

PRIVILEGE WEEK

Cornell's Black Awareness Cultural Organization sponsored an event called Privilege Week wherein students, faculty, and staff **explored the often unconscious bias and privilege they have in society, and on campus, based on race, socio-economics, gender, religion, ability, and sexual orientation.** Everyone was invited to unpack the privilege "knapsack" they knowingly or unknowingly carry.

Tee-shirts given to anyone who participated read on the front: "Watch your privilege." On the back the shirt read,

*Those who have the privilege to know have the duty to act.
~ Albert Einstein."*

Below is an outline for an event lead by students in an inter-faith understanding group which deals with the topic of religious privilege.

OUTLINE OF RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGE DISCUSSION:

Goal of the event is introduced: To foster and engage in constructive and meaningful dialogue related to what 'faith privilege' might mean, how it appears in different parts of the world, and its intersection with other forms of privilege such as race and socio-economic status.

Icebreaker: Members introduce themselves and their faith-tradition/spiritual or secular identity.

General dialogue guidelines introduced:

1. Use of "I" statements
2. Speak from personal experience
3. Respect other participant's speech
4. Respect other participants and their individual experiences
5. Freedom to express dissenting opinions within the dialogue

Layout of dialogue:

1. Show video of a news segment about the conflict between a Biblical Statue and a Satanic Statue in Oklahoma: <http://www.chron.com/news/nationworld/article/SatanicTemplesstatueofSatanicfigureunder5454360.php>
2. Show an interview about Religious Privilege and Theonormativity by Chris Stedman, an atheist activist and scholar in an interview for the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ktphhmd1eQI>

3. Show poem/performance by Jefferson Bethke posted on Youtube about the differences he sees in organized religion and faith: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1IAhDGYlpqY&feature=youtu.be>

4. Playing a short 12 segment of an Oxford Union debate by Mehdi Hassan, a British journalist (I could only find part of the video on Youtube, though I can find the article posted about the debate by the Oxford Student): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdpJqi3Xcul>