, relocation, and public confession as disciplines of lament.

We live in an age of innovations that are constantly improving to solve problems faster and better. Computers can process data at dizzying speeds. COVID-19 vaccines were developed in a fraction of the time it previously took to deliver such protection from novel diseases, and social media has circumvented barriers to connecting all corners of the planet. Not so with lament, which pushes against speed “because it sees the challenge of transformation not from the top but from the margins—indeed from the bottom” (p. 81). Katongole and Rice propose an attitude of pilgrimage “as a way of unlearning speed” (p. 91).

The goal of a pilgrim is not to solve but to search, not so much to help as to be present. Pilgrims do not rush to a goal, but slow down to hear the crying. They are not as interested in making a difference as they are in making new friends. The pace is slower, more reflective. (p. 91)

In the same way, the pursuit of multicultural camp ministers begins with the long journey of building relationships across racial barriers, which must involve pilgrimage. Many camps are located in wilderness areas such as the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, the deserts of Utah and California, waterfront locations around lakes in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, and in the wooded places of Upstate New York. Their campers come not from their neighborhoods, but from far and wide, from suburbs and close to cities (Hunter, 2020b, p. 22). It would make sense, then, to intentionally reach out to communities of color that do not necessarily live close to the camps. This is more easily said as done, because alienating structures and practices earlier discussed would be barriers to any responses that are not preceded by patiently nurtured relationships. Those relationships begin with pilgrimage.

It takes a party who is grieved and lamenting about racial disparities, to do the hard work of reaching across racial divides (Westbrook, 2020). Building relationships takes repeated reaching out, leveraging on personal relationships and face to face introductions. Relationships subsequently take time to build before they can take hold. The staying power of pilgrimage offers resiliently to take initiative, make mistakes, seek forgiveness, and maintain a posture of learning and listening. To their advantage, camps are in the ministry of hospitality, and have a culture of receiving guests well. Many camps are willing to host practitioners from other camps, as well as church and community leaders, visiting to explore chemistry. Relationships, however, involve not just receiving, but also giving up power and familiarity, going to the other and respectfully receiving hospitality. And in the quest for relationship building, one must resist the temptation to fix perceived problems of the other. “Pilgrims set out not so much to assist strangers but to eat with them.”

In the camp world, reaching out in pilgrimage can be to camps whose racial demographics look different, or it can involve building relationships with churches and neighborhoods of different demographics. It can take the form of staff exchanges, providing scholarships and discounts, and other such pursuits that give opportunities for different races to encounter each other in the context of Christian camping.

Within camps, pilgrimage should include engaging with current societal affairs of justice, inclusion and unity taking place beyond the Christian camping world. The isolated nature of camp tend to insulate staff and campers from local, regional, national or international news that do not directly affect their programs. This insulation can perpetuate the us versus them worlds by becoming places of escape from events and issues relating to race and culture. Whereas countering this might not involve blaring TVs and radios which would violate the sanctity of camps as temporary community, prayer times could include bringing world concerns before the Lord and discussing these concerns as part of developing a civic engagement ethic.

As relationships develop, the emerging diverse communities can begin defining their interests and goals. This is a risky enterprise as it reveals priorities, perspectives and even beliefs that might be different. Difference is an inevitable companion of otherness and diversity. Accommodating and adjusting to these differences requires staying power, and a willingness to consider changes that can bridge gaps. This is what Katongole and Rice (2007) call the practice of relocation: “tarrying long enough to be disturbed, … [as] a way of unlearning distance” (p. 91). Differences and disagreements encountered in the process can be weathered by good foundations of relationships.

Relocation is when camps begin making structural changes to accommodate emerging multicultural mindsets. For the changes to be real, there must be a commitment to planning and executing them. This involves “diversity … clearly visible in the strategic planning and vision … . Along with that, it’s important to have targets around diversity in strategic planning. You cannot hit a target unless…you’re committed to measuring progress…,” adds Young Life’s Paul Coty (Hunter, 2020a, p. 28). The willingness to act in the context of accountability makes the difference between cosmetic changes and systemic changes.

Those changes can mean some loss of control and power. This may be in the form of letting go of practices that have worked in the past, and attempting new things that might feel unfamiliar. For example, as campers of color begin to attend dominantly white camp, there may be need to intentionally create safe spaces for them at camp, where they can experience relief from constantly needing to navigate interactions defensively ( Shelby-Caffey C., Byfield L., & Úbeda E, 2015). This does not necessarily mean having all the kids of color staying in the same cabin (although that might be the way to go if you only have a handful among a sea of majorities). It might, however mean intentionally allowing minority campers to sit together at meals (Tatum, 1997), or participating in camp activities together, providing safe places where they are not singled out as being different, lacking “white skills,” or being the ones expected to save teams by their athletic or other stereotypical abilities.

On discovering gaps and places that need change, some camps quietly implement these changes without fanfare. They quietly remove artifacts, photos and even eliminate activities and practices that they learn may be alienating to people of color. Whereas this is useful because the camp subsequently becomes more welcoming, opportunities for healing and structural change are lost when the process is kept a private and quiet affair. Katongole and Rice propose that the practice of public confession would be a more authentic and lasting way of “unlearning innocence” and taking ownership for past wrongs (Katongole & Rice, 2008, p. 92).

Public confession can take the form of community lament, acknowledging that past practices were alienating and perhaps even racist, whether by omission or by commission. Publicly declaring to the camp community the disparities between existing practices or traditions, and the declared strategic intent towards becoming multiculturalism invites responses and processing. It is taking the hard road towards change, and being willing to wrestle with opposition, pushback, regret, and perhaps even loss. It may take time to get to a point of agreement and might be frustrating to those who are ready. The advantage of taking the path of public confession is that it becomes a place of meeting those minorities that have been hurt, who subsequently become allies in the process of change and the journey to multiculturalism.

Public confession can also refer to the process of making public events and practices more welcoming to diverse populations. It is the process of intentionally including art, symbols, and even worship styles that represent those from minority populations whom a camp is hoping to include. And to do that, the artists and drivers of this diversity needs to be people from these communities themselves, so that cultural appropriation does not take place.

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