

1-1-2002

## Cultural Distinctives of Anglo Churches

Will Raney

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, will@megnet.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/jascg>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#), [Practical Theology Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Raney, W. (2002). Cultural Distinctives of Anglo Churches. *Journal of the American Society for Church Growth*, 13(1), 19-38. Retrieved from <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/jascg/vol13/iss1/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of the American Society for Church Growth by an authorized editor of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange.

## Cultural Distinctives of Anglo Churches

Will McRaney

### *Introduction*

Everyone has cultural distinctives, whether they be known or hidden to the beholder. And Yes, Virginia, Anglo-Americans<sup>1</sup> do have cultural distinctives. The culture, customs and habits of the Anglo have dominated the cultural landscape of America since its inception. Yet, Eleanor W. Lynch noted that those who make up the “mainstream United States culture may have the least awareness of the ways in which their culture influences their behavior and interactions.”<sup>2</sup>

Through immigration, America became what has been described as a “melting pot,” and this phenomenon has diluted many of the cultural distinctives of Anglos. Lynch said, “the diminishing of these early immigrants’ roots has resulted in some mainstream Americans feeling that they do not have a culture, that they are ‘cultureless.’”<sup>3</sup>

### *Aim of This Article*

The purpose of this paper is to identify characteristics that mark Anglo churches. The desire is to assist churches in understanding their cultural blind spots and identify those factors that may be hindering the Anglo church from reflecting more of God’s desire for the church. Because every generalization has limitations, none of the characteristics that are identified will be typical of any one Anglo church, and some distinctives will be stronger than others. I will highlight some of the shared attitudes, values and behavioral practices which characterize Anglo

---

Journal of the American Society for Church Growth, Winter 2002

churches in America.

I will seek to identify general distinctives, but recognize that differing faith traditions have their unique distinctions, and different regions of the country will have unique characteristics. What may be generally true of Anglo Southern Baptist churches in Florida most likely will be different than Anglo Episcopal churches in New York and different than Anglo Vineyard churches in California or Anglo United Methodist churches in Iowa.

#### *Benefits of Study*

There are multiple benefits to an examination of the cultural distinctives of Anglo churches. In *Values-Driven Leadership* Aubrey Malphurs said, “An understanding of an individual’s or an organization’s precepts is a key to an extended, successful ministry.”<sup>4</sup> If Christian leaders desire to bring about changes in a particular church’s culture, they must first understand it. Malphurs went on to define the importance of the role of core values in a culture when he said, “A ministry organization’s core values are a part of its corporate culture. Every ministry, church, or parachurch has a culture—though it may not be aware of it. A church’s culture consists of such things as its traditions, heroes, expectations, norms, stories, rituals, symbols, rewards, and—most importantly—its values. A congregational culture ties its people together and gives meaning and purpose to the ministry’s life. It provides a sense of identity and stability and sets boundaries. I summarize it as the way we do things around here.”<sup>5</sup>

#### *Culture*

##### *Definition of Culture*

A former preaching professor of mine said that words do not have meanings; they have usages. People use the term “culture” differently. An abstract definition of culture would include traditions, religious beliefs, and ideas. Among other interpretations, a more concrete understanding of culture would include food, music, clothing styles, and language. According to Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary culture is “a. the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon man’s capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations b. the customary beliefs, social forms

and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group, c. the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes a company or corporation.”<sup>6</sup>

*Culture: A Shaper of Our Lives*

Do people shape their culture or does culture shape people? Regardless of how one answers, culture is a powerful influence in our lives. E. T. Hall said, “There is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves (including shows of emotion), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organized, as well as how economic and government systems are put together and function.”<sup>7</sup>

*Responses to Different Cultures*

How does God view cultural distinctives? We worship and serve a God who is above the distinctives of culture, but is highly creative. The God who created over 300,000 different species of beetles<sup>8</sup> is the God who created people different. So, how then should we respond? Some take the position that we should segregate due to our differences in tastes, styles or practices. Others say that we should treat everyone the same and thereby ignore our differences. Still others express a desire to acknowledge our differences, but celebrate them in a spirit of unity in purpose.

*Pluralistic Society*

America has become a pluralistic society. This pluralistic society has many subgroups, but the lines are becoming more blurred between these groups. With a high percentage of people moving every five years, a cross-pollination is taking place among people who differ in race, cultural and religious backgrounds, worldviews, as well as social and economic status.

America is made up of unique types of churches, all with historical roots. These churches have responded differently to the increased plurality and cultural diversity. What then is the objective? Is the objective to create one church in each area, so that the church reflects the entire community in most every way? Is the objective to ignore or celebrate our different cultures?

Some argue that Sunday morning is the most segregated time of the week. Is this bad? Is this good? Does it matter? In a

recent conversation with a friend of a minority culture, he pointed out to me that Sunday morning is the most separated time of the week, but not necessarily the most segregated. I believe that it is possible to be together and be segregated and worship in different styles, yet be united in purpose and mutually supportive.

*Culture Friend or Foe*

Christian people differ in their response to culture. Some embrace it as friend, while others push it away as they would a foe. What then should be the response of the Christian church? In order to gain Godly wisdom in dealing with cultural differences, the church needs only to look to the Bible and specifically to the life of Christ. Jesus was not born into cultural homogeneity, but into a world, which was experiencing the effects of multi-culturalism. Although the Bible states that God is not a respecter of persons, yet throughout the life of Christ, we see Him acknowledging, not ignoring the differences.

George Barna and Leith Anderson are contemporary Christian writers who are advocating that Christians not fight our culture. They suggest that churches should focus on the life changing impact of a vital relationship with Christ, which in turns positively impacts culture.

*Christian Church in Culture*

*Why a Study on Anglo Churches*

Churches are Christian people unified around a commitment to the person and mission of Christ and each other. Therefore, since culture is such a powerful force on people, then it must affect churches of all types, kinds and sizes and be worthy of serious reflection. Because Anglo churches are a part of the larger family of churches, a study would be helpful.

Aubrey Malphurs in his book *Values-Driven Leadership* stated that one of the primary roles of leadership is to shape values. A pastor, consultant, or denominational worker would be wise to understand the values/culture of the people he is trying to lead and shape.

Anglos and non-Anglos can benefit from a study of the Anglo culture. For the Anglo, a greater self-awareness will result from such a study. And for Anglos seeking to do some ministry through intervention, the beginning of understanding other cul-

tures involves understanding one's own culture. Lynch said, "To understand and appreciate fully the diversity that exists among the families that interventionists serve, interventionists must first understand and appreciate their own culture. Self-awareness is the first step on the journey toward cross-cultural competence."<sup>9</sup>

Non-Anglos will also benefit from a review of the distinctives of Anglo churches. Non-Anglos will gain a better understanding of their Anglo associates. This will be a key to effectively communicating and ministering with them.

#### *Growing Separation*

Joe Hernandez of the North American Mission Board, among others, noted the obvious, that not all Anglos nor Anglo-predominate churches are the same. The diversity of the Anglo church has been recognized as its greatest strength. This diversity among Anglo people and subsequent churches is what makes characterization so difficult. Lyle Schaller said, "The differences among congregations are becoming greater with the passage of time. The safe assumption today is no two are like. Each congregation has its own unique culture."<sup>10</sup>

#### *Toward Anglo Church Distinctives*

Like most racially distinct groups, most Anglos do not want to be held to rigid stereotypes. I cannot imagine trying to provide hard and fast distinctives of African-American, Asian, or Hispanic churches. The same can be said of Anglo churches.

There are many factors that contribute to the characteristics of a local church. All churches are affected to varying degrees by the age of the church and members, its leadership gifting and style, its community context, philosophy of ministry, the values held by the members, life and ministry experiences, size of the congregation, among other factors. The location of the church also affects many of the characteristics of the church. Demographics and psychographics, along with whether a church is located in a major urban center, suburban community, inner city, smaller town or rural community will help shape the church.

The experiences and expectations of the church members also affect the cultural climate of a church. Churches who are comprised largely of first generation Christians will have fewer religious traditions than a church in which most of the members have been in that particular church most of their lives. However, if a church has a large percentage of members who are connected

to the church through several generations, a strong sense of cultural identity will exist.

*Cultural Changes Affect Cultural Distinctives*

Trying to determine or locate cultural distinctives is like trying to hit a moving and ever-fragmenting target. In terms of marketing, a shift has been made from mass marketing to direct marketing to specific target audiences. The number of specialized magazines in circulation in the United States is a strong indicator that our society promotes specialization and individualism.

Some experts in the field of trends have stated that the culture is reinventing itself every 3-5 years. So, what is in today, is out tomorrow. Historically the church has been slow to respond to cultural changes; eventually, its ability to survive will depend on its willingness and ability to more quickly respond to societal changes.

*Blurring Lines*

With America becoming more pluralistic, it is now more difficult to identify with great certainty the cultural distinctives of any group. Twenty or thirty years ago the task of identifying distinctives of Anglo churches in America would have been much easier.

Today's Anglo church has been affected by cultural factors in most every area of church life. For instance, business has influenced the church in such areas as total quality management, leadership styles, and decision-making procedures. Churches are also different in various regions of the country. The degree to which a given church has been influenced by one or more of the above factors or a host of other factors, will determine how many and how far many of the formerly distinct characteristics have been altered.

*Anglo Church Background Historical Roots*

Placing a group in its historical context provides insights into the present distinctives of the group. The Anglo church has occupied a place of dominance in terms of size, influence and power. At no point in American history has the Anglo church as a whole had to deal with their task and context in a position other than that of superior strength in terms of access to financial, political, societal, and leadership resources.

Any ethnic group's position in society will affect their worldview and values. It also affects how they interpret and apply the Bible, how they determine the key passages and themes of the Bible, and how they carry out the mission of the church within the larger culture. Many of the following distinctives in the Anglo churches have originated as a result of their worldview and filter the way they live and function as churches.

#### *Selected Value Distinctives*

As stated earlier, understanding the values of a person or a group will tell you a great deal about what to expect in their behaviors. Experts in the area of multi-culturalism have noted several of the prevailing values of Anglo-Europeans. These values are also reflected in most Anglo churches in America today. Althen, in his 1988 guide for foreigners in the United States, identified the following as American values and assumptions: "1) individualism and privacy; 2) equality; 3) informality; 4) the future, change, and progress; 5) goodness of humanity; 6) time; 7) achievement, action, work, and materialism; and 8) directness and assertiveness."<sup>11</sup>

#### *View of Time*

Anglos ascribe to a time equals money tenet, and therefore time is considered a commodity. Leisure and money were held as dominant values of many Americans, yet today the dominant value is time. Anglos, especially those with higher levels of education and incomes, time is increasingly important. Within five minutes, most events among Anglos will start and end on time.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Individual vs. Community*

Anglos generally value the rights and privileges of individuals. They usually view the world from a more individual perspective, and therefore act and make decisions from a perspective that is more individual in nature. Non-Anglos often ask decision making questions in keeping with the interests of the whole group, not them individually or their particular church.

#### *Logos vs. Ethos and Pathos*

Anglos, through their education practices and the content of their sermons, seem to emphasize more logos (reason and logic) than ethos (the distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature, or guiding beliefs of a person, group or institution) or pa-



thos (to experience, suffer - an element in experience or in artistic representation evoking pity or compassion).

*Hold vs. Gain (Consolidate vs. Risk)*

Because the Anglo churches have occupied a place of dominance in terms of resources and facilities, much of the focus has been on holding on to what they have gained. This has the tendency to reinforce a fortress mentality and less of a conquering mentality. Non-Anglos, who are seeking to access, resource and establish themselves in terms of property and influence, focus more of their efforts on overcoming injustices and providing for physical needs.

This position of power could be a contributing factor in the apparent unwillingness of the Anglo churches to take risks. As a church ages or expands, the perception grows that it is unwise to take risks. This may also contribute to the Anglo church losing its missional edge.

Often the Anglo church has functioned like a blue chip company trying to hold on to the benefits of being large and powerful. The non-Anglo churches are in the position to behave like a newly established or up and coming company. The worldwide church moves forward in times of persecution and hardship. History, from the earliest records in the Old Testament, indicates that the people of God have more difficulty in overcoming success, prosperity and general favor.<sup>13</sup> The military is probably a better model for the church universal than that of following business.

*Selected Behavioral Distinctives*

The following represents an attempt to highlight some of the behavioral distinctives of Anglo churches. I have sought input and insight from Christian leaders from racially diverse groups. It is often difficult to see your own cultural distinctives, especially if you are in the group that is dominant in terms of size, influence, and power.<sup>14</sup>

*Worship Services*

People come to worship services with a wide variety of needs. Some are coming off the best week of their lives, while others are experiencing significant heartache and turmoil. Apart from the working of the Holy Spirit in a congregation during a given service, it would be impossible to address the varying

needs in the lives of the people attending.

Worship services among Anglos vary in purpose and style. The primary purpose of Anglo worship services range from teaching the saints to providing a service wholly designed to win those outside of the family of God to focusing on experiencing God through worship and prayer. The spectrum of style may range from the highly formal and liturgical to very informal and unplanned.

What then can be said about Anglo worship services? They are generally more planned and less spontaneous than other cultural groups. Frequently, the order of service is established prior to Sunday and is printed in a bulletin for each worshiper to read and follow. Rarely do elements of worship that are not listed in the bulletin take place, and then are often viewed with speculation. This could be because Anglos prefer being in control, or it could relate to a high value of order and tradition. Most worship services in Anglo churches have a set time to begin and a set time to end. This seems to contrast with non-Anglo churches, which value spontaneity and resist routine.

Worship services in Anglo churches tend to be shorter in length than services of other cultures. Most Anglo church services are completed in the range of one hour; this could be due to a heightened awareness of time or a desire for order. The worship is often more focused on the individual than the group or the needs of the community. Wright said, "Worship seems to be more about the needs and comforts of the individual than about 'proskuneo'."<sup>15</sup>

#### *Music*

Music style preference and wording reveal a great deal about a people. It is unarguably a subject that brings out great passion and debate. In my own personal experience, no subject taught in my seminary classes has elicited more highly emotional, strongly stated opinions.

Variance in music styles is increasing among Anglo churches. However, most Anglo churches still use hymnals. Many of these hymns reflect the music styles and forms from centuries past. These hymns have served to set or reinforce doctrinal positions of the churches. Many hymns reflect an intellectual and teaching approach that is common among Anglo preachers. The numbers of words in a song is usually longer than non-Anglos. This fact could be a result of the more intellec-

tual/knowledge-based approach to God and their European roots. Non-Anglos tend to use fewer words, but repeat them more often, which could be a reflection of a greater dependence upon oral traditions, right brain thinking and ties to their cultural roots.

Music in Anglo churches reflects a more structured form with steady, consistent, gentle rhythms. However, music styles within non-Anglo churches reflect a wider variety of strong beats with a deeper level of expressed passion through the sounds and chosen instruments. This difference is also noted in the physical response. Non-Anglos are more likely to clap their hands or have their hands raised while they are singing, while a member of a traditional Anglo church will often have their hands occupied supporting an open hymnal.

#### *Hermeneutics*

Is it possible to interpret scriptures without being influenced by your background? Anglo-Americans have occupied the position of the dominant culture. Wright said in reference to Anglos, "We tend to impose on scripture our cultural patterns of comfort."<sup>16</sup> This may or may not be true on a wide scale, but it is a danger all majority groups must guard against. Anglo churches commonly avoid the verses that deal with matters related to social justice, oppression or like matters. Members of a non-dominant culture will naturally emphasize these when viewing and applying scripture.

#### *Discipleship*

The Great Commission involves a call to make disciples. A key question the American church must address is what is a disciple? In many Anglo churches, discipleship is equated with gaining biblical information and holding to the certain doctrines. There is almost an unspoken assumption that commitment and faithfulness to the church and its education classes will yield a disciple."<sup>17</sup> This false assumption needs to be challenged and addressed. Often in non-Anglo cultures, discipleship is related to personal piety or involvement in ministries to the community.

#### *Preaching*

Among Anglo churches there is a wide range of preaching styles and approaches. However, there does appear to be several general common characteristics. Preaching in many Anglo

churches can be characterized by analytical, deductive proposition; more left-brain oriented. It is often said among Anglos that right thinking will lead to right behavior. The apparent dominant target of preaching in Anglo churches is to affect the head or intellect, more than the heart. This is not reflective of all Anglo preaching, but most.

Preaching in other cultures seems to be more right-brained and focuses more on the heart. Pastors from non-Anglo cultures often preach with greater volume and passion or intensity. The use of narratives and stories are most often the preferred methods of communicating to the congregation. Among groups where survival of the group is considered paramount, preaching may also be targeted toward skill development and emphasize themes of overcoming.

The lengths of sermons vary as well. A majority of Anglo traditions call for a 20-25 minute message or a little longer, but a much longer sermon is common in other cultures. Having to listen to a lengthy sermon is rarely a cause for complaint from a non-Anglo worshiper.

#### *Education and Sunday School*

Anglo churches place a high value on church and Christian education. In most churches this takes some form of Sunday School. Non-Anglo churches seem to value relationships and community aspects of the Christian life and in many churches, to a lesser degree, education.

Anglos are not the only cultural group that uses Sunday Schools, but Anglos usages are unique in several ways. Many of the Sunday Schools are marked by a high degree of structure and organization. Precise paper records and age-grading are regarded as a necessity. Southern Baptists have been leaders in form and success in assimilating people through the Sunday School. Facilities

Because of the inordinate status of the Anglo church in America and because these American congregations have been in formal existence longer than most non-Anglo churches in the United States, much of the activity of the church centers around a building or buildings. It is common for Christians to think of church in terms of buildings. There have been, and maybe still are, associations of Southern Baptists Churches which do not recognize fellowships of believers as churches until they own or occupy buildings. Christians in America are often overheard say-

ing, "I am going to church." The church is the people, united in heart and purpose around the persona and mission of Jesus Christ. Yet, Anglos treat the church as though it was a restaurant. If we like the service and what's on the menu, we return, that is until we have a bad experience.

Buildings are amoral. Too often Anglo churches judge their success and viability as a church based on their ability to build, pay for and upkeep their buildings. I wonder what would happen if all of our church buildings were suddenly to disappear. Rick Warren said, "I believe that you measure the health or strength of a church by its sending capacity rather than its seating capacity."<sup>18</sup> Is it possible that Anglo churches have taken a false sense of security and developed a false sense of success by constructing buildings?

#### *Polity*

In keeping with America's democracy and representative form of government, most Anglo churches make decisions through either an elected body, an appointed board, or as an entire congregation. Among Baptist churches, most function under congregational polity. It appears that non-Anglo churches are more inclined to allow their ministerial staff to give direct leadership. Committees spread along the landscape of many Anglo churches. Some times these committees serve as clearinghouses for decisions already made, while other churches use committees to lead and direct the affairs of the church.

While Anglos place a premium on educational degrees, many other ethnic groups within the U.S. value experience and apprenticeship more than formal education. Often ethnic leaders occupy additional highly respected roles in their community and are also among the most educated.

Thomas Wright has written on issues related to culture and church. In responding to my survey question on church polity Wright wrote, "Since they are so clearly biblical, the basic Baptist issues of priesthood of the believer autonomy of the local church, integrity of scripture, believer's baptism, and symbolic nature of the ordinances seem to be fairly uniform among Anglo and ethnic congregations. There is sometimes a discussion and consensus mentality among ethnics instead of a rigid Roberts Rules of Order."

*Understanding and Working with Anglo People and Churches*

Most of the churches started prior to 1970 may very well be more characterized by the European roots, which is what one often thinks of when they think of Anglo churches. The chances dramatically improve that the Anglo churches started after 1970 will be more indigenous to the American culture, which is becoming increasingly diverse.<sup>19</sup>

*Consulting with Anglo Churches*

Churches are made up of the sum total of its people, therefore an interventionist must learn his audience. Because Anglo churches can be so different, anyone wanting to consult, resource or assist Anglo churches will have to learn about the individual church they are working with at the time. Lyle Schaller said the consultant needs "to be exceptionally sensitive to the distinctive culture of that congregation."<sup>20</sup> He went on to say it is no longer "possible to design a program, edit a hymnal, produce a curriculum series, offer a formula for a capital funds campaign, publish an adult Bible study program, train a youth minister, outline the format for a corporate worship service, fashion a church growth strategy, design a staff configuration, or recommend a system of governance that will meet the needs of every congregation. This explains why the interventionist has to customize a strategy for working with each congregation. One size no longer fits everyone! The strategy has to be compatible with the culture."<sup>21</sup>

Developing an awareness and understanding of the Anglo culture can be accomplished through a variety of methods. Lynch offered the following four effective ways to learn about any culture: "1) Learning through studying and reading about the culture, 2) talking and working with individuals from the culture who can act as cultural guides or mediators, 3) participating in the daily life of another culture, and 4) learning the language of the other culture."<sup>22</sup> With some effort, one can learn about and from people who are different.

*The Key Learning to Ask Good Questions*

In dealing with any particular culture or subculture, a key lies in gaining an understanding of the group. This is best done by asking questions and making observations. Rick Warren said, "To design the right strategy you must ask the right ques-

tions."<sup>23</sup> With the culture changing so frequently and becoming increasingly difficult to define in broad terms, Lyle Schaller said, "The most effective way to influence both individual and institutional behavior is to ask questions."<sup>24</sup>

Prior to moving to California to start Saddleback, Warren's quest to learn about churches and examine Christianity led him to ask a series of questions. One of his questions was, "How much of what we do is just cultural?"<sup>25</sup> A careful examination of the church would reveal that much of what we do is just cultural. Is this bad? The answer could be yes, but probably it is more complex. If culture is working in opposition to becoming a biblically functioning community that is impacting its community and the world for Christ, then yes, it is bad.

#### *The Anglo Church Future*

What will characterize the landscape of future Anglo churches? At election time, politicians tend to move toward a central or more neutral position on controversial positions. When lawmakers handle bill differences, the tendency is toward a middle, negotiated position. Over time, I believe the church will slowly move toward reflecting the highly diverse society. As in society, there will be a wide spectrum of churches with some churches holding extreme positions on particular issues.

I believe the composition of the Anglo church will continue to reflect the members who gather together as a church family. It must reflect the growing diversity of the family from its members. The worship and work of the today's Anglo church will by necessity need to adjust to the preferences of the diverse peoples who participate in it.

I believe there will be fewer common Anglo church distinctives. Each church may have more distinctive characteristics as it ministers to its target, but the Anglo church as a whole will have fewer characteristics in common that are easily distinguishable from non-Anglo churches. The future will be interesting and rewarding as churches become more diverse.

What will be the major factors that distinguish one church from another? What sensitivities will need to be developed among Christian leaders to help facilitate church health and kingdom expansion? While racial factors will play a role in understanding a church, other factors seem to be growing in importance. The other factors include, but are not limited to, the following: the age of the church, the location of the church, the av-

erage age of the members, the philosophy of ministry, as well as the key components of the chosen church model, style and target of the worship service, and the ministry focus group. Doctrinal distinctives, which in the past defined many churches, are less likely to be the primary distinctive of a local church.

#### *Conclusion*

God was the creator of the beautiful mosaic of cultures. No group, including the church, is without a cultural influence on most every area of life. May God grant us wisdom in knowing ourselves and other cultures so ultimately all people will come to know and live for Him.

#### *Holding Meetings with Anglos*

##### *Objective*

Determining the objective for the meeting will somewhat dictate the approach taken when meeting with Anglos.

If the primary objective is the accomplishment of a task as quickly as possible, then the leader will want to identify the culture distinctives and use them to his or her advantages.

However, if the objective involves a desire to expand the cultural awareness and sensitivity of the Anglo group, then the interventionist will take need to take some creative approaches to stretch the Anglos culturally.

##### *Culturally Sensitive Suggestions*

- have a clearly defined objective(s)
- start on time
- end on time
- have an organized agenda
- follow a logical order or sequence
- having a printed agenda may reduce tension

##### *Areas of Improvement*

- since many Anglos are wired for information, supplement that information with an effort to affect their emotions and passions
- ask Anglos to consider the wider influence of their decisions, especially in terms of the community in which they minister
- ask Anglos how they feel about issues, especially potentially controversial issues, so that the group will



be forced to consider their feelings, not just thoughts

*Leading A Cross-Cultural Meeting with Anglos*

- Make as many observations as possible (dress, buildings, seating arrangement, relational climate,
- body language, printed materials, decor, automobiles, how members relate to each other & gestures)
- Shake hands as the form of greeting
- Learn to ask some key questions (the following are some samples)
  - What is really important to you?
  - In what areas have you been most successful?
  - What dreams do you have regarding ministry?
  - What are some of your church traditions?
  - What is success to you and your organization?
- Learn to follow up entry level questions with additional questions to gain information at a deeper level.
- Speak while making eye contact with the person/group
- Speak in a moderate tones of voice
- Use a give-and-take exchange of information
- Schedule the meeting with as much advance notice as possible
- Speak more directly, using more active voice
- Handle conflict in a direct manner

---

 Writer

McRaney, Will: Dr. McRaney serves as Assistant Professor of Evangelism at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. As a church consultant he works with the Ministry Enhancement Group focusing on issues such as ministry in a postmodern culture, contextualized evangelistic strategy development, organizational alignment, and role of guest sensitivity. He may be reached at will@megnet.org or by calling (985) 871-0940.

*Selected Bibliography***Books**

- Althen, G. *American Ways A Guide for Foreigners in the United States*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1988.
- Anderson, Leith. *A Church for the 21st Century*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1992.
- Elmer, Duane. *Cross-Cultural Conflict Building Relationships for Effective Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- Evans, Anthony T. *Are Blacks Spiritually Inferior to Whites?* Wenonah, NJ: Renaissance Productions, Inc., 1992
- Gangel, Kenneth O. and James C. Wilhoit, eds. *The Christian Educator's Handbook of Family Education*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996.
- Gangel, Kenneth O. and James C. Wilhoit, eds. *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1993.
- Hall, E.T. *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1976.
- Henderson, David W. *Culture Shift Communicating God's Truth to Our Changing World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.
- Hiebert, Paul G. and Eloise Hiebert Meneses. *Incarnational Ministry Planting Churches in Band Tribal Peasant and Urban Societies*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995.
- Henderson, David W. *Culture Shift Communication God's Truth to Our Changing World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. and Marvin K. Mayers. *Ministering Cross-Culturally An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1986.
- Lynch, Eleanor W. and Marci J. Hanson. *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence A Guide for Working with Young Children and Their Families*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992.

---

 Journal of the American Society for Church Growth, Winter 2002

- Maiphurs, Aubrey. *Values-Driven Leadership*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996.
- Neighbor, Fl. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1951.
- Romo, Oscar. *American Mosaic Church Planting in Ethnic America*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993.
- Schaller, Lyle E. *The InterVentionist*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997.
- Vacc, Nicholas A., Susan DeVaney and Joe Wittmer. *Experiencing and Counseling Multicultural and Diverse Populations*. Bristol, PA: Taylor and Francis, 1995.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1995.

### Articles

- Wind, James P. "Cultures Mixing" in *Congregations* May/June 1999, pp. 2-3.
- "The Gospel of Community" in *Urban Mission*, September 1996, pp. 3-5.
- Lupton, Robert. "Urban Perspectives" in *Urban Mission*, June 1997, p. 56.
- Nouwen, Henri. "Our Greatest Gift" *Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press*. 1995, p. 87.
- D'Amico, David F. "Evangelization Across Cultures in the United State: What to do with the World Come to Us?" in *Review and Expositor*, vol. 90, 1993, p. 83-97.
- D'Amico, David F. in *The Courier Journal*, March 11, 1991, p. A3.
- Co-Laborers: Achievements, Projections in from Language Church Extension Division of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1992, p. 6.
- Conn, Harvie M. "On Individualism" in *Urban Mission*, September 1996, pp. 6-18.
- Holder, John. "The Issue of Race: A Search for a Biblical/Theological Perspective" in *The Journal of Religious Thought*, Volume 49 No. 2 Winter-Spring, 1992-93, pp. 44-59.
- Tapi, Andres. "L.A. After the Ashes: Churches Struggle to Overcome Racial Tensions, Poverty, and Inner-City Violence" in *Christianity Today*, April 26, 1993, pp. 42-46.
- Weary, Doiphus. "The Gift of Race" in *Christianity Today*, April 26, 1993, p. 20.

### NOTES

---

Journal of the American Society for Church Growth, Winter 2002

1. There are many different types of Anglos. In writing this chapter, I was primarily thinking about Anglo-Americans who make up Protestant churches.
2. Lynch, Eleanor W. and Marci J. Hanson, *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence A Guide for Working with Young Children and Their Families* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992, p. 37. Chapter 3 is "Developing Cross-Cultural Competence" written by Lynch. This is outstanding materials dealing with this subject area.
3. Lynch, Eleanor W. and Marci J. Hanson, *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence A Guide for Working with Young Children and Their Families* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992, p. 37. This fact could have contributed to the author's own difficulty in thinking through the issues and difficulty in locating insights from other Anglos when they were surveyed.
4. Malphurs, Aubrey. *Values-Driven Leadership* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996, p. 10.
5. Malphurs, Aubrey. *Values-Driven Leadership* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996, p. 10.
6. Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1993, 10th ed., p. 282.
7. Hall, E.T., *Beyond Culture* Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1976, pp. 16-17.
8. <http://www.150.si.edu/150trav/discover/bettle.htm>.
9. Lynch, Eleanor W. and Marci J. Hanson, *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence A Guide for Working with Young Children and Their Families* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992, P. 37.
10. Schaller, Lyle E., *The Interventionist* Nashville, 1997, p. 12-3.
11. Lynch, Eleanor W. and Marci J. Hanson, *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence A Guide for Working with Young Children and Their Families* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992, p. 71. For an explanation of each one, see pages 71-74.
12. For an extensive overview of the difference between time oriented culture verses an event oriented see chapter 3 Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K Mayers' book *Ministering Cross-Culturally* pp. 37-51.
13. The author prefers the use of the military as a comparison for the church than that of business. The military is cause and objective directed, rather than financially, customer or employee directed.
14. The following areas of behavior distinctives are believed to be distinctive of Protestant Anglo churches. The author cannot totally remove his Southern Baptist roots or raise well beyond his own personal experience or research into the subject. These distinctives will characterize Anglo churches to various degrees.
15. Wright, Thomas. In a written response to a survey conducted by the author.
16. Wright, Thomas. In a written response to a survey conducted

by the author.

17. See Reggie McNeal's discussion of this topic in *Revolution in Leadership* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997) pp. 46-7.

18. Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church Grand Rapids*: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995, p. 32.

19. For a more complete argument of this principle see Schaller, Lyle E. *The InterVentionist Nashville*: Abingdon, 1997, chapter 7, pp. 91-104. Schaller discusses his findings concerning the unique differences between churches in America who's roots are European and those who are roots are more American.

20. Schaller, Lyle E. *The InterVentionist Nashville*: Abingdon, 1997, p. 13.

21. Schaller, Lyle E. *The InterVentionist Nashville*: Abingdon, 1997, p. 13.

22. Lynch, Eleanor W. and Marci J. Hanson, *Developing Cross-Cultural Competence A Guide for Working with Young Children and Their Families* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992, p. 39-40.

23. Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church Grand Rapids*: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995, p. 30.

24. Schaller, Lyle E. *The InterVentionist Nashville*: Abingdon, 1997, p. 15.

25. Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church Grand Rapids*: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.