

SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR “The Impact of Tokenism”

1. When you watch TV, movies, or other media how many different characters or individuals can you find that you feel represent you – positively or negatively?
2. How often do you think that the portrayals are trying to show the complexity of the identities being represented, such as with gender, race, or other aspects of identity?
3. How does media representation of other groups influence your beliefs or opinions about those identities?
4. How would you define “tokenism” as it relates to identity?
5. Why do you think that some groups are more negatively impacted by the use of token or representative characters in the media?
6. What kind of responses do you hear in defense of tokenization and stereotyping?
7. Why do we need to advocate for more thoughtful representation and messaging about identity?
8. What are some of the ways we might use examples from the media to open up discussion about identity?
9. How can we create an environment where participants feel open to discussing how their identities are being portrayed?
10. What are some opportunities to provide more balanced, complex views of identity and culture (to counter singular or negative messaging perpetuated by media and society)?

Need support facilitating discussion around equity and cultural competency? Contact ReachOut for more information about our services and resources: info@reachoutfornewfutures.org.

Web Radio Archive: “Hopeful Television”, KUOW.org (NPR Broadcast, Dec. 2009)

Web address: <http://www.kuow.org/program.php?id=19027>

Web Article: “Glee Is Off Key on Race”, COLORLINES Online Magazine (Dec. 2009)

Web address: <http://www.colorlines.com/article.php?ID=668>