

Cross-Cultural Encounter and the Power of the Other: How Your Personal Narrative Can be Enriched by Learning from Those Different Than You

We live in a world of walls and barriers. The international refugee crisis and the responses of nations to the newcomers at their borders has raised fears, rage, and debate about the importance of welcoming people into our midst. This session draws lessons about cross-cultural encounter from a project at a University in Southern California in which students built relationships of trust with people on the margins of life and who have felt alienated because they are from areas of the world where conflict and violence are taking place.

Michael Longinow is a senior faculty member in Biola University's Department of Media, Journalism and Public Relations. He earned a BA in political science at Wheaton College (IL), an MS in news-editorial journalism at the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana), and a PhD in educational policy studies at the University of Kentucky. He has contributed chapters to numerous anthologies on the history of evangelical Christianity and the intersection of media, faith and culture. Longinow is active in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) and was a founding adviser member of the Advisers of Christian Collegiate Media (ACCM). He is a frequent workshop presenter and panelist at national conventions of the Evangelical Press Association, Associated Collegiate Press, and College Media Advisers (CMA/ACP). Longinow has three grown children and two grandchildren. He and his wife Robin are active in Chino Valley Community Church in Chino Hills, CA. They live in Yorba Linda.

I. Introduction

We live in a world of new walls and barriers. God calls us to breach the walls and enter into spaces where people have been left unseen, unheard, and uncared for.

II. Research literature about teens and twenty-somethings on cultures and encounter

- A. They have more fears and anxieties about life than other generations.
- B. They seek out social media before human (face-to-face) social connection.
- C. They believe media of fear about people different than them culturally.
- D. Paradox: they have more compassion for other cultures (conceptually)

III. Research literature about pedagogy (related to ministry) on experiential learning

- A. Dewey: students who learn with their hands and feet retain it longer
- B. Learning obtained by students' own questions helps gain social intelligence.
- C. Experiential learning about (and through) cross-cultural encounter is crucial in helping students break the pattern of misinformation leading to prejudice.

IV. Media Narrative Project at Biola University: cross-cultural teaching through media

- A. Students are given a cross-cultural topic, assigned chapters (book they write)
- B. Students are assigned documentary photojournalism and video projects.
- C. Class involves immersion into cultures unfamiliar to students (U.S. & overseas)
- D. Premise of the class is to dig deep into cross-cultural topic that needs clarity.
- E. Project grew out of Kids with Cameras [project](#) and Slow Journalism [Movement](#).
- F. The project has helped students grow in cross-cultural understanding.
- G. The project has embedded a grasp of God's heart for the poor and marginalized.

Suggested Readings: