“Teaching Students about White Identity Development Theory: Reflecting & Assessing Practice in a PWI Classroom”

Dr. Sherwood Smith, Lecturer & Director, UVM
Adriana Lara, Masters Student, Counselling, Mental Health, UVM
Books

WHITE TRASH
RACE AND CLASS IN AMERICA
EDITORS
MATT WRAY AND ANNALEE NEWITZ

CONTEMPORARY VOICES OF WHITE NATIONALISM IN AMERICA
EDITED BY
CAROL M. SWAIN & RUSS NIELI
Themes:

- Enhancing critical thinking by deconstructing White & whiteness and engaging White students in reflection on their own identity as ethnic people

There are three learning objectives we will address in this session:

- Understand the usefulness outcomes of a course on White Identity Development to the critical thinking, diversity and justice goals of higher education classroom
- Provide a basic structure for the development of such course
- Understand the challenge and benefits to date in conducting the course from the perspectives of grad teaching assistant, professor & students.
SESSION OUTLINE:

- 1. Introduction: Video Fishbowl
- 2. Groups Exercise I: Words & Identities
- 3. Course Overview Information
- 4. Tools Used: Exercises & Videos examples
- 5. Course reflection: Pedagogy & Analysis
- 6. Assessing Outcomes
- 7. Evaluation of Presentation
BEGINNING OF GROUND RULES

- Demonstrate Respect: Platinum Rule
- Maintain Confidentiality
- Allow Silence
- Share “air” time actively
- Challenge Respectfully
- Seek Clarification
- Suspend Disbelief
- Own our own beliefs - “I” statements
Key Terms:

- Ethnicity
- Race
The Complexity of Ethnicity

Please list each of the people as White or Not White.

1 = definitely White/Anglo/Caucasian

5 = not white at all
Course Textbooks

- Making Meaning of Whiteness
- White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism
- Learning to Be White
- White by Law
Course Overview

Major Themes of the course are:

- What is the meaning of Social Construction?
- What is whiteness?
- Historical Perspective of Whiteness
- Exploring Critical Reflections of Whiteness:
  Developmental Influence and Processes
  Role of Institutions (Education, Government, etc.)
  Model of Identity Development
VIDEO CLIPS:

- Europa Europa
- Addams Family
- Soprano’s
- Way Home
Personal Variables:
Five Personal Skill Levels


Unconscious

Conscious

Competent

Incompetent

Preconscious Awareness
Video Clips Examples & Discussion

Surface Culture

- LANGUAGE
- ARTS, LITERATURE
- RELIGIONS, MUSIC, DRESS
- DANCE, GAMES, SPORTS, COOKING

Folk Culture

- NOTIONS OF MODESTY
- CONCEPTS OF BEAUTY

Invisible

- EDUCATION
- CHILD RAISING
- RULES OF DESCENT
- COSMOLOGY
- RELATIONSHIP TO THINGS, ANIMALS & PLANTS
- COURTSHIP PRACTICES
- CONCEPT OF JUSTICE
- MOTIVATION TO WORK
- CRITERIA FOR LEADERSHIP
- DECISION MAKING PROCESSES
- DEITIES
- DEATH
- IDEAS OF CLEANLINESS
- LOCUS OF CONTROL
- THEORY OF DISEASE
- PHYSICAL SPACE
- DEFINITION OF SANITY, FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, MURDER, LIFE, GENDER, FACIAL EXPRESSIONS
- ROLES IN RELATION TO STATUS BY AGE, GENDER, CLASS, KINSHIP, OCCUPATION, RELIGION,
- CONVERSATIONAL PATTERNS IN VARIOUS SOCIAL CONTEXTS
- CONCEPTION OF TIME & SPACE
- PREFERENCES FOR COMPETITION, COOPERATION, INDIVIDUALISM OR GROUP NORMS, SIN, GRACE
- NOTION OF ADULTHOOD
- NOTION OF LOGIC AND VALIDITY
- PHYSICAL SPACE ARRANGEMENTS, LIFE ODORS
- HANDLING OF EMOTIONS
- ACCEPTANCE OF FRUSTRATION OR PAIN
- CONCEPT OF FAITH

- **Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg**
- **Five stages Toward Cultural Competence**
- **Author:** Jerome Hanley
Individual Identity

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT THEORIES:
Perry’s Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in College Years

Position Description Student in the Classroom

- Mode of meaning making that tends to view the world dichotomously (black/white; right/wrong).

  Dualism

  · Learning is information exchange.
  · Knowledge is quantitative (facts) and authorities (instructors/books) have and dispense the right answers.

  Student learns how to learn. Multiplicity

  · Continuum--honoring diverse views when the answer is not known.
  · All opinions are valid in such instances.

  Student learns to think more independently. Individuals improve their ability to think analytically.

  Relativism

  · Initiated by the recognition of the need to support opinions.
  · Knowledge is viewed more qualitatively.
  · Knowledge is contextually defined, based on evidence and supporting arguments.

  Student’s rationale for current adherence to belief reflects a process that includes questioning and a contextual basis for stances taken. Commitment in Relativism

  · Making choices in a contextual world.
  · Initiates the ethical development of the thinker.

  Student finds the sense of identity searched for elsewhere.

# Haridman & Jackson Model


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Naive</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Resistance</th>
<th>Redefinition</th>
<th>Integration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active</td>
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### Individual Identity Development

**DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY**

From Janet Helms combined with Bennetts
By S. Smith 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denial</th>
<th>Defense</th>
<th>Minimization</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Adaptation</th>
<th>Integration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-encounter</td>
<td>Encounter</td>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td>Reintegration</td>
<td>Pseudo-Independence</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Internalization</td>
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**ETHNOCENTRIC STAGES**
- Unconscious and incompetent

**ETHNORELATIVE STAGES**
- aware and skills developing
Development and Learning Style Issues in Teaching this Class

Diagram:
- Instructor
- Teaching Assistant
- Students

Intersection:
- Instructor and Teaching Assistant
- Instructor and Students
- Teaching Assistant and Students
Pedagogical Issues:

- Historical Context at Your Location
- Course History & Status
- Your & Student Status / Identities
- Students Awareness levels
- Knowledge and Developmental Levels
- Instructor Relationship to Teaching Assistant (Job Roles)
Ethical Issues

- Accessibility
- Numbers in the Room

- Climate at the campus

- Your definition of “safety”
  - Confidentiality
  - Overall power & privilege issues
Assessment Tools

- Quantitative
- Qualitative
- Observational
- Reactional
Sample Assignment Format

- Paper Format = **DICE** or **ICE**-- label each section please
- **Description** = Begin with a 2 or 3 sentence summary of the video
- **Interpretation** = Define the prejudice, if any presented using terms/concepts/theories from the course or use the terms to explain why it is not prejudice. Use specific examples.

- **Contrast** = compare your experience of the film to your partners. How does your reaction compare to your partner’s or the readings?

- **Emotion:** Did your feelings change from watching the video? How did your emotion impact your experience of the event? Focus this section on feelings only, not logic. Do not use the words “think,” “thought,” or “know.”
Through taking this course I have learned a lot about what it has meant and what it means to be white today. Although I knew in some sense that whiteness or what it means to be white is a social construction, I didn’t think it was to the high degree I now see it. For one, I didn’t realize who specifically classifies as white has changed over the years. Reading Lopez allowed me to see that you can be considered white one day while a different race the next depending on what the law decides or how people view you. While nothing is cut and dry and easily determined, I had thought whiteness was a term that was more static and fixed. Also, reading Blumenbach showed how the term whiteness was created by one man, reemphasizing its social construction.

There were two points of clarity for me when I was taking this course. The first occurred when I was researching for our final project. We got to choose the topic and I wanted to find out how you know and identify what level of understanding you have about your own identity and what you can do to change this system of racism. I came across a book where somebody stated that, “Everyday I wake up and think ‘I am black.’” At first I thought this was a hyperbolic statement but I couldn’t think past it and I finally came to the conclusion that everyday I wake up and think, “I am a woman.” Every day I walk to class, every time I check the back seat of my car, every time I am nervous to use the weights at the gym, every day I am thinking about being a woman. Although this course focused on white identity, I think it also opened the door to thinking about the various types of identity one can hold. Black, white, gay, straight, male, female; these are all identities that impact the way we act and the way we interact with others.
I am now serving in AmeriCorps in Portland, ME and I still think about and use the lessons I learned in White Identity every day. During my research for this course I read a book titled “A Race is a Nice Thing to Have.” Before this class I never had to think about my race, after it, I am constantly thinking about my whiteness and understanding, identifying and knowing my race positively impacts my behavior daily and causes me to think more about my actions and the actions of those around me. Truly, a race is a nice thing to have.

This class has been one of the most engaging classes I have had. I enjoyed the answer-a-question-with-a-question technique, because it always left room for more ideas and challenged me to question myself. I appreciated Sherwood’s ability to let the discussion go off topic, and then bring it back. I was impressed with Payne’s ability to ask students clarifying questions that led us to deeper thought.

1. Examine the components of human development such as values, behaviors, beliefs, and customs that are associated with his/her ethnic identities development. Yes; could do more: I think that we were encouraged to look at our own values, customs, beliefs, etc., through the use of the iceberg and tree models.

2. Broaden and enrich your understanding of issues related to your own identity development. Yes. I have had what I considered to be good conversations about race with a former co-worker who was/is tireless in trying to help her White co-workers and clients gain understanding of race issues. I have also worked in a small group investigating community racism. Yet I still had no development of my own racial identity. This class has been instrumental in helping me include race as being part of my identity.

3. Reflect upon the influence of ethnic identity on the development of behaviors, values, beliefs, and attitudes specifically regarding day-to-day interactions with, expectations of, and judgments about the people. Yes. I think we have had many opportunities through reserve readings and class discussions to reflect on the way our ethnic and/or racial identity affects the way we act and think.
Sample Evaluation

Course Evaluations HDFS 295 – Ethnic Id. 2008

Sherwood Smith

*I have been exposed to issues of culture I have never thought about.

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Unsure   D = Disagree   E = Strongly Disagree

A = 11

*I have been exposed to issues of identity development I never thought about.

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Unsure   D = Disagree   E = Strongly Disagree

A = 11

* Now that you have completed this course, is there anything that you wish was discussed in your classes that wasn’t?

Yes = 1            No = 12

What was it?

American History X (movie)

Really appreciated professor allowing students/encouraging students to develop ideas on own, but would have also been an interesting discussion on what we could do to change, or have discussion time on this issue.
REFERENCES ON IDENTITY


Banks, J. Education For Survival In A Multicultural World. Social Studies And The Young Learner. 1:4. (3-5)


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<tr>
<th><strong>SAMPLE VIDEOS</strong></th>
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| **Title:** What does it mean to be white? : the invisible whiteness of being / Derald Wing Sue.  
**Description:** 1 videodisc (50 min.) : sd., col. ; 4 3/4 in.  
**Published:** [Framingham, Mass.] : Micro Training Associates, c2004. |
| **Title:** Tim Wise: on white privilege : racism, white denial & the costs of inequality / Tim Wise ; produced by Sut Jhally.  
**Published:** Northampton, Mass. : Media Education Foundation, c2008  
**Description:** 1 videodisc (57 min.) sd., col. ; 4 3/4 in. |
| **Title:** Mirrors of privilege : [video Recording] : making whiteness visible / a film by Shakti Butler ; directed by Shakti Butler and Rick Butler ; produced by Rick Butler.  
**Description:** 1 videodisc (50 min.) : sd., col. ; 4 3/4 in.  
**Published:** Oakland, Calif. : World Trust Educational Services, Inc., c2006. |
| **Title:** Invisible revolution [video Recording] / produced, directed & edited by Beverly Peterson ; written by Beverly Peterson & Barbara Bowen.  
**Description:** 1 videocassette (55 min.) : sd., col. with b&w sequences ; 1/2 in.  
**Published:** New York : Filmmakers Library, c2000. |
| **Website:** [Stuff White People Like](http://stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/) : Depending on the coolness of the white person, they can experience this stage ... But be warned that a white person saying they like “reggae” what they ... stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/-[Cached][-Similar]http://stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/ |