

JUNTOS Workshop Summary of Content
September 30. 2007

Purpose of the Day

- Authentic, ongoing dialogue around race, racism and white privilege
- Decrease in racism
- Development of a “critical lens” when considering issues of race, racism, and white privilege
- Training of students as facilitators for future training and dialogue
- Increased safety and achievement for all students
- Better listening processes for increased cultural understanding

Race as a Social Construction

Race is a socially constructed phenomenon

- No biological basis for the division
- No historical consistency in the US
- No global consistency today

The Social Construction of Race—What is the purpose?

- Establishes Dominant and Subordinate groupings
- Completely about power, privilege and access to resources

Meaning in the U.S. today: Color Blindness v. Race Consciousness

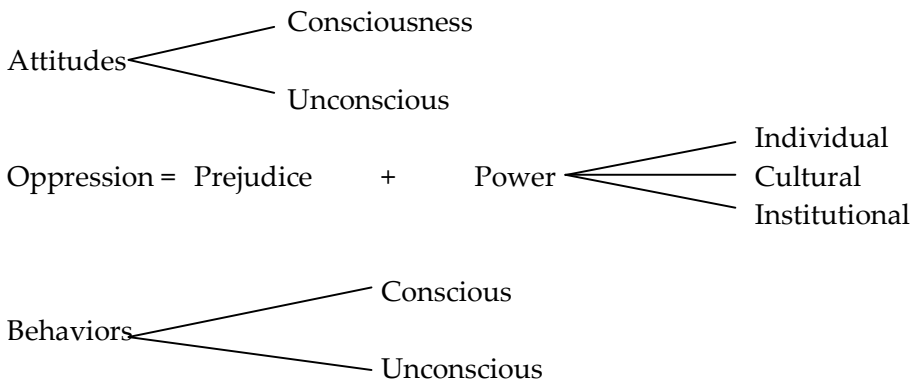
Color Blindness

- What it is and why white folks want it so badly
- What it does to students of color
- What it does for white students
- It is an “idea” in this country but not at all part of our “practice”

Race Consciousness

- Acknowledges the social construction of race AND
- Acknowledges the real consequences of race AND
- Understands the development of shared experiences born out of centuries of fighting against racism

The Oppression Model



Adapted from Judith Katz, *White Awareness* as well as various *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* readings.

Prejudice and Power

Prejudice

- Everyone has it as a result of socialization
- It can be conscious or unconscious
- It has certain functions for folks who hold onto it

Power

- In order for something to be considered “oppression” in its truest sense, the person, group or institution perpetuating it, must have access to power on all three levels
- There is no such thing as “reverse oppression (racism)”
- It can be active or passive and still constitute oppression

Understanding Racism

The cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of white folks and the assumed inferiority of people of color

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A system of advantage based on race that benefits white folks and disadvantages people of color

(Adapted from Tatum, Beverly in “Defining Racism: ‘Can We Talk?’” in *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, 2000)

(What can JUNTOS do?)

What can you do?

- Continue to deconstruct racism! Open each JUNTOS meeting with the questions, “What have you done to address racism/white privilege?”
- Actively seek correct information to heal from the ways that we have been unaware and uninformed
- If you are white, situate yourself within the context of racism.
- Use the “Critical Thinking” questions on a regular basis, in particular, when making decisions for JUNTOS.
- Critically distinguish between Race and Culture/Ethnicity so as to lay a foundation for valuing culture while dismantling racism and white privilege.
- Deconstruct notions of race (start to catch the ways in which you make race real) while supporting culture.
- Become aware of the ways in which your racial identity speaks when you enter the room.
- Begin to see how ALL interactions are racialized in some way.

What can you do?

- Educate others about racism. Racism is operating everyday; work to deconstruct it everyday!
- Openly disagree with racist comments or actions of those around you.
- Do not deny your socialization and accept responsibility for your own racism (sexism, classism, etc...) and attempt to become aware of them in a non-defensive, guilt-free manner.
- Discover your own culture and explore your values, standards, and assumptions about human behavior.

Critical Thinking

The following is a summary of what “critical thinking” actually is (and questions to consider). It is taken from critical pedagogy literature (Freire, Giroux, McLaren, Shor, Kreisberg, hooks, and the like).

1. CT involves examining issues from **multiple, non-dominant** perspectives and sources of information,

“Who is not at the table? Whose perspective is not being represented here? How would I think about or understand this issue if I looked at it from ‘this’ perspective?”

2. CT always considers issues of power and privilege at the smallest to most significant levels and understands that power is always a part of the discussion,

“Who benefits from this? Who is not served/is disadvantaged?”

3. CT involves **rigorous** self-reflection.

“How do I actually know what I think is true? Or, have I just thought this for so long, that I am mistaking it for fact? What information have I read, what classes have I taken, who do I know from this group or who has first-hand experience with this?”

From Flip Charts:

1. “The most sacred place on earth is where an ancient hatred becomes a present love.” (Adapted from *A Course in Miracles*)
2. **Race:** skin color; labeling cultural; distinguishes differences; construct—not real; medicine wheel.
Culture: hierarchy of values; language; traditions/community expectations; weddings; think food, dinner table; everything people do; music; traditions; social norms; customs; ritual; transferred...lost; multiple culture; where you grow up.
Ethnicity: heritage; self-identification; transcends race/culture; ceremonies of life...marriage, death; choice; other-identified.
3. **American:** White; English; from U.S.; Christian; able [?]; patriotic; hard-working