

April Kelcher

September 24, 2010

Mini-Project: 2

Fortunately, I have many people in my life that have a mixed culture relationship, so I was excited to ask them some questions about what they have experienced. I chose two sets couples to interview about the experiences they have endured.

Interviewee's background:

The first couple has been married for five years and has one child; their names are Rosa and Kevin. Kevin was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska and Rosa was raised in Venezuela. They are both in their twenties and both have college degrees in education. Rosa came to Nebraska originally as a nanny because she was unsure what she wanted to do with her life before entering college. The family that she was being a nanny for encouraged her to enroll in college. She eventually found a scholarship that would help pay for school. Once in college is when she was introduced to Kevin. They eventually got married and had their son Dominic. Dominic is three years old and is being raised bilingual.

The second couple I interviewed was Scotty and Kelly; they have been married for three years and have one son, Linden. Scotty is from Manchester, England and Kelly is from Denver, Colorado. They both were introduced at a Denver Nuggets game, where Kelly at the time was a Nuggets dancer. Scotty had recently moved from New York to Denver for coaching opportunities, where he lived a year after moving from Manchester.

Family reactions or concerns:

Kevin and Rosa stated the following: Both of their families were excited to hear when they announced that they were getting married. Although Rosa's family was a little sad, due to the fact that this ensured that she wouldn't be moving back to Venezuela. When they began dating, there were never any negative reactions with the culture differences between the two. Both sides of the family are very open to all cultures so it was never seen as a stress on their relationship. The only real concern from Kevin's point of view was being able to communicate with his in-laws.

Scotty and Kelly stated the following: Their families were more shocked than excited at first, when they had announced their engagement. Scotty and Kelly had only been dating a few months before they made this decision, although their family's reactions were not due to the difference in culture, but from the lack of dating period. Each family became more excited about the decision as the time went on.

Society's acceptance or challenges:

Kevin and Rosa: They both agreed that they have never really had to endure any true challenges within society from their relationship, in the United States. Although, when they traveled back to Venezuela it was slightly a different issue. Kevin and Rosa would definitely get some looks and comments on their relationship, more so because Kevin was an American. Neither of them, were too worried about the comments or looks they said, "They simply dismissed it".

Scotty and Kelly: My husband and I have actually been to dinner with Scotty and Kelly and have experienced society's reaction to an Englishman. I would have never thought about some of

the reactions that Scotty got when we were out to dinner, I was shocked and ashamed. Scotty dresses; I would say more “metro-sexual” than some Nebraskans are used to, but nothing inappropriate. Some of the other diners would just stare and whisper about Scotty, it was very apparent they didn’t care how noticeable they were being. A few times I wanted to go to their table and address the situation, but knew that it wouldn’t have helped. Scotty seemed to dismiss the looks and didn’t let it affect him. I later asked him about the situation and he said, “It didn’t happen very often and when it does he just ignores it”.

Afterthoughts:

After interviewing both sets of couples it has seemed that culture differences between the husband and wife had definitely not effected or damaged the relationship in any way. Both sets of families all seemed supportive of the relationships, besides the short dating period between Scotty and Kelly. I do realize that this is not always the case with relationship that has different cultures; some family’s have very strong beliefs and want their children to marry within the same culture.

I do find it very disappointing to hear and see our society not always accepting everyone for who they are. I was so ashamed to watch my fellow Nebraskans to act in the way they did. Just because someone speaks with an accent and dresses a little more fashion forward than they are used to, doesn’t mean its okay to make that individual feel alienated. Overall, in most circumstances I think society has grown a lot in being able to accept most culture diverse relationships.