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INTRODUCTION FROM TIKOLA RUSSELL:

In the spring of 2011, I was a graduate student enrolled in the Administration of Higher Education program at Suffolk University in Boston. One of my last requirements was to complete a second practicum experience, and I became an intern in the Office of Intercultural Affairs at Stonehill College.

Why is this book important? While institutions of higher education are designed to raise the level of conversation and inquiry, issues about various aspects of diversity can sometimes be pushed aside or ignored because people are not comfortable starting the conversations. These conversations, though difficult, need to take place in order to foster a healthy community that is accepting and welcoming of all people.

This book can be that starting point for all members of our community. It is the hope of the Office of Intercultural Affairs, that members of our community will take pride in reading through the responses and using it as a tool to engage each other in dialogues about these issues.

I am thankful to Liza Talusan for giving me this opportunity, and I am especially thankful to all who participated in the

online survey. Your statements make this book real and relevant to Stonehill and I believe that it will serve as an asset to many on campus for years to come.

Thankfully yours,

Tikola Russell

July 2011

AN INTRODUCTION FROM LIZA A. TALUSAN:

In my role as the Director of Intercultural Affairs, and particularly in my career working with college students, I realized that many important, moving and impactful stories were never found on student surveys, never recorded in exit interviews, and never surfaced in class discussions. These stories often took place in casual meetings – while eating lunch in the dining commons, walking to class, or in the few minutes before a program or meeting started. These stories were about inclusion, feelings of belonging, exclusion, feelings of being disconnected, frustrations, anger, joy, and triumph. These stories were of students who were leaders, who cared deeply about the community in which we lived, studied, and worked;

and these stories were almost never heard by the people who could help make change in our lives.

For years, I have wanted to collect these stories – somehow – and make them available for all the members of our Stonehill community to read, interpret, and connect. I wanted people to get a chance to talk about topics that some of us get to talk about every day: stories of success, challenge, decision making, first messages, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disAbility, religion, and identity.

“Diversity: The Untold Stories” was compiled by asking students to complete an online survey. While the students had the option of being anonymous, nearly all of the students chose to identify themselves with first and last names, hometown and state, gender, sexual identity, religious identity, and other demographic pieces. At first, I was surprised by the number of people who chose to identify themselves. Then, I realized, this project was exactly what so many people were looking for – *an opportunity to engage in the conversation, to be a part of the change, and to stand up for their ideas*. They wanted to move from being *untold stories* to *personal statements*.

The responses in the book. The responses in the book have been edited for length and not ideology. Of the more than 200 responses, we picked the 25-50 of the ones in each section that would spark the most discussion and introspection. Though the selected responses do not necessarily reflect those of the Stonehill College mission statement, generally accepted practices of social justice and inclusion, or the philosophy of the Office of Intercultural Affairs, we left them in the words of the students. We did, however, edit any profanity used. In addition, to give a level of anonymity, in some instances, we excluded descriptors of students that would easily identify them; however, we did not alter any information that individuals provided in the free-response of demographic information.

How to use this book. At the beginning of each chapter you will find a few reflection questions. The questions are designed to get you thinking about who you are, how you might have responded to the questions, and your reactions to what you are reading. Whether you engage in this conversation via the book, in class, or with your group of friends, the purpose is to get you thinking and talking. We hope that your story becomes a part of

the fabric of Stonehill. We hope that, in telling the stories of others, you find your own voice.

To learn more about ways to get involved in the conversation about diversity, identity, and inclusion, stop by the Office of Intercultural Affairs, email diversity@stonehill.edu, attend one of the many programs we host during the year, or participate in our dialogue, book or discussion series!

Peace,

Liza Talusan
Director of Intercultural Affairs
July 2011

DIVERSITY: THE UNTOLD STORIES

How has Stonehill impacted your definition of diversity?



We all bring a diverse range of experiences that have been informed and shaped by our families, our environment, and our interactions with others. The more people we meet, the more our circle of understanding grows.

As a college student, you have many opportunities to further guide your definition of and experience with diversity. Take a deeper look into how your peers feel about diversity, how they interpret the meaning of diversity, and how they believe Stonehill has played a role in their development.

The following reflection questions will help you further think about the student responses to “How has Stonehill impacted your definition of *diversity*?”

- What do you think of when you hear the word “diversity”?
- What were your first messages about people who were different from you?
- How would you have answered the question provided in the survey?
- What themes did the student responses have in common? What themes were unique?
- Which themes or quotes do you most relate to or feel connected with?
- What responses surprised you? What did not surprise you?
- What do you think informed these responses?
- How might faculty or staff respond to this question?
- How might your peers respond if you asked them this question?

Stonehill has added more to my idea of diversity of thought and lifestyle than ethnic diversity. I have been exposed to different ideas about how the world works and the different lifestyles people live. – *White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA*

It has not had much of an impact. My high school was overall much more diverse. – *White, Catholic, Springfield, MA*

I never thought about the word 'diversity' until I came to Stonehill because for the first time, I was very much in the minority. Having come from a very diverse high school, Stonehill was definitely a culture shock for me because all I saw was white. However, if you know the right people, you can make sure you are surrounded by people that make you feel at home and not in the minority. My definition has changed because I now know what it fully means--people of all kinds of backgrounds that make the world a better place. – *Anonymous*

I believe that Stonehill is a very accepting place. One of the reasons that I wish to become an RA is because I want the opportunity to welcome incoming freshman students and make sure that they feel comfortable, welcomed, and safe here at Stonehill. I know that my RA staff has done that this year and I could not be more thankful to have had them as role models during my freshman year. – *White/Caucasian, Catholic, East Meadow, New York*

Stonehill isn't very diverse but this doesn't change my

definition of diversity. I grew up living in the city of Boston so my definition of diversity was created there and I have just held on to that throughout my life. – *Caucasian, Catholic, MA*

I am more aware that people today are still discriminatory. My high school and family taught me to be accepting of all people and I had always just assumed everyone learned that. I was wrong. Stonehill showed me that bias still exists, and we now just need to work harder to open the closed minds out there. Stonehill is working hard to do just that, and I am certainly on board. – *White, Agnostic*

It has not. My high school was more diverse, and that is part of the reason why I chose Stonehill. – *Weird, Easton*

I have participated in the ALANA-A program and it really opened my eyes to diversity. I learned so much from the discussions that we experienced. I've learned that color blindness isn't the best way to go about saying you don't discriminate. To be color blind is to not recognize a person's background and ethnicity and therefore not recognize their complete self. Diversity isn't just color but also sexual orientation, backgrounds, gender, etc. It's what makes us all different. – *White, Roman Catholic, Brockton*

I don't think it has impacted my definition of diversity; it is the least diverse school I have ever been at. – *Indian, Hindu, Brockton, MA*

Although people complain about Stonehill not being diverse, etc., I do think it has actually increased my personal awareness for the necessity of diversity in any environment. At times the

push for diversity here on campus can be a bit overwhelming but I do think that helps in the long run because whether we like it or not it is constantly in the back of our minds. We become aware of the issues associated with the lack of diversity and thus strive to increase it on campus or at the very least understand what it entails. I think Stonehill has made me realize that diversity means more than just race, it means lifestyle choices, religious affiliation, socio-economic status, etc. All things I had not previously stopped to think about. – *Caucasian, Catholic, Newport, NH*

There is no diversity at Stonehill. – *Anonymous*

Before Stonehill, I thought the world was a more progressive place. Coming from a liberal public high school in Boston, the presence of such a homogenous student body made me realize that not everyone has been exposed to diversity like I have. However, I have learned more deeply that diversity not only has to do with race or ethnicity, but also socioeconomic status and physical abilities. Although the population of Stonehill may look the same in many cases, there are instances where people will reveal their diverse backgrounds, proving that you can't judge a book by its cover. – *Latina, Catholic, Boston, MA*

Although Stonehill does not offer significant diversity in terms of the student body, I have undergone training and education about diversity that I have never experienced before. The Office of Intercultural Affairs offers programs and

seminars that have opened my eyes to diversity, and it continues to make me more and more knowledgeable and comfortable on the subject. – *White, Roman Catholic, MA*

I come from the second least diverse state in the nation, so for me Stonehill has been a more diverse experience than living at home in terms of meeting people from different ethnic groups as well as people with different worldviews. From the friends I've made at Stonehill, I have been able to broaden my own perspectives. – *White, Protestant, Southern Maine*

It hasn't really. Diversity is everywhere, even at Stonehill (though some people may argue otherwise). The thing is, we all view diversity differently; maybe we all have the same general notion of the concept, but when we ourselves look for diversity, we each have different aspects of the definition. Some people look at race, sexual orientation, gender, varied activities, food, music choices, etc. and think, "Ok, this is diversity." We're all different. That's what makes us diverse. Diversity is inclusive; that's what many people here don't get, and that's why many people have a difficult time finding it here. If Stonehill has taught me anything about diversity here at the college, it's that the majority of people don't find diversity here because they don't have an understanding of diversity. – *Caucasian, Queens, NY*

Can't really say it has. I've learned a lot about different cultures but I can't really say that Stonehill has impacted my

definition of diversity. – *African American, Christian, Georgia*

Coming to Stonehill has slightly increased my knowledge of diversity, as the town I am from is not very diverse at all. I do not believe that Stonehill is an extremely diverse school, but through little fault of the school. This school holds high standards and students who meet those standards are accepted. These standards should not differ to expand diversity because that would change the status of the school. I believe that this school is thought of highly and if it were to simply allow students based on their backgrounds than that would lower its high status. I do not believe that the apparently low diversity at Stonehill has impacted me very much. Despite the fact that I have not been exposed to much diversity over my lifetime, I still strive to see everyone as equals and to understand individual thoughts and beliefs regardless of my own. – *White, Catholic*

Stonehill has greatly impacted my definition and awareness of diversity. The high school I attended was majority white, catholic girls from upper or middle-class. My exposure to diversity before Stonehill was through pictures or books. By coming to Stonehill I was able to experience the beauty of diversity. – *White, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

I think before I came to Stonehill, I thought that diversity consisted of racial diversity. Now, I find that diversity can come in many different forms including religion, geography,

and morals. – *White, Catholic, Essex Junction, Vermont*

Stonehill has given me a better idea of how diversity is put into practice. I have never been surrounded by so many different groups of people. Stonehill is allowing me to get outside of my comfort zone and begin to expand my horizons and understand the cause of diversity for everyone and in everyone. – *Caucasian/White, Roman Catholic, Wayne, New Jersey*

I believe Stonehill views diversity so much more than just on the basis of skin tone, so I think Stonehill has impacted the broadness I think of when it comes to diversity. – *Anonymous*

Stonehill really tries to push diversity on campus. While they're intentions are good, I believe that they have not been able to achieve the results they desire. I believe this is in part due to the manner in which they have gone about trying to promote diversity. Stonehill virtually injects diversity into nearly every single event, program, or lecture it puts on in an attempt to make diversity one of the main focal points. In my opinion, Stonehill turns many of its students off to diversity by overt preaching of the topic. As a result many of the students seem to ignore the message, ridicule those who speak of diversity, or even act against it. – *Anonymous*

To be honest, it really hasn't, I went to a high school with a lot

more diversity and acceptance at it, and I actually find the cultural barriers between races bigger here than in high school.
– *White, Christian, Plymouth, MA*

Because I went to a predominantly White high school, Stonehill has exposed me to more diversity. I have met people of different races and ethnicities, but also of different religions and backgrounds. Stonehill has helped me to understand diversity not simply in terms of skin color, but rather that each human being is diverse in his or her own way. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

Stonehill has really shown me how ignorant people really are and the fact that racism still exists in the world. – *Black/Native American, Methodist, NY*

It has definitely given me an eye-opening view of diversity; however I would actually love to see more diversity on campus.
– *White, Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Stratford, CT*

Stonehill has impacted my definition of diversity because it is a predominately white college and I come from a city where there are a variety of races/ethnicities around. To me Stonehill is not a very diverse place in terms of race and ethnicity. – *Vietnamese, Malden, MA*

I came from a town where there was virtually no diversity. Being at Stonehill has allowed me to meet a variety of people

and become comfortable with people who are different from me. – *White, Poland, Maine*

My definition of diversity is pretty much everything Stonehill is NOT. Ethnically, religiously, and sexual orientation-wise, Stonehill is quite frustratingly homogeneous. – *Caucasian, Christian, Branchburg, NJ*

In my opinion, Stonehill students are very similar. Everyone seems to be solely concerned with their physical appearances and with what others think of them. I hope in the near future that students will be more open to embracing their own individual styles and their unique self. – *White, Greek Orthodox*

Stonehill has an open attitude towards diversity. We can see that in the programs and events held. Diversity just isn't about race and I think that being in a college setting allows students to meet people they would never have met. – *Caucasian, Catholic, Hampton Bays, NY*

Coming from a diverse hometown, the Stonehill College community has been a shock to grow accustomed to as a freshman even being white like the majority of the campus. – *White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA*

I was raised in a white upper middle class environment. That is also the environment that dominates the Stonehill Community. However, living with others, I have been able to find differences in other people that I find interesting to talk about. At Stonehill I have learned that having an open dialogue about diversity is the best way to spread equality. – *White, Roman Catholic, CT*

Stonehill has GIVEN me my definition of diversity. Diversity was not something that was discussed in my all white Catholic high school, so Stonehill, and more specifically the Intercultural Affairs staff and the students I have met here, have helped me define and understand diversity. – *White, Female, Scranton, PA*

I realized quickly on that "diversity" is not something most middle-upper class white folks want to talk about. I think it's because they think diversity is a color, and something that they don't need to take an interest in. However, diversity is diverse. It is race, religion, socioeconomic status, etc. and is what makes people different from one another. Working with Liza and different groups on campus showed me that diversity is very broad, and that by understanding it we can work towards social justice. – *White, No religious affiliation, Watertown, CT*

Stonehill has greatly impacted my definition of diversity. I

came from a predominantly white town, and my high school was the same way. Stonehill opened my eyes in a multitude of ways. It showed me that diversity is more about individuality and appreciating originality, than it is about race or skin color. Since this realization I have become an integral part in Stonehill's diversity initiatives by working on R.A.C.E. dialogues with my peers, helping Diversity on Campus facilitate discussion to raise awareness about social stereotypes, and holding the position of Publicity Coordinator on the Student Government Association's Diversity Committee. – *Caucasian, Hanson*

Being biracial, I have my own idea of diversity. I do not judge people based on skin color but I feel as though Stonehill highly emphasizes racial differences when I wish they would focus more on other topics. – *Irish and Mexican, Catholic, TX*

If anything, Stonehill has expanded my definition of diversity. A lot of people - especially a lot of people on campus - look at our student body and say we're not diverse because we don't have a lot of Black people or Asians or whatever. They say "you're all White and White people are all the same" and they are wrong. We're all different, and that makes us diverse. If the school had an entirely Asian population or an entirely Hispanic population it would still be the same - it would still be diverse, because diversity isn't just what color your skin is, it's your sexuality and your beliefs and your hometown and the people you identify with. It's a lot of things and Stonehill is diverse. – *Caucasian, Nashua*

Stonehill has impacted my definition of diversity to an extent. Although the student body is not extremely diverse I think the opportunities to meet new people from around the country has helped my understanding of diversity. Stonehill has also provided me with many opportunities to encounter diversity which I have taken advantage of such as volunteering in Brockton, HOPE programs to different areas of the country in need, and through study abroad programs. – *Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

Stonehill has not really changed my perspective on diversity. I would say though that Stonehill has brought to my attention the lack of diversity many college students grow up in. I myself was fortunate enough to grow up in a very diverse community; however I know many students at Stonehill have only been surrounded by people of their own race and rarely interacted with others outside of it.... – *Filipino-American, Catholic, Stockton, CA*

I come from a very small and monochromatic town. My hometown isn't very racially diverse. It is, however, socioeconomically diverse. Coming to Stonehill has had a significant impact on my definition of diversity because it opened my eyes to the possibility of different types of diversity. I would not have considered a socioeconomic disparity among a town's residence as diversity had I not been included in some of the conversations or presentations that I have been involved in here at Stonehill. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Salisbury, MA*

I was still not comfortable because I did not see much diversity or Asian American students. However, I did adjust well and made close friends both in the Path Program and IEP by the ALANA-A. I thought ALANA-A helped me get through the fear of not being accepted. Most of my classes I noticed I was the only student of color and Asian American in the entire class. It didn't really bother me until this year as a sophomore when one of the students said a bias comment about sushi and chopsticks when he was actually eating sushi. I really got heated about it but of course I did not want to make a scene. I have noticed for me diversity was a big thing. – *Asian American/ Filipino, Roman Catholic, Weymouth, MA*

Coming from a New York background, diversity has never really been something I've had to investigate. Stonehill's sometimes monolithic populous has prompted many discussions on a topic I have rarely addressed in the past. Although I see Stonehill's population engender more races and colors, how diverse are the financial backgrounds of our students? – *White, Buddhist, Glen Cove, NY*

Stonehill truly has not impacted my definition of diversity. I am from inner city Boston and have been in the middle of diversity my entire life. Coming to Stonehill, for me, was a culture shock because I am so used to a more diverse environment. But because Stonehill is not diverse racially, Stonehill has helped me to realize that diversity is more than just race. – *White/Italian, Catholic, Dorchester, MA*

I came from a town with little diversity. I realize Stonehill is very similar in its diversity, but the school has worked hard to illustrate the diversity of the school to the student body. – *White, United Church of Christ, MA*

It definitely opened my eyes to people's unconscious racism. A lot of what people say in class or propose for programs and other activities have showed me that some people mean well but can implement things that hurt people of color. Diversity is lacking at Stonehill and many are not geared and focused on increasing our numbers of people of color. In the Northeast of America racism still exists. – *Filipino, Catholic, Jamaica, Queens, NY*

By being involved in SGA Diversity Committee and partaking in a series of diversity-related events, I have come to understand a new definition of diversity. For so long, I associated diversity with race, but I have learned that it is more than one's skin color or ethnic background. Diversity entails gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, disability, and individual differences such as area of study, meal preferences, and athleticism. I have always had a strong appreciation for diversity, as I believe that it is something that should be recognized and embraced. Often times, we recognize diversity in a way that highlights our differences. Instead, we should work towards appreciating the differences and discovering how we are similar in different, less tangible ways. – *Lebanese, Plymouth, MA*

There is little diversity here. I feel the only reason minorities come here is from scholarships, athletic or otherwise. It would be refreshing to have different types of people here. –
Caucasian

No, there is little to no diversity and I feel as if the majority of the people I'm surrounded with live 30 - 45 minutes away. Their mothers are right down the road and visit frequently. – *White, Catholic*

There has been a common thread of social justice throughout my time at Stonehill--from work with Activism Club, to Mindful Living, to my education courses focusing on the achievement gap and my HOPE experiences--my Stonehill experience has been about being present for others in our shared humanity and recognizing our differences, whether in wealth, race, gender or culture, that need to be recognized and treated with compassion. – *White, Norwell, MA*

There isn't any diversity here, I know four black people.
– *White*

I don't think it has at all. The only experiences I've had that have caused me to think about the meaning of diversity are ones I've sought for myself. There's a difference between having a lot of diversity programs and making efforts at the

policy level to change the school's culture. Diversity still feels like a pet project at Stonehill because our culture allows most of our white students to stay in their bubble. I think one of the biggest problems is that the issue of HOW to talk about diversity isn't taught. Many people don't know how to engage in a conversation about diversity and are afraid of being offensive. As a result, the real conversations, the ones that allow people of different races and backgrounds to understand each other and the experiences of others, simply aren't had. Personally, I think that Stonehill's population would benefit more from a freshman requirement on understanding privilege and relating it to the experiences and perspectives of others than it would from a Catholic Theology & Traditions requirement. – *Caucasian/Irish, Atheist, Cromwell, CT*

Especially being a part of the Diversity Committee, my eyes have truly been open to the different heritages and diversity that the students bring to Stonehill. Numerous races are represented here, but at first glance, it may be hard to notice. Many students joke that everyone looks the same here, but at a closer look, many people are extremely diverse and most importantly, are proud of their differences. Stonehill has certainly taught me to look beyond people's immediate outward appearances in order to define their diversity which is a wonderful life-long skill to have. – *White, Catholic, Andover, MA*

I grew up understanding that there are a variety of ways for groups of people to be diverse. It's not merely

race/ethnicity. There's a plethora of differences between people, and as humans, it's our responsibility to be civil to our fellow brothers and sisters. When I first came to Stonehill I realized that diversity is much hidden. It's difficult to find and a majority of students and staff tend to not embrace or even acknowledge these differences. For example, when one of my professors was talking about marriage and the significance of a wedding ring, he said to the females in the class, "When a man approaches you with a wedding ring, what would that mean to you?" He assumed that all the young women in our class are heterosexual. Little comments like that in our community make a lot of people feel ostracized and unwelcomed. – *Caucasian, None, Brookfield, NH*

At my high school, there was a large population of Portuguese and African-American students, so I was no stranger to diversity. However, the population here is a great deal more homogeneous which I think creates a higher need to fully embrace diversity so that those individuals who do not have the same background as 90% of the population are not ostracized and people who have never experienced any degree of diversity before understand that it is a positive asset to our campus. – *White, Catholic, East Providence, Rhode Island*

I don't believe Stonehill is very diverse; when I first came here as a freshman, there was lots of hype about diversity, but the majority here are still white. Stonehill offers many foreign language classes and encourages students to study abroad, which does increase many diverse activities on campus, but Stonehill is mainly a White Catholic college. There is no

getting around this and there have sadly been many racial incidents that appear to indicate diversity isn't as accepted as it should be here. – *White, Catholic*

Stonehill has made me look at diversity in a different way. Being from Boston and having lived in a predominately Hispanic neighborhood, I always saw diversity as something to do with race/ethnicity, but Stonehill has made me see that there is more to add to my definition of diversity. Stonehill has made me aware of where and how people grew up and their socioeconomic standing rather than just their color or creed. – *Puerto Rican, Catholic, Boston*

At Stonehill diversity is talked about more than in any other place I've been. It has certainly made me think a lot more about the diversity around me and how to address issues surrounding diversity. – *French/English (Caucasian), Catholic, Southwick, MA*

Funny story about that. Diversity at Stonehill is not about diversity at all; it's about equality. It's about treating everyone the same way. Accepting other cultures isn't the main focal point here, even though many might think it is. – *White, Agnostic, Saint James, NY*

During freshmen orientation, Stonehill described diversity and how they are trying to make the campus more

diverse. However, I see Stonehill to be a white catholic school.
– *White, Catholic, Waterford, CT*

I've always defined diversity as a place that consists of an equal amount of different races; blacks, whites, Latinos etc. My definition of diversity has 'matured' after 2 years of being here at Stonehill. I know see diversity as the convergence of very distinct and unique personalities, as well as individuals, in any setting. It's no secret that we lack a good amount of "colored" people here at Stonehill! However, after opening my mind to getting to know people outside my race, I've realized diversity is not solely based on race. My perception of diversity correlates to the length I am willing to go to learn more about other people and their personalities. – *Black/Nigerian, Christian, Nigeria/London/Newton*

Stonehill has greatly impacted my definition of diversity. By being part of PRIDE and being active within Intercultural Affairs, I have learned diversity is more than just ethnicity. – *White-European, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

My definition of diversity has grown over the past four years. Through different events on campus to my personal experiences, it has broadened my personal definition. It is constantly expanding in its definition. – *Latina, MN*

It doesn't seem that diverse to me. Only on the sport teams seem to be diverse. – *Black/Puerto Rican, California*

I had never been involved in anything diversity related prior to coming to college, but once I started here I really understood the importance of diversity and learning about other people's cultures, religions, races, etc. – *White, Andover, MA*

Growing up, I lived in a very ethnically diverse community. By the time I graduated my town's public high school I was an ethnic minority. This being said, the term "diverse" meant different ethnicities. When I first arrived at Stonehill I was slightly shocked to discover that the majority of people I interacted with were Caucasian, Roman Catholic and had attended private or Catholic high schools. In all honesty, I was rather distraught by this. How could it be that there are so many white catholic kids in one school?! I just couldn't fathom not having any friends of a different race or religious background. I held this view for the first two months of school (in which time I had interacted with just one Pakistani boy.) Friendships grew, however, and during this time is when I started to realize that diversity is much more than someone's race or religion. By the end of my freshmen year I grew to realize that diversity is just about anything that makes a person unique. Some of my friends went off to become peer leaders; others became resident assistants, while I devoted myself to volunteer work. Stonehill has taught me that perhaps diversity can be defined as racial and religious differences, but much more importantly, diversity is the differences in which individuals have a passion for. – *Caucasian, New Jersey*

Stonehill has made me question what a diverse environment really looks like. In order to see diversity on the campus, you have to go to the meetings and events held by D.O.C.-related groups. – *White, North Kingstown, RI*

The institution of Stonehill itself has not exactly impacted my definition of diversity, but rather the classes that I have taken here and some of the groups that I have been involved with at Stonehill. My Intro to Gender Studies class opened my eyes to different ways that we are all diverse, and my experience on a H.O.P.E. trip to New York City helped me to see just how institutionally not welcome schools can be to minorities. An elementary school that we visited in the Bronx, New York was covered with images of famous people who were Black, Latino, and a great percentage of them were women. This made me think back to my own elementary school that lacked this representation. – *Caucasian- Irish, Scandinavian, MA*

Stonehill has made me more aware that there are still a lot of issues revolving the issue of diversity. For some, Stonehill has been the most diverse place they have been to and for others, like myself, it is not the most diverse community I've been a part of. Also, it has allowed me to understand that for different people diversity means different things. To me diversity has become intertwined with experiences. Why do people say the things they say or act the way they act. How does it affect the people who are underrepresented within the community and does it really impact the way they view themselves and the community as a whole. – *Latina, Boston, Massachusetts*

There isn't much diversity here at all, so when there are people of diversity here that I see, they stand out more than they normally would to me. – *White, New Hampshire*

Stonehill's lack of diversity does not really bother me but it is the formation of cliques and the secluded groups on campus that makes it uncomfortable. – *Asian American, Cambodian/Vietnamese*

Stonehill has done little to broaden my definition of diversity. The only impact it has made is teaching me that diversity is something that can be swept under the rug. It is easy to argue that the students at Stonehill are diverse - they have varied interests, come from different family structures, practice an array of religions - but the lack of diversity in terms class, culture, or mindset is particularly evident. Therefore, Stonehill has made me appreciate the smaller things that make people different, but it has very few opportunities to interact and appreciate other kinds of diversity. – *Caucasian*

I think that Stonehill has opened my eyes to many types of diversity and I think that we still need to work on inclusion and acceptance. I know that certain students do not feel as welcomed on this campus as they should so we should try to increase awareness and acceptance to make everyone feel they can be themselves. – *White- Irish and Polish, Dunbarton, NH*

I think it focuses too much on ethnic background rather than differing interests and values. – *Caucasian, Long Island, NY*

Prior to coming to Stonehill, I knew I would encounter people I had never interacted with before. I have traveled to various places across the world so I had the impression that becoming immersed within the Stonehill community would not be too hard to adjust to. Now, since being here for about six months, I have realized that many of the expectations or thoughts I once had about diversity were unrealistic. I believe that many of us have the impression that "diversity" relates to race or ethnicity, which in many cases is very true. Diversity, though, also accounts for religion, culture, sexual orientation, and even clothing style or music genre when looked at on a smaller scale. One would think that since Stonehill is on the smaller end of student population, you would not encounter such vast diversity, but this isn't necessarily the case. I have met so many great people here who come from diverse backgrounds, family life, and personal activities. Stonehill has opened my eyes to the fact that even though we are here for similar reasons, that being here to get an education, we are all unique and diverse in our own ways. – *White/Caucasian, Auburn, MA*

Stonehill is much less diverse than my hometown. People call it "Clone-Hill" because everyone is the same. – *White*

Before coming to Stonehill, I had literally no awareness of diversity. In fact, I viewed it as something that did not concern me at all: i.e, because I am not "diverse," I did not have to concern myself with it. Since attending Stonehill, I have examined what it means to be "privileged" and how this privilege affects the way that I navigate the world and other cultures. I now view myself as an ally and advocate of diversity initiatives. – *Caucasian/White, Sandwich, MA*

I've had many different experiences at Stonehill that have impacted my definition of diversity. From my work in Brockton with Big Sisters Big Brothers program, where my little came from a completely different background than me or at the Yawkey House of Possibilities where I work with children on the autism spectrum, with Down's syndrome, and other disorders. I think the most powerful experience I've had was when a group of people expressed the challenges they had to overcome to get to Stonehill and the challenges they faced at Stonehill itself. They were things I'd only ever heard about and never seen or personally experienced. It was eye opening and heart breaking to hear that their Stonehill experience wasn't as positive as mine. – *Caucasian, Gales Ferry, CT*

I feel as though Stonehill ended up not being as diverse as I had expected a college population to be, and so a lot of diversity dialogues here become more about different ways in which to define diversity; i.e. not just race, religion, gender, etc. but different viewpoints, backgrounds, and life experiences. – *Caucasian, Newton, MA*

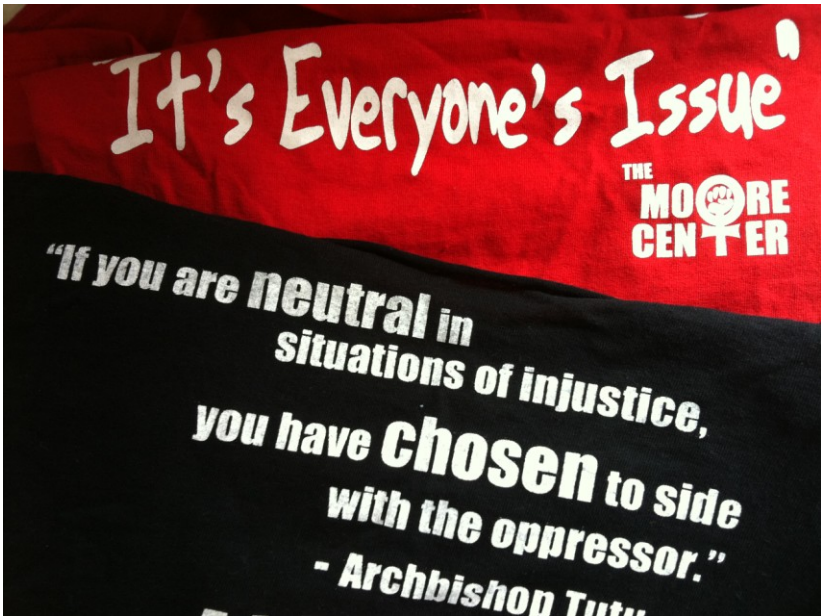
To be honest, Stonehill impacted my definition of diversity in a different way than I feel most people who are also considered white may have been impacted. I grew up in Yonkers, NY, a very diverse city. In middle school, I was the minority. I was the only white girl in the midst of Blacks, Arabs, Indians, and Latinos. When I moved to Carmel, NY for high school, it was a bit of a cultural shock because for the first time I wasn't the minority. However, I didn't feel comfortable. I felt more in common with people that weren't my color than the people that were. In high school, we had what we called "the minority table" in the cafeteria. I sat there with my friends and felt like I had always felt around people that were different from me at home. Coming to Stonehill was one of the biggest culture shocks I have yet to experience. Almost everyone was white. There wasn't a group of people, like the one in high school, that I could find that were diverse. I learned quickly that if you weren't wearing JCrew or Urban Outfitters or some other ridiculously expensive labeled clothing, you were not going to fit in at Stonehill. I would refer to this college as "White central" to my friends back at home and when an old boyfriend, who was of Dominican descent, came to my school to visit me, he also didn't feel comfortable. So, Stonehill impacted my definition of diversity in showing me what it's like to live with people who can afford and like to shop at very expensive labeled clothing stores. – *White, Yonkers, NY*

I think that it has really opened my eyes to the fact that no one should judge someone based on their sexuality. Before coming to Stonehill, I would say things like "That's gay.", and now I realize how inconsiderate and hurtful that can be to someone else. – *White, Loudon, NH*

Stonehill has helped me realize that my definition of diversity is not official. What makes a place diverse to me, may not/will not be what makes it diverse for someone else. I also think that Stonehill has expanded my definition of diversity. It is so much more than a difference of race. It is religion, traditions, behaviors etc. – *Black/Haitian, Milton/Boston*

Before attending Stonehill my sense of diverse was seeing people of color on my MBTA bus. I had no interaction with people of color before Stonehill. I attended a majority white, all-girls Catholic high school, grew up in a mostly white neighborhood--the diversity being children adopted from other countries. So when I attended Stonehill, I had absolutely no idea of the suffering, discrimination for people of color, or the need for diversity within our school environment. – *White, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

What privileges do you experience because of your gender?



Privilege is a term understood to mean situations and/or opportunities that are afforded an individual or group over another.

While Stonehill College seeks a gender balance in our student population, women have been the numeric majority for a few years. This dynamic might shape the experiences around gender issues and gender dynamics.

- Do dynamics change when men – who are considered as having privilege in our U.S. society – are in the minority at Stonehill College?
- In what ways have women experienced privilege because of their gender?
- What are the experiences of people who do not identify with a gender binary?
- What are common themes among the responses? What are differences?
- How would you respond to this question of privileges and gender identity?

"Women and children first!" When presented with a question about privileges about being a female, this quote usually comes to mind. Although I'm not always proud of it, I have used being a "helpless female" to my advantage. For example, the amount of snow this year was awful, and just about any male student would help a female if she looked like she was struggling. I'm not sure this is a privilege or just an abuse of power. – *Caucasian, Princeton Junction, NJ*

I guess being a girl means I can get out of "hard work" - step back and let a man do it. But really, I hate that. I think I do everything I can to defy that. I don't think there are as many privileges associated with being a girl as being a boy. – *White, Catholic, Meriden, CT*

I am able to get out of trouble easier. – *White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA*

My parents were not as hard on me in certain situations as they were on my brother. I feel like I was given more chances to do certain things because I am a girl. – *White, No religious affiliation, Poland, ME*

I usually do not think of my gender as something beneficial or as something giving me privileges. I think it is nice when a

guy acts chivalrously and will stand up for a girl or just do something nice. On the other hand, it is embarrassing or rude when a guy tries to help a girl only because she is a girl. – *White, Catholic, Peabody, MA*

I can get out of speeding tickets because I can cry my way out of them. I can get free drinks at bars because I am a female. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, NJ*

I suppose that because I am female, many people have always been a little more delicate with me than if I were a boy- I guess I am more apt to be taken care of. – *Caucasian*

The privileges that my gender has given me are that I think people are more lenient and sympathetic towards girls and if I do something wrong, or any girl, we can get away with it easier. – *Asian American, Cambodian/Vietnamese*

Sometimes people give preference to women because they are attracted to them – *White*

As a female, it is easy to use my gender as something to make excuses with. That sounds awful, but I am often exempt from things that are physically strenuous because I am a girl,

and therefore it is not expected of me to do things like heavy lifting or running or anything. – *White, Andover, MA*

I feel as though occasionally women can get by easier based on their looks. – *White, Greek Orthodox, Westwood, MA*

I am given leeway in classes because of my gender. If I forget an assignment, a professor is more likely to sympathize with me. – *Caucasian, Long Island, NY*

Not many, I am a female. I am sometimes excused from being expected to do manual labor such as yard work. I'm not sure this is considered a privilege though. – *Caucasian, Catholic, Andover, MA*

I wouldn't call this a privilege but to some when people assume you're not physically strong enough to do certain things as a woman it can free you from a number of responsibilities. However I find this more degrading than anything else. – *Filipino- American, Catholic, Stockton, CA*

There are no specific privileges I can think of that I've been given because I am a girl. – *White, New Hampshire*

If I had to name a privilege, I would say that woman are more easily trusted. I think a lot of the time females don't have to work to earn the trust of a professor or employer; instead they must do something to destroy the initial trust. For males it seems to me that it is the other way around, where they are initially untrustworthy then work their way to being trusted. – *Caucasian, Catholic, NH*

I am considered trustworthy by many people simply because I am a woman. Also, men frequently offer to carry heavy things for me or open a door for me because of my gender. I am also given the privilege of showing emotion in public without being at risk of being called homosexual or made fun of. – *White/Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

I do feel that because I am girl things are given to me more freely. People tend to trust me more because I am female, and I have also been characterized as "smart" as a result of my gender. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

Being a female, I feel that I can gain other's trusts almost instantaneously. I feel that people respect that I am furthering my education. – *White, Catholic*

As a woman I feel like we're more trusted with certain responsibilities especially when working with kids. People also tend to be more sympathetic towards women than men in certain situations. – *Vietnamese, Malden, MA*

This is one of my least favorite questions. I understand that because I am a white female I am more privileged, but I always feel like I worked for what I have and it wasn't just handed to me. Plus, this is still a 'man's world' so women do have to work harder to make it. – *Caucasian, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

I have the privilege of having one of my jobs as my gender. Working in a metal fabrication shop, it is normally difficult for women to get a job there. There is currently only one woman working there, but I am so grateful for her because she is my mentor. I also have the privilege of not being looked down upon as weak or moody in everyday society. – *Caucasian/ White, Roman Catholic, NJ*

I feel blessed to know that I have not been made aware of any privilege given to me simply because I am a man. I feel our society has made immense progress in this department and while I am well aware that the experience of the masses does not coincide with my own experience I know that we are moving in the right direction. I'm sure I have been given some advantages based only on my gender but the fact that they have not been important enough for me to notice is encouraging. – *White, Catholic, NY*

As a female, I don't think there are too many privileges that are given to us. – *Indian, Hindu, Brockton, MA*

I cannot think of many privileges that I have been given because of my gender. One thing that I do believe is a slight privilege is the fact that as a female, I am seen as more loving and calm. I have wanted to be an elementary school teacher for my entire life. The fact that I am female shows my loving, caring side which has accepted me into the field much easily and with much more open arms. – *White, Catholic*

At Stonehill I cannot think of any privileges that I have been given because I am female. I think I might be given more if I was male because there are fewer of them at the college. – *White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA*

None that I can think of. It's kind of different being at a school that is dominated by females, which means I don't just stand out as an African-American, but as a male as well. It's kind of a good thing because you can't help but talk to people of the opposite sex because you have to and you learn how to talk with the different types of women that are on campus. – *African American, Christian, Jonesboro, GA*

As a male, there are certain things that I think are expected of me, but I cannot, as of now, think of any specific privileges I have been given because of my gender. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Salisbury, MA*

I have been given more opportunities in athletics as a result of my gender. My stature and body type as a male has allowed me

to have greater physical ability than if I were a female. Stonehill is also dominated by a female population so the fact that I am a male definitely helped me stand out when applying here. – *White/Caucasian, Other, East Bridgewater, MA*

Because of my gender I have earned more respect as a female athlete and a student. There is more recognition to women's rights and this continues to be demonstrated on campus with feminism ads all over. – *White, Roman Catholic, Farmington, CT*

Because I am a female, when I work intramural basketball games, I score keep and all of the guys are referees just because it has always been that way. – *White/Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Stratford, CT*

I am a white male. Today's world seems to be geared towards my success. However, I do not think that I have been afforded extra chances or extra help to get me to where I am today. – *White, Roman Catholic, Preston, CT*

I have been given the privilege of not having to worry about how people will view my sexuality, as well as not finding it difficult to interact socially among my peers. – *Caucasian, No religious affiliation, Hanson, MA*

I do not worry about being sexually assaulted. – *White, Catholic, CT*

I feel like none in all honesty. Of course others might believe because I am a female it played a factor into why I was accepted to Stonehill since there are a larger percentage of students that are females. However, I still feel that because I am a female it is not socially acceptable for me to do certain things or speak my mind without being considered something negative. – *Latina, Boston, MA*

I am a male and because of this I have many privileges that women do not have. Chiefly, I have the privilege of not being subject to harsh judgment or criticism by others. Though not apparent or obvious to all, our culture and language has made it so that women are not conveyed in the best light. Profanities exist in our culture, which in nature are degrading to women. Of these profanities there are no male equivalents, which are demeaning or degrading to men. Something as simple as the word bachelor is reserved for men and carries no negative connotation. Women on the other hand have the word spinster often carrying a negative connotation. As a male, I am not judged harshly by the way I dress, as women act, nor is sexual activity a way to measure me as a person. I will not be criticized for being a poor father by choosing work over my family, where as a woman would be criticized for being a bad mother. I will never have to experience childbirth and the likeliness of me being a single parent is very low. I am not viewed as a sexual object, nor am I treated like one. If I am strong and independent that will be seen as a positive

characteristic and not a negative one. These as well as many other issues, which women encounter, are the things that I as a male do not have to worry about. It is these issues, which give me many privileges and arise because our society and culture demeans and undervalues women. – *White*

I've always been listened to, always respected to a certain degree. I have been given opportunities with internships and jobs, and frankly I'm not sure how things would be different if I were a minority. – *White, Buddhist, Glen Cove, NY*

I have been given privileges of opportunity, both professionally and socially. – *Filipino, Catholic, Jamaica Queens, NY*

I do not think that my gender has given me any privileges, but I also do not think that my gender has negatively impacted me either. I honestly believe that I have worked hard to earn what I have achieved, and if I was not chosen for something, someone more deserving (regardless of their gender) was chosen instead. – *White Non-Hispanic, Catholic, Woburn, MA*

As a girl, I'm privileged in that I can reasonably expect my future husband to be responsible for taking care of me. I also don't face the same pressures to be successful in my career. I can freely express my emotions without being scorned. If I divorce, I can expect to get child custody, child support, and

maybe even some alimony. I don't have to be athletically skilled to be respected. I have much more freedom in choosing my clothing, the movies and music I like, and the colors I surround myself with. I'm sure there are many, many more than this as well. – *Caucasian/ Irish, Atheist, CT*

Wow. Well as a woman...there are assumptions that come with being female, the stereotype of being delicate, "lady-like" and weaker than the opposite sex. In that sense, there are certain privileges that are inherent--as a female, I don't share the burden (and I'm generalizing here) that males bear--to be dominant, to provide for their families/woman, to be strong "enough"... Also, as a prospective teacher--being a white female puts me in the status quo for teachers. By going into public education in the states, I'm not an exception, I'm the standard. – *White, None, Norwell, MA*

I feel that I may not have as many privileges, because in the education field men are so few that I may not be valued as much as them. By the same token, I am embraced because of my gender in it as well. – *Catholic, Connecticut*

It is more acceptable for me to be in a care giving role or accepted as a teacher than a male would be. – *White, Roman Catholic, Massapequa Park, NY*

Being a female I don't think I have any specific privilege over males, nor do I think that in today's society males have superiority over women. If anything the movement for feminism has made things harder for men and easier for women to get jobs (at times). – *French/ English (Caucasian), Catholic, Southwick, MA*

As a woman, I can express emotion without being viewed as weak. Our society constructs masculinity in a way that forces men to suppress emotions. Although women are by far the less privileged gender in almost every other way, at least it is socially acceptable for us to have moments of vulnerability. – *White, Agnostic/Atheist, Easton, MA*

As a female, I think courtesy is the most common privilege I have been given. No situations come to mind other than having the door be held for me or the chair moved towards me as I am sitting; common gestures that I don't think can be categorized as privilege. – *White/ Caucasian, Catholic, East Meadow, NY*

I am allowed to cry and not be judged for it. Teachers have an inclination to like me and think that I will not cause trouble. I can more easily ask for help from others. – *White/Caucasian, Protestant, Groveland, MA*

As a female the privileges include being able to act stereotypically like a female without any judgment such as showing emotions. – *Caucasian, Catholic*

None. The male sex has granted me biological privileges, being somewhat faster and stronger, compared to the average female, but gender has never given me privilege. Each gender has its own stereotypes and challenges to endure and conquer - there are so many that to say one gender has more privilege than the other is to discredit the issues the "other" must face. – *White, Agnostic, Leominster, MA*

It's harder for me to get into college/grad school, to get a job, and it's apparently impossible for me to be discriminated against. – *White, Agnostic, Saint James, NY*

I would like to think that nothing I have accomplished has been given to me based on my gender; I work hard at everything that I do. I see the gender bias disappearing on several plains, and I do not support anything that compromises equality. – *White, No religious affiliation, Warwick, RI*

None. I have been treated equally. – *Black/Puerto Rican, Oakland, CA*

I am given fair pay. I am not discriminated against because of it in the hiring process. Sometimes I feel as though I am given more respect in some situations. – *Anonymous*

As a white male, I have unparalleled amounts of privileges. I have advantages everywhere I go. I know this is making me sound cocky and unaware of others, and I am sometimes ashamed of the privileges I have been given compared to others. – *White/European, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

I frankly wouldn't know. I see a lot of emails about how I should be ashamed of being a white woman because I have things that others don't, but you know what? Guilt doesn't change things. Feeling guilty that I'm a white woman won't make things better. – *Caucasian, Nashua, NH*

As a woman, I know that I am a member of the more oppressed gender because of the inherent patriarchal nature of our society. However, I have been fortunate to not have PERSONALLY encountered any obstacles or discrimination because of my gender. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

I don't think I have yet to be given any certain privileges because I am female. However, I have heard that I should be ready to be faced with discrimination because of my gender and even though I am prepared for it, when it actually does happen, I know it will be a slap in the face. – *White, Yonkers, NY*

I am actually not aware of any privileges I may have been given because of my gender. Being a female at Stonehill I feel as though men are given more privileges, which is odd seeing as there are more female students than there are males. – *Puerto Rican, Catholic, Boston, MA*

There are a higher number of female students at Stonehill, so I feel like sometimes programs are designed more so for females than for males. However, I would like to add that because there are fewer males sometimes in classes I feel like some professors exhibit favoritism towards them. I feel like if there is an equally smart male and female, sometimes the professor will choose the male to TA or something of the nature. – *White, NH*

As a female, I have been given the opportunity to apply for certain scholarships specifically for women and even when applying to Stonehill, the administration was looking for a specific female to male ratio. – *White, Catholic*

Being able to live in the only all girls courts house and suite style dorm, my privilege is not having to pay for damages often caused by guys and being able to enjoy generally party free environments. – *White/Non-Hispanic, Cape Cod, MA*

I think that my gender has not been specifically privileged me, yet attending an all female high school I found that I have the potential to be a successful woman in whatever career path I so choose because I'm privileged to be alive. – *White, Milwaukee, WI*

I don't believe I have been given any special privileges because of my gender. I honestly believe that in my generation, gender discrimination has decreased and that equality and acceptance of both genders in all aspects of life (be it in the workplace, in education, etc.) have been generally accepted by all. – *White, Catholic, Andover, MA*

The privileges that have been given to me because of my gender is being able to have an education, be involved in clubs and other activities around campus, and to be to voice my opinion about what needs to be changed at Stonehill, such as Women support groups and R.I.S.E. (empowering women of color). – *Asian American/Filipino, Roman Catholic, Weymouth, MA*

As a female, I sometimes have the upper hand in learning things that are domestic. For example, my dad feels a man should never step foot in the kitchen, the women are supposed to cook, clean and all that domestic stuff. Although some people may feel pity for me, I am starting to reap the benefit of it. I am off to college now, I can cook and clean for myself, and

I do not need my parents around to cater for me. (Unlike my brothers) Especially the older one, he's all the way in China and he calls me every day for recipes and ingredients to cook. So I definitely think when it comes to domestic work I've been given the privilege to learn it, unlike the men in my family. – *Black/ Nigerian, Christian, Nigeria/ London/ Newton*

To be perfectly honest, I think it is a great privilege (not a curse) to be able to bear children. This might not be the answer you're looking for, but I think that nurturing future generations is the most important role for a woman who feels called to have children. I'm not advocating for being a "traditional" housewife, but I do think that being a mother and bearing a child is the best privilege I can have as a woman. – *White, Agawam, MA*

I feel as though I have not been in a serious position where my gender has benefited me in any clear way. – *White, Cranston, RI*

I consider my privileges to come more from my ethnicity, social class, sexuality, and physical abilities rather than from my gender. However, I do realize that I am privileged by my gender in the sense that I do not have to uphold a mask of masculinity including toughness or strength. I am allowed to cry in public if I need to and I have more options in clothes.

These are only some small examples. – *Caucasian (Irish/ Scandinavian), Mashpee, MA*

Our country is one that has grown to establish vast gender differences, which in turn lead to both privileges and disadvantages. As a woman, I know that I can punish a man to the fullest extent of the law if he ever tried to injure or harm me in any way. I also know that I now have more of an equal shot at a high standing job when in competition with a man, when years ago that would not be the case. – *White/ Caucasian, Auburn, MA*

I'm a female. I have the privilege of wearing a dress, makeup, high-heels, tights, jewelry, etc., without being degraded or being looked at weird. I also have the privilege of getting away with wearing stereotypical men's clothes without being harassed. I have the privilege of "gentlemen" holding doors for me, buying me dinner, holding my books, and treating me kindly in ways that women don't necessarily treat men or in ways that men don't treat each other. I also have the privilege of punching, kicking, hitting, slapping, etc., a guy without being penalized for it and without other people necessarily viewing it as a violent offense. – *Caucasian, No religious affiliation, Queens, NY*

I feel free to wear a wide variety of clothes, from jeans to skimpy shorts to dresses without fear of ridicule. I feel free to exhibit a wide range of emotions. I am used to asking for help.

I am not automatically expected to be the family breadwinner.
– *White, Roman Catholic, Brockton, MA*

As a female I'm allowed to wear a variety of clothes; anything from long pants, shorts, skirts, dresses etc., an option that the opposite gender doesn't have. In a moment of panic and/or danger, I'll be the first to get help. I am able to give life to another human being. My obsessions with shoes and shopping can easily be explained. – *Black/ Haitian, Milton/ Boston*

The one thing I can think of is as a female RA, I feel as though there are times when I confront situations with male residents and they are more inclined to listen and treat me with respect because they don't want to be mean to a girl- the idea of respect women, etc. and the situation is thus easily diffused where as a male RA confronting the same situation might be challenged or met with opposition and competitiveness for authority. However, at the same time I don't believe this is always the case; I'm sure there are situations where both male and female residents are more likely to give me a hard time and think they can take advantage of the fact that I'm a girl and will therefore back down from confronting. – *Caucasian, Newton, MA*

I am privileged to not get my sexuality questioned. I am privileged to get drinks for free when I go out from men. I am

privileged to be complimented even if I look like a mess. I am privileged in ways I sometimes do not recognize. – *Latina, MN*

Because my sex and sexual orientation "match" my gender, I feel that I have been given many social privileges: most relationship-related media caters toward heterosexuals, clothing always fits, and I am allowed to marry legally in all states. – *Caucasian/ White, Cape Cod, MA*

Because I identify with a gender that society recognizes and has certain standards for, and because, for the most part, I act within those standards, I am not marginalized in the same way as someone who does not identify with the binary constructs of gender that our culture expects. People look at me and think "woman". Most people have certain ideas about what that means, and for the most part I adhere to these. – *Anonymous*

Because I identify as female, one of the two "traditional" gender categories, I have privilege. There are bathrooms labeled female that I can walk into, there are boxes labeled "female" that I can check on official forms, and during housing, I check the "female" box which will help determine where I live. People who may identify as transgendered, androgynous, or otherwise outside of the "expected" gender identities of male and female do not have these same privileges. – *White, No religious affiliation, PA*

DIVERSITY: THE UNTOLD STORIES

In what ways has Stonehill impacted your awareness, understanding, and experiences with LGBTQ* community?



**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning*

Our country has been changing shape in our awareness, inclusion, conversation, faith, legislative action and dialogue about LGBTQ issues and identity. Some of our students come from diverse family structures that may include LGBTQ parenting, siblings, friends, mentors and relatives. Some of our students may not have had interactions with individuals who identify as LGBTQ.

At Stonehill College, we have included LGBTQ identity, issues, programming, and discussions as an integral part of our educational, spiritual, and formative dialogue.

- In what ways as Stonehill shaped your experiences with the LGBTQ community?
- What are some common themes in the collected responses? What are some differences?
- In what ways does the Catholic identity of the college intersect with the conversations about LGBTQ inclusion?
- What assumptions are challenged by the question of LGBTQ inclusion at a Catholic college?
- What assumptions are not challenged?
- In what ways does faith inform first messages about those with LGBTQ identity?

Here at Stonehill I met one of my good friends who happen to be a lesbian. I was also able to participate in a 'safe zone' training program which is meant to help people understand LGBTQ a bit better and train you to offer support to those who are a part of this community. Stonehill students may not be overly accepting of those who are gay, but PRIDE seems to be a group that is supported by many community members. – *Caucasian, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

The LGBTQ community is much more repressed at Stonehill than it was at my high school. I display a Safe Zone certificate on my residence hall door, and it fortunately hasn't been torn down like many others have. Stonehill is very heteronormative, and has a problem with any individuals who may diverge from that norm. My hope is that the number of bias incidents related to gay/lesbian slurs decreases, since they have been at the forefront of my LGBTQ experience since I arrived at Stonehill. – *Latina, Catholic, Boston, MA*

I do not know what LGBTQ community is. – *Anonymous*

It has changed my experiences in mixed ways. On the one hand, I have become much more informed about the problems plaguing the LGBTQ community. On the other hand, I find that there is no real dialogue between the LGBTQ community and those who disagree with their goals, who are often, in my opinion, unfairly simply called ignorant by the LGBTQ community, and therefore not worthy of true dialogue. – *White, Cranston, RI*

Stonehill personally has done nothing. However, in the recent past I have had situations where my experience increased tremendously. Numerous friends and even family members choosing to "come out", solely to me, during my time at Stonehill. Unfortunately I do not think, in the least, that the college is appropriately prepared to handle LGBTQ students. This makes it very difficult for myself and those students to feel comfortable talking about it with their peers etc. I don't want to imply that there is no tolerance, because I do think much of the faculty and staff is quite tolerant, but overall I think it is a taboo topic on campus, which I find to be quite sad.
– *Caucasian, Catholic, NH*

I have had a positive experience with PRIDE and the work they do on campus. But as for the student body, I think they have been extremely bigoted and ignorant. I think the administration has been good at trying to stop the hate crimes on campus and supporting the LGBTQ community as much as they can. –
White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA

I approve even less because of the way it is rammed down our throats. Speaking of diversity, let's make an S community and then you can get back to me on how I feel about LGBTQIRSTUV. – *White, Agnostic, NY*

Stonehill has provided me with both great and horrible experiences with the LGBTQ community. I have experienced the great efforts they have put forth to inform and engage the

Stonehill community. I have experienced the ways in which people have become accepting. However, I have also witnessed horrible acts of ignorance and prejudice towards members of the LGBTQ community. I have hopes that as a community, we can work together to eliminate these incidents, and accept our neighbors by embracing their differences. – *Anonymous*

Stonehill has not greatly shaped my experiences with the LGBTQ community. I have been exposed to some activism groups such as PRIDE sending listservs or learning about issues in my Gender Studies class. Some of the bias incidents on campus against the LGBTQ community have been very disconcerting and have changed some of my ideas of the Stonehill community in general. – *Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

It has made me more aware of justice issues pertaining to the LGBTQ community. PRIDE has always been a visible presence and has eye opening events throughout campus. – *White, Roman Catholic, Brockton*

My sister is LGBTQ, so I knew a lot about their community prior to coming to Stonehill on a very personal level. However, I have worked closely with PRIDE (the GSA on campus) with programming in the Res Halls and have also gone to their events, and I find the work they do incredibly important and admirable. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

Again, Stonehill, while it appears to try hard to accept the LGBTQ community, it is not efficient. In high school, I was the president of the Gay-Straight Alliance and raised money for organizations like the Matthew Shepard Foundation and promoted things like Day of Silence and National Coming Out Day. At Stonehill, one of my best friends was beaten up for being with his boyfriend at a party. I would get involved with PRIDE, but I think that PRIDE is as interested in getting the message out as it is hanging out with friends within the group. That's just my opinion. I am not undercutting good things that the group has done, but I do think they could be doing a lot more. – *White, Agawam, MA*

I think Stonehill is finally making strides and PRIDE is doing a lot to help, but the amount of homophobia and anti-gay bullying here disgusts me. My best friend since childhood is openly gay and I've seen him go through so much. Where he goes to school now he is finally accepted, but so many people here - they still can't escape the hate. I can't stand it. – *White, Catholic, Meriden, CT*

Stonehill has not shaped any of my experiences with the LGBTQ community. The people in PRIDE do not give the Stonehill community enough credit. They think that just because some people are not accepting then all of us are not accepting. Personally, I have someone very close to me that is a lesbian, and I could not imagine my life without her. I am

extremely accepting of everyone and it makes me mad that PRIDE thinks everyone is so judgmental. – *White/ Italian, Catholic, Dorchester, MA*

I am gay, and it was definitely a privilege to find a PRIDE group on campus. With that being said, I believe the greater Stonehill community needs to be more informed on LGBTQ issues. When I hear people using words like "gay" or "fag" with negative connotations, I'm not as personally offended as I am disappointed in their ignorance. – *Anonymous*

Overall, it has weakened. If you are not in PRIDE, then it hardly exists in the public eye. It's not often discussed or acknowledged and many of the student body have serious issues with using incredibly offensive language towards/about the LGBTQ community. – *Caucasian, No religious affiliation, NH*

Stonehill hasn't had a positive effect on my experience with the LGBTQ community. I know that we have a PRIDE group on campus, but I do not feel like that the Stonehill campus, on the whole, is open to the LGBTQ community. Granted, we are a Catholic-affiliated college. Still, openness toward sexual orientation is something that I think is lacking on campus and I do not think this is acceptable (neither on campus, nor off). – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, MA*

Stonehill does not publicize that type of diversity, although we do have PRIDE, it does not do much on a large scale for Stonehill diversity. – *Agnostic, MA*

Stonehill has given me a chance to interact with PRIDE on campus, which is more than what the "real world" outside the "bubble" allowed me to do so far. That interaction has been great. – *White, Agnostic, Leominster, MA*

Before coming to Stonehill, I wasn't personally affected by anyone who was homosexual. However, now one of my best friends here is gay. I think groups like PRIDE do a lot to educate people about gay rights and such, which is great. But I was really surprised to find that there are a lot of gay slurs and even bashing. Last spring, my friend and his significant other were both punched one weekend by a group of drunken athletes. This really opened my eyes to the reality of the situation, because I always thought Stonehill was such a nice little Catholic college. Most of the people are WONDERFUL, but this hatred still exists and I can't even wrap my head around it. – *White, NH*

Stonehill has showed me the LGBTQ community can persist. I was unaware of PRIDE's existence at my high school because

it wasn't paid any attention. At Stonehill, I found students enthusiastic to teach Stonehill about LGBTQ issues. LGBTQ activities are just as important as diversity because we want to make others on campus aware of the presence and power we have. – *White, Catholic*

As an ABS leader and a part of the PRIDE Society at Stonehill, I had a lot of chances to encounter various diversity issues at Stonehill. The ABS program not only focuses on different ethnicities, but it also emphasizes different sexual orientations. Covering a broad areas of issues, the ABS program certainly helped me to gain knowledge about LGBTQ community. – *Asian, No religious affiliation, Seoul, South Korea*

Awareness. My sophomore year when bias acts were on the rise, I felt that was when the LGBTQ community had a face. The club dedicated to raising awareness about these issues, PRIDE, really stepped up and became more involved on campus, thus helping it become a mainstay. – *Haitian, Roman Catholic, West Haven, CT*

The group PRIDE here on campus is an amazing group. One event that they put on in regards to the recent suicides hit me the most. Lying dead near a tombstone, I was able to get the impact they were trying to show. However, I know that Stonehill isn't as open as it should be. I know of one male who

was gay who transferred because instead of being harassed, he was ignored. He felt invisible at Stonehill. It saddens me that this college has not opened up because I know so many high school students that are a part of this community that are anxious to leave high school and move on to college where they feel they will finally be free to be who they truly are; and in reality, they will not be free. – *White, Yonkers, NY*

Stonehill has not really changed my experiences with the LGBTQ community. I feel very strongly about the inclusion and equality of this community, but I don't feel as though there is a large population at Stonehill. Perhaps if I became involved in PRIDE or another similar club I would feel differently. – *White, Andover, MA*

I am not involved in the PRIDE club, but I do think it's good that Stonehill lets everyone's voice be heard. Our community constantly receives emails promoting the club and different events to spread the word about the LGBTQ community. – *Hispanic, Glen Head, NY*

It hasn't, but I know the president of PRIDE and she is incredibly dedicated to the LGBTQ. Her innovation and awareness have been incredibly inspiring. – *White/Non-Hispanic, Cape Cod, MA*

I joined PRIDE because I have a friend who is a member of the LGBTQ community and encouraged me to attend the first meeting. I was hesitant at first fearing that as a straight female being in PRIDE might make people assume something false about my sexual orientation but after the first meeting I became more comfortable. I realized you can be involved as an ally and support your friends and it is ridiculous to fear any stigma, particularly when you think that belonging to the LGBTQ community should not be a stigma at all. Membership in this club at Stonehill has exposed me to a new diverse community and helped me learn about a valuable range of experiences and helped me meet a wonderful group of people. – *White, UT*

I don't think that Stonehill has done much for me. I see the school as a difficult place for the LGBTQ community which is disappointing. I am from a family that has some members of this community and that has shaped my opinions much more than Stonehill has in the last few years. – *Anonymous*

Stonehill has opened my eyes to new ideas about this community. I went to the talk in the beginning of the school year and it has forever changed my life. I think about words I say and make sure that they are not hurtful to anyone. – *African American, Roman Catholic, Raynham, MA*

I'm more aware of the bullying and the hardships they face. – *Anonymous*

I have heard mixed stories pertaining to the LGBTQ community. Some were very bad in which people were harassed and others were very good. In all scenarios, however, people who bullied others for their sexual preferences were punished. This tells me that Stonehill is working hard to be accepting of differing lifestyles but overall the college does not have a very big LGBTQ community. – *Caucasian, Long Island, NY*

They have the PRIDE club, but otherwise I've really not seen much efforts from the administration or otherwise. – *Caucasian*

As an openly gay student at Stonehill, I see how the Stonehill administration tries to be encompassing of all without judgment through events on campus and the bias response implemented. I find it interesting that despite being an extremely small minority of campus, there is still attention brought to this community when necessary. – *Anonymous*

I think that it is good that Stonehill has implemented the Bias Incident Reports because I think that the culture at Stonehill is generally homophobic and there has been an incident in my residence hall where a gay student was harassed. – *Anonymous*

I found a welcoming space within the LGBTQ+ community, but outside of it, I found apathy, if not outright hostility. – *Caucasian, Christian, Branchburg, NJ*

Being a gay woman on Stonehill's campus has not been easy, but the acceptance from the LGBTQ community on campus has been amazing. Although Stonehill tries to address things like homophobic remarks and threats by students, it is really hard to do because people have so many different views of the LGBTQ community itself. Many Stonehill students are not aware of anything that is going on in the LGBTQ community because they and some parts of Stonehill are not acknowledging and are not willing to understand the community. – *Catholic, Boston, MA*

I feel as though Stonehill has been doing a good job of trying to spread the word about the LGBTQ community by the group efforts, however, I think we as a student body need to be more accepting because as a whole, I feel that this group is still looked down upon. – *White, Greek Orthodox, Westwood, MA*

Unfortunately, several occurrences on campus have offered negative experiences pertaining to the LGBTQ community. Bias-related incidents have demonstrated that hatred and adversity can exist anywhere, even on a quaint college campus that is known for its kind and compassionate students. My view of the LGBTQ community has not changed; if anything, I have learned to sympathize more and to stand up for what is right. – *Lebanese, Plymouth, MA*

Stonehill hasn't been the most inclusive environment for the LGBTQ community therefore; it really hasn't helped with my experiences. However, being part of ABS has allowed me to reach out and be an ally for the community in general. I have witnessed some pretty nasty remarks surrounding people who identify as part of the LGBTQ community and as a person I felt that I needed to speak up. That also is shaped by the fact that I am part of ABS, I have been taught that when something is not right, you should speak up and in certain situations that bias incidents occurred in front of me that revolved around the LGBTQ community. – *Latina, Boston, MA*

Stonehill takes pride in its openness and awareness of the LGBTQ community, and I honestly feel privileged to be able to go to a school that is so accepting. I have not personally encountered any harsh judgments or have had gender-related words thrown at me or any of my friends, and I always see signs and posters around campus on any given day in the hopes of enlightening people about such gender differences. Stonehill

allows people to be who they want to be, and I have felt that the campus really caters to difference and diversity in a safe setting. – *White/ Caucasian, Auburn, MA*

Stonehill has showed me that there truly are people in this world who have significant issues with homosexuality and that, unfortunately, they are not afraid to make those issues known after a beer or two. This community has forced me to really confront homophobia and accept it as a real problem that I need to do something about. – *White/ Caucasian, Protestant, Hudson, MA*

I have a lot of close friends and family who are members of the LGBTQ community here at Stonehill. They have made me much more aware of discrimination issues on campus, such as the lack of professor protection under the nondiscrimination policy, and the various hate crimes and assaults they have gone through on campus. Overall, I believe that Stonehill's community is a very accepting one, but there will always be those few people whose actions continue to suppress individuality and diversity. – *Anonymous*

On our campus there exists an underlying feeling of homophobia within our student body. There is a large group that supports our LGBTQ community but not enough has been done to empower them. – *Filipino, Catholic, Jamaica Queens, NY*

Once again, my intro to gender studies class has taught me much concerning the LGBTQ community and I find that although I thought that I was being open and understanding of all people before, I was not completely open and understanding of my privileges as a straight woman. Considering Stonehill's issue of our sexuality discrimination clause for both students and faculty, I have been able to realize that although Stonehill is in many ways a very open and accepting community, there are still many institutional issues at play. – *Caucasian (Irish, Scandinavian), Mashpee, MA*

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My time here has included outrage and simple sadness over a few bias incidents towards the LGBTQ community in the Stonehill community. Since the LGBTQ community here is not that prevalent (I personally know very few students who identify as LGBTQ) the fact that there are bias incidents (i.e.

homophobic slurs written on res hall doors) makes Stonehill students seem more acutely homophobic and thus, a less safe space to "be free to be you" if you will. – *White, No religious affiliation, Norwell, MA*

Not many. Really, being here has made me more aware of the injustices done to homosexual people; I grew up in a very welcoming environment and have found friends here who foster that acceptance, but I have seen so much discrimination towards the LGBTQ community here that it breaks my heart. We're in college, kids; we're supposed to be open-minded; we're supposed to be smart; we're supposed to know better. It's appalling that there are people here that are not accepting. – *Caucasian, None, Queens, NY*

Stonehill has and is educating me and allowing me to mature in a positive way so that I can help my community in the future. – *Black/ African American, Roman Catholic, Woodbury, MN*

It has only strengthened my relationship with the LGBTQ community. – *White, No religious affiliation, Warwick, RI*

I have been surrounded by the LGBTQ community my entire life. My aunt is a lesbian and has been with her partner for over twenty years so I have known her for my whole life. They have many friends who are also lesbians and they have been

around me for years as well. Being around this community has never really phased me and I have never thought any differently of these individuals. When I got to Stonehill, my boyfriend found out that his roommate was gay. He has not been around this community as much and because of that he was slightly taken aback. I went in to the situation with him trying to allow for understanding on everyone's part. At first the situation was difficult because his roommate also had a boyfriend who has ended up staying here much of the time. However, now we are all good friends and talk to each other all the time. – *White, Catholic*

I have several very close friends who are members of the LGBTQ community at Stonehill and I don't have any from home. I was friends with them before they felt comfortable enough to come out and as a result I was able to experience firsthand this process and they have also made me much more accepting to everyone. – *White/ Caucasian, Other, East Bridgewater, MA*

I have become more open and understanding about the LGBTQ community. I know a few people that are gay and by talking with them, it has really changed my perspective. – *White, Catholic, Essex Junction, VT*

Stonehill really has not shaped my experiences with the LGBTQ. My rugby team during the summer and my friends have. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic*

Although I have been around more LGBTQ people since coming to Stonehill and I have been friendly with all of the different people I have met, I cannot say that it has necessarily shaped my experience. One experience I did have was attending a speaker event on DADT and discussed the issue very intellectually with an LGBTQ activist. It was an excellent and very rewarding experience. – *Caucasian/ White, Roman Catholic, Wayne, NJ*

A close friend from high school was initially gay and then transgender, so even before Stonehill I was exposed to the LGBTQ community. However, Stonehill has provided me with the opportunity to create relationships with other people who are a part of the community or sympathize with it. I do wish to note, however, that I do not think Stonehill has a large LGBTQ community; people are not apt to discuss those lifestyles openly or are not a part of them at all. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

Obviously Stonehill's Catholic identity offers little in terms of accepting openly homosexual students or works for their comfort on campus. I find that Stonehill has helped me in seeing how not to neglect a particular population. That said I find it ironic that a school that offers spiritual counseling and mental health counseling cannot be comforting for teens and 20-somethings that find sexual identity to be a crisis. – *White, Buddhist, Glen Cove, NY*

Stonehill does not really have a large LGBTQ community. I have one gay friend that I know of and he does not feel comfortable coming completely out because people are not as accepting here. Generally speaking, he believes that many male athletes here would not accept him. – *White/ Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

I think Stonehill has done well in informing me and other students about the LGBTQ community. The club and the activities they have put on around campus really helped me learn more and be an ally in breaking down the barriers of prejudice. – *Asian American/ Filipino, Roman Catholic, Weymouth, MA*

The various discussions and talks that I have had during RA trainings with various groups on campus have definitely shaped both my experiences with LGBTQ and race issues. Before coming to Stonehill I knew that all of the various "isms" existed, but I had never heard any personal stories about how they affected individuals' lives. These various discussions and talks opened my eyes to the real detriment that these issues can have to the emotional well-beings of individuals. The most powerful memories that I have of these issues is related to the stories that I heard from my own classmates about the bullying, teasing, and verbal abuse which they experienced due to their own identities. The scars left from this horrible physical, mental, and emotional abuse should never have to be experienced and it is horrible to think that they are inflicted in the first place. – *Caucasian, Woodbury, CT*

I have always been involved in the LGBTQ community and Stonehill has beneficially impacted by experiences. Being on Diversity Committee has not just opened my eyes up to different races, but the acceptance of many other differences. My best friend in high school is a proud lesbian and I support her completely. From experience with her, I know that when she came out to her friends and family, she needed as much support and guidance as possible. I think that Stonehill does a great job and gives many opportunities for students of the LGBTQ community to talk and express their feelings which is extremely important. It is also important, and Stonehill does a great job of, for students that are not directly members of the LGBTQ community to understand and not discriminate against those in the community. – *White, Catholic, Andover, MA*

Again, my hometown is very diverse in many ways and my graduating class had a substantial LGBTQ community. I'm not sure that Stonehill is accepting, or if the LGBTQ community isn't as vocal, but I cannot say Stonehill's LGBTQ community has shaped me in anyway. – *Caucasian, Princeton Junction, NJ*

Once again, Stonehill has supplied me with a wealth of knowledge on different things including the LGBTQ community. My personal growth on the topic has allowed me to become a more open and compassionate person to all people. – *Anonymous*

I met more LGBTQ people before I came here. I have no problem with their life style. – *White, No religious affiliation*

Barely, other than realizing that they are under-represented on this campus. – *White, Catholic, Tolland, CT*

Stonehill has made me closer with the LGBTQ community. I have always had an open mind, but Stonehill has raised awareness about what challenges this community faces on a daily basis. – *Caucasian, No religious affiliation, Hanson, MA*

I still have not really experienced that part of the Stonehill community. – *White, No religious affiliation, Poland, ME*

Stonehill has made me more informed in both academic and social knowledge of the LGBTQ community. At Stonehill, I have had opportunities to talk openly and honestly with members of the LGBTQ community as well as learn about the history and challenges of the LGBTQ community in some of my classes. All of this has made me a better ally to the community. – *White, No religious affiliation, PA*

I have become more comfortable with the idea of gay marriage and I have met more people who are gay here than I knew at home. – *Caucasian*

Stonehill has made me more aware of the LGBTQ community, but I do not believe that Stonehill has influenced the way I feel about that community. – *White/Non-Hispanic, Catholic, Woburn, MA*

They allow us to ask questions and learn about the LGBTQ community and hear the experiences that they have gone through. They try to change that negative persona or opinion towards that group. – *Caucasian*

It made me feel more comfortable. – *Black/Puerto Rican, CA*

Absolutely none. I find it sad that I knew more open LGBTQ students when I was in a high school of 500 than in a college of 2400. I think Stonehill's track record with acknowledging, respecting, and protecting the LGBTQ community at our school isn't very good. – *Caucasian/Irish, Atheist, Cromwell, CT*

While I fully respect all aspects of the LGBTQ community I have not learned much about it while at Stonehill. I am aware that there have been plenty of opportunities; however, the constant listserv emails turn me away from attending events. – *Caucasian, Catholic, NY*

It opened up my mind to the community and allowed me to be able to participate in some of the functions/meetings that they have and just to be more respectful. – *Black/Native American, Methodist, NY*

I have not really had any experiences with the LGBTQ community in my past or here at Stonehill. However, I think that they are very vocal here on campus, which promotes conversation and acceptance in the Stonehill Community – *White, Roman Catholic, Plymouth, MA*

It has made me aware that more events need to take place on campus to allow the understanding of being able to tolerate people's sexuality and gender identity when they differ from one's own. – *Hispanic, Catholic, NY*

I have always been an extreme supporter of equal rights and an end to the bullying faced by the LGBTQ community and Stonehill gave me a great opportunity to test my ability to be open and honest when it came to this issue. I had a few gay friends in high school but growing up with these people the bonds of our friendship were so strong by the time they were able to come out that there was very little fear of rejection. In college, I met for the first time peers who were openly gay and having no prior experiences with them my reaction was put to the test. Stonehill showed me that I was able to practice what I preach in that the question of gay or straight played no role in how my group of friends was formed. – *White, Catholic, NY*

I think Stonehill has made strides in terms of making the LGBTQ community more prevalent and welcomed on campus, but it honestly hasn't shaped my experiences. I have always been accepting of the LGBTQ community, but I have educated myself largely without the help of Stonehill. – *Caucasian, Sidney, ME*

I know that Stonehill is a safe place for those belonging to the LGBTQ community and knowing that people can express themselves freely is comforting and encouraging. – *White/Caucasian, Catholic, East Meadow, NY*

This question is difficult to answer. I am bisexual but I have never felt comfortable with myself here at Stonehill. While the school and some of the students in it work hard to make the campus a welcoming place for the LGBTQ community, there still exists a mentality of “Otherness” for those within that community. Because only a few of my friends do know this about me, I have seen the situation from both sides of the spectrum and have heard and experienced the way many of the students feel or react to the idea of having LGBTQ peers. While they are most often supportive, there is always a feeling of hesitance and exclusion. The lack of complete support by the school makes being a member of the LGBTQ community difficult as well. The exclusion of homosexuals or transgenders from the school's nondiscrimination policy makes it feel like Stonehill is unsupportive and behind the times. – *Caucasian*

I feel that one problem with the Stonehill community is a perception (both merited and at times unmerited) that it is not acceptable to be part of the LGBTQ community, and that anyone who is will be judged for it. It thus seems that many people are not open about their orientation; this is extremely different from my high school where we had a very vocal LGBTQ community. I wish everyone, not just the LGBTQ community, felt freer to be themselves. – *Caucasian, Newton, MA*

I have grown to care more for this community because I have seen all the hatred for members of the LGBTQ community at Stonehill. There is SO much discrimination at Stonehill and being in almost every minority group at this school I know what it feels like. I think it is absolutely terrible how little respect people are given when they don't fit into the Stonehill norm. Thus, I have taken up caring even more for this community and I stand up for people who indentify with it. – *Indian, Hindu, Brockton, MA*

DIVERSITY: THE UNTOLD STORIES

What role has race played in your day to day life here at Stonehill?



Stonehill College, though individually diverse in many ways, is a predominantly white institution. Though we seek to build, create, and sustain an environment that is inclusive of ideas, beliefs, and experiences, students navigate Stonehill in different ways through the lens of race and racial identity.

Our students grow up and are educated in areas that are different from one another. Depending on where and how we were raised, we were all influenced by first messages of race and ethnicity. *For some, race is something that other people experience.* For others, race is a core piece of their identity that informs how they interact with people and the environment.

- When you think about your upbringing, what were your first messages about race?
What were your first messages about race when you came to Stonehill?
- What interactions have you had that make you think about race?
- What are some common themes in these responses?
What are some differences?
- In what ways is your home environment different from Stonehill? The same as Stonehill?
- What are the ways you identify as helping to raise your level of interaction with people from different racial backgrounds?
- What ways has the idea of “post-racial” impacted your sense of the conversation?
- In what ways have you felt excluded from the conversation about race?
- What do you need to feel included in this conversation about race?

Race has not played a huge role in my daily life at Stonehill. I do not have a lot of minority friends, and those that I do I see them as individuals, not as a race. If we have a conversation that involves race or ethnicity, it is more in passing and sometimes a learning experience. But other than that, it is not something I think about every day. – *White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA*

I am white and most of us here are white. My race really doesn't impact my experiences here at Stonehill. – *Caucasian, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

The fact that I am white on a predominantly white campus has geared me towards being very self-aware when interacting with persons of different races (especially when I do not know them particularly well). I feel myself attempting to be "extra"-sensitive about racial divides and to almost treat the interactions with an element of caution so that I am not perceived as being prejudice or ignorant. – *White, Catholic, CT*

I was never aware of my race as much as I am here at Stonehill. Sometimes I'm reminded that I have a skin color that tells people that I'm not white, and they then make assumptions about me on sight, and that makes me sad. I've never had the luxury of blending in to the community given my skin, features, and hair. At first, I felt very ugly, out of place, and just plain different. However, I have come to use the fact that I stick out to my advantage, using it to educate others. I encourage them to ask questions. – *Latina, Catholic, Boston, MA*

Not being white makes you obviously stand out, both literally and figuratively. In one regard, you are spotted immediately on campus - so you literally stand out. However, race/culture significantly shapes my identity and I feel like it is not respected at Stonehill. The values I associate with stand in stark contrast to white values, in my opinion. In discussion based classes, it is awful to know that I am usually one of the only people to feel a certain way about given topics. I stand up for immigration, diversity, etc. White people at Stonehill don't give these issues any importance - it is really sad. – *Indian, Hindu, Brockton, MA*

I think race is an important thing to acknowledge when getting to know a person, but for me it is the same as getting to know any person's particular upbringing. Because of this mindset I find that I see every person as someone I should get to know for who they are since they inevitably have a "story". I don't really think of race on a daily basis, unless there are the various diversity outreach programs/flyers. I almost want to say that it plays no role in my day to day happenings, since in my mind everyone is different and has a story to be heard...if that makes sense... – *Caucasian, Catholic, Newport, NH*

I think that, coming from Queens (a very racially diverse place) to Stonehill (where one might argue is not so racially diverse), I've been encouraged more to observe the racial disparity and to talk about it (and I like that we talk about it and don't ignore it). – *Caucasian, None, Queens, NY*

I think that Stonehill is diverse. I don't believe that race plays a large role here other than raising awareness for other cultures, which is extremely welcomed! – *White/Caucasian, Catholic, East Meadow, NY*

It's played a huge role here. Being an African American at basically an all white school means I stand out more and get more attention than I would like to. I usually get weird looks from people when I'm walking around school or when I walk into class. It affects your dating life because a decent amount of the girls here are not really interested in black men, so you kind of have to find the girls that do not mind dating outside of their race before other guys do. In a way it becomes a competition for who can find those girls first. It has affected my relationship with some of my friends here because we just have differences that are unavoidable and even some guys have a problem with the way some of "US" act. It affects you as a student because the professors can easily pick you out in class and might have some preconceptions on your intelligence or how you are supposed to act or behave. So race plays a huge role in my day to day life. – *African American, Christian*

Race has played a huge role in my life here at Stonehill. I never thought about my race that much until I got to college. I have faced some discrimination. On one occasion a girl didn't want me to leave my stuff in her room even though I was really good friends with her roommate. I feel as though I am always watched and I'm representing my "black community" so I always watch what I say or do. I feel as though I'm assumed to be a stereotype sometimes and I would hope to see a change in the future. – *African American, Roman Catholic, MA*

Race has not played as large a role as it may for other people because I am not surrounded by a lot of people of a different race than me, but I still have been able to interact with people who have physical differences and they are not much different from me or anyone else of my race. – *Caucasian/ White, Roman Catholic, Wayne, NJ*

Race does not play any role in my day to day life at Stonehill. I find Stonehill is a rather accepting place. Everywhere has its bigots, but I feel Stonehill is above average in the case of acceptance, even though it is seriously lagging in racial diversity. However, potentially because of me being white, I find race playing no role in my day to day life. – *White, Cranston, RI*

I really don't think about that as much. I guess though one day where I really noticed being Caucasian is when I went into a restaurant in Brockton and my two friends and I were the only white people there. It was weird having everyone stare at us, like we did not belong there. But it turned out to be the best experience ever we started talking to people at different tables and the people there were really friendly and welcoming! – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Chatham, NJ*

In all honesty, I don't believe race plays a role in my day to day life here at Stonehill, but more so my friends and the

people I know who do not fit the 92% or so white population at Stonehill because they are visually in a minority on a day to day basis. – *Anonymous*

To be honest, I really do not believe that Stonehill is a rather diverse campus. Because of that, I do not have any personal experience of race playing a role in my day to day life. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

A huge role! Being of a minority group, I'm constantly looked down on but it has boosted my confidence and made me proud. – *Black/ Native American, Methodist, South Setauket, NY*

I feel like race plays a pretty dominant role in my day to day life here at Stonehill because I am Asian and there are not many on the campus. Sometimes I feel like I stick out more than others. – *Vietnamese, Malden, MA*

As a white male, I walk around Stonehill looking generally like everyone else. If I were of a different race however, I think I would find the Stonehill community to be accepting. We all see color, but it is the way we interpret that color that matters. – *White, Roman Catholic, Preston, CT*

I'm not sure, really. I guess more recently I've become aware of my "white privilege", but race isn't something I really talk about on a day to day basis or focus on a lot. It feels awkward when it comes up in classes - like no one really knows how to approach it in a sensitive and respectful manner, so it's avoided more than it's talked about. – *White, Catholic, Meriden, CT*

I have discussed race quite a bit here at Stonehill, normally in two kinds of contexts. First, I have had the wonderful opportunity to have honest discussions about what race means with groups of people from all races. I have also had really tough discussions with some of my white peers about why race is important and what an impact it can have in someone's life. – *White, None, Scranton, PA*

I can't say it really impacts my day to day life at Stonehill. – *Filipino-American, Catholic, Stockton, CA*

No role. During all of my time at Stonehill, I have never once felt uncomfortable due to my race. – *Irish and Mexican, Catholic, TX*

I think race plays a major role in my everyday life because I know I am an Asian American and look different. If I fail as student in college, I feel that I let myself, my nationality, and my family down. It is my obligation to do my best and be the

best I can be in order to succeed in a predominantly white school, if not then people would step all over me. I feel that some the people think I get all A's or B's in class but I'm not perfect I still get low grades too. – *Asian American/ Filipino, Roman Catholic, Weymouth, MA*

Every day I wake up thinking about race. I hope one day our school will fully understand the importance of race and why it matters. – *Filipino, Catholic, Jamaica Queens, NY*

I would say it plays a major role at Stonehill. Being one of a dozen Asians at Stonehill is tough in various ways. It is better to learn English in a Stonehill-like community, where I have no one but Americans to interact with. However, as an Asian, it is very intimidating to "survive" against prejudice. – *Asian, Seoul, South Korea*

I wonder if being at Stonehill (which is, what, 93% white?) has caused me to notice race more than I would otherwise. Since I am unused to seeing many people of other races (because in many of my classes, everyone is white), it surprises me when I do come across someone of another race. I don't like this because I don't want to be hyper-aware of race, but I'm afraid that this is what has happened. – *White/ Caucasian, Protestant, Hudson, MA*

I feel as a Caucasian I am ironically enough, not treated the same as a minority here. When applying for an internship a student was able to get a paid internship through a diversity fellowship (her mother was from Panama). While I will have an unpaid internship and my GPA is a 3.39, while hers is a 2.7. I don't see how that is not racism either. I guess it's meant to level the playing field, but I felt like she was being treated better because of her skin color and because of mine. –

Caucasian

Personally, race does not play a major role in my day to day life here at Stonehill. I am used to being at a school where it is not diverse in race. Although sometimes the thought of what others think of me has crossed my mind. Those who are not used to seeing people of color have assumptions of how a person of color may be from stereotypes they've heard or from things they see on TV. I do not appreciate when people say I do not act like a "Hispanic" type girl. They may say I act like a "white" girl. I feel that the reason they think this is because of the stereotypes people have about races around America.

Personally, when someone says I act like a "white" girl, it does not bother me. Sometimes when walking to class, people may glance at me because I stick out compared to others, I wonder if they think anything of me because of my race. I am comfortable being mixed but when others look at me, I know they don't see that. They probably assume I am one race- Hispanic- and then assume I am a certain way. – *White, Dominican, Black, Wicca*

I am definitely noticeable. Everything that I do is being watched by everyone. But I do feel that if I do something that is looked at as high rewarding, I would probably receive more praise than someone of the opposite color would. – *African American, Pentecostal, CT*

It hasn't played a big one, other than that I am very privileged at this school. 93% of the students look like me, and come from similar socioeconomic classes. I'm privileged that I can be in that environment. There are some non-white students in some of my classes, but I only know a few of them. Out of all my extracurricular activities, there is only one non-white student involved in any of them. She's one of my best friends. I've noticed that some of our other friends refer to her as "Mexican" or "burrito" or another nickname like that. She's mentioned a few times about being teased as a child for being non-white, and so I think those nicknames bother her and she doesn't let on. Stonehill culture doesn't encourage outside-class discussion of serious topics - in my experience; it's barely even encouraged them inside class. So I've never had a serious discussion with my friends about race. I would like to, but I don't think many people would be receptive to it. – *Caucasian/Irish, CT*

As a white, upper-middle class female at Stonehill, I feel like the poster-student for white privilege. The article, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* By Peggy McIntosh, sums up the role my race plays at Stonehill. <http://www.nymbp.org/reference/WhitePrivilege.pdf> – *White, No religious affiliation, Norwell, MA*

Because I'm white and that is the majority here at Stonehill, I tend not to have to think about it. Then again, I have a very racially diverse group of friends. It's something that we talk about - we are all very honest with our experiences and our differences, so it's shed a lot of light at how I view race/ethnicity. – *Caucasian, No religious affiliation, NH*

Being Puerto Rican, race for me played a big role for a while. Race was something that Stonehill itself would talk about a lot, but most kids did nothing to learn about diversity clubs. After a while, race wasn't as big of a role, mainly because there weren't a ton of different races on campus to learn about and see. Stonehill primarily focuses on its majority race on the campus, which seems to be Irish. In order to learn about any other students, you have to be willing to ask questions and that can be hard. – *Puerto Rican, Catholic, Boston, MA*

I believe my race has allowed me to meet more people here at Stonehill, but is not an obstacle in any way. – *Hispanic, Catholic, NY*

I wake up every day knowing I am going to have to prove my race and ethnicity because I grew up acting white. I know people do not see me as a Latina so I have to work ten times harder to prove that I am. I also have to take ownership of the image because I spent a majority of my time away from members of my race. – *Latina, MN*

Through being involved with Diversity On Campus (D.O.C.) groups and events, I have made many friends that have different ethnic backgrounds from me. While non-white students do not make up the majority here, I feel that it is easy to meet them by getting involved on campus. – *White, North Kingstown, RI*

It has made me feel like a minority but I have been treated equally. – *Black/Puerto Rican, CA*

I would say that race does not play into my day to day life here at Stonehill. People generally accept me as a person, but I'm sure that's not true for everyone. – *White, Agawam, MA*

It hasn't played much of a role in my life particularly. Because I am like the majority of people here on campus, I have not noticed anything really day to day. However, for those who I have heard of that have been affected in some way by verbal slurs etc., I have felt ashamed of people on our campus who contribute to that. – *Caucasian, Canton, MA*

The role has been relatively minuscule. Some of my friends are different races than me but for the most part, the overwhelming homogeneity on campus makes it difficult for

race to have a role. The only impact it has had is in making me recognize how surprised I am to see someone of a different race at Stonehill. When students from Brockton come to campus, I am taken aback and sometimes (I'm sad to say) feel uncomfortable - like a balance has been shifted. And that's not the way I want or should feel in a situation like that. But being at Stonehill, where there are so few visible differences between students almost makes you believe that this is the way things really are. – *Caucasian*

Well, everyone here is white so... – *White*

Race has played a big role. I am Hispanic and since Stonehill has such a small population of "racial diversity," I often get told I only got in due to the color of my skin. I know that's not the reason I was admitted to Stonehill, but it's nice to get involved with diversity here and teach others. – *Hispanic, Glen Head, NY*

My own race- very little. I know this is largely due to the fact that my race is the majority at Stonehill so I have privileges here that I am not even aware of. – *Caucasian, Sidney, ME*

It doesn't really play a part, maybe because I grew up in a place where I was the only Asian, or non-white in a class and it hasn't changed so I've grown used to that. In fact, I'll be surprised when there is someone else "of color" in the class also. – *Asian American, Cambodian/Vietnamese*

Like I said before, I was used to being around different types of people. At Stonehill, it's either you see the white girl with the pearls, the Uggs, the Northface, or the JCrew outfit, or you see the boy with the polo shirt from Ralph Lauren. – *White, Yonkers, NY*

I think racial diversity on campus has the potential to be much greater than it is, but traditions are hard changed, and the white Catholic tradition here at Stonehill is steadfast. I think because we have such small degrees of diversity on campus people feel as though they have more leeway to get away with bias comments and acts when those should not be tolerated, regardless of settings. – *White, Milwaukee, WI*

From the moment I wake up and decide to leave my little bubble called my room, race plays a huge and important role in my daily life. It is something that I am constantly thinking about and am definitely aware of. As a Black woman on campus, I have to make sure that the things that I do and say don't have a negative impact on the way people perceive me. I also have to be aware of the fact that I live in a predominantly white community where not everyone has been as exposed to racial differences as I have been. – *Black/Haitian, Boston*

Being white I feel like I must work hard to prove to everyone that I am an individual, and not just the clone-like Uggs wearing white college girl. I feel like I blend in more than I

stand out. I wish Stonehill were more diverse so I could be learning from people of other races and ethnicities, and they could be interested in learning about me. – *White, Agnostic*

I really do not think about it. I treat everyone as the individual they are and race really does not make a difference. – *White, Catholic, Peabody, MA*

I am conscious of it. As a Resident Assistant, I know that my residents of any and every racial background have unique needs, so I try to remain aware and sensitive to racial differences in every aspect of my job, from programming to door tags to simply conversing with residents on a day to day basis. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

None. Everyone I come into contact with is white. – *Anonymous*

Race has not really played a role in my day to day life here at Stonehill. I interact with people of other races but that does not really affect me at all. – *White, Catholic*

To be honest it hasn't played too much of a part here. The diversity here is about the same as it was in high school and as a result it hasn't really changed my day to day life at all. – *White/Caucasian, Other, East Bridgewater, MA*

Because I am white I have never really been made aware of my race as being an inhibitor to my daily life, and I have continued to have that experience here at college. – *White, Roman Catholic, Plymouth, MA*

A minor role, I do not even pay attention to anyone's race. To me, that's so not important. – *White/Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Stratford, CT*

I try not to give race a role to play in my day to day life at Stonehill. At the end of the day, race doesn't matter to me. What does matter is the appreciation for cultures and of individual's past. I hate to see individuals grouped together based on race because everyone isn't the same. We all have our own story. And if you take the time out of your day to listen, you won't be sorry. – *Caucasian, Hanson, MA*

I am white, like the majority of my classmates. It's not something that I think about a lot. Race isn't something that I think about often when I'm in a more diverse community either, though. I work in an elementary school in Brockton, and I don't

constantly think of race when I work with the children who are from different backgrounds. I have lived a very "white" life, but I don't see race, I see people. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Salisbury, MA*

Honestly, race does not really play a role in my day to day life. – *Anonymous*

I'm white, male, upper class. What role isn't affected? – *White, Buddhist, Glen Cove, NY*

I have encountered very little diversity in my time here at Stonehill and for that reason; race has played little to no role. In my mind, a person's race does not define them rather; it is the kind of person they are deep down beyond the color of their skin or where their ancestors were born. The most important thing to me is a person's true character learning about their race and ethnicity comes after that. – *White, Catholic, Niskayuna, NY*

Race has not played that big of a role in my day to day life at Stonehill. I do have friends that are racially diverse compared to myself, but all of my close friends that I see everyday are white. – *White/Italian, Catholic, Dorchester, MA*

Race is not an issue. I have learned and become accustomed to accepting everyone. – *White, Catholic, South Portland, ME*

It has not; there is no race diversity here to speak of. I can count the number of African Americans I have seen on campus on my fingers. – *Agnostic, MA*

Personally, race does not play much of a role in my day to day life here because I am accepting of all other races like most people should be. I do not judge people by their race. While race is apparent on the outside, I do not discriminate against anyone based on what I primarily see. It is more important to get to know the person behind the race and ethnicity in order to really get a sense for them because just their race alone will not tell you anything about their personality, likes, dislikes, etc. Therefore, race does not play a role in my day to day life here at Stonehill. – *White, Catholic, Andover, MA*

On a day-to-day basis I don't put much thought into race, when looking at, interacting with, or meeting people race is far from the first thing that comes to mind. As a college student I'm more focused on what they have to offer academically rather than racially. – *French/English (Caucasian), Catholic, Southwick, MA*

Not really besides experiences outside of Stonehill. We have limited racial diversity here. – *Catholic, CT*

At Stonehill I have been more aware of race in the sense that I have traveled through some Stonehill programs that have allowed me to experience other cultures. I think that this has given me a wonderful opportunity to be a minority for once or to see how another race/ culture may live. It is unfortunate that everyone doesn't take these opportunities because I still believe that many at Stonehill are ignorant to their derogatory comments made in regards to race. This may be due to the lack of diversity in race at Stonehill but not an excuse. – *Caucasian, Catholic*

Being white comes with a certain connotation here at Stonehill, as if the color of my skin automatically suggests that I come from a middle to upper class family, that I'm a Catholic, and that I'm just here for the parties on the weekend. "Clonehill" is only as homogeneous as the viewer wants to see it. It's not a major annoyance every day, but it is irritating. – *White, Agnostic, MA*

Very little, I don't care about what race someone is and I don't need someone with a microphone to tell me to think that way. – *White, Agnostic, NY*

I would say race does not play a huge role in my life. Everyone treats each other with respect. I try to see everyone not by their race but their personality. – *White, Catholic, CT*

Growing up, race became something that wasn't even given a second thought. I believe that has carried over to my time at Stonehill. I believe that people should be proud of who they are and we should take that as our opportunity to learn about different races and cultures. Everybody has a different story; it is up to us to listen to them. – *Caucasia, NJ*

I don't see race as an issue although Stonehill is mostly a Caucasian school. – *Caucasian*

I don't honestly feel as though race does play a role in my day to day life here. I am not in any form of minority here at Stonehill, so perhaps that affects my opinion, but I don't feel like race plays a role. – *White, Andover, MA*

I am so privileged that I never have to think about my race. I am a member of what is considered the homogeneous group on campus, and therefore do not face many of the negatives that are connected with race. – *Caucasian/Irish, Scandinavian, Mashpee, MA*

Race plays the biggest role in my day to day life at Stonehill. There are a couple of days that I feel that the people within the Stonehill community have to be joking with the comments they make. There is not a day that I don't believe the comment or the way someone acts around me was not due to my race. People stop themselves from saying certain things because I am of color or because I am part of ABS and they will rather not hear a "sermon" as some call it. I feel that being a person of color can sometimes become pretty challenging because you have to prove that you got into the college because you were a good candidate not because you are of color and they accepted you on that fact only. – *Latina, Boston, MA*

Here at Stonehill I come across all sorts of people. From the listserves about Latin dancing, to signs advertising the Asian American Society; Stonehill encourages racial diversity and acceptance towards it. – *White/ Caucasian, Auburn, MA*

Very little. There is so little diversity in race at Stonehill that I have not been able to fully experience a diverse atmosphere. Although, there is very little diversity in race the few students that are not Caucasian at Stonehill have made me see that people of every race can be successful...even though I did not believe otherwise before, my thoughts have just been proven true. – *White, West Roxbury, MA*

Again, I wish that Stonehill was more diverse racially. It's upsetting to me that Stonehill friends who aren't Caucasian feel as though they don't fit in here, this is also very different from my high school which was extremely racially diverse. Because it was so diverse, race wasn't talked about as much, there was no stigma, it was just a given that people were different from one another and they would get along regardless. – *Caucasian, Newton, MA*

I do not think that race does play a role in my day to day life here at Stonehill. Here at Stonehill we are all united by common bonds and ties; no matter what race or ethnicity one belongs to. We are all Stonehill students and act as such. This can be seen by the friendly faces and hello's that can be seen and heard while anyone is walking anywhere on campus. – *Caucasian/White, MA*

Well, to be honest, after a while you see the same people around campus and they are majority white. I find myself wanting to know more about someone when they are not white. The fact that I would scout out anyone that is not white and have it be a rare occurrence does not speak well to the diversity at Stonehill. – *White/Non-Hispanic, Cape Cod, MA*

It does not play a role, because being adults we are beyond noticing people for their ethnicity. We are all Stonehill students and that's all that matters. – *White, Loudon, NH*

What were some of your earliest messages about people with disAbilities?



Stonehill College, in recent years, has been adapting buildings, practices, and every day activities to be more inclusive of community members with diverse needs and disAbilities. Similarly, our society has been changing with a purpose of more inclusion of individuals who require accommodations. There are still early messages to unpack about how we view, treat, and accept those with different ways of knowing and being.

- What were some of your earliest messages about people with disAbilities?
- How were these messages informed?
- How were they reinforced or dismantled?
- In what ways have you seen changes in accommodations at Stonehill?
- What aspects are still missing to make Stonehill an inclusive environment for people of differing ability needs?
- Think about your average day – from the moment you wake up to the moment you go to sleep. What accommodations would you need to make based on a particular disability? Are those accommodations available at Stonehill?
- What are steps you can take to be more inclusive for people of differing abilities?

Why do we use the term disAbility with a capital “A”?

Disability is a relative term. That is, “disability” compared to *what*? We keep the word “disability” because it requires us to understand the needs and concepts but also helps us to reframe the norm that we have created.

At first I had not normally been around people with such a range of abilities. But once I became friends with these people and began to learn about their lives, my initial impressions were gone. – *White, Roman Catholic, Waltham, MA*

I've had people with varied abilities in many of my classes since I started school and always been aware of how they were just as capable as everyone else. – *White, Catholic, Springfield, MA*

I grew up with a mother who had Multiple Sclerosis who was wheel chair bound for most of my life. This has helped me to be more understanding of people with disabilities and to realize that everyone is different but in a way we are all the same. – *Caucasian, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

Everyone has varied abilities; no two people are alike in terms of their skill-sets or struggles. – *White, Catholic, Tolland, CT*

As someone who has a family member with a developmental disability, I always embrace people with disabilities and am inspired by how hard they work. – *White, Roman Catholic, Massapequa Park, NY*

I think I thought that people with varied abilities were less smart than others, when I was a very young child. As I grew older, I learned this wasn't true, of course. However, it's still difficult at times when first encountering someone with a disability because it's not a huge part of my life. Once I recognize that the person is getting along fine, but simply does things in a different way, I tell myself I have been silly for feeling uncomfortable. Just because someone may walk or hold an object differently doesn't mean that it's incorrect, or makes them any less "able." – *Latina, Catholic, Boston, MA*

I remember first learning about people with developmental disabilities like Down syndrome, etc while shopping at a department store with my father. A young woman with some kind of disability walked by my father and for seemingly no reason hit him in the arm. I was very young, and seeing this happen bothered me greatly. My father seemed surprised at first, but explained to me that the young woman was one of God's children just like I was, and that she had a condition that caused her to not understand that hitting is not a nice thing to do. He told me to be patient and compassionate to any one I encountered who were born with varying abilities that I did not personally experience. This memory will remain with me forever. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

Uhhh.... like people with different talents? I just think that the fact that we have so many different people with different talents is a testament to the diversity that is present here at

Stonehill. Most people don't see it that way, but that's what it is. Diversity is there. – *Caucasian, None, Queens, NY*

I used to passively think that they were not capable of achieving greatness. I have since learned that it is I who cannot achieve greatness carrying that attitude. – *White, None, Warwick, RI*

None. Everyone at Stonehill is exactly the same, which is why I will be transferring next year. – *Anonymous*

Here at Stonehill? I see a few girls getting from place to place via electric scooter and it makes me realize how Stonehill has made buildings wheelchair and scooter- accessible. – *White/ Caucasian, Catholic, East Meadow, NY*

I'm confused by what is meant by varied abilities, but I will have to say that I remember that they are human as well and therefore deserve to be treated as so. – *African American, Christian, Jonesboro, GA*

From a very young age my mother always yelled at me or my brother if we used the word "retarded". This influenced my perception of people with intellectual disabilities always. My mother, a math teacher, has taught me how important people

with intellectual disabilities are and the need to love them. As any young child, I asked a lot of questions and was confused by their abilities. As a result of my upbringing, I am extremely involved in Best Buddies as the Into the Streets Coordinator, Stonehill College's House of Possibilities, and Special Olympics. – *White, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

I am sort of confused by this question. If you mean like how people have different talents then I was aware people are different and can do things you least expect them to do based on what gender they are and where they come from. From a physically handicap stand point, I have one hand and I can do practically anything except the monkey bars. So I am never really surprised in what people can do who are handicapped, but rather proud that they had the determination to do it. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Chatham, NJ*

They are people like me. They shouldn't be treated any different because of the way they were born or because of an injury they suffered. – *Anonymous*

I've never really thought about it. Everyone is human and deserves to be loved and respected. If this question is asking if I ever made fun of a differently-able person, I most certainly did NOT. – *Caucasian, Christian, NJ*

I may be answering this incorrectly, but since I have been really young I have always been a lot more accepting of people with varied abilities and disabilities than the rest of my peers. – *White/ Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

I personally have a sister with learning disabilities. I have struggled to realize that she is not socially or academically as capable as a normal person. – *White, Roman Catholic, Preston, CT*

At first I did not understand the conditions people with varied abilities go through while at college. Recently I remember friends talking about one student who gets to class on a motorized wheel chair. When the snow was piling up and the side walk conditions were really bad but the school stayed open she could not attend class and that was penalizing only her while the rest of the student body could walk to class over the snow piles. This example made me think of the equal treatment all students should receive at Stonehill without anyone being penalized for their varied abilities. – *Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

I have worked at a camp for people of all ages with a range of special needs every summer since I was 11 years old...they capture my heart. I think a lot of people here have no respect for people of different ability levels though. It's actually kind of scary. I think the disABILITY group is working to change that, though. – *White, Catholic, Meriden, CT*

My first impression of people with varied abilities was in grade school. In first or second grade, there was a boy in our class who's mental and physical abilities varied from most of the other children our age. He had his own classroom assistant and a lot of the other kids did not want to play with him. The message I got back then, especially from my teacher, was that people with varied abilities should be set apart and treated differently... not a great message to send to little kids. –*White, PA*

Ever since elementary school I have shared classrooms with students of various abilities. We were all kept in the same classroom with some individuals receiving extra academic assistance when they could not grasp certain concepts. However, the aspect that I loved about these classroom dynamics was that students were not singled out for having a different ability; instead we were all kept together to learn together. – *Caucasian, Woodbury, CT*

My earliest impressions about people with varied abilities were positive. My mother has taught special-education for a very long time and before that was an Instructional Assistant for students with special needs. Thanks to this, my earliest impressions were that I should be open, and willing to extend friendship to those with varied abilities. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, MA*

My earliest impressions of people with varied abilities were that these people do not need my help, they do not need my pity, and they simply want to be treated like anyone else. The fact that these people have been able to overcome a disability makes them stronger than I am, not weaker. – *White, Catholic, NY*

I've been volunteering with Special Olympics for years so I have always been accepting of people with varied abilities. I always try my best to see where they are coming from and understand how hard it must be for them. I try my best to help them while not looking down at them because I do not want to make things worse. These people live their entire lives with others feeling sorry for them so I try my best to just be a friend to them. – *White/ Italian, Catholic, Dorchester, MA*

I do not treat them any differently. If anything I will try and help them more. – *White, Catholic, South Portland, ME*

One of my aunts was developmentally disabled, so I grew up with an understanding that people with different abilities weren't to be feared or shunned. When I was a toddler, my aunt wasn't mentally much older than me, so the two of us played together a lot. I didn't see anything wrong with her. The word "retarded" was literally a swear word in my house. Because of her experience having a disabled older sister, my mom always made it clear that people who were different from me weren't weird, or to be used as the butt of jokes. That included the physically disabled as well. – *Caucasian/ Irish, Atheist, CT*

At Stonehill, I noticed that students with varied abilities are rare...what I mean is, for the most part--Stonehill students are very similar, somewhat blending together across campus while we walk around from day to day. – *White, No religious affiliation, MA*

It is like a typical high school classroom. – *Agnostic, MA*

My mother works in an elementary school for children with disabilities and I volunteer there over the summer. I have come to understand that despite having a disability, they are not much different than us. If anything, they are the most accepting people I have ever encountered. I also volunteered at the Special Olympics Basketball Tournament in February and that was an amazing experience. The children and adults in the tournament were extraordinarily talented and they truly opened my eyes to the fact that just because they may be mentally disabled, there is nothing that they cannot do. – *White, Catholic, Andover, MA*

Many members of my extended family suffer from disabilities; I have always had sympathy for these individuals, and also have learned to look past their disabilities. My cousin is blind and has spinal and heart issues, and being around him has made me realize that physical and mental ailments do not make one less of a person. – *French/English (Caucasian), Catholic, MA*

Being visually impaired myself, I have met many people at Stonehill who have thrived despite their disability. Everyone here has something unique to contribute. I have always enjoyed Stonehill's DiverCity show because many of the different clubs perform dances and songs specific to cultures we don't see at Stonehill. It is refreshing to see something different. – *White, Catholic*

That's the thing. For the longest time, my impressions have been shaped by people's faults and imperfections. Throughout my first year at college I have gained trust in people. I no longer wonder how someone will come up short or disappoint me today, but how they will never cease to amaze me, every single day of my life. – *White, Christian, West Springfield, MA*

If you mean varied abilities as in disabilities, then I grew up with two parents that were handicapped so I learned that people who are handicapped were no different than I. To me, a person was a person and should be respected no matter where they came from, what their sexual orientation was, if they had disabilities and if they had different opinions on things. I grew up learning that we were all different with who we were and what we could do, but that at the same time we were all alike on the inside. – *Puerto Rican, Catholic, Boston, MA*

That they needed some sympathy and perhaps needed help more often. – *Caucasian*

I have an uncle with CP so I have always been exposed to people with disabilities. I have tried to always have an open mind and never make assumptions. – *Caucasian, Catholic, Andover, MA*

When people have different abilities, we can all work together. We all have one purpose. – *White, Catholic, Waterford, CT*

They are normal people; they just have to work a little harder to do something's than we do. – *Caucasian, Sayville, NY*

I have family members that have varied abilities so I think that I have always been open to the fact that it doesn't change how I should act toward someone. One of my cousins is mentally challenged and ever since I was young I knew there was something different about him even though I didn't understand. He is one of the most loving people that I know and therefore it is very painful whenever someone makes a remark about someone with a disability just because they don't understand. – *Caucasian, Catholic*

I felt sorry for them. – *Black/Puerto Rican*

I think at first I was slightly intimidated by those with varied abilities. I didn't know exactly how to communicate with them, or if there were certain things I should or should not say. However, I have grown to be much more comfortable, and may even pursue a career working with them one day. – *White, Andover, MA*

My earliest impressions of people with varied abilities were that this must be an extremely difficult campus for people with disabilities to get around on. – *Caucasian- Irish, Scandinavian, Mashpee, MA*

When I was younger, I remember feeling scared and uncomfortable. Even now, though I'm good friends with people with varied abilities, I still feel awkward at times, or overly aware of certain situations. – *Caucasian*

Stonehill is a very homogenous school so anyone with differing beliefs or abilities definitely stands out. – *Caucasian, Long Island, NY*

Everyone has different abilities, strengths and weaknesses. A strength for one person may be a weakness for another, so it is important to be sensitive to that fact. – *Caucasian/ White, Brookfield, MA*

I was always confused with why they were the way they are. My uncle is mentally retarded, and I'm not using that term loosely, but it's how my family refers to his conditions. Growing up I took initiative to find out what causes these disabilities and birth defects. – *White, Milwaukee, WI*

My brother's best friend all growing up had Down Syndrome. I have never viewed people based on their ability, but rather on who they are as a person. – *White, Agnostic*

I never really have an "impression" except for the acknowledgment of that person's "varied ability". One of my friends does not have a full arm, but that has never affected my friendship or changed the way I think of her. I honestly never have an "early impression" of someone until I meet them personally, and even then it is solely based on the character of that person. Granted I may think something such as "that person is so strong for being the cheerful, optimistic person that she is despite the challenging cards she has been dealt." – *Caucasian, Catholic, NH*

They are different. Just like I differ from someone with a lighter or darker skin color, I think of people with varied abilities are different in their own way. – *Black/Haitian, Boston*

I can't recall what they were, but I'm accepting of people with varied abilities. – *White, NH*

I think I was surprised at first because Stonehill can be a difficult place to manage with a disability. Ultimately, I admire their conviction to lead a normal life despite their disabilities. – *White, Agawam, MA*

I respect everyone and look at everyone the same. I am part of the Disability Enlightenment Club where we raise awareness and find out ways to make Stonehill more "accessible" for them. – *Caucasian*

My earliest impressions of people with varied abilities were associated with stigmas that the general public has. These stigmas are increasingly becoming less common which is great, and therefore we are more open to different abilities. – *White, Roman Catholic, CT*

My roommate during my first year here was partially deaf and blind at night. My impression of him was that he was a good guy. His "varied abilities" - which is what I assume this question is looking for - were unexpected but they didn't factor into our relationship at all. It was just how things were and would have been regardless. – *White, Agnostic, MA*

How has attending Stonehill influenced the role of religion and/or spirituality in your life?



Stonehill College is a Catholic college rooted in scholarship and faith. Our students choose Stonehill for many reasons, and the Catholic nature of the institution is one that impacts and informs life on campus. Because individuals come to Stonehill both with and without expectations to engage in religious and/or spiritual life, we wanted to find out whether or not our Catholic identity impacted or influenced student engagement, academics, and life.

- How has attending Stonehill influenced the role of religion and/or spirituality in your life?
- What were your first messages about religion? About spirituality?
- What were your first messages about Catholics and Catholicism?
- How is your practice of faith (if any) different having attended college? Having attended Stonehill?
- What were your first messages about religion and/or spirituality at Stonehill? Who were those messages from?
- In what ways has your peer group influenced or shaped your views and/or practices on religious and/or spiritual life?
- What frustrates you about religion/faith/spirituality?
- What benefits do you and/or others experience as a result of religion/faith/spirituality?
- Do you think students at institutions that are not religiously affiliated have a similar experience to those at religiously affiliated colleges?
- In what ways should Stonehill change in regards to religion/faith/spirituality? In what ways should it stay the same?

I've had my spirituality slightly renewed since attending Stonehill. – *White, Catholic, Springfield, MA*

Stonehill has helped me nurture my Catholic faith through the campus ministry, but a lot of it happened out of my own need for a more spiritual life. I think Stonehill as an institution is out of touch with its Catholic heritage as a whole. The administration needs to work harder at nurturing its Catholic Identity, and the students and faculty that are at Stonehill need to be more accepting of the fact that they are at a CATHOLIC college. I sometimes feel attacked by people because of my faith and questioned for why I follow the church. And I have heard a lot worst stories from my friends about having to be on the offensive about their Catholic faith on a Catholic campus. So I guess I can say that coming to Stonehill has made me appreciate my faith more because the people I associate with accept me and my faith and are willing to nurture it with me. – *White, Roman Catholic, MA*

It has made me appreciate my religion more than I had before because I appear to be one of a very few that hold these religious beliefs on campus. – *Anonymous*

Because of personal factors in my life I have a strained relationship with my religion. I do however enjoy being at a Catholic college and my hope is maybe something here at Stonehill will draw me back to my religion. – *Caucasian, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

Very little to be honest. I entered into Stonehill as a confirmed Catholic who firmly believed that if God is everywhere then praying in a building is no better or worse than taking advantage of a beautiful summer's day by walking through a field to observe and appreciate God's art work. – *White, Catholic, Tolland, CT*

I actually think I have become less spiritual since coming to Stonehill. I was always forced to attend church at home, but now that I have the chance to step back, talk about the bible in class, and talk to my educated friends, I see religion as more of a comfort. It is almost like a story. You know it is not true, but the morals are something to live by. But I do not see religion as anything more than that. I attend church now for the music and the relaxing atmosphere. – *White, Catholic, Peabody, MA*

I have begun to question my religion because my classes at Stonehill have fostered discussion and deep thought instead of just blind acceptance of a religion because someone told me I need to be Roman Catholic. – *White, Roman Catholic, Massapequa Park, NY*

I was raised Catholic, but don't really practice, like many of the other students here. My family has always openly held discussions about religion and the Church at home, resulting in an Agnostic belief in God with a mild distrust of church hierarchy. I attended a Catholic private school until the sixth grade, and then a public school until I came to Stonehill. Here,

I have been able to reflect on my spirituality a little more than I did in the past. I had previously written off my spirituality, but the Catholic influence of the college has brought it back into daily conversation. I am thankful for that. – *Latina, Catholic, Boston, MA*

It has made me hold on to my beliefs even more firmly. At Stonehill Catholicism is REALLY forced on you. Trust me, professors and students treat you differently if you believe in reincarnation, karma, etc. If you as someone of Christian faith know how strong the presence of Catholicism is on campus, they say very little. If you ask me, I am reminded of how different my religious views are EVERYDAY. – *Indian, Hindu, Brockton, MA*

The subject of religion is a tricky one. I came to Stonehill completely Catholic, with no doubt in my mind. I was challenged and adjusted to those challenges accordingly, but I am still strong in my faith. Recently I have fallen away nearly completely (without losing belief in a God), but I do not attribute that to Stonehill at all. I am heavily involved in Campus Ministry and I can assure you that it has been hard to fall so far with all these people here trying to catch me. My "loss of religion", as I would call it, is due to my own thoughts based on various happenings in my social and family life. Things for which I would not at all blame Stonehill. – *Caucasian, Catholic, NH*

I have become more religious while at Stonehill. I am a member of the Good News Club and it has brought me closer with my religion and given me the opportunity to explore my beliefs. My religion professor, John Lanci has also been extremely beneficial in exploring my faith. – *White/Caucasian, Catholic, NY*

It really hasn't, which was not what I was initially hoping to find when I got here but it might be more of myself than the actual school. – *African American, Christian, GA*

Attending Stonehill has influenced the role of religion because of the fact that it was necessary for us to take an introductory religion course. Although I have grown up with some religion in my life, by learning more in depth about other religions I have learned to respect and understand their opinions. – *White, Catholic*

My freshman year I was very confused by Stonehill's Campus Ministry. I felt as though it was very cliquey and not inviting. The lack of unity drove me away from the Chapel of Mary to a local Easton parish. I needed the space to realize how great Stonehill is. During my junior and senior years I have really been tested and challenged spiritually. I question myself and my intentions often, "Why do I go to church?" sometimes I answer to make my parents happy, to hit the weekly "recharge" button, to feel one with God. Stonehill has provided me plenty of opportunities through HOPE trips and ITS to understand

why religion is important to me. Spirituality is forever changing in my mind and heart. – *White, Catholic, West Roxbury, MA*

Stonehill has allowed me to build on the strong sense of spirituality that I had at home. Working in Campus Ministry and immersing myself in the religious mission of the college multiple times a week has been an excellent and firm basis on which I can build my faith and inspire others to build theirs as well. – *Caucasian/ White, Roman Catholic, Wayne, NJ*

Stonehill has barely influenced the role of religion in my life. Rather, Stonehill has provided an environment where I have personally examined my religious life, and it has evolved from that, not from Stonehill's influence. – *White, Cranston, RI*

I feel as though it has in some way but I'm not sure how at the moment. I don't feel any more or less spiritual or religious now than when I started school, but perhaps my perceptions have changed. – *Anonymous*

I'm more religious than I was before I got here but Stonehill had very little to do with it. Outside experiences forged my religion and Stonehill accepted it. – *White, Christian, Plymouth, MA*

I am Roman Catholic; Stonehill has allowed me to continue growing in my faith. – *White, Roman Catholic, Plymouth, MA*

I like the fact that Stonehill requires you to take a religion class. My favorite class here was my religion class, and not because we learned about my own religion but because we learned about all types of religions I previously knew nothing about. – *Caucasian, Catholic, Bridgewater, MA*

It hasn't... I do not attend the church here on campus, because it is too regimented and I do not like it...But I still go to my church back home. – *Black/Native American, Methodist, South Setauket, NY*

I never thought about religion and was not raised with religion in my childhood. I have not really explored the option but I have become more comfortable with talking about it. – *White, No religious affiliation, Poland, ME*

Learning about other religions has made me re-evaluate my beliefs on spirituality. Also, being exposed to many different types of diversity has made me realize that I want to choose a religion that is accepting of everyone. Because of this, I actually left the Catholic Church two months ago because of a sermon my priest gave on the wrongness of gay marriage. – *Caucasian, Agnostic, Portsmouth, RI*

I wish Stonehill offered more outlets for non-Catholics. Often times I feel like Christian is Catholic here. I definitely do not attend church as much at Stonehill because the school does not offer non-denominational services. – *White/ Caucasian, Protestant, MA*

I was brought up in a Catholic community. I went to a Catholic school, and I attend a Catholic college. The set of morals that come with my spiritual beliefs define who I am. – *White, Roman Catholic, Preston, CT*

I am not a very religious person and carry no religious affiliation. Stonehill has made me aware that it is OK not to follow a certain deity. Despite the fact that Stonehill, itself is Catholic by affiliation, its cultural acceptance of different cultures makes me feel more at home when I live here during the school year. – *Caucasian, Hanson, MA*

Stonehill has influenced the role of religion in my life. I am Protestant so I don't adhere to or agree with many of the Catholic traditions that are upheld at Stonehill. I have attended a few of the Campus Ministry events such as HOPE trips, CCF, and retreats. These events have helped me meet other students on campus who are spiritually oriented and that has influenced the role of religion in my life. – *Caucasian, Protestant, Rowley, MA*

I think a lot of professors I've had have tried to bring down my faith rather than support it. I thank God for the people of campus ministry, and the few professors I've found who are looking to enhance spirituality, not run it away. I love my faith, it's the cornerstone of who I am, and I don't want to lose it. – *White, Catholic, CT*

Attending Stonehill has allowed me to educate myself about many different kinds of religions and spirituality around the world. Although I haven't really found my religious or spiritual identity yet, I feel much more informed now than I did four years ago. – *White, No religious affiliation, PA*

Ironically, attending Stonehill (with its Catholic affiliation) has opened my eyes to more religions, and different types of spirituality. This has been accomplished through two instrumentally important religious studies courses that I have been enrolled in. Spirituality, I have come to learn, is broader than I once thought it was. While I have not been more motivated to go to Mass than I was before, I have learned a great deal about different religions which, I think, is very valuable. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Salisbury, MA*

I am not a very religious person, but Stonehill, particularly my experience in New Orleans for HOPE has made me much more aware of its merits in life. The people of New Orleans were very hopeful and uplifting, and I think that had a lot to do with their spirituality and concept of religion. – *Anonymous*

During my freshman year, I did go to church at times but clubs, activities, and homework became some of my main priorities. I am Catholic but not religious but I still believe in God and live by teachings. I noticed the more I grew apart from God the less I was happy about myself. My religion has shaped me for who I am, giving me the values and lessons of life. My sophomore year I became more involved and became a Eucharistic minister. I thought it was a great way for me to keep in touch with my religion and the church. – *Asian American/Filipino, Roman Catholic, Weymouth, MA*

My spirituality and religion do not require Stonehill to do anything to enhance it. If Stonehill has shaped any part of my faith, it has been the recent HOPE trip to Honduras. Again, this furthered my Buddhist practice, not a Catholic one. – *White, Buddhist*

Since attending Stonehill, I feel as though I have become more spiritual and less religious. As a Catholic, I used to go to church every week. But now I have the freedom to do what I want. I still go to church, but not as much. Now I have the

freedom to explore my spirituality as opposed to my religion. I have come to realize that I enjoy being more spiritual instead of being so "by the book" religious. – *White/Italian, Catholic, Dorchester, MA*

Stonehill has shown that it is okay for a college student to be in touch with their faith and to not be afraid to want to participate in faith-based activities, like going to mass or going on a retreat. – *White/ Non- Hispanic, Catholic*

Some of the people disappoint me because they believe just to believe rather than trying to figure it out themselves. I have sort of lost faith since I've been here, though I've never really known. I identify as Agnostic now. – *Caucasian*

I think it's helped me to maintain my respect for other people's religions & faiths. With so many people using their religion as a shield for their hate, it's easy to start blaming religion as the source of the hate. Being around good, kind, open-minded people of faith helps me to maintain perspective and realize that religion isn't the problem, it's how some people use it. – *Caucasian/ Irish, Atheist, CT*

So very much. Although I am still searching and exploring my faith, HOPE and my relationship and reflection with MaryAnne in Campus Ministry has shaped my faith. – *White, No religious affiliation, Norwell, MA*

Stonehill does not necessarily press its Catholicism onto its students and I have not been greatly influenced by the role of religion in my own personal life. I do, however, enjoy the fact that students are required to take a Critical Encounters Religion class because it allows students from all sorts of religious backgrounds to share their experiences despite being in a predominantly Catholic school. – *White, Catholic, Andover, MA*

I am ecstatic to have gone to a Catholic school. I became a lot more involved with my faith back in high school, and I am happy to continue that at Stonehill. It is a great feeling attending mass with my own peers. Campus ministry is excellent as well. Because of the people who were involved there, they got me involved with retreats. Now I either attend or I am leader on the retreats that happen once a semester. – *Haitian, Roman Catholic, CT*

My spirituality/religious background has strengthened since being at Stonehill because I have been so involved in campus ministry activities. Though this is not imposed by any means (and sometimes I wish it were more prominent--not enforced or shoved down people's throats--but I wish we weren't afraid to show our identity), I have taken advantage of the fact that we

are a religious institution and embraced that part of our identity as a college of the Holy Cross. – *Catholic, CT*

I often forget that Stonehill is a Catholic institution. The only times I do notice it, is when it becomes the reason that something is banned from our school. For example, it's difficult to give out free birth control (condoms) because when it is advertised, there's a risk at being in trouble. – *Caucasian, No religious affiliation, NH*

As Stonehill is a Catholic College, the Catholic religion is very much enforced. Being both Catholic and a member of PRIDE felt strange for me at first. Stonehill seems to apply a double standard when it comes to Catholicism: though they preach about diversity and the inclusion and acceptance of all faiths, they Nonetheless put their own religion above others. I can see how that would make others feel uncomfortable and more like a minority than an accepted group of people. I feel Stonehill pushes too hard. I have sung in our Chapel Choir for four years because I enjoy the music and find it both satisfying and spiritually uplifting, but I think there is almost too much emphasis on Catholicism. – *White, Catholic*

I grew up in a Catholic family, was sent to Catholic school, and decided to attend a Catholic college. By the time I was at Stonehill, I was still questioning my faith. By the end of freshman year philosophy, I was able to examine my faith with reason and logic - and subsequently reject it. It was amazing. Stonehill allowed me to become a better person by giving me the tools I needed to empower myself and toss away religion. – *White, Agnostic, Leominster, MA*

I was Roman Catholic for 17--almost 18--years before coming here and because of the fallacies in Catholicism that the college presents, I am now Agnostic. On second thought, I wouldn't put the entire blame on Stonehill, I probably would have decided to identify as an Agnostic eventually the college just quickened the process. – *White, Agnostic, NY*

Stonehill has allowed me embrace the Catholic religion more since it is the first Catholic institution I have ever attended. With a cross in every room it is hard not to feel that God and Jesus affect my life every day. – *Hispanic, Catholic, NY*

It hasn't really. Sometimes I get frustrated by the influence religion has around campus. Since it is a private Catholic school I know there are many things that I might have access to at a State funded college that I don't have here, but it still sometimes makes me wonder if I made the right decision when choosing my school. We don't have any sort of sexual education or access to condoms like they do at some schools, for example. – *Caucasian, Catholic, Andover, MA*

I still believe in my religion but I am still debating about religion. – *White, Catholic, Waterford, CT*

It has made me more appreciative of so many different religions and how they affect politics, culture, etc. – *Caucasian*

In my first year I participated in a first learning community. The aim was to discover how college students think about religion and spirituality. It was a really eye-opening endeavor for me, as I had gone to public school for my entire life. Although I am Catholic, I was not a devout, and religion did not consume my everyday thoughts. However, after completing this project and analyzing the results, I realized that I was becoming more spiritual. I saw this especially in my sophomore year when I attended a HOPE trip. It was the first time where I was asked to sit down every night and reflect on the service experiment in a spiritual manner. At first I was worried about this, because I've done a lot of community service, but in the past the service ended when the work was done. I am now an ITS facilitator and see the value of reflection and spiritual practice in combination with the actual service. I think this is one skill I could not have gotten at a public college. – *White, NH*

It hasn't really influenced my religion. I am not Catholic so I don't attend any of the masses but I think it's great for those who are. – *Indian, Waterford, CT*

Stonehill has not really influenced religion in my life, but that is only because in all honestly my beliefs have been very sturdy

for many years now. I am a Protestant Christian and sometimes get frustrated with how Stonehill does not necessarily cater to those of my faith, but rather expect us to attend Catholic Mass, etc. However, this has not changed my spirituality in any way.
– *White, Andover, MA*

I attended Stonehill because it was a Catholic college. My faith is the most important thing in my life and always will be. I think that I have discerned a call in life to service because of programs like H.O.P.E. As a Crossings Minister, I try hard to encourage people to figure out what they believe in and to stick by their beliefs, no matter what they may be. – *White, Agawam, MA*

Attending Stonehill has made me realize now more than ever that I do not believe in religion nearly as much as spirituality and I continually find it ironic that I am at a Catholic affiliated college. – *Caucasian, Canton, MA*

This impact is one I really did not expect when I chose to attend Stonehill. Knowing that it was a Catholic school, I expected to be bombarded with catechism and Catholic leaning agendas. My experience has been the complete opposite however. Yes, there are outlets for students who are passionate about their Catholicism, but there are also a multitude of venues for students to explore their spirituality or religious ideas. The Religious Studies department has been crucial in navigating this journey and they are truly wonderful in guiding,

helping, suggesting, and especially listening to students who are struggling with what they believe, question, or what to believe. Also, students here are open to the ideas of other religions and together they create an environment conducive to practicing Buddhist meditation, or doing yoga, or visiting places of other worship. – *Anonymous*

While at home, I was forced to attend masses and religious ceremonies by my family, but here I've been able to choose for myself and now I refrain from attending church. My classes have also helped me to find a firmer ground on which I base my beliefs and not believing in Christianity, though that's not what classes teach. Everyone here gets to choose to practice religion or not, and one side or the other isn't imposed on students or taught in classes which is something I like a lot about the school. – *White, NH*

Stonehill has influenced my role of religion and spirituality in my life a lot. I am very involved in different clubs and events that go on through campus ministry and I think the religious life at Stonehill is great because it's so welcoming to everyone and really promotes a "campus wide community/feeling". – *Hispanic, Glen Head, NY*

Attending Stonehill has made me realize how exclusive the Catholic religion is. Being a non-Catholic myself, I am often shocked that, although being a Catholic school, Stonehill as a college does little to recognize other religions, especially in

terms of holidays. I think student groups do much more to recognize other religions than Stonehill as an institution ever has. – *Caucasian, ME*

I came to Stonehill from a very strong Protestant background. While I still practice my faith, I have learned what it means to be truly "spiritual" and also how to find harmonious elements between my religion and others. Truthfully, I have been surprised by many of the people at Stonehill who claim to be "religious" and act in morally reprehensible ways. In the same way that I re-examine and re-evaluate my religion every day, I think that other people should partake in this process as well. – *Caucasian/White, Sandwich, MA*

It has actually made me dislike religion even more. I already had a problem with the Catholic Church but being here, it almost made me feel even more pressured to be a Catholic. Obviously I knew what I was getting into when I decided to go to Stonehill, but I know that Catholicism is not my religion and to hear people almost preach about it makes me look negatively about it. That being said, I do not hate anyone for being one with their religion. My best friend here on campus is a Crossings Minister and goes to mass every week and when she does speak to me about her beliefs, I listen and respect her because she is entitled to her opinion and I am entitled to respect her opinion even if I disagree. – *White, NY*

Prior to attending Stonehill, I always thought of myself as a Catholic, but never really considered what that meant. Finishing my fourth year at Stonehill, I now have a better understanding of what it truly means to be Catholic. Stonehill has allowed me to ask questions and dig deeper in my religion. It has also allowed me to experience and learn about different religions. – *Caucasian/White, Brookfield, MA*

I still consider myself to be Agnostic; however I am very interested in other religions. This interest started with my general honors religion class. – *White, Loudon, NH*

I grew up Catholic, attended a Catholic high school and have since stopped considering myself a member of that religious community. I was fearful that Stonehill might be a place that shoved religion down your throat because it is religiously affiliated but I have since learned that the exact opposite is true here. **I** found Stonehill welcoming of all faiths and my religious studies course was one of the best academic experiences I have had. It opened up my eyes to a more mature, academic approach to religion and increased my understanding of the variety of attitudes towards spirituality out there. Ultimately I have grown in my own spirituality in the sense that I no longer feel pressured to subscribe to one set of organized beliefs and that it is ok to explore your own spirituality- something I do not think would have been possible without the supportive and open Stonehill community. – *Caucasian, Saratoga Springs, NY*

Being a part of a HOPE trip this year has really opened my eyes to my Catholic faith. I have realized what I believe in and that I would like to continue with my beliefs and even go further to put them out there. – *Caucasian, Catholic, NY*

I was raised Catholic, so going to a Catholic institution was an easy enough decision for me to make. However, I have found that I am less religiously active in college than I was when I was at home when I would go to mass with my family every weekend. Both religion and spirituality are still very important to me, and I do wish I made time for it in my weekly schedule. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

It hasn't greatly influenced me and I'm okay with that. The religion class that I took wasn't solely based on Christianity and I was happy to see that. – *Anonymous*

Because I'm a Catholic and this a Catholic college, my religious life is going okay. – *Black/African American, Roman Catholic, Woodbury, MN*

I am Catholic and at Stonehill I have questioned my beliefs because I don't agree with some practices my fellow Catholics take part in. I wonder whether or not I should be in this faith. – *African American, Roman Catholic, MA*

I have become much more spiritual at Stonehill because of retreats and especially H.O.P.E. trips have truly advanced my faith further. My faith is different compared to high school; it is not as based on the bible and more about having faith in people and yourself and being compassionate towards others in your daily life. – *Caucasian, Roman Catholic, Chatham, NJ*

I have realized how little of an importance religion is to me at Stonehill and I am no longer a Catholic since beginning my college experience at Stonehill. – *Anonymous*

While I often identify myself as Catholic, I am not a very religious person. Stonehill's Catholic identity was not a contributing factor at all in my decision to come here. Therefore, I would say Stonehill has had no impact on the role of religion in my life. – *Catholic, North Kingstown, RI*

I do believe that coming to Stonehill has influenced my religion. Although I am Catholic and Stonehill is a Catholic college, I did not choose to come to this school because of religious affiliation. And I do not think that Stonehill is a school that "pushes" religion onto its students. I have taken my own personal interest in Catholicism (and spirituality in general), and I find myself going to mass more often than I would before coming to Stonehill. – *White, Roman Catholic, Boston, MA*

I think the religion classes I've taken have given me a better look at what I want to believe in, but I'm not more "spiritual" because of it, and I'm certainly not religious. – *Caucasian, Nashua, MA*

I think it's great that Stonehill has outlets for people who are very spiritual, I myself haven't really taken advantage of these places as much as I should have, but my friends do keep me grounded and in touch with my religion. – *Filipino-American, Catholic, CA*

I am amazed at my ability to keep my faith in college. Being at Stonehill I have become great friends with the priests and am in church every Sunday. I find that without my family nearby for guidance I am often forced to turn inward and it is within myself that I find the faith and strength to overcome any personal issues that my family might otherwise have had to help me with. – *White, Catholic, Niskayuna, NY*

I don't think that Stonehill itself has influenced my religious journey, though I have changed my ideas a lot since high school. I do think that being at Stonehill has offered a very unique look at how the hierarchy of the Catholic Church functions, given that our school identifies very strongly with its Catholic heritage. – *White/Caucasian, Protestant, Hudson, MA*

Attending Stonehill has bolstered my spirituality and has helped me to separate the childlike acceptance of faith from the truth of what being a Catholic really means. It has helped me to infuse my religion with more spirituality and understanding. – *Caucasian/Irish, Scandinavian, Mashpee, MA*

Coming from a Protestant/Methodist upbringing, I had never been to a Catholic school before. I knew that coming to Stonehill would be in some ways different for me, but so far the differences have been positive ones. I had never attended a Catholic mass before coming to Stonehill, and I had never taken a religion class before coming to Stonehill. I have recently been interested in religion and learning about others' beside my own, and luckily for me, Stonehill has allowed me to do so. – *White/Caucasian, Auburn, MA*

I'm not Catholic, and choosing to attend a Catholic college was a tough decision to make. After attending a mass on campus, I started to consider to what extent there is "Catholic privilege" at Stonehill, in the same way some people might talk about "male privilege" or "white privilege". Although in many ways Stonehill's religious affiliation has challenged me to consider my own beliefs, priorities, and ways I act upon them, I also often feel like the "other" here. – *Anonymous*

THANK YOU!

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