

Brandeis University
Master's Program in Coexistence and Conflict Resolution

The Future of Diversity Work – COEX 270

Prof. Theodore Johnson

Class time: Wednesdays, 2:10-5:00pm

Syllabus – Spring 2009

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Course Outline

Course Description and Assumptions:

Diversity and multiculturalism are challenges to global human relationships. This course will uncover popular misconceptions about these factors, will provide effective approaches to address them, and will develop scenarios for a future of constructive coexistence, which goes beyond these challenges.

Course Objectives

Course Format:

This full semester course will meet weekly in a seminar format and will be open to both undergraduates and graduate students.

Final Project/and Paper:

In the final session there will be an in-class presentation (is one-half of the final grade), consisting of: 1) an oral presentation (individually or in pairs) of the proposed final paper and, 2) a final paper (12-15 pages) consisting of an analysis of a diversity challenge of your choice. The paper should identify symptoms of the challenge, the gaps, and causes along with realistic recommendations for addressing the challenges.

For example, you may believe that affirmative action is the key to closing the diversity gap between blacks and whites in a particular country. Closing this gap will be both morally and politically important for the country and the global community, etc. The symptoms might include frustration, rising crime rate and increased violence, racial tensions etc. The causes might include economic disparity, limited job opportunities, inequality in social status leadership and so on. The causes may include a history of racism, discrimination, hostile attitudes towards

inclusion, etc. From there you might posit some realistic suggestion for closing the gaps.

The above example is only a snapshot of the problem and is for illustration purposes. You would develop your ideas more fully and draw from the readings, discussions, and exercises in the class. A short bibliography (one page) will also be expected.

COURSE OUTLINE

**Session 1 & 2 – (Jan. 14th & Jan. 21st): Introduction and Course Overview:
What is Race – Diversity – Multiculturalism? What is discrimination?**

The first two sessions pose the definitional and labeling dilemma. The session will include an overview of the common perceptions and myths about race – its origins and impact in a modern “multi racial” society. It will also look at other classification “labels” such as Multiculturalism, Diversity and Ethnicity.

In-class film and discussion: “Understanding Race.”

Required Readings:

Alland, Jr. Alexander (2002) “Race: a Flawed Category” in *Race in Mind, Race, IQ and Other Racisms*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 39-55

Michaels, Walter Benn. (2006) “The Trouble with Race” in *The Trouble with Diversity, How we Learned to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, p. 21-49

Gutman, Amy. (1993) “The Challenge of Multiculturalism in Political Ethics” in *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Summer, 1993) p. 171-206

Recommended Readings:

Watson, C.W. (2000) “Nationalism and Multiculturalism” in *Multiculturalism*. Buckingham UK: Open University Press, p. 18-45

West, Cornel. (1993) “Nihilism in Black America” in *Race Matters*. Boston: Beacon Press, p. 11-20

Darder, Antonia and Torres, Rodolfo, D. (2004) “Does ‘Race’ Matter? Transatlantic Perspectives on Racism after ‘Race Relations.’” With Robert Miles in *After Race, Racism after Multiculturalism*. New York: New York University Press, p. 25-46

Session 3 & 4 – (Jan. 28th & Feb. 4th):

Color, Class and Inequality: A Global Perspective

Why does race persist? These sessions will focus on the various social, political and economic concepts and elements that constitute “class” and oppression. The session will also enable students to identify the makers of inequality and allow for descriptions and experiences of people from different social classes. This session will examine a case study on Brazil as it struggles to deal with class, race, indigenous and human rights.

In-Class video and discussion: “Not Black or White”

Required Readings:

Twine, France Winddance. (1998) “Introduction and History,” “Vasalia” and “Discourses in Defense of the Racial Democracy” in *Racism in a Racial Democracy, The Maintenance of White Supremacy in Brazil*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, p. 1-30 and 65-86

Nascimento, Elisa Larkin. (2007) “Brazil and the Making of Virtual Whiteness” and “Constructing and Deconstructing the ‘Crazy’ Creole” in *The Sorcery of Color, Identity, Race and Gender in Brazil*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, p. 42-118

Recommended Readings:

Nascimento, Abdias Do. (1992) “Pan-Africanism, Negritude and the African Experience in Brazil” in *Africans in Brazil: A Pan-African Perspective*. Trenton: Africa World Press, p. 81-117

Session 5 & 6 – (Feb. 11th & Feb. 25th):

Gender and Sexism – Stereotypes, archetypes and prejudice

These sessions will address issues of gender and sexism. Readings will lead students to critique the dominant U.S. culture’s social construction of gender and engage in a discussion of how gender affects their own lives. This will be done within the context of coming to understand stereotypes, archetypes and prejudice. Stereotypes can be positive, neutral or negative. Prejudice is a shortcut for taking time to fully understand differences. Archetypes are “descriptive” of a behavior without judgment, attribution or critique. This session will also pose the question: Who benefits from sexism and from the denial of gender equality?

These sessions will also examine the case studies on the former Kosovo and Iran, and issues of sexual oppression and sexual violence as an act of war, and media complicity in perpetuating unhealthy stereotypes.

In-class video and discussion: “Gender & Communication: male-female difference in language & nonverbal behavior”

Required Readings:

Sharepour, Mahmoud. (2005) "Gender Role Stereotypes Among Iranian Adolescents" in *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 145 (4), p. 491-494

Wade, Jay, C. (2001) "Professional Men's Attitude Toward Race and Gender Equity" in *The Journal of Men's Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 73-88

Smith, Anna Deavere. (1995) "The Most Riveting Television: The Hill-Thomas Hearings and Popular Culture" in *Race, Gender and Power in America*, Hill, Anita Faye, and Jordan, Emma Coleman, Eds. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 248-270

Del Zotto, Augusta C. (2002) "Weeping Women, Wringing Hands: How the Mainstream Media Stereotyped Women's Experiences in Kosovo" in *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, p. 141-150

Recommended Readings:

Brainerd, Elizabeth. (2000) "Women in Transition: Changes in Gender Wage Differentials in Easter Europe" in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 54, No. 1, p. 138-162

Sessions 7 & 8 (March 4th & March 11th):**Diversity and Religion**

These sessions will look at America's challenges of religion diversity and will specifically probe the impact of evangelical and fundamentalist movements and their impact on multiculturalism. This session is not a study of comparative religion but will have students identify the key strands of these two movements and how they enable or disable diversity of thought and discourse.

The sessions will also explore the European approach to the challenge of Muslims and citizenship – its meaning and struggles with modernity.

In-class video and discussion: "Jesus Camp"**Required Readings:**

Gasper, Louis and Dynes, Russell R. (1964) "The Fundamentalist Movement" in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 154-155

Lumsden, Michael. (2005) God's Politics: AN Interview with Jim Wallis.

http://www.motherjones.com/cgi-bin/print_article

Frederick, Marla and Griffin, Traci. (2007) “‘Becoming Conservative, Becoming White?’: Black Evangelicals and the Para-Church Movement” in *This Side of Heaven, Race, Ethnicity and Christian Faith*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 145-160

Jessup, Michael. (2007) “The Swords of Truth in a Sea of Lies: The Theology of Hate” in *This Side of Heaven, Race, Ethnicity and Christian Faith*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 165-178

Kastoryano, Riva. (2006) “French secularism and Islam, France’s headscarf affair” in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship, A Europe Approach*. Modood, Tariq, Triandafyllidou, Anna and Zapatra-Barrero, Richard, Eds. London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, p. 57-69

Recommended Readings:

Laurence, Jonathan and Vaisse, Justin. (2006) “Patterns of Exclusion and Inclusion in French Society” in *Integrating Islam*. Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press, p. 49-73

Session 9 & 10 (March 18th & March 25th): Transcending Difference – Towards co-existence

These sessions will focus on the beginning steps towards re-defining the traditional labels and practices that have led to repetition of ineffective measures and strategies locking societies in dysfunctional patterns of social behavior regarding diversity.

The purpose of this session is to explore new theories and possibilities that move beyond existing behavior patterns. It will explore new approaches and practices aimed at getting beyond race and empowering the traditionally oppressed – women, minorities – and those trapped in poverty.

Required Readings:

Payne, Richard, J. (1998) *Getting Beyond Race, The Changing American Culture*. Boulder CO: Westview Press.

1. Promoting Equal Opportunity and Treatment, p. 107-130
2. Interracial Relationships and the One-Drop Rule, p. 153-173

Williams, Kim M. (2006) *Mark One Or More, Civil Rights in Multiracial America*. Ann Arbor: University Press of Michigan

1. Introduction, p. 1-6
2. Undoing the Working Definition of Race, p. 7-37
3. Growing Racial Diversity and Civil Rights Future, p. 111-131

Herring, Cedric. (2006) “Does Diversity Pay? Racial Composition of Firms and the Business Case for Diversity.” A paper published by the Department of Sociology and the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Session 11 & 12 (April 1st & April 8th):

Intercultural Awareness and Cross Cultural Communication

These sessions will focus on the diversity of value orientations – the essential building blocks that manifest difference. Value orientation form the mental programming instilled from birth and become unquestioned rules, norms, and behaviors that are accepted and expected. Diversity cannot be understood without exploring these important concepts which include: Individual-Communitarian attitudes towards Risk Taking, the fundamental nature of truth and how it is determined, the rules of relationship and how people are expected to treat each other.

The purpose of the sessions is to go beyond mere cultural awareness and will identify effective intercultural communication and dialogue techniques for exploring difference – first one’s own, and then of others. The session will hold lab sessions to apply intercultural dialogue skills in a safe and stimulating learning environment.

Required Readings:

Bennett, Janet, M. and Milton J. (2001) “Developing Intercultural Sensitivity: An Integrative Approach to Global and Domestic Diversity.” A paper published by the Intercultural Communication Institute, Portland, Oregon.

Hall, Edward T. “The Power of the Hidden Differences” in *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*, Milton J. Bennett editor. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, p. 53-67.

Barna, LaRay M. “Stumbling Blocks in Intercultural Communication” in *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*. P. 173-189

Bennett, Milton J. “Overcoming the Golden Rule: Sympathy and Empathy” in *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*. P. 191-213

Session 13 (April 22nd):

In-class Presentations

This session will be a series of individual or partnered presentations on the following questions:

1. What do you envision as a future scenario for global diversity?

- a. Select a country, or region and a social, economic or political sector from which to argue the perspective.
2. What gaps exist between current diversity efforts in this area and your future scenario?
 - a. Example, in gender diversity, women's full participation in some cultures is denied due to religious beliefs. This gender gap lowers the overall GDP and limits the society's potential.
3. What are some of the causes of the gaps?
 - a. In the above example, religion may be the apparent cause, but are there others? Culture, tradition, fear, ignorance, etc.
4. Identify a realistic roadmap or staged plan towards achieving the future scenario.
 - a. For example, is your scenario something that can be achieved in 3 to 5 years or longer? What steps does it entail? What support for it is needed? How will that support be obtained? Etc.

The presentation should be from 12 to 15 minutes (outlined from of your proposed final paper – see below), and should employ the use of PowerPoint slides.

See LATTE “supplemental area” module for proposed bibliography.