RACE: A PRODUCT OF CULTURE

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Introduction & Interactives

- Race: The Pwr of An Illusion activity:
  - [http://www.pbs.org/race/002_SortingPeople/002_00-home.htm](http://www.pbs.org/race/002_SortingPeople/002_00-home.htm)

- AAA website’s Race: Are We So Different? interactive
  - [http://www.understandingrace.com/home.html](http://www.understandingrace.com/home.html)
Race vs. Ethnicity

- Race: based on perceptions of biological differences
- Ethnicity: more of a culturally based category
- There are multiple ethnic groups within any “racial” group (examples)
- Unfortunately, there has been a long history of ethnic conflict, even ethnocide
- Concerns regarding ethnicity have long shaped public policy regarding immigration to the U.S.
Scientific Racism:
ppl belong to fundamentally diff. biolog. stocks & that race can be scientifically supported

Social Evolutionism:
attributes diffc’s btwn groups of ppl to culture & suggests that groups can be hierarchically ranked by their station on a unilinear plane
Unilinear Social Evolutionism

- Oft. called Soc. Darwinism: the idea isn’t from Darwin at all, coined by H. Spencer
- Suggests that societies can be ranked from most primitive to most advanced
- Like sci. racism, includes a hierarchy & suggests that some grps are superior to others
- Used to provide justificatn for colonialism, & blatant disregard of treaties made w/ Native Americans
L.H. Morgan’s stages of soc. evolution’m

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>technology</th>
<th>Social organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>civilization</td>
<td>Phonetic alphabet</td>
<td>monogamy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barbarism</td>
<td>agriculture, pottery</td>
<td>Polygamy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>savagery</td>
<td>Bows &amp; arrows</td>
<td>Promiscuous sex</td>
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Social Evolutionism

- Prevailing view: ↑ a culture’s values modeled a Euro-centered “ideal” the ↑ “evolved” they are
- Father of Amer. Anthro & 1st activist, who?
- Franz Boas: deeply opposed to soc. Evolutionism, also stronger supporter of racial equality
- Utilized craniometry (popular w/in scientific racism) to illustrate the prob’s w/ this method
Stereotypes: fixed not’ns/ideas, oft. negative & offer extremely narrow portrayal of grp.

Discriminat’n: policies & practices that harm a grp & its members, 2 types:

De jure: sanct’ned/backed by law  examples?
- Apartheid-S. Africa, Jim Crow laws- U.S.

De facto: technically illegal, but persists in a subtle manner
Caste grp similar to social class, though it offers little opport. for upwards mobility. Officially illegal, still alive in public psyche.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste Group</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>(priests)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kshatriyas</td>
<td>Warriors, kings &amp; queens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaisyas</td>
<td>Merchants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudras</td>
<td>peasants</td>
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Dalits: “untouchables”: “beneath caste”
Cultural construction of race

- Meaning of race built & shaped over time
- Based on cultural perceptions, not on group-wide actual physical or biological differences.
- Construction has taken on a binary nature: majority vs. minority, white vs. non-white.
- If race doesn’t exist scientifically or biologically, does it exist at all?
- Social race: created & justified stratification.
- Hypodescent (V. Williams anecdote)
Miscegenation ? (laws & beliefs)

Belief that race mixing is a negative occurrence & that doing so will distill the “superior “race

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18034102/

Laws have been repealed, but the beliefs are all to prevalent

Do we actually live in a post-racial society?

Consider this: avg. net worth: black: 20,600, latino: 18,600, by comparison, white?

140,700!!! (cumulative disadvantage)
De Facto Discrimination

It's the 21st century.
Can you believe some high schools still have segregated proms?
Old world is about to meet new school.

A Lifetime Original Movie
For One Night
Inspired by a true story of seeing beyond black and white
Premieres Monday, February 6 at 9