



## CULTURE AMBASSADORS NETWORK

### Heritage and Awareness Months

Heritage and awareness months are a chance for us to celebrate and recognize the achievements and accomplishments of underrepresented and marginalized communities, and they can also be an opportunity for our community to educate ourselves about our connected global histories and backgrounds.

The Culture Ambassadors use an interactive model where we present a video that our group can watch together related to the heritage or awareness month (each video is less than 10 minutes long), and then talk through discussion questions in small groups. We also share resources and other readings, videos, and books as a follow up, including the [comprehensive heritage and history month book displays](#) compiled by HKS Library.

We have listed a few examples of heritage month activities below, using [Harvard's Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity's Heritage and Awareness Calendar](#) as a guide. The Culture Ambassadors would like to note that this list is not comprehensive of every heritage or awareness month, and you are welcome to customize the exercises as needed! Please feel free to utilize these exercises in your staff meetings, community gatherings, or otherwise.

## ***February: Black History Month***

### **Pre-readings and resources:**

- [HKS Library Book Display: Black History Month](#)
- [Association for the Study of African American Life and History: Black History Month](#)
- [Harvard University's In Focus: Black History Month](#)

### **Black History Month Video Discussion Exercise 1**

Watch the video "Black Futures: An Ode to Freedom Summer by the Movement for Black Lives": <https://vimeo.com/507147022>

#### Discussion questions

- What did you think about the video? Did you learn anything new?
- How can we commit to not just celebrating Black history, but committing to uplifting Black joy and liberation?

### **Black History Month Video Discussion Exercise 1**

Watch HKS PhD Candidate Anna Gifty's video on her book 'The Black Agenda: Bold Solutions for a Broken System': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQSeJSLAloY>

#### Discussion question

- Anna's scholarship centers on the idea that if the best outcome is achieved for Black people, it's a better outcome for everyone else. How did this resonate with you? How might this apply in your work to advance equity and inclusion?

## ***March: Women's History Month***

### **Pre-readings and resources**

- [HKS Library Book Display: Women's History Month](#)
- [National Women's History Museum: Women's History Month](#)
- [Harvard University's In Focus: Women's History Month](#)

### **Women's History Month Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch HKS Professor and Co-Director of the Women and Public Policy Program, Iris Bohnet's, video on her book, [What Works: Gender Equality by Design](#):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niH9wfKsUIc>

#### Discussion questions

- In what ways do you see unconscious bias come up in your department or area – both individually and institutionally? How is unconscious bias embedded into some of our workplace processes and policies?
- Which behavioral design interventions could you use in your workplace to advance gender equality in your role? (e.g., hiring, career advancement, or culture?)
- Reflect on the statement: “seeing is believing” – how important is equal representation for diversity, inclusion and belonging?

### ***March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility***

#### **Pre-readings and resources**

- [GLAAD: Trans Day of Visibility](#)
- [Harvard IOP: Issues Facing the Transgender Community: Progress, Backlash, and Paths Forward](#)
- [Harvard WAPPP: Why do people defend the gender binary? With Dr. Thekla Morgenroth](#)

#### **Transgender Day of Visibility Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch the video “The Hijra Community” by Stonewall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNWk7R9hVU>

#### Discussion questions:

- What did you learn about the Hijra community through this video?
- What could global trans solidarity look like? What is the importance (and difficulties) of focusing on "visibility" for this marginalized community?

### ***April: Arab-American History Month***

#### **Pre-readings and resources**

- [Arab American Foundation: National Arab American Heritage Month](#)
- [HKS Library Book Display: Arab American History Month](#)

#### **Arab-American History Month Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch the video "ARAB How You See Me" by Participant:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3ydbIUo0EY>

#### Discussion questions

- One of the speakers said that their identities have been "inherently politicized." What does that mean, and how did that resonate with you? Are there identities that you hold that might be "politicized"?
- Another speaker mentions the tense balance between your racial/ethnic identities (e.g., being Palestinian and Arab) and your identity as an American. What do you think they meant by this comment?

#### ***May: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month***

##### **Pre-readings and resources**

- [HKS Library Book Display: Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#)
- [Harvard University In Focus: Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#)
- [PBS: Celebrate AANPHI History Month](#)

##### **AAPI Heritage Month Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch P&G's video "The Name": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fN7cpMC1414>

#### Discussion Questions

- What resonated with you in this short video?
- Why is saying people's names correctly not just an issue of common courtesy, but an issue of inclusion?

#### ***May: Jewish American Heritage Month***

##### **Pre-readings and resources**

- [Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History: Jewish American Heritage Month](#)

##### **Jewish American Heritage Month Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's video "Marianne & Jane: A Pen Pal's Story": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIUmcpWDJ-U>

### Discussion Questions

- What did you learn about Jewish refugees through this video? In what ways did it highlight the importance of global Jewish resistance and solidarity against the Nazis?
- Did the difficult refugee process remind you of any other injustices against marginalized groups? How did that resonate with you?

### **June: LGBTQ+ Pride Month**

#### **Pre-readings and Resources:**

- [HKS Library Book Displays: LGBTQ+ Pride Month](#)
- [Harvard University In Focus: Celebrating Pride](#)
- [Harvard IOP: America's Leadership in Global LGBTQI+ Rights](#)

#### **Pride Video Discussion Exercise 1**

Watch the video "What is Pride Month?" by ShareAmerica:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KdCiqLfMIs>

### Discussion Questions

- Did you know about the history of Pride being a protest? Is that reflected in how Pride is celebrated/commemorated today?
- Despite progress in terms of public policy, homophobia and transphobia still exist in the workplace on a micro and macro level. How do we better incorporate the needs of LGBTQ employees in our DEI efforts? How have you seen this being done on your teams?

#### **Pride Video Discussion Exercise 2:**

- Watch the video "Y'all better Quiet Down with Sylvia Rivera at the 1973 Gay Pride Rally": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jb-JIOWUw1o>
- Content warning: swearing, mentions of rape, sexual assault, police brutality and violence
- Facilitator Note: The video is slightly harder to understand given it was filmed in 1973 - you can find a [biography of Sylvia and a transcript of her speech here](#).

### Discussion Questions

- How does Sylvia mention the importance of intersectionality within pride movements? How do we center those most marginalized as we fight for LGBTQ+ rights?

- Sylvia has also talked about the issues related to "rainbow-washing." Have you heard of "rainbow washing" before? What are the potential concerns or challenges of corporations capitalizing off Pride?

### ***June 19<sup>th</sup>: Juneteenth***

#### **Pre-readings and Resources:**

- [Harvard University's In Focus: Juneteenth](#)

#### **Juneteenth Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch Harvard Business School's video "The Importance of Juneteenth":

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OShpcTev\\_6A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OShpcTev_6A)

- Content warning: mentions of anti-black racism and police violence

#### Discussion Questions

- The speakers talk about the importance of Black joy and celebration as the core meaning behind Juneteenth. How can we center this in our recognitions of Juneteenth?
- One of the speakers also mentions to ensure "your public rhetoric is in line with your private action" - what did this mean to you? Is this true for your workplace, department, or team? Why or why not?

### ***July: Disability Pride Month***

#### **Pre-readings and Resources**

- [Them: What is Disability Pride Month?](#)

#### **Disability Pride Month Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch Barnard Center for Research on Women's "My Body Doesn't Oppress Me, Society Does":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7r0MiGWQY2g>

- Content warning: mentions of anti-black racism and police violence

#### Discussion Questions

- Stacey Milbern mentions the importance of shifting our lens from an individual impairment lens to the bigger picture of thinking about ableism as a societal issue. What does this mean?

- How can we (as an institution, and within your areas) think proactively about disability justice and inclusion, and not reactively?
- Have you seen successful models for disability justice where people's access needs are met (in your department, area, or elsewhere)?
- What could you do or advocate for within your areas to ensure inclusion of people living with disabilities? (Think about not just physical disabilities, but also cognitive and learning disabilities, psychosocial disabilities, etc.)

### ***September: Latinx Heritage Month***

#### **Pre-readings and Resources**

- [HKS Library Book Display: Latinx Heritage Month](#)
- [Harvard University In Focus: Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

#### **Latinx Heritage Month Video Discussion Exercise**

Watch National Museum of the American Latino's video "Somos":

<https://vimeo.com/656330489>

#### Discussion Questions

- What did you learn about Hispanic and Latinx heritage and history?
- What is the importance of recognizing the history of these communities, both within your state and nationally?

### ***October: LGBTQ+ History Month***

#### **Pre-readings and Resources**

- [HKS Library Book Display: LGBTQ History Month](#)
- [GLSEN: LGBTQ History](#)

#### **LGBTQ+ History Month Discussion Exercise:**

Watch the video "Billy Porter Gives A Brief History of Queer Political Action":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoXH-Yqwyb0>

#### Discussion Questions

- Typically, the history of political action in the LGBTQ+ community that we hear about centers on the fight for marriage equality. What did you learn about the diverse history of queer political actions in this video?

- How does the LGBTQ community's history of activism intersect with other marginalized communities - including the fight against police brutality, poverty, and homelessness?

### ***October 19<sup>th</sup>: Indigenous Peoples' Day***

#### **Pre-readings and Resources**

- [NPR: What Indigenous Peoples' Day means to Native Americans](#)
- [HGSE Usable Knowledge: From Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day](#)

### ***November: Native American Heritage Month***

#### **Pre-readings and Resources**

- [HKS Library Book Displays: Native American Heritage Month](#)
- [Harvard In Focus: Native American Heritage Month](#)
- [Harvard EDIB: Native American and Indigenous Resources](#)

#### **Native American Heritage Month Discussion Exercise 1:**

Watch the NDN Collective's "HESAPA - A Landback Film":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCl6TS5zBlw>

#### Discussion Question

- What did you learn about the landback movement and its intergenerational legacy in Indigenous communities?

#### **Native American Heritage Month Discussion Exercise 2:**

Watch the video "Land Acknowledgment, 2022 Kennedy School Commencement" with Megan Minoka Hill (Oneida Nation WI): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZS-USPpA1w>

#### Discussion Questions

- What is the importance of land acknowledgments during events at Harvard? What did you learn about the history of Indigenous peoples in MA from this land acknowledgment?
- Megan mentions that "at the heart of any land acknowledgment is reckoning with past injustices with respect and responsibility" - how do you think an institution like Harvard can move beyond land acknowledgments into action, and do this in respect of Indigenous peoples and their lands?