

CHAPTER 9: INEQUALITIES OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

World Wide Web Activity

National Civil Rights Museum

Annotation: The National Civil Rights Museum is found at <http://www.civilrights museum.org/>. This site offers an excellent, interactive tour of the history of African Americans in North America. It includes exhibits, activities, current events, and links to other web sites related to the Civil Rights movement and African American history.

Learning Objective: To enhance detailed understanding of the history and experiences of African Americans.

Faculty Note: The exercise below invites students to learn more about African American history in an enjoyable, self-paced format. The emphasis is on both the contributions made by individuals to the cause of freedom of African Americans and the changes in American society associated with the changing circumstances of African Americans.

Activity: Have students click on the Web Link, National Civil Rights Museum "Virtual Tour" found at <http://www.mecca.org/~crights/cyber.html>. Take the "Virtual Tour." to learn more about civil rights and African American history. Lead a discussion of about why it took so long for African Americans to attain the full rights of citizenship, and how whites resisted that attainment.

Additional Resources: The web site "The Chronology on the History of Slavery and Racism" found at <http://www.innercity.org/holt/slavechron.html> offers a detailed listing of historical events related to slavery in the United States.

Video Activity (Premium Resource CD Rom)

Race Relations and Troopers Guilty of Racial Profiling

Annotation: In *Race Relations*, the narrator reveals information about the different TV viewing preferences of whites and African Americans, but asserts that both groups overwhelmingly agree, "Anglos have a long history of prejudice." Despite this agreement, 79% of whites agree "minorities claim discrimination too quickly." In *Troopers Guilty of Racial Profiling*, the reporter enforces the notion that African American drivers are, in fact, singled out for traffic stops on the New Jersey Turnpike.

Learning Objective: To develop awareness of the possibility of holding both egalitarian beliefs at the general level and prejudiced beliefs at the individual and organizational level.

Faculty Note: It is easy for students to acknowledge historical discrimination against minority groups, but much more difficult for them to accept their own prejudices. The exercise below is intended to reveal to them their inconsistent beliefs. These video clips are a part of the "Premium Resource CD Rom" provided to instructors upon request.

Activity: Lead students in a discussion of instances of prejudice and discrimination they observe in their daily lives. Ask them how they feel about prejudice and discrimination toward minorities. Then have them watch the videos, *Race Relations* and *Troopers Guilty of Racial Profiling*. Ask them whether they agree with the reported finding "minorities claim discrimination too quickly", especially in light of the information provided in the clip on racial profiling by New Jersey troopers. If you find their attitudes are similar to the attitudes revealed in the survey, lead students (gently!) to examine the inconsistency between their avowed disapproval of prejudice and discrimination and their rejection of the claims of prejudice and discrimination made by minorities. Explore with your students how it is possible to hold these two apparently contradictory beliefs.

Additional Resources: Go to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's home page found at <http://www.hud.gov/>. Search for the issues that address the availability and discrimination in housing, focusing on your own state. Also examine HUD's form "Are You a Victim of Housing Discrimination?" found at http://www.hudclips.org/sub_nonhud/html/pdfforms/903-1.pdf to learn of current federal efforts to find and

eliminate discrimination in housing. As a college student seeking off-campus housing, do you feel you have ever been discriminated against by a potential landlord because of your race, ethnic heritage, sex, or status as a university student?

World Wide Web Activity *The Multiracial Activist: Are Racial Categories Becoming Meaningless?*

Annotation: Our society's increasing diversity makes it difficult for many people to specify their racial-ethnic heritage. Multi-racial identity is discussed on the web site "The Multiracial Activist" found at <http://www.multiracial.com>

Learning Objective: To appreciate the effect on our concept of race of the increasing blending of ethnicities.

Faculty Note: The exercise below confronts students with the reality of American ethnic diversity. Different ethnic groups not only coexist, they marry and produce children whose physical appearance is a blend of their parents' features. In this process of intermarriage, traditional racial and ethnic classification schemes no longer fit.

Activity: Have students click on <http://www.multiracial.com> the web site of "The Multiracial Activist." Then direct them to the "Photo Album" button, and browse the photographs of the families in the album. Ask into which ethnic or racial category the people in these photos should be classified. Finally, discuss the meaning of "race" and "ethnicity" in our society, which is home to an increasing number of multiracial or multiethnic people.

Additional Resources: The Association of Multiethnic Americans, Inc. <http://www.ameasite.org/> covers the current controversy about census classification and other issues of concern to people with multiethnic backgrounds.

Test Question: (Essay) How is the traditional classification scheme of race and ethnicity changing in the U.S.?

Answers might include: The number of categories is increasing to reflect the increasing diversity of American society, but even the increasing number of categories does not capture accurately the multiracial/multiethnic backgrounds of an increasing proportion of Americans.

World Wide Web Activity *Learn about the Debate over U.S. Immigration Policy*
Content Select Activity *Immigration, Assimilation, and Pluralism*

Annotation: The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) <http://www.fairus.org/> argues that the current rate of immigration has a negative impact on our society. The National Immigration Project <http://www.nationalimmigrationproject.org/> supports more open immigration policies. For this exercise, students will combine the *World Wide Web Activity* and a *Content Select Activity*.

Learning Objective: To develop awareness of the common misconceptions about immigration, and how these misconceptions can influence public policy.

Faculty Note: The stereotypes of immigrants and the pattern of immigration have historically and currently produced widespread opposition to immigration. The exercise below will make students aware of some of these misconceptions.

Activity: Have students peruse the National Immigration Project home page at <http://www.nationalimmigrationproject.org/> to learn more about the advocacy of more liberal immigration laws. Seventy-nine percent of Americans agree that the 'blending of many different cultures into one is a unique feature of American society, while 44% of respondents felt that too much diversity could 'change American culture for the worse.' Based on the research you can conduct on the various web sites available and through the *Content Select Activity*, have the students write an essay to explain that contradiction. The student will also be directed to use the *Content Select Activity* to search for articles using the key words assimilation, melting pot, cultural diversity, and pluralism. These four words, when entered separately in the search box, will reveal 226 articles for the student to peruse.

Additional Resources: The web site of the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform <http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/uscir/binational.html> offers a unique effort to understand immigration between the United States and Mexico from a variety of facets. The report was composed by twenty scholars from both nations. Compare the content, style, and focus of this web site's report to the information provided by the federation for Fair Immigration Reform and the National Immigration Project.

The Video Professor

Remember the Titans

Annotation: Two previously segregated schools merge resulting in a mix of leadership among the players and coaches. How the student athletes and their coaches resolve their differences and transform a team divided by color into a championship season is an inspiring example of how racial differences can be overcome.

Learning Objective: To demonstrate how different groups can learn to appreciate one another and develop bonds that transcend color.

Faculty Note: *Remember the Titans* is based on a true story. Denzel Washington accepted the lead part in the movie for considerably less than his standard payment because he believed in the story the film tells. The movie is available for rental at most movie houses and may be found in the university library or a local public library.

Activity: After watching the movie, lead a class discussion. Have the students identify the issues and factors that initially contributed to the tension between the different coaches and among the players. After these issues were beginning to be settled, what were the other obstacles the team encountered? Have the students identify a similar issue of racial merging and what the short term and long-term obstacles were and how they were met. Two examples of this on the national scale were the desegregation of the military in 1948 and Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier into major league baseball in 1947. Are students aware of similar desegregation efforts in the state police, fire service, and other businesses and agencies?

Additional Resources: Students can access an article about Jackie Robinson "The Trailblazer" at <http://www.time.com/time/time100/heroes/profile/robinson01.html> and "The Truman Legacy: Desegregation of the Armed Forces" at <http://www.majorcox.com/columns/truman.htm>.

Video Activity (Interactive Video for Introductory Sociology)

Student Pioneer
Ramadan Ends
Racial Profiling

Annotation: The United States is a land of immigrants, each with a culture of its own, rich in diversity. The three video clips illustrate this diversity, calling attention to how ethnicity and race are often misunderstood by members of society who are not members of the group being stereotyped. The *Student Pioneer* clip illustrates pluralism and the other two clips address prejudice and discrimination.

Learning Objective: To consider the impact of race and ethnicity upon individuals and groups and to illustrate the concept of institutional discrimination.

Faculty Note: Personal and institutional discrimination are major issues in society. Before watching these video clips, provide the class a lecture on the theories of prejudice and discrimination and Merton's typology of discriminators (prejudiced discriminator, non-prejudiced discriminator, prejudiced non-discriminator, and non-prejudiced non-discriminator).

Activity: Assign the class the following questions as a take home assignment. Collect the assignment and then lead a class discussion on the answers they have provided.

1. According to your text, what exactly are race and ethnicity? How would you classify yourself in reference to your specific ethnic heritage as well as your racial heritage?

2. Why was race and ethnicity an issue for student pioneer in clip #22? How might she influence race relations in her community?
3. What social factors do you feel lead to positive or negative race relations in any community?
4. Why are race and ethnicity an issue for Muslim-Americans?
5. Do you think racial profiling is discrimination motivated by racism? Why or why not?
6. How do you think racial profiling can be effectively prevented or discouraged?

Additional Resources: For more information on Ramadan, examine the web page on holidays at <http://www.holidays.net/ramadan/> and the home page of the Muslim-American Society found at <http://www.masnet.org/home.htm> More information on racial profiling in New Jersey can be found at a site sponsored by the Drug Reform Coordination Network <http://www.stopthedrugwar.org/njprofiling/#intro>. This site adds criticism to the accusation of racial profiling by New Jersey troopers. In a more supportive effort, an article by Heather MacDonald in the *City Journal* claims “there is no credible evidence that racial profiling exists”. Her article is found at http://www.city-journal.org/html/eon_3_27_02hm.html

The Video Professor *Men of Honor*

Annotation: Carl Brashear joined the United States Navy shortly after President Truman desegregated the armed forces. Although the concept of de jure segregation ended, de facto segregation continued. In some ways, the continued practices of discrimination and bigotry after Truman’s proclamation were more frustrating and humiliating for African Americans than the previous arrangement.

Learning Objective: To demonstrate how ambition, fortitude, and a stubborn disposition can overcome what appears to be an impossible barrier to achieving one’s goals.

Faculty Note: Carl Brashear was a pathfinder who shattered racial barriers most people considered unbreakable. He was an American hero, not just to African Americans, but to all Americans and the nation.

Activity: Assign the students to write an essay based on the content of the film and other reading and resources they may be able to access. The focus of the essay may be any of the following topics: (1) Using the functionalist perspective, describe how an integrated armed services is important to America. (2) Using the conflict perspective and the teachings of Karl Marx, why were the armed services segregated? How did this contribute towards maintaining a caste-like society that benefited the upper class? (3) Based on the sociological perspective of symbolic interactionism, compare the image of minorities in the armed forces from the period immediately after Truman’s presidential proclamation as illustrated in the film and the image of minorities in the armed services today.

Additional Resources: The movie has an excellent web site at <http://www.menofhonor.com/intro.htm> that includes a biography of Brashear, behind the scenes footage from making the movie, quick time clips of the movie, and other information. The Truman Presidential Museum and Library features a detailed account of the President’s Desegregation Proclamation. This can be accessed at http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/desegregation/large/desegregation.htm