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Women of Color and White Women: In Dialogue across the Boundaries

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Women of Color and White Women: In Dialogue across the Boundaries

Abstract

Most of the time will be spent in structured dialogue, focusing on our experiences as women of color and as white women in the academy. Topics will include the issues that impact us as women and ways in which we can work together collectively and collaboratively.

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The presenter believes that women have something to say to each other, whether it's sharing information, advice, or passing on life experience. Our lives no longer allow us to visit with one another over a clothesline in the backyard or a mid-day cup of coffee in the kitchen, but those times of connection and inspiration are still vitally important. The purpose of this session is to provide a forum at which women can have those rich conversations, in small and in large groups.

In a recent article in *Newsweek* (March 3, 2003), it was noted that "Long confined to menial jobs, black women are advancing faster than black men -and many whites -in education, income and careers. ..[and] in the aftermath of the women's liberation movement, females of all colors [have] moved into the academy and the professions." This advancement is not without its cost, often in terms of professional and academic struggle and a feeling of isolation.

While it is important that women of color have the opportunity to discuss the every day 'isms and issues they face, it is also important to form alliances with all women, intra- and inter-ethnically, including women of European descent. Our experiences are different, yet some of them are the same or similar. Although we have made great strides in our presence and participation in the academy, much still needs to be accomplished. This session will explore these areas and issues related to women and women of color and forming collaborative alliances with each another.

The content of the session is 90% experiential, 10% didactic. Topics will include the issues that impact us as women, including how we impact each other, relationships, strategies for success, and ways in which we can work together collectively and collaboratively to address issues and barriers that we face.

Presenter

Kathleen Brown is an Organizational Development Specialist in Human Resources Development & Training at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). She is passionate about self-development, women's self empowerment, and women's leadership

and has been instrumental in founding programs such as the Women's Leadership Program and Strategies for Success for Women of Color. In April of 2001, she was recognized for her work with women, receiving the UCSF Chancellor's Award for the Advancement of Women as a member of the staff. Her areas of expertise and interest include conflict resolution/conflict management, group facilitation, managing organizational and personal transitions, organizational assessments, strategic planning, and team building. She has a B.A. in Social Work from the University of California, Berkeley, a B.S. in Physical Therapy from the University of California, San Francisco and an M.A. in Organizational Development & Transformation from the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco. A proponent of life-long learning, Kathleen is pursuing a **PhD** in Humanities, with a concentration in Transformative Learning and Change. Her dissertation topic is "Women of Courage: African American Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century."