



**Texas Bandmasters Association  
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**Mythbusters: Removing Assumptions  
from the Diversity Conversation**

**CLINICIANS:  
Weston Lewis, Christopher Song**



**HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER - SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

# Myth**busters**:

# Removing Assumptions from the Diversity Conversation

Prepared by:



**Christopher Song**

Graduate Student  
Louisiana State University  
*csong5@lsu.edu*



**Weston Lewis**

Graduate Student  
University of Texas at Austin  
*weston.lewis@utexas.edu*

**MYTH 1:** “MY PROGRAM IS SO DIVERSE. WE HAVE SO MANY DIFFERENT RACES AT OUR SCHOOL.”

- Intersectionality and Identity Politics (Crenshaw, 1991)
- Intersectionality - How systems of oppression overlap to create distinct experiences for people who identify with different identity categories.
- Blindspots: Why Smart People Do Dumb Things (Van Hecke, 2007)
- DEIA - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion + ACCESS

**BUSTED:** Race could be a factor in gauging diverse makeup of a group of people, but it is not (nor should it be) the only factor.

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**MYTH 2:** “I NEED TO CHECK ALL THE BOXES!”

- Concert programming is a good start
- Tokenism - What does it look like in our field?
- Repertoire IS the Curriculum (Reynolds, 2000)
- Culturally Responsive Education
  - Culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
  - Culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000)
  - Culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012)

**BUSTED:**

- In the Educational Process, “checking the boxes” creates an unfair focus on factors other than student enrichment. There are caveats to this
- We should elaborate on healthy practices in diversifying your band (i.e. set a broader focus based on your students).

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**MYTH 3:** “I DON’T SEE COLOR. I’M COLORBLIND!”

- Discuss checking privilege
- The Horizon Leans Forward...: Stories of Courage, Strength, and Triumph of Underrepresented Communities in the Wind Band Field (Leung, 2021)
  - Implicit bias
  - “Color blindness”

**BUSTED:**

- In disregarding the personal backgrounds of any group of people, one encourages an unhealthy culture of compulsive assimilation.
- “They do not need to act like a man to be a good band director” - Roxanne Stevenson in *The Horizon Leans Forward*

**MYTH 4:** “*YOU KNOW, I FEEL LIKE MY HANDS ARE KIND OF TIED WITH THIS.*”

- “I’m here to listen.”
- Allyship and Anti-racism Gatekeeping: Good or Bad?
- Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? (Tatum, 2017)
  - Silence and compliance

**BUSTED:** We all need to take an active hand to not only be allies, but be actively anti-racist.

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**MYTH 5:** “*THIS IS GOING TO TAKE SOME TIME.*”

- This statement is a matter of perspective.
  - Delay vs. Change
- Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1970) - Liberation Theory
- Invest in the younger generation
- There is no “One Size Fits All” approach

**BUSTED:** The process of making our programs and systems more accessible requires time because it asks us to take an insightful look into who and why we are. However, there are MANY things we can do now to effect change in our programs and communities.

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**NOW WHAT?**

- This week
- This semester
- This year
- Long Term