

Escaping the Misconceptions of #BLM

On the first day of class, I wasn't sure what to expect of the semester. I entered the classroom with curiosity and a drive to learn more about #BlackLivesMatter and how I can contribute to the mission. By having this course at UTSA, it created a safe space for open dialogue around controversial and sensitive topics to be discussed from a critical lens. The class was very unique because it was made up of a diverse group of students that have different backgrounds, race, gender, values and beliefs. Everyone was opened minded and listened to different perspectives. Now, at the end of the semester I have gained a greater insight and knowledge of a variety concepts surrounding #BLM. For the purpose of this project I decided to address what the #BLM movement is **not** through the framework of the Drama Triangle.

I am always finding ways to connect my courses at UTSA to my professional work. As a corporate trainer, I teach a class on a model called, the Drama Triangle. The Drama Triangle is a dysfunctional model of social interaction in response to conflict that was created by Dr. Stephen Karpman. The Drama Triangle tells us that we play three different roles during conflict. We tend to have a natural role that we display but we can play all of the roles at different and/or the same time. The first role is called the persecutor also known as the "villain". The persecutor says, "I'm okay, and you're not okay" because I have more power of you. This role tends to blame and criticize others often. The second role is called the Rescuer also known as the "hero", and they say, "I'm okay and you're not okay" because I have more knowledge and resources than you. This role seeks to help people for their own benefit not for betterment of the individual. And lastly, there is the Victim also known as the "child". The victim says, "I'm not okay, and you're okay" because I am inferior. This role tends to have a "poor me" attitude and finds it easier to be in a rut than rising above challenges. How does this relate to #BlackLivesMatter?

There are many misconceptions about this movement that I wish we could escape from. First, many believe we have a persecutor mindset in the sense that we are simply looking to blame or "point the finger" at someone. This is definitely not the case as it is something that is much bigger. Instead, this movement seeks to end color blindness and have white people understand their white privilege and start to do the right thing. Another misconception is that we are looking for a "hero", someone to come save us from our disparities. Instead the movement simply seeks to establish equity. We don't want anyone doing the work for us or making things easier, but to only provide a fair opportunity and resources that the community needs in order to be successful. The idea of having a rescuer connects to the critical race theory tenet, interest convergence which is when individuals only advocate for minorities for their own personal gain and not genuinely for the betterment of the community. For example, we tend to see this a lot among politicians. They make false promises about creating a just society for minorities but only to gain votes. Lastly, the movement is often viewed as the black community playing the victim role. This misconception bothers me the most because it is not about being the victim. We have risen above that title and are striving for something more powerful and that is our right to live. The #BlackLivesMatter wants to stop the increasing number of tragedies and re(build) the Black liberation movement.

The project is called Escaping the Misconceptions of #BLM because this course has shown me that this movement makes a statement about what the Black community stands for. It

tells the world that we have put our foot down and chose to use our voice to express ourselves. I refuse to tolerate these misconceptions any longer and strongly feel they need to be addressed. This project's intended audience is for anyone who is mis-educated and ignorant. The purpose of the Drama Triangle is to highlight dysfunctional actions and to learn how to move out of the Drama Triangle to an "adult mindset". An adult mindset says, "I'm okay, and you're okay" which establishes equality. In order to move out of the Drama Triangle, you have to be open minded, willing to listen and learn what questions and actions are appropriate. Of course with any controversial topic, there is an opportunity for potential problems. Some audience members may disagree with the misconceptions and state that these are things that are displayed in the #BLM movement. However, I would hope there are more benefits of learning something new and to gain insight on the purpose and accomplishments of the movement. Most importantly, the purpose of this project is to drive home the point that All Black Lives Matter, period.