Infusing Sociocultural Learning in Psychology Classes

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Resources for Teachers

Teaching on Diversity and Multiculturalism

**Stereotypes and Prejudice**


**Teaching about Race and Ethnicity**


Helms, J. E. (2007). *A race is a nice thing to have: A guide to being a white person or understanding the white persons in your life (2nd ed.)*. Canton, CT: Microtraining Associates.


**Teaching about Disability**


Controversy in the classroom: Using hot topic to foster critical thinking (pp. 209-223).


Social Oppression, Privilege, and Power


Internet Resources for Teachers

The Voices Project Resource Page
http://www.misericordia.edu/voicesproject

Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Teaching Materials Development Program

Principles for Promoting Social Change
http://www.spssi.org/_data/n_0001/resources/live/PPSC_2ndED_Apr2005_1.pdf

APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major

Project Implicit (Implicit Association Test)
https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

DISABILITY

YouTube link for The Voices Project: Disability
http://on-demand.wvia.org/video/2310041666/

Guidelines for Assessment of, and Intervention with, Persons with Disabilities

SOCIAL CLASS

Wealth inequality in America
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnijnsM

60 Minutes Hard Times Generation and follow-up
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dK_RnxYdrgU
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2hzRPLVSm4

Play Spent, an on-line game meant to simulate poverty
http://playspent.org/html/

Resources for the Inclusion of Social Class in the Psychology Curricula

Films:
Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class (Media Education Foundation)
Waging a Living (PBS; http://www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/)
A Place at the Table (Magpictures; http://www.magpictures.com/aplaceatthetable/)
Unnatural Causes (California Newsreel & Vital Pictures; http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/)
30 Days (Morgan Spurlock TV series; http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0502498/)
**RACE, ETHNICITY AND IMMIGRATION**

Largest Immigrant Population in Each State  
http://knowmore.washingtonpost.com/2014/05/28/the-largest-immigrant-population-in-each-state/?Post+generic=%3Ftid%3Dsm_twitter_washingtonpost

Teaching Moments about Policing in Ferguson, Missouri  

Spoken word poetry about race:  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9Wf8y_5Yn4

Activities for Teaching about Prejudice and Discrimination  

Social Construction of Race Explained  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaWp8_z81w&list=TLVYmIY8zD0fV8T8aq-SvSAEv_ZKJuEhZ0

Breaking the Prejudice Habit  
http://breakingprejudice.org/

STP International Relations Committee  
http://www.teachpsych.org/diversity/irc.php

Understanding Prejudice  
http://www.understandingprejudice.org/teach/

**OBESITY**

Films:  
The Weight of the Nation (HBO): http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com/)  
Super Size Me (Morgan Spurlock): http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0390521/?ref_=nv_sr_1  
Forks Over Knives (http://www.forksoverknives.com/)
US/UK VOICES PROJECT

ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

The purpose of this assignment is to experience and share the life stories of people from “groups of difference” within the framework of psychological theories and principles. The assignment is called The Voices Project because it allows students to hear the “voices” and life stories of people from cultural groups with which they may be unfamiliar. By getting to know people of different cultures and hearing their stories, students in the class will be able to identify and critically analyze the stereotypes and the roots of prejudice and discrimination that are prevalent in social norms and how they affect people’s lives.

Your task in this assignment is to document the lives of two British students attending Blackburn College. In turn, your life will be documented through the lens of a British student writing about you. You will be assigned your British partners during the last week in September or first week of October. During the month of October, you can use email, Facebook, Skype, Google Handout and other communication systems to interview your partners and gather information about their lives as pertains to the categories described in the guidelines below. Based on the information gathered during your interviews, you will write a 5-7 page memoir on EACH interviewee’s life highlighting themes of importance. The memoirs written by both the American and British students will be integrated into an iBook to share with others and may be integrated into a staged reading or documentary in the future. All identities will remain anonymous.

The project contains several different parts that will occur over the entire Fall 2014 semester. The guidelines and grading criteria for each part are presented in this handout.

Part I: Attitude Survey #1

As part of this project, students will complete two survey packets asking about your attitudes towards groups of differences: one at the beginning of the semester and one at the end. These surveys will help you evaluate the impact of the assignment on your attitudes across the semester. The surveys are not graded but are required as part of the experience of the assignment and can be referred to in the essays. The first survey packet was collected during the first week of class. The second packet will be distributed the last week of class. Students who are absent on these days are responsible for contacting the instructor to arrange alternative pickup and drop off times. Students who do not turn in their surveys will receive half credit for their papers.

Part II: Interviews

Each American student in Intro to Psychology will interview TWO British students attending Blackburn College during the month of October. The goal of your interviews is to gather information on the lives of your interviewees’ as it pertains to the following topics:
1) **Childhood experiences**: early childcare experiences (e.g., home, daycare, preschool), health problems, social and peer relationships, attachment style, activities/talents, temperament

2) **Family relationships**: family structure, relationships with siblings and parents and other family members, discipline, atmosphere, activities, values

3) **Academic experiences**: school experiences from early childhood through college, how educational system works in England (financially and academic/vocation pathways), academic performance, career goals

4) **Social relationships**: friendships (quantity, type, quality), romantic relationships, level of social interaction

5) **Health**: current status, changes over time, chronic conditions, health of family members

6) **Culture**: religion/faith, ethnic background, impact of gender, social class, sexual orientation, languages spoken

7) **Personality**: current personality features and changes over time, passions, dislikes, career goal, how personality affects other categories (e.g., school, friendships), life goals and wishes

8) **Stereotypes and discrimination**: assessment of how the person feels like they fit/don’t fit within the social norms of their society

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**Part III: The Voices Project Paper: A Mini-Memoir**

Based on the information gathered from the interviews, each student will write one 5-7 page biographical narrative about each of your interviewees (two total) highlighting 3-5 main themes that emerge from your interviews. Students should write the mini-biography from the first person perspective as if you are the person (using the word “I” instead of the person’s name) using your own words. Everyone will attend a memoir-writing workshop taught by Matt Hinton, Director of the Writing Center, on October 22 in the Alden Lab of the library. There will also be two class periods dedicated to writing in the library and a preparation class focused on interviewing strategies. Students will have the option of a draft meeting with the instructor before the portfolio deadline on December 5. The essays should reflect well-developed and clearly expressed content (e.g., ideas, thoughts, and arguments), logical organization, appropriate grammar and spelling. Students who turn in papers after this deadline will have 1 point deducted for each late “day” (defined as a 24-hour period). Papers turned in more than a week after the deadline will not be accepted.

**Memoir style and mechanics**: students will write the memoir from the FIRST PERSON perspective using the word “I” to adopt the identity of their interviewee. Students should express the person’s story in their (students’) own words instead of using the actual words of the participant. If essential, students can insert brief direct quotations for accentuation purposes’ however, 98% of the words should be in the authors’ (students’) voice. This transformation of
expression from participant to student will “fictionalize” the story and give students’ their won venue to express the ideas and meaning of their interviewee’s story. Students must strike a balance between maintaining accuracy of the information shared by their interviewees and demonstrating creativity in their unique communication of the person’s life as it relates to the themes of the memoir.

Although the memoir is a fictionalized story based on true events, the paper should reflect well-developed and clearly expressed content (e.g., ideas, thoughts, and arguments), logical organization, appropriate grammar and spelling. Students are highly encouraged to have their papers reviewed by a member of the Writing Center (x6191) and can earn points for extra credit to be added to their papers.

Part IV: Final Portfolio

The final portfolio for the US/UK Voices Project will involve several parts. It is due to be uploaded to Blackboard by December 5.

1) Memoir of British student #1: please label this file LastnameMemoir1 before uploading.

2) Copy of correspondence for British student #1: please include copies of your correspondence through email or facebook. Please copy and paste the correspondence into ONE file labeled LastnameCorrespondance1 before uploading.

3) Psychology concept essay #1: please include a 2-3 page essay describing 4-5 principles, theories, or concepts from the Intro to Psychology course that are relevant to the memoir. These 4-5 principles cannot include stereotypes, prejudice, or discrimination and must be smoothly reflected in the story yet clearly apparent to the instructor. They can come from anywhere in the textbook, even sections that were not covered in class. Students should put APA style citations for these concepts in footnotes or endnotes, briefly explain the principle/theory/concept, and provide a brief description of how the concept is reflected in the memoir. Be sure to include a works cited page at the end. Please label this file LastnameEssay1 before uploading.

4) Memoir of British student #2: please label this file LastnameMemoir2 before uploading.

5) Copy of correspondence for British student #2: Please copy and paste the correspondence into ONE file labeled LastnameCorrespondance2 before uploading.

6) Psychology concept essay #2: same as above. Please label this file LastnameEssay2 before uploading.
7) **Reflection journals**: this class emphasizes the development of student writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills through reflection. As defined by the Service Leadership Center,

> “Reflection is a guided process of exploring and clarifying values identified during service learning experiences. Reflection provides the student and faculty with the opportunity to state ideas; hypotheses and feelings that develop based on the service learning experience. According to Dewey (1933) reflective thought has five stages: 1) perplexity, confusion, doubt; 2) attentive interpretation of the given elements; 3) examination, exploration, and analysis to define and clarify the problem; 4) elaboration of the tentative hypothesis; 5) testing the hypothesis by doing something overtly to bring about anticipated results.” (p. 7)

Students will keep an electronic reflection journal throughout the semester as a means of enhancing self-awareness of emotions and thoughts related to their interviews and overall experience with the project. Student journals will be evaluated based upon their level of self-insight, critical thinking, integration of psychology knowledge and course material, and clarity of expression.

Templates for each journal entry will be available on Blackboard and should be downloaded and save in ONE file to be uploaded by the due date. Please label your file **Last name Reflectionjournal** before uploading.

**Part VI: Related Issues**

**Confidentiality**: the participants in this project will be sharing personal information with you, so it is important for everyone in the class to keep all documents, notes, audiotapes, and materials related to this project private and confidential. In order to ensure privacy, please keep all materials in a private place that cannot be easily accessed by other students, parents, coworkers, etc. Here are recommendations to ensure privacy and confidentiality:

- Do not leave notes or documents related to this project in public places that are easily visible to others (e.g., library tables, computer labs)
- To protect the identity of your interviewee, give the person an alternate name and refer to that person by that name throughout the interview, discussions in class, and the memoir paper. Please do not use the person’s real name in any document.
- Keep any documents related to the project on the Blackboard course server and ONE other computer source (e.g., personal computer hard drive, one flash-key). Be sure to back up your documents but do not keep more than two copies.
SAMPLE EXCERPTS FROM MEMOIRS

My Baby Boy

When I was 17, attending college, I met my current fiancé through the internet. After three months together, we had sex just once and I got pregnant. It was terrifying, but I was going to be a mum. I was still living with my mum, and I was going to be a mum myself.

I loved this little baby inside me. I wasn’t really sure how I was going to take care of him, but I had my boyfriend and together we were going to make it work. I’d lie in bed at night, just before falling asleep, and think about what my life was going to be like—how I would get to teach this little baby to walk and talk, how he’d need me, how it would be my job to show him the world. I existed in this weird mixed emotional state, a combination of terror and excitement. How was I going to be able to do this?

When I was nineteen weeks along, my sister and I got into an argument and she kicked me in my belly, but the scan I got the following week showed my baby was fine. Another week after that, we got into another argument and she kicked me again. Of course I fought back—I hit her—and my mum took her side. She pushed me away and started yelling at me.

A few days later, I was sitting on the couch wrapped in an afghan and I felt cramping; I thought I had to use the bathroom but when I’d tossed off the blanked and made it up the stairs my body just told me to start pushing. I got scared. Back downstairs, I kept trying to get my boyfriend to come so we could go to the hospital. He finally got to our house and I threw on my winter coat and left with him. His sister drove us, but we went to the wrong hospital and I was in so much pain they had to put me in a wheelchair and wait for an ambulance. It took an hour for us to get from the house to the right hospital.

I gave birth to my beautiful baby boy at 10:30 that freezing January night in 2006. He was about the size of my hand; he was so tiny. And he was stillborn.

They told me something about how my placenta had erupted and caused premature labor, but I just wanted my son. We had his funeral three weeks later, but even now, I still wish he was here with me.

I started smoking and drinking again. I didn’t have him to protect anymore, so I didn’t see why I shouldn’t. I needed something to hold onto and since I couldn’t have him, a bottle had to suffice.

Getting a Diagnosis

Friday the 13th is a joke to most people, and even I treated the day as nothing more than a light-hearted superstition for most of my life. My situation started at work. We always had checks regarding our health and they always referred me to a clinic to look at what was regarded as fatty tissue in my breast. I started to get a weird feeling about the tissue, and the doctor drained fluid from it just to be certain. I think they believed it was a cyst and I probably did too, after all I was only thirty-four. There is a very strange feeling that takes over when something happens you think never will. The doctor called it in situ lobular carcinoma. For a few minutes my world stopped turning. Looking back, I think I was in shock and I know I couldn’t think straight. I left work early to go for my results but I knew I needed to keep the news to myself for a little while; I needed some time to process what was in front of me.

My life at this point was more than just me, and my husband was working in Germany at the time so unfortunately he was not even home. I kept the results to myself for five days before I could talk to him. I also had two beautiful children. My daughters were just kids who needed me. I could not stop thinking about what would happen to them without me. They needed their mother, whether something was wrong or not and they kept me so busy that part of me didn’t have time to become frightened. My girls were the most important things in my life and I knew I had to be there for them and be strong because to them, I was just Mum.
The lump found in my breast was not actually the problem. However, the surrounding tissue needed to be removed. I scheduled the surgery for January 11th, so there was less than a month between when I initially found out and when the nightmare would end. With a wide excision, the tissue would be completely removed so I would not have to worry about medicines, chemotherapy, or a mastectomy. However, life has a funny way of never going according to plan, which I knew when I found out I had cancer, but it didn’t truly hit me until the day before my surgery. That was when I found out I was pregnant again, which was one of the most beautiful things that could have happened to me. In a time where I could have gotten lost in the possibilities, I had a reason to be happy again after spending my time thinking about and being so focused on all of the bad things... The surgery was postponed for three months until I was in the second trimester of my pregnancy. Everything went well and that was that. I have never believed in self-pity and I do not want anyone to feel sorry for me. It’s the way I was raised because it is the same way my granny was. She was a great role model for me and I still think about how she didn’t let me dwell on my own self-pity. For me, the importance was placed on making sure the people I cared about were taken care of. I had to be the one who was strong, because life did not cease to go on. A few months later, my brother was married in Greece. My sister-in-law was diagnosed with an aggressive form of stomach cancer and was gone within a year, leaving behind a one and a half year old daughter. Whatever I had left to be put into perspective was then. Since I got the all clear after my surgery, it has not left. I had ten years of follow up exams and check-ups with good results. My situation was scary, but I see how much scarier it could have been. Although my husband and I have since split up, I have my health and I have my family which is all I need to get by.