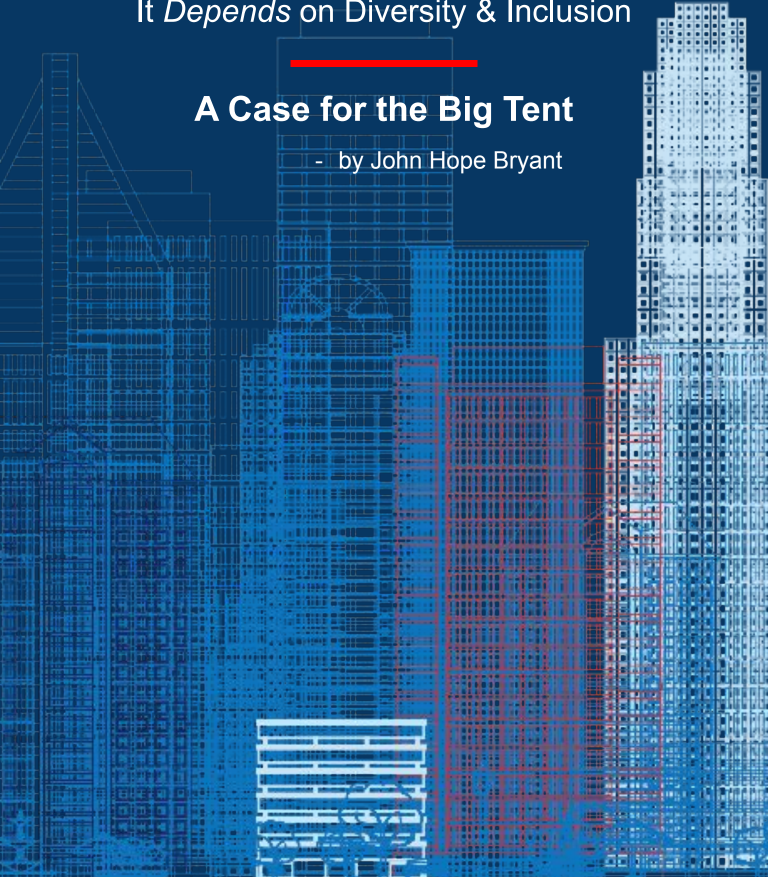
THE BUSINESS PLAN FOR AMERICA

It *Depends* on Diversity & Inclusion

A Case for the Big Tent

- by John Hope Bryant



Whether Tears or Cheers,
Diversity is Destiny

According to John Hope Bryant of Operation HOPE, the growth and development of our population, as well as its ethnic and cultural diversity, is a major contribution to our financial growth and cultural creativity.

As I watch Atlanta boom, I can’t argue with him.

In the late 1960’s the business leaders of Atlanta adopted the slogan “The City Too Busy to Hate!” We have had a booming economy.

Now John Bryant is offering a business plan for America based on equal opportunity. Equal opportunity to capital as well as to education and markets.

It sounds good to me. What do you think?

Ambassador Andrew Young
Civil Rights Icon

Everyone wants to be an American, except seemingly many Americans. Most of us are all busy arguing with each other, about things that really don't matter. And respectfully, we need to knock it off. Let me offer you – the intelligent and thoughtful human being and thinker that you are – the facts of the matter.

1. **Demographics are Destiny:**

   a. In 1955, America was 90% white[i]
   b. <u>In our lifetime</u>, America will experience a majority of Americans being over the age of 65, for the first time, ever. The U.S. Census projects that by 2034, those over 65 will outnumber children for the first time in U.S. history[ii].
   c. Most of those retiring are white and economically successful Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964)[iii].
   d. Today, for the first time in our nation's history, America is more than 40% black, brown or other people of color[iv]. And, too many in this group haven't read *The Memo* (my book from 2017) on how finance, money, free enterprise,

capitalism, and wealth creation *actually* work. These basic financial concepts were not shared historically, leaving many people of color outside the mainstream economy and without a ladder to personal wealth.

e. By 2045, the U.S. Census estimates that the country will become a majority of minorities[v]. And at present, while brilliant, ambitious, and eager to engage, most members of these groups are not prepared to take hold of the economic levers of the largest economy in the world. More troubling, our collective system doesn't seem invested in helping the new farm club along with the knowledge, skills and experience needed. Note: This is literally our future bench strength, for the playoff games, for the rest of our lives. But more on that later in the plan.

2. **In Successful Capitalism Models, Diversity Always Wins.**

a. Capitalism and democracy, for that matter, are imperfect and messy. At the same time, they generate better financial and governance outcomes than any system the world has created.

b. America today is among the most diverse countries in the world. It's also the world's largest economy. Our individual and collective success has literally been built on immigrants and our diversity. It always has been, it still is today and it will be in the future. The choice not to embrace diversity and inclusion is the equivalent of jeopardizing the well-being of our children and grandchildren.

c. The two biggest economies in the U.S. – California and New York[vi] – are also the two most diverse states in the U.S.

d. Metropolitan Atlanta is the most diverse city in the Southeast, the only international city in the South, and the 10th largest economy in the entire United States[vii], at more than $450 billion in GDP in 2022.

e. If Metro Atlanta was a country, its GDP would comfortably be amongst the 40 largest countries, of the almost 200 countries – in the world. And Atlanta runs on a business plan of diversity and inclusion.

f. Underscoring the Atlanta-diversity -and-inclusion-as-business-plan, every state in the South has chosen a ‘different’ business plan than Atlanta over the past 60+ years since the civil rights movement.

g. Fact: The GDPs of all six Southern states – Alabama ($300B), Arkansas ($176B), Kentucky ($258B), Louisiana ($291B), Mississippi ($139B), and West Virginia ($97B)[viii] – all have GDPs (state economies) that are smaller than the GDP of Metro Atlanta. You can almost fit the three smallest of these states inside the metro Atlanta economy, and still have room!

h. More diverse companies outperform their peers. According to McKinsey[iv], ethnically diverse organizations are 39% more likely to outperform companies that are less diverse when measuring ethnicity and gender, according to its latest research.

3. **Racism Doesn’t Work**. Tapping down on diversity and inclusion is just plain bad for

business. And racism is a balance sheet and income killer. Financially, racism is a very poor financial choice for the country, our states and cities and for our families themselves.

a. According to a 2020 Citigroup Report[x] racism and bias against blacks alone, for the 20-year period from 2000 and 2020 alone, cost the U.S. economy approximately $16 trillion.
b. The Citigroup Report further noted that if we just stopped this behavior, the U.S. economy would increase $5 trillion over the next five years, *or as much as 4% of additional U.S. GDP on an annualized basis* from this one action alone.

4. **Being white alone – or even just *for* white alone – is not a winning plan.**

a. Going forward there will not be enough college-educated white men to drive and grow future American GDP, compared to a couple of generations ago. And this is not a racial comment. It's just math. The argument here is about green not just black and white.

b. While Baby Boomers are in the process of mass retirement, Social Security is scheduled to go broke after they have reached retirement age—by 2033[xi] (meaning, it will not be able to pay out 100% of scheduled benefits to all retirees on its own, just a projected 77% of scheduled benefits).

c. The economy now needs fuel and energy from all of us in order to succeed and continue to grow.

d. Those *now* joining our educated and connected white brothers and sisters in the economy – as new middle-class aspirants and wealth creators – have not been formally educated in elementary, middle or high school about how money works, about capitalism, economics or how to build wealth, with the racial gap making this even worse[xii]. And their relationship capital and 'sponsorship' is horrible. Moreover, there seems to be an active push to destroy and dismantle programming focused on helping these groups to become competitive in a market economy, yet alone being able to win (or to join the winning economic ranks).

e. One estimate is that if we don't invest in the economic future of African Americans and they remain on their current economic trajectory, they are estimated to have a net worth of zero by 2053. This is not just bad for Black America. This is bad for *America*.[xiii] In this same study, the case for Latinos under the same assumptions are estimated to have their net worth approach zero by 2073. All of this, is bad for the world's sole superpower and economic power. America.

f. *<u>This is why I say that financial literacy is not a 'nice to have' today, but rather the national economic imperative for this generation</u>*. For ALL people, including the working poor whites today, who make up a larger number of those in poverty,[xiv] it’s the difference between success and failure.

5. **Facts Matter. Like This One: We Are Only Better Together.**

   a. There has never been a global superpower, that wasn’t <u>at the same time</u> also a global economic superpower. Think England, Germany, France, Ancient Rome, etc.
   b. Right now, America is that sole global superpower, as well as the global economic power. But based on the simple data and math above, this cannot survive even another 30 years on current trajectory and plan.
   c. Nearly 70% of the largest economy on the planet is driven by consumer spending.[xv]
   d. 78% of Americans today are living paycheck to paycheck, according to an industry survey.[xvi]
   e. 50% of those making $100,000 a year today, are living from paycheck to paycheck, according to a 2023 LendingTree survey.[xvii] [xviii]

f. A third of those making $250,000 a year report living from paycheck to paycheck, according to a 2022 LendingTree survey.[xix]

g. Those at the economic bottom of the pyramid are in no way prepared to move to the top of the economic food chain. This includes the single largest group of poor in this country, which are poor and white, making up over 26 million citizens.

h. My rich white friends, need my poor black friends to do better, if only to stay rich. These are the non-emotional facts of the matter.

i. <u>Even the racist wins when a black or brown person succeeds in this new American landscape, because GDP rises (for all of us)</u>. [xx]

6. **America is at War. Or <u>the World is at War *with Us*</u>!**

a. Four authoritarian-led countries – China, Russia, North Korea and Iran -- *want* to diminish and replace America. They want to replace our influence on the world stage and at home. They cannot win in a fair fight, so they cheat at capitalism, and undermine, well – us. Their plan is simple. Get us, to fight with us.

Unless we all want to be subject to the rules of some other authoritarian government or some form of chaos, we will need to get one thing straight and crystal clear -- <u>going forward, we actually need each other. And, together, we can build an even stronger economy, avoid a disaster and a lot of shared pain, while we continue pursuing the tremendous potential our country holds.</u>

"The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation… We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth."

Here Lincoln argued that that the survival and success of the American experiment in self-government was crucial not just for Americans, but the entire world, as a beacon of hope and a testament to the vitality of democracy.

This plan is akin to the one prescribed by Abraham

Lincoln over 100 years ago. I make the same argument, but I also believe that we have grown into a *free enterprise* democracy in the 21st century in America, and (we) remain the light on the hill for the world. God, I believe, needs America to survive, and thrive. As a symbol of hope for the world. But God does not segregate and divide one brother and sister from another. We are all one. And this, is how we win, also, for the next 100 years.

Join me in my campaign for America. It begins with financial literacy for all.

Financial literacy is the civil rights issue of this generation.

Sign up today.

Let's go…

John Hope Bryant

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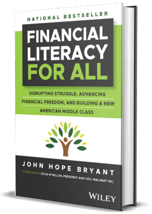
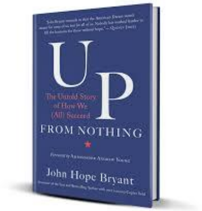
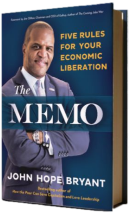
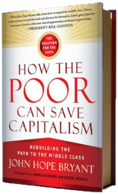
OTHER WRITINGS

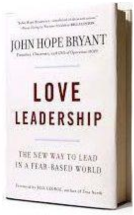
by John Hope Bryant











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