

Laughing while black: The wine train incident

An innocent sounding scenario...

Having warned book club members about noise as their coach left the Napa station and at least once more, an employee decided to exercise one of the more unpleasant aspects of the job – the group of women would be escorted from the train at its next stop. The St. Helena police stood by to assure there were no problems related to the removal. As the train waited, security personnel escorted the women, a few who were elders and some who were weeping, carefully down the aisles of the six train cars, following behind to assure there was no lingering. One of the train employees provided a small wooden stepladder and physically assisted the oldest member of the group, down the stairs and out of the last car. The group huddled together, taking pictures as they waited for the taxi the company provided to carry them back to Napa. Within a few hours, a company employee, who may or may not have witnessed the precipitating events, posted a Facebook explanation as to why the women had been asked to leave.

What was the key decision that resulted in 11 members of the Sistahs on the Reading Edge Book Club standing in a St. Helena dirt parking lot on a sunny August 2015 afternoon, after having been escorted off the iconic Napa Valley Wine Train?

A family owned business

Founded in 1864 by Vincent Michael DeDomenico, the Napa Valley Wine Train served as a tourist attraction offering fine wine and dining services to passengers as it passed through the scenic backroads of the California wine country. Its six antique 100 year-old railcars and 150 year-old rail corridor allowed the wine train to continue a transportation tradition that was disappearing from the American landscape. The Napa Valley Wine Train web site (<http://winetrain.com/>) indicated that it was actually “one of the most distinctive Napa restaurants, offering a relaxing three-hour, 36 mile round-trip authentic, memorable experience that echoes the glory days of train travel, with fine dining service, multiple course meals, Napa Valley scenery and ultimate relaxation aboard exquisitely restored vintage rail cars.”

The backdrop

At the time of this incident, the Sistahs on the Reading Edge Book Club had been around for 17 years. While most of the women in the group were of African descent, there were no racial restrictions on membership – you just needed to be female, willing to both select and lead discussion critiques of books and interested in getting together on a regular basis with other like-minded women. Participants ranged in age from their late-30s to 83. The monthly gatherings frequently occurred in locations other than members’ homes and the August 2015 session began like many others.

In the summer of 2014, after deciding that it would provide a great backdrop for their monthly discussions, an August 2015 reservation was made for 15 members of the group to

travel from Napa to St. Helena on the Napa Valley Wine Train. Lisa Johnson, a self-described speaker, coach and self-made Sunshineologist, indicated she had initiated the reservation. Via a posting to the Wine Train's electronic reservation system, Johnson noted that club members could get somewhat "boisterous" at times. She formally asked if Sistahs on the Reading Edge could be seated in an area where their laughter and discussion would not disturb other travelers. Given that it was a year in advance of the trip, there was an unspoken expectation on both sides that the request could easily be accommodated.

Unexpected obstacles: Laughing while black

Saturday, August 22, 2015 began as a perfect day: sunny and warm with clear blue skies. 11 of the book club members arrived – relatively on time – ready to board the train at its Napa orientation. The photos and videos snapped on various cell phones, posted on Facebook prior to the trip, and subsequently shared with the press, show clusters of 5-6 women, smiling and obviously ready for fun.

All of the participants agreed that a Wine Train employee made a point of coming over and speaking aloud to the book club group about disturbing others as they left the Napa station. While some book club members might have wondered why they were being warned about noise, even prior to the trip's getting underway, no points of contention apparently arose around that initial conversation.

However, about two hours into the journey, the group was again approached by train employees, citing complaints from other passengers about the noise level of the club's conversations. At this point, they were advised that their discussions and laughter had become a problem and they would need to leave. Some members reportedly asked if the situation could be resolved by relocating the group to a separate area away from other passengers; they were told that there was no space to accommodate this request.

Rather, the collective group of Sistahs on the Reading Edge club members were told they would be met at the train's St. Helena station, transported back to their cars in Napa at company expense and provided with a full refund for the cost of their tickets. While a few book club participants protested that they were no louder than others on the train, no members were drunk and all were merely enjoying themselves in line with the wine train's stated purpose, it was to no avail. Instead, as they were readying themselves to leave the train car, another passenger reportedly scolded the group, stating "this is not a bar" (*Los Angeles Times*, August 25, 2015). According to a subsequent complaint posted on Lisa Johnson's Facebook page, train staff "paraded us through six cars on display in front of the other guests to waiting police like we were criminals" (*Reuters*, August 25, 2015).

A virtual backlash

Johnson wasted no time describing her and other club members' feelings about the incident on social media and the reaction nationally was almost immediate. On that same Saturday afternoon, a train employee issued a Facebook post, asserting that "following verbal and physical abuse toward other guests and staff, it was necessary to get our police involved"

(*Los Angeles Times*, August 25, 2015). Within hours, that particular company Facebook post had been deleted.

By Sunday morning, a Twitter feed entitled hashtag #LaughingWhileBlack was trending, engendering sympathetic comments from the likes of Emory University political science professor Michael Lee Owens such as “race-based misophonia: a sound-induced disorder afflicting whites in the presence of black fun” (*Reuters*, August 25, 2015). By that Monday, only two days later, over 13,000 signatures had been gathered via an on-line petition protesting the wine train’s actions.

By August 25th, still only two days after the original incident, a Latina UC-Berkeley student reported having posted Yelp information about a similar April 2015 experience, although she stipulated her party of 10 Latino individuals had only been threatened with action and not actually removed from the train. “I think it was just that person complaining and then the manager, seeing that we were Latino, basically decided to discriminate [against] us because we were Latino and [a big] group...I’m seeing a pattern. I’m realizing that how I was treated was not normal” (*Slate.com*, August 25, 2015).

Subsequent reactions

By late Tuesday, August 25, 2015, wine train Chief Executive Office Anthony Giaccio issued a written statement indicating, “The Napa Valley Wine Train was 100 percent wrong in its handling of this issue. We accept full responsibility for our failures and for the chain of events that led to this regrettable treatment of our guests.” (*Reuters*, August 25, 2015). Despite Giaccio’s promise to have train employees participate in sensitivity training, book club members were not placated, particularly as a result of reactions they received in response to the deleted Facebook post. Over the next several weeks, Lisa Carr, another of the women removed from the train, indicated members had to deal with a range of negative responses on social media, telling reporters, “It’s horrible, it really is. People don’t think that it is real. It’s absolutely real...People have been nasty. It’s uncalled for”. (NBC Bay Area, October 1, 2015).

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Laughing while black: The Wine Train Incident

Critical Incident Overview

This critical incident describes issues leading up to the removal of Sistahs on the Reading Edge Book Club members from the Napa Valley Wine Train on August 2015. It is intended primarily for a real-life instructional approach to coursework in organizational behavior or conflict management. However, the challenges presented by the incident also lend themselves to course segments involving questions of leadership, diversity and inclusion and business communication.

Research Methods

This critical incident was developed after a review of published articles, videos and news clips related to the incident itself and a review of the literature associated with perception, implicit bias, racial discrimination, micro-aggressions, and business communication.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes of this critical incident are for students to:

1. Identify and analyze the implications of the general diversity issues in play within the context of this incident.
2. Formulate possible antecedents and consequences of the concerns, perceptions, and behaviors portrayed.
3. Categorize the role of communication in both the emergence and the resolution of the situation presented.
4. Critically examine the logical approaches a decision-maker might take in response to the situation and hypothesize possible outcomes resulting from the decisions made.

Discussion Questions

The following questions may be useful in guiding class discussion of this critical incident:

1. Even as the train was leaving the Napa station, a train employee warned book club members, in the presence of other passengers, about making too much noise. What alternative actions do you think were available to either (1) the employee or (2) book club members? For either group, provide some possible reasons why they might not have exercised the alternative. (LO2, LO3)

2. What implications might this initial decision have had on subsequent actions taken during the ride by (a) book club members; (b) fellow passengers in the train car; and (c) train employees? (LO1, LO4)
3. How might any of these three stakeholder groups have acted to prevent the situation from escalating to the point that book club members were removed from the train? (LO4)
4. How did Facebook and other social media posts materially change the dynamics of the emerging incident both immediately and over the subsequent 30 days? (LO3)
5. Ms. Ruiz's Yelp complaint occurred in April 2015, almost four months prior to the book club incident. How might consideration of that situation and the Wine Train's acknowledgment of that complaint been used to inform education and training steps within the business (LO1)? How, if at all, might that training have helped prevent the book club incident? (LO2)
6. Given that the setting of this incident is a recreational wine train, what overall employee training do you think should be in place to facilitate conflict de-escalation and customer service enhancement? (LO4)

Answers to Discussion Questions

1. Even as the train was leaving the Napa station, a train employee warned book club members, in the presence of other passengers, about making too much noise. What alternative actions do you think were available to either (1) the employee or (2) book club members? For either group, provide some possible reasons why they might not have exercised the alternative. (LO2, LO3)

Here, students are being asked to examine the earliest stages of conflict with the intention of supporting an understanding of how interrelated behavior and contexts are, in general, and in particular. Potential student responses to this question may include:

- a. A general announcement over the train's intercom might have been made, reminding all passengers that, while having fun and celebrating is encouraged, patrons need to be courteous to others during the journey as it relates to noise, animation, etc. Included in such an announcement could have been a statement that the Napa Wine Train encourages everyone to drink responsibly, so as to best appreciate the remarkable travel experience through the historical Napa Valley.
- b. Staff could have directly engaged the reading group, expressed curiosity, respect and appreciation for their choosing the wine train, and offered to serve in any way possible to enhance their enjoyment of the excursion. During that process, an opportunity might have arisen to communicate

concerns or expectations, should there have been any, regarding noise in a discreet manner. These types of actions might have laid the foundation for a cooperative mood on the part of the book club members as well as prevented any of employees' initial concerns from affecting the experiences or attitudes of other riders in the train car.

- c. No action might have been taken at all at this point in the trip. Too little time had passed for the construction of accurate behavioral perceptions regarding any of the passengers. Such prompt and conspicuous sensitivity to the behavior of any group of passengers could be framed as being more consistent with pre-existing biases than with adroit and insightful processing of any observations.
2. What implications might this initial decision have had on subsequent actions taken during the ride by (a) book club members; (b) fellow passengers in the train car; and (c) train employees? (LO1, LO4)

This question encourages both perspective-taking and consideration of context and complexity as situational consequences are developed by learners.

- a. Being approached almost immediately as the train ride began may have made book club members feel singled-out, activating defensiveness and stress. Any subsequent resistance to or skepticism regarding complaints or warnings would merely be reactions to the initial trigger.
- b. Some passengers on the train may have been made uncomfortable by witnessing train employees warning fellow passengers. Others may have assumed the group had committed some offence, even if they had not observed the same. This may have resulted in sensitizing other passengers on the train to how much noise book club members were making or activated a judgmental or stereotypical attitude toward a group of predominantly African American women. Finally, in the event that the passengers on the train truly did share a general feeling that too much noise was being made, these passengers might have felt both supported and emboldened in any subsequent actions they chose to take against club members during the trip.
- c. Some train employees may also have been affected when a fellow employee pressed the group of passengers to be less noisy or disruptive. A sense of solidarity with their coworker may have caused them to try to mentally validate the actions that had already been taken. Coworkers may have felt their own kinds of tension over having female African American passengers on board, who may not have been viewed as "typical" wine train guests. Train employees, who may have disagreed with what had previously occurred, might still have wanted to align themselves with a fellow employee as the initial decision to make a pointed warning may have tamped down their personal tendency to ask questions and challenge decisions made by

other staff members. Given the strengths typically claimed within the literature for the benefits of teamwork, concurrent “group think” by observing employees may have contributed to the resulting negative outcomes.

3. How might any of these three stakeholder groups have acted to prevent the situation from escalating to the point that book club members were removed from the train? (LO4)

Many negotiation courses and human resource training programs cover the subject of bargaining styles. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)(1978) is a psychological assessment tool that can be used by students and instructors to probe this topic. The TKI measures the five conflict management facets proposed by the dual concerns model: competing, collaborating, compromising, accommodating, and avoiding. The TKI frame could be applied by learners to this stakeholder analysis in the following manner.

- a. Book club members could have asked again to be seated in another car, where they would be able to continue their discussions without disturbing others (it turns out they did just that and were refused reseating). They also could have opted to either talk more quietly or made arrangements to be let off the train at the next stop because the service was not optimal for their group discussion. The latter action probably would have included a refund request. This would have been a great illustration of either avoiding (if the group simply stopped talking altogether or decided to terminate their trip early) or accommodating (if club members simply whispered or only occasionally continued with their book discussions). It is highly unlikely that club members would have chosen either of these two alternatives, since both of these options would have required that they sacrifice their supposed purpose: to enjoy each other’s company on the vintage train. However, the exercise of either of these choices would have de-escalated the situation.
- b. Other train passengers, if disturbed by the noise, could have moved to another car. If they did not want to wholeheartedly engage, they could have chosen to come and speak to the group personally about how the level of club members’ conversations was disturbing their own enjoyment and asked for some accommodation. Finally, other train passengers could have approached the group, inquired as to its purpose (especially since it was reported that all members were wearing the same t-shirt) and then pleasantly spoken about the conversation level or even joined in the book conversation themselves, assuming group members gave permission.

If other train passengers only engaged in the first behavior (moving), they too would have stopped at the avoiding level of conflict management. However, taking either of the other two actions (speaking to the group about noise or joining in) would have been excellent examples of either

compromising (asking for a voice level reduction) or collaborative (joining in with the book club discussion) behavior.

- c. Train employees could have taken some of the following conflict management steps to de-escalate the declining situation including:
 - i. Book club members could have been asked to exit from the immediate train car they were in and not walked through the entire train. If the intent was solely about removing unruly passengers, it would make sense to involve as few other passengers as possible, through a discreet removal (compromise strategy).
 - ii. No Facebook posts could have been made. The inaccurate Facebook post contributed to book club members' belief that they had been wrongly judged. The anonymous nature of the inaccurate post also led to concerns since it was impossible to determine whether or not the train employee behind the note actually had witnessed any portion of what had actually occurred (avoiding strategy).
- 4. How did the Facebook and other social media posts materially change the dynamics of the emerging incident both immediately and over the subsequent 30 days? (LO3)
 - a. The key question here that students should be encouraged to answer is why was any Facebook post made? If removal of unruly passengers is a routine matter, why would there be a need for a Facebook post about it? As opposed to individuals who may believe that every detail of life must be recorded, most companies would not issue a social media post about routine work details. One might argue that the very fact that an explanation about a "routine" work detail was posted on social media would have a negative effect on everyone who read it: general customers, employees, as well as the individuals who were removed.
 - b. It would be useful for students to examine the immediate effects that resulted from the social media post on each of the respective stakeholder groups, beginning with customers.
 - i. Given the variety of options as to how one might spend leisure time, general customers would probably not choose to deliberately place themselves in situations where they would be likely to be exposed on some regular basis to "unruly" passengers! As a result, from a marketing perspective, the wine train company would probably have preferred to have only positive posts made by its employees about the excursion experience (the firm would naturally have no control over either positive or negative social media posts made by customers).

- ii. Next, how might a negative social media post about the removal of “unruly” passengers impact company employees? Students should be encouraged to discuss potential reasons why those working in such customer services positions frequently see themselves as embattled company representatives (Freudenberger, 1975). They should then be asked to examine how the particular wording of the social media post might have triggered a “circling the wagons” affect of “us” against “them” (Strentz, 1990) among employees, possibly in line with the posting employee’s intent. Spreading a collective defensive attitude might have actually been intentional, particularly if the employee who originated the post was worried about how decisions he or she might have initiated that resulted in the actions subsequently taken, would be judged by supervisors and the company.
 - iii. Finally, in retrospect, the responsible employee should have anticipated that the Facebook post would have had mostly negative impacts on the persons who were removed from the wine train. First of all, most customers would not have liked to have their ejection from a tour publicized in any way. Second, the details surrounding this particular event were somewhat unclear from the beginning: while book club members and the train company had electronic evidence as to the conditions associated with the original reservation, this information was not available to employees as the incident was unfolding; noise levels and customer disturbance could be a matter of interpretation and dispute; and finally, how passenger removals were threatened and/or carried out did not appear to follow a set pattern. The ambiguity connected with each of these aspects of the situation would probably have been easier to resolve out of the limelight of a social media storm, where both sides needed to display their “positions” rather than attempt resolution based upon their respective “interests”.
- c. Over the subsequent 30 days, given social media reactions, the positions of each of the stakeholders in this situation would probably have hardened. With the immediate apology of the wine train regarding the incident and the publicity surrounding the race, ages and social media posts of the book club members, a sensitive customer service issue was played out in the public eye. Potential passengers probably wondered what actually happened and, given choices, might have concluded that they did not want to travel on the wine train. This was certainly the case with many area African Americans, who subsequently were aggressively marketed to by African American tour companies, offering a more “welcoming” type of wine country experience.

Employees probably had a heightened sense of both being scrutinized and being held responsible for scrutinizing customers for noise and disruption.

Further, given the company's announcement that employees were to be given additional "sensitivity" training as a result of this incident, employees were likely to feel that they were being collectively punished without evidence that the responsible individual had been identified.

Finally, the individuals who were removed from the wine train were both supported and vilified in social media over the next 30 days, making it more likely that they would consider legal action as a means of both repairing their reputations and providing a higher measure of compensation than was initially being offered by the company.

5. Ms. Ruiz's Yelp complaint occurred in April 2015, almost four months prior to the book club incident. How might consideration of that situation and the Wine Train's acknowledgment of that complaint been used to inform education and training steps within the business (LO1)? How, if at all, might that training have helped prevent the book club incident? (LO2)

It is interesting that the Ruiz complaint was almost immediately acknowledged but no reflective or integrated corporate response occurred. Rather, it appeared that a public relations effort was carried out by one side of the firm without a corresponding connection being made by the human resources/training side of the company. Thus, an excellent opportunity for management to incorporate real life practice and enhance employees' customer service and conflict management skills was missed. Basically, whether or not the substance of the complaint was true, someone in Human Resources could have asked "how might we want employees to react if the complaint was true" and to follow with "how might we assure this never happens here, if for no other reason than the harm it might cause our business?" Had the connection been made from the public relations apology to needed human resource training, the incident with the book club group might have been much less likely to have happened.

6. Given that the setting of this incident is a recreational wine train, what overall employee training do you think should be in place to facilitate conflict de-escalation and customer service enhancement? (LO4)

Customer-facing roles should always entail considerable training in product details, effective listening, as well as picking up on verbal and non-verbal cues related to stress, curiosity, interest, and preferences. In the case of the wine train, it is arguable that these and other customer service skills must be augmented with training regarding the effects of alcohol consumption on individuals and groups, balancing the company's desire for profits and customers' desire for pleasure.

Students should be encouraged to discuss how careful management of the brand outside of formalized wine tour events should help customers self-select for environments appropriate to their needs and expectations. However, once customers are on board, skill in continuing to reinforce consistent wine train policies and behavior expectations is necessary as well. Thus, regular and frequent customer

service training would be very relevant to supporting the steps necessary to de-escalate and resolve conflicts that could routinely arise in situations where alcohol and collective behavior intersect.

General Discussion

The incident presents students and instructors with an opportunity to critically consider some of the customer relations and associated conflict management issues faced by an increasing number of service personnel: how to properly satisfy clients' expectations in a manner that is consistent with company policy. It also allows students to examine the impact stereotypical thinking may have in situations that call for in-the-moment rather than measured decision-making. Other problems are suggested that may or may not have contributed to the ejection of the book club members from the train, social media praise and condemnation, and the resulting legal suit settlement.

First, a range of organizational behavior topics should be discussed in relationship to this critical incident including literature associated with individuals' cultural values (Schwartz, 1999), emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2006) and, most importantly, conflict management (Thomas & Kilmann, 1978).

As it relates to cultural values, it is important to note that whenever individuals encounter "rude" or unfamiliar behavior, it can serve as a "trigger", leading towards misunderstanding or mis-perception and assumptions that may or may not be correct (Livermore, 2016). As a part of his blog analysis, Livermore (2016) points out that there are many cross-cultural errors that can be made socially both in person and in writing including:

- Asking questions that are considered to be too personal (Chinese)
- Not starting an email with a friendly greeting (Argentina)
- Looking a superior in the eye (Nigerian)
- Not looking other individuals in the eye (Canadian)
- Using first names as part of an introductory email (Slovakian)

What is often forgotten is, that due to the history of the United States, even what might be classified as "routine" interchanges between African Americans and Caucasians actually represent cross-cultural conversations. As a result of slavery and post-Civil War experiences, African Americans and Caucasians frequently view their interactions through a racial lens, which can quickly lead to misunderstandings. Recent incidents of police and civilian murders, continuing civil unrest and social media discussions provide supportive evidence that these types of cross-cultural exchanges require appropriate dialogue and training so as to support proper conduct of the same. Thus, we find that the Napa Wine Train's CEO was quick to dispute the Book Club's assertion that they were racially profiled and instead offered an interpretation that what was needed was simple customer service "sensitivity training" (Rocha, 2015).

As it relates to conflict management, participants can use this critical incident to examine Thomas and Kilmann's (1978) five conflict management styles and consider where it might be most appropriate to use each of the various strategies including:

1. Accommodating – This is where individuals cooperate to a high-degree at their own expense and against their personal goals, objectives, and desired outcomes. This approach is effective when the other party is the expert or has a better solution. It can also be effective for preserving future relations with the other party.
2. Avoiding – This technique is used when individuals simply decide to avoid the issue. They don't help the other party reach their goals and they don't assertively pursuing their own. This approach is frequently used when the issue is trivial or one party feels they have no chance of winning. It can also be effective when the issue would be very costly, when the atmosphere is emotionally charged and space needs to be created. Sometimes issues will resolve themselves, but "hope is not a strategy", and, in general, avoiding is not a good long term approach.
3. Collaborating – The collaborative option allows groups to partner or pair with the other party to achieve both sets of goals. It allows for a break from the "win-lose" paradigm and permits both sides to seek the "win-win." This can be effective for complex scenarios where there is a need to find a novel solution. This can also mean re-framing the challenge to create a bigger space and room for everybody's ideas. The downside is that it requires a high-degree of trust and reaching a consensus can require a lot of time and effort to get everybody on board and to synthesize all the ideas.
4. Competing – This is the well-known "win-lose" approach. Here, one group acts in a very assertive way to achieve goals, without seeking to cooperate with the other party and, frequently, at the expense of the other party. This approach may be appropriate for emergencies when time is of the essence or when quick, decisive action is needed and people are aware of and support the approach.
5. Compromising – Unlike what many may think, compromise represents a "lose-lose" scenario where neither party really achieves what they want. This requires a moderate level of assertiveness and cooperation. It may be appropriate for scenarios where a temporary solution is needed or where both sides have equally important goals. The trap is to fall into compromising as an easy way out, when collaborating would actually produce a better solution.

In addition to conflict management, the topic of racial discrimination was one of the core issues that drove the events in this critical incident. Evidence that the book club had requested specialized seating and had described their planned activity as a part of making reservations in the train's electronic system called into question initial claims of racial neutrality in this situation and opened the wine train to the charge that club members had only "laughed while black". Specialized entertainment vehicles such as the wine train, are not unique in being places where members of diverse ethnic groups, may come into contact

with one another and exercise various forms of prejudice and discrimination including negative attribution and racial harassment. This critical incident could be used to intentionally examine any of these destructive behaviors (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013).

Another core issue that underlies all of the behaviors within the incident is the institutional response to the challenges of diversity, inclusion and equity. This connects well with discourse around leadership, communication, organizational culture, and change. An overarching concept that arguably culminates in the moment of decision that ends the incident is that of leadership, its multifaceted responsibilities, and its role in framing activity within the firm. Bolman and Deal (2013) provide an excellent treatment of how effective leaders need the capacity to view situations through multiple lenses and from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders.

As students consider possible interventions that employees might have undertaken in the face of concerns about customer noise, it could be useful for them to bring into play concepts from the study of organizational change. A rich discussion is possible regarding the categories of response to different steps leadership might take and the manner in which these steps are communicated.

Furthermore, woven around the concepts of racial equity and institutional response raised by this critical incident are issues of perception and communication. For example, if employees were actually unclear about what might be required to balance some patrons' concerns about noise versus others' desire to enjoy themselves with conversation and wine, there is probably a communication problem of some kind. Students can be asked to identify possible reasons for this gap in understanding. It may also be interesting to consider what may be required for a change in company culture to be sustained, if successfully set into motion. The critical role of organizational communication and leadership action within the symbolic frame in driving shared meaning fits in well here (Bolman & Deal, 2013; McShane & Von Glinow, 2013; Mumby, 2013).

Additional Pedagogical Materials

The instructor may also wish to ensure that students consider the broader implications of what occurred in this situation by having them select various print or social media reports on the same. An Oxford-style debate could be used to summarize the key stakeholders' perspectives and determine if the actions taken by the train employees were appropriate or not. Should the instructor care to have students begin the critical incident analysis after having conducted their own secondary research, a list of research links can be developed.

The research information may be provided either during a time set aside for that purpose or injected at various points during incident presentation or discussion.

Epilogue

On October 1, 2015, an \$11 million racial discrimination lawsuit was filed on behalf of the 11 book club members by civil rights attorney Waukeen McCoy. "The actions taken by the

wine train were egregious,” McCoy said. “This lawsuit highlights that blacks are still treated differently in America.” (NBC Bay Area, October 1, 2015).

On April 18, 2016, the case was confidentially settled out of court. “We’re relieved that we were able to resolve the matter,” Johnson said on Monday. “I think it’s something we can put behind us.” Two of the women — a nurse and a bank/credit card company employee — indicated they lost their jobs because of news reports about the incident and comments made about them on social media. (The Mercury News, April 18, 2016).

Patrick Wingfield, who represents the Napa Valley Wine Train, said he had no comment on the case.

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