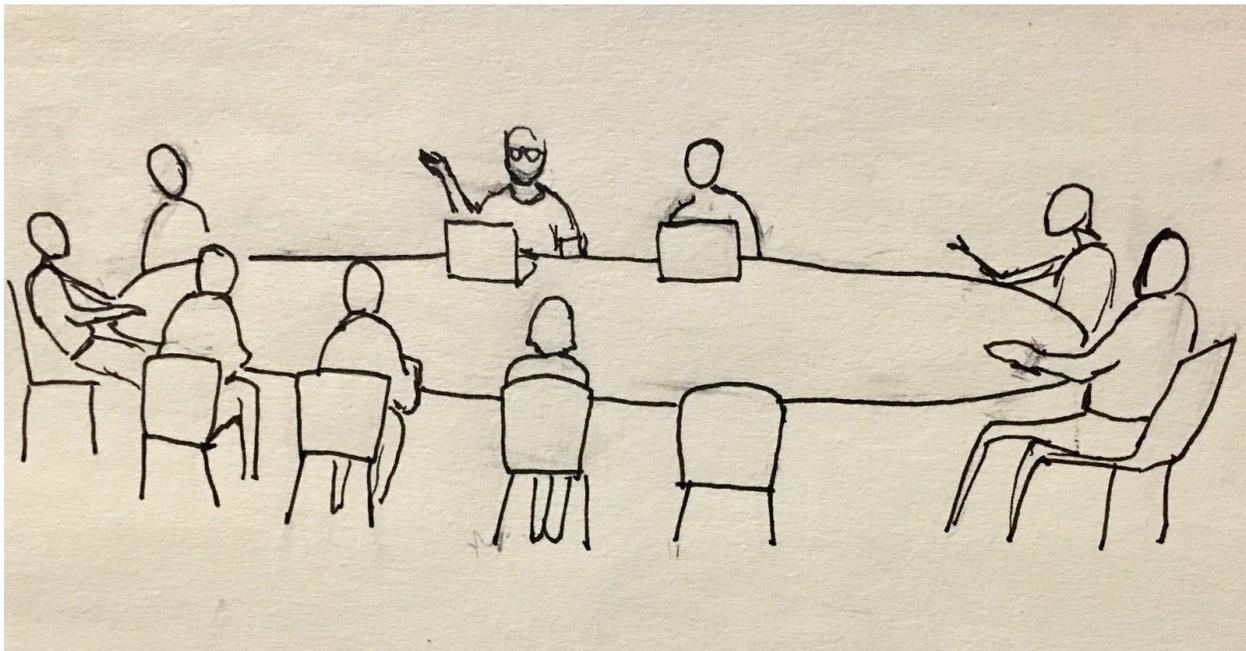


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### P1: Need Finding

#### Event 1: Free Speech & Exclusion on American Campuses



#### Interview Questions

1. What motivated you to attend this event today?
2. Overall thoughts on what was presented.
3. Do you think that campuses are exclusionary?
4. To what degree should we have free speech vs safety?

## Summary

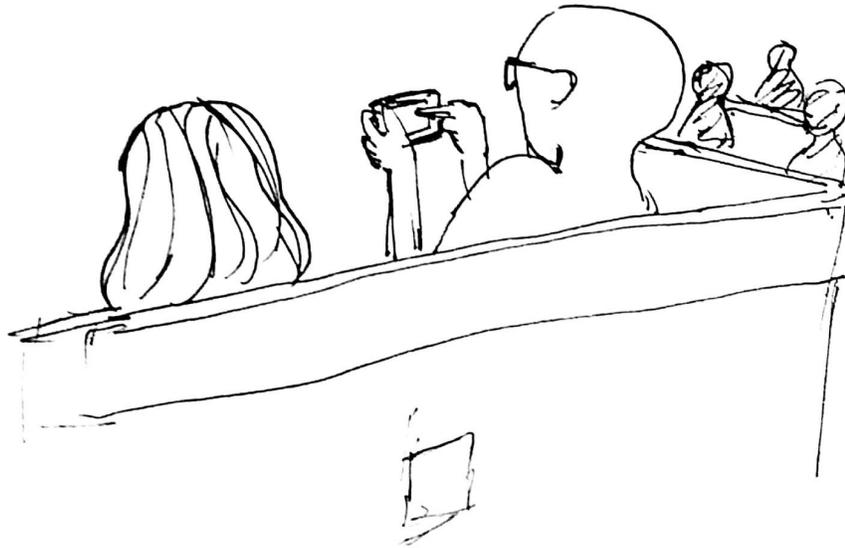
This event was part of an ongoing, weekly discussion group held at the MENA salon. Each week there are different topics based on recommended readings and the one this time was focused on free speech and exclusion. This is open to the general public so there were people in attendance that were not specifically related to UC Berkeley. There were two moderators to prompt discussion on the readings.

People in attendance were mostly elderly, white men or college-age students. Those participating tended to get off topic from the question asked although they were passionate about what they were discussing. When each person who voiced an opinion talked, they were listened to and allowed to fully express their opinion. Whoever replied to them or responded was respectful even when they disagreed.

Overall, we noticed that there were common opinions expressed during the event. A few agreed that strong labels are counterproductive to having a meaningful discussion with others of opposing viewpoints. The major idea that surfaced is that listening to others is crucial for solving the major problems in the world. As one attendee mentioned: "Solutions to our problems are on the other side"

**Event 2: White Supremacy, Gender, and Speech in the Wake of Charlottesville**





### Interview Questions

1. What motivated you to attend this event today?
2. What were your overall thoughts on what was presented?
3. What perspectives did you hear today that you haven't considered before? How do you feel about that?
4. Have you interacted with someone that didn't share your opinion? Can you tell me about a specific incident?

### Summary

The format of the event was a panel of speakers talking about white supremacy, gender, and free speech. At the end, there were a few minutes for questions from the audience. We didn't think that this specific event was structured to foster discussion. This was not really a place where diverse opinions were being expressed. It seemed to be an echo chamber in itself, with the assumption that everyone was on the same side of the issues. One particular speaker came off condescending and was constantly making fun of the other side. Throughout the event, people were leaving and generally didn't seem engaged. We noticed that the audience mostly just nodded. When there was time for questions, only three people had questions. One of them was an advertisement for an event. Overall, the event was mainly a platform for the speakers to share their ideas, without much of a discussion.

We interviewed two people: a professor of critical theory and feminism, and one of the speakers at the event. Both talked about how they generally agreed with the perspectives presented that day and how they try to seek out opportunities to engage with people who disagree with them in a meaningful, critical way. We were not able to get much useful information from the interviews.

**POV:**

We met with... we were amazed to realize... it would be game changing to...

1. *We met with* a young Berkeley City College student at the *Free Speech and Exclusion on American Campuses* event at the MENA Salon.

*We were amazed to realize* that he felt that there is lack of constructive and thoughtful discussions/sharing of knowledge particularly in Berkeley.

*It would be game changing to* provide a way for him and other like minded individuals to meet and have a meaningful discussion.

2. Based on our observations, it seems that Berkeley is not as open-minded as we thought. We were amazed to realize that there is this Berkeley bubble that prevents students from wanting to speak up or disagree. It would be game changing to improve the Berkeley community so that students can form and express their own opinions.

**HMW:**

1. How might we motivate college students to step outside their social circle/comfort zone?
2. How might we organize a way to help students find others students interested in conversing with people of different perspectives?
3. How might we structure campus events so that they attract a more diverse audience and foster an environment where students feel like they can freely express their opinions?
4. How might we keep apathetic audience members engaged and interested during events covering controversial topics?

**Presentation Slides:**

[Slides](#)