

LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE
SESSION 3:
What it Means to Be a Person of Color
in a White Society:
Racial Microaggressions, Cultural
Appropriation and Structural Racism

Workbook



Welcome to Session 3!

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Session 3: Agenda	1
Who Am I? Poem	3
Tatum Chapter 2, The Complexity of Identity: Who Am I? - Selections.	4
Conversation Guidelines	5
Conversation Goals.	6
Definitions	7
Definition - Socialization	8
What I Bring	9
White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisable Knapsack	10
First Turn, Last Turn	15
Tatum Quotes for Chapters 3 and 4	16
Examples of Racial Microaggressions Chart	18
Racial Micraggressions in Everyday Life: Is Subtle Bias Harmless	20
Preparation for Session 4	24
Outline of Sessions 4 - 5	24
Microaggression in the Classroom.	25
1963 - Letter from the Birmingham Jail	30
1967 - Black Panthers: 10 Point Program	31
Evaluation - Challenging Racism	33
Evaluation - Let's Talk About Race, Arlington All In!	35

PARTICIPANT PREPARATION

- *Tatum, Chapter 3, Understanding Blackness in a White Context: The Early Years, and Chapter 4, Identity Development in Adolescence, "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?"*
- *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, Peggy McIntosh*

Just because you came here in 1880, 1950, whenever, you became an American. You get to celebrate July 4th like every other American. You don't just get the good part. You get the bad part, too. You get all of it.

Ta Nehesi Coates

Writer and Editor, Atlantic Magazine, Journalist in residence, City University of New York, 2012-2014, Visiting Professor, MIT

SESSION 3 AGENDA: Let's Talk About Race

PAGE 1

What it Means to Be a Person of Color in a White Society: Racial Microaggressions, Cultural Appropriation and Structural Racism



1

CHECK IN: STEVEN JONES, Lead Facilitator

PERSONAL STORYTELLERS: Experience as an African American, "My beautiful Black life and racism", Followed by Questions:

- **Dr. Alfiere Breland Noble**, Georgetown University Medical Center, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Director, Akoma Project (Work with Adolescents), and parent, APS
- **Tiffany Mitchell**, 6th grade Social Studies teacher, Kenmore Middle School, APS, BA, MA, and PHD candidate, GMU School of Education, Spring, 2017

SMALL GROUP: Check in

Conversation about McIntosh and About the Personal Stories that We Just Heard.

- Readers who identify as of color please read the McIntosh list for the 4 privileges you would like to have, and/or, if you choose, "What are the 4 things about my culture that I could not do without?"
- Readers who identify as White, please read the list of 25 privileges for the 4 you could not live without.
- Discussion

Reading: Chapter 3, Understanding Blackness in a White Context: The Early Years, and Chapter 4, Identity Development in Adolescence, "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" Chapters 3 and 4, Beverly Daniel Tatum

- Discussion using quotes from the Chapters and First Turn, Last Turn

Continued on the next page...

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR THIS SESSION

- > *What are some common issues for people of color developing their identity in a White World?*
- > *Can you think about simple things that you might do that could support a person of color?*



....continued from the previous page.

RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS:

"Racial Microaggressions are the brief and everyday slights, insults, indignities, and denigrating messages sent to people of color by well intentioned White people who are unaware of the hidden messages being communicated. These messages may be sent verbally, ("You speak good English."), nonverbally (clutching one's purse more tightly), or environmentally (symbols like the Confederate flag or using American Indian mascots). Such communications are usually outside the level of conscious awareness of the perpetrators." Our research suggests that micro insults and invalidations are potentially more harmful because of their invisibility.."Derald Wing Sue. (Workbook)

Read the Examples in the Microaggressions Chart in the Workbook with the purpose of finding at least one microaggression that is familiar because you have done it unwittingly to another person or because it is a microaggression you have suffered.

Conclusion on Microaggressions: Read the last paragraph of the Sue article: Detrimental consequences to people of color from Racial Microaggressions.

(Video: "Conversations with Great Minds, Part 1. Derald Wing Sue, "The Ultimate White Privilege" about Sue's book, Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence". 2015. YouTube. Video: What Kind of Asian Are You? 12-18 minutes excerpt)

VIDEO: Are You Asian? 2 minutes YouTube

CHECK-OUT ACTIVITY: If you were granted a wish at this moment, what would it be?

THANK YOU FOR COMING: We look forward to seeing you at the next session, 2/15/17, here at the Career Center, 6- 8 pm.

EVALUATION FORMS: Please take your evaluation forms from your materials, complete them and drop them in the place provided.

PREPARATION FOR SESSION 4:

Tatum, Chapter 8, Critical Issues in Latino, American Indian, and Asian Pacific American Identity Development

- Microaggressions in Schools: Workbook article, Joel Portman
- Materials in the Workbook and handouts.
 - Letter from the Birmingham Jail, excerpt
 - Black Panthers, 10 Point Program



Who Am I?

The answer depends in large part on who the world around me says I am.

Who do my parents say I am?

Who do my peers say that I am?

What message is reflected back to me in the faces and voices of my teachers, my neighbors, store clerks?

This "looking glass self" is not one dimensional...

How one's racial identity is experienced will be mediated by other dimensions of oneself:

male,
female,
young,
old,
wealthy,
middle class or
poor,
(and so on.)...

Who is my cohort group?....

What has my social context been?...

Was I surrounded by people like myself?...

Or was I part of a minority?....

Identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation...

"The concept of identity is a complex one, shaped by individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors and social and political contexts."

Tatum, Chapter 2, pp.18 and 19

Tatum Chapter 2, The Complexity of Identity: *Who Am I ?* - Selections

Pp. 18-19. These are the basic definitions of identity with which we work in these discussions. Pages are edition 2003.)

The concept of identity is a complex one, shaped by individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors, and social and political contexts. Who am I? The answer depends in large part on who the world around me says I am. *Page 18 (see also page 19, quote from Erik Erikson which explores this idea further.)*

Pp. 20-22. Multiple Identities.

..there at least seven categories of otherness commonly experienced in US society. People are commonly defined as other based on race or ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, and physical or mental ability. Each of these categories has a form of oppression associated with it: racism, sexism.... In each case there is a group considered dominant (systematically advantaged) and a group considered subordinate... When we think about our multiple identities, most of us will find that we are both dominant and targeted(subordinate) at the same time... *Page 22*

Somewhere, on the edge of consciousness, there is what I call a mythical norm which each one of us within our heart knows "that is not me". In America, this norm is usually defined

as white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian and financially secure. It is with this mythical norm that the trappings of power reside within society. *Page 22*

Pp. 23- 28. Domination and Subordination:

About students who feel subordinate: *Page 26* In school, "Not learning tends to take place when someone has to deal with the unavoidable challenges to his or her personal and family loyalties, integrity and identity. In such situations, there are forced choices and no apparent middle ground. To agree to learn from a stranger who does not respect your integrity causes a major loss of self. The only alternative is to not- learn and reject their world." Herbert Kohl.

Page 27 "Many of us are both dominant and subordinate.... To the extent that one can draw on one's own experience of subordination- as a young person, as a person with a disability, as someone who grew up poor, as a woman- it may be easier to make meaning of another targeted groups' experience."

Conversation Guidelines

<p>1 Seek knowledge about yourself and others.</p>	<p>2 Use 'I' messages.</p>	<p>3 Be present. Stay engaged. Listen.</p>
<p>4 Ask questions of genuine interest. <i>"Please tell me more"</i> <i>"Help me out here"</i></p>	<p>5 Experience discomfort. Talking about race does not create divisions itself. Talking about race opens doors.</p>	<p>6 Challenge and ask questions respectfully.</p>
<p>7 Say 'ouch' when something bothers you. Explain or write the 'ouch' in the Parking Lot.</p>	<p>8 Know that there is always the right to pass, <i>i.e. to continue listening.</i></p>	<p>9 ASSUME GOOD INTENT.</p>
<p>10 Practice recognizing the difference between intent and impact. One may have a given intent but a different impact on the listener. Try to think about both.</p>	<p>11 Accept and expect non-closure. Our goal is not always to agree but to explore difference.</p>	<p>12 Take Risks.</p>
<p>13 This conversation is a beginning. We will not finish today. Relax.</p>	<p>14 Respect confidentiality. It allows others to talk freely.</p>	<p>15 <i>Enjoy learning each other's stories</i></p>

CONVERSATION GOALS

EVERY SESSION INCLUDES EXPERIENCES THAT WILL...

1 *Increase our understanding of ourselves.*

2 IMPROVE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

3 Provide practice in talking about race, immigration and the process of learning English as another language and other subjects that maybe uncomfortable, along with the listening practice that makes those conversations possible.

4 *Explore how our roles as parents and teachers can be improved by being able to talk about race and difference.*

5 *Move us from telling to others to listening to others and their stories.*

7 Move us from thinking and talking to thinking, talking and acting to challenge racism where we find it.

6 *Help us learn to ask questions of genuine interest when we encounter difference. Would you... "Please Tell me more," "Help me out here?"*

Definitions

ANTIRACIST: Conscious and deliberate behavior that works to reverse disparities caused by racism.

ALLY: A member of the “majority” group who rejects the dominant social construct of race and racism and takes action against this construct in the belief that eliminating oppression will benefit both the majority and the minority.

CULTURE: The sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another.

DISCRIMINATION: Actions based on unconscious or conscious prejudice.

ETHNICITY: A socially defined group based on cultural criteria such as language, customs and shared history.

PREJUDICE: A preconceived judgment or opinion based on limited information.

RACE: A socially constructed means of identifying people that has virtually no basis in biology.

RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: Defining for oneself the personal significance and social meaning of belonging to a particular racial group.

RACISM: A system of advantage based on race. Racism like other forms of oppression is not only a personal ideology but also a system involving cultural messages, institutional policies and practices, as well as the beliefs and actions of individuals.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCT: A concept or practice which may appear to be natural and obvious to those who accept it but is in fact an invention or artifact of a particular culture or society. Ex: Race and ethnicity are both socially constructed.

STEREOTYPE: A set of beliefs generalized about a whole group of people.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE: The ongoing development of awareness, attitudes, skills, knowledge and behaviors that enable staff to create an equitable learning environment. By focusing on relationships, pedagogy, environment and curriculum, culturally competent educators increase the quality of education to insure that race and English language acquisition are no longer predictors of achievement for the students they teach.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING: A set of congruent behaviors that recognize the importance of including students’ cultural references, along with those of the teacher, in all aspects of learning.

EQUITY: Providing each student with the individual support he/she needs to reach a common standard of performance. Equity is demonstrated explicitly by teachers through expectations and the work to help students achieve those expectations, through rigor, the relevance of work to students’ lives, and most of all, by relationships.

Note: The definitions above are found in Tatum, Chapter 1 and 2 except the second from Chapter 6. The three definitions on the bottom right are from Becoming Culturally Competent: Conversations on Race, the APS teacher training program, 2015.

Definition - Socialization

From Chapter 3, "Socialization", *What Does It Mean to be White?* (Robin DiAngelo)

"The systems of (cultural) meaning tend to be below the surface of everyday awareness." (Page 13)

"Socialization is the process of being trained into our culture: learning the norms, meanings and practices that enable us to make sense of the world and behave appropriately in a given culture. We are taught these norms in myriad ways and through a variety of mediums." (Page 14)

"Socially constructed: Meaning that is not inherently true but is agreed upon by society. Once society agrees to this meaning, it becomes real in its consequences for our lives." (Page 17)

"As we are socialized into our culture's gender roles, so we are socialized into our country's racial roles. Our parents may tell us that race does not matter... but as with gender socialization this explicit teaching is not enough to inoculate us against the role of other messages circulating in our culture. For example, if race does not matter, why do we live so racially separate? We do so because in our culture race does matter." (DiAngelo, Page 17)

Socialization begins at birth. "We cannot make sense of the world without the meaning making system that our culture provides. Yet this system is hard to see, because we have always been swimming with in it; we just take for granted that what we see is real, rather than a particular perception of reality." (Page 17)



This collective socialization is the framework of the glasses through which we see the world. Our personal experience is the lens. The collective socialization is to the superiority of Whiteness.

What I Bring...

Socialization to White Privilege is our framework for looking at the world about race. Our social frame is in the unconscious.



The lenses in that frame are our personal experiences that inform us.

Ingrained White socialization, that “White is better” has consequences for all of us, but the consequences are negative for people of color. (There are negative consequences for White people too, but in general they are unaware.) This system of White advantage based on race is racism. Racism has two forms: a personal ideology based on racial prejudice, and systems (such as discrimination) involving socialized cultural messages and institutionalized policies, practices and the behavior of individuals within those institutions, to the advantage of White people.

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

by Peggy McIntosh

10

Through the work to bring materials from Women's Studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are over privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say they will work to improve women's status, in the society, the university, or the curriculum, but they can't or won't support the idea of lessening men's. Denials which amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages which men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened or ended.

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of white privilege which was similarly denied and protected. As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.

I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege. So I have begun in an untutored way to ask what it is like to have white privilege. I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned

assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless backpack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.

Describing white privilege makes one newly accountable. As we in Women's Studies work to reveal male privilege and ask men to give up some of their power, so one who writes about having white privilege must ask, "Having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?"

After I realized the extent to which men work from a base of unacknowledged privilege, I understood that much of their oppressiveness was unconscious. Then I remembered the frequent charges from women of color that white women whom they encounter are oppressive. I began to understand why we are justly seen as oppressive, even when we don't see ourselves that way. I began to count the ways in which I enjoy unearned skin privilege and have been conditioned into oblivion about its existence.

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on

her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: *whites are taught to think of their lives as a morally neutral, normative, and average, also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us."*

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions which I think in my case attack some what more to skin-color privilege that to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographical location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can see, my African American co-worker, friends and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place, and line of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front

page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.

6. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
8. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
9. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
10. Whether I checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
11. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
12. I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
13. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
14. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

15. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

16. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.

17. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.

18. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.

19. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.

20. I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazine featuring people of my race.

21. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.

22. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.

23. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.

24. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.

25. If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.

26. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.

I repeatedly forgot each of the realization on this list until I wrote it down. For me white privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own.

In unpacking this invisible backpack of white privilege, I have listed conditions of daily experience which I once took for granted. Nor did I think of any of these perquisites as bad for the holder. I now think that we need a more finely differentiated taxonomy of privilege, for some of these varieties are only what one would want for everyone in a just society, and others give license to be ignorant, oblivious, arrogant and destructive.

I see a pattern running through the matrix of white privilege, a pattern of assumptions which were passed on to me as a white person. There was one main piece of cultural turf; it was my own turf, and I was among those who could

control the turf. My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make. I could think of myself as belonging in major ways, and of making social systems work for me. I could freely disparage, fear, neglect, or be oblivious to anything outside of the dominant cultural forms. Being of the main culture, I could also criticize it fairly freely.

In proportion as my racial group was being made confident, comfortable, and oblivious, other groups were likely being made unconfident, uncomfortable, and alienated. Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress, and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit in turn upon people of color.

For this reason, the word "privilege" now seems to me misleading. We usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned or conferred by birth or luck. Yet some of the conditions I have described here work to systematically over empower certain groups. Such privilege simply confers dominance because of one's race or sex.

I want, then, to distinguish between earned strength and unearned power conferred systematically. Power from unearned privilege can look like strength when it is in fact permission to escape or to dominate. But not all of the privileges on my list are inevitably damaging. Some, like the expectation that neighbors will be decent to you, or that your race will not count against you in court, should be the norm in a just society. Others, like the

privilege to ignore less powerful people, distort the humanity of the holders as well as the ignored groups.

We might at least start by distinguishing between positive advantages which we can work to spread, and negative types of advantages which unless rejected will always reinforce our present hierarchies. For example, the feeling that one belongs within the human circle, as Native Americans say, should not be seen as privilege of a few. Ideally it is an unearned advantage and conferred dominance.

I have met very few men who are truly distressed about systemic, unearned male advantage and conferred dominance. And so one question for me and others like is whether we will get truly distressed, even outraged, about unearned race advantage and conferred dominance and if so, what we will do to lessen them. In any case, we need to do more work in identifying how they actually affect our daily lives. Many, perhaps most, of our white students in the US think that racism doesn't affect them because they are not people of color; they do not see "whiteness" as a racial identity. In addition, since race and sex are not the only advantaging systems at work, we need similarly to examine the daily experience of having age advantage, or ethnic advantage, or physical ability, or advantage related to nationality, religion or sexual orientation.

Difficulties and dangers surrounding the task of finding parallels are many. Since racism, sexism, and heterosexism are not the same,

the advantaging associated with them should not be seen as the same. In addition, it is hard to disentangle aspects of unearned advantage which rest more on social class, economic class, race, religion, sex and ethnic identity than on other factors. Still, all of the oppressions are interlocking, as the Combahee River Collective Statement of 1977 continues to remind us eloquently.

One factor seems clear about all of the interlocking oppressions. They take both active forms which we can see and embedded forms which as a member of the dominant group one is taught not to see. In my class and place, I did not see myself as a racist because I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group, never in invisible systems conferring unsought racial dominance on my group from birth.

Disapproving of the systems won't be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes. [But] a "white" skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end, these problems.

To redesign social systems we need first to acknowledge their colossal unseen dimensions. The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects.

Most talk by whites about equal opportunity seems to me now to be about equal opportunity to try to get into a position of dominance while denying that systems of dominance exist.

It seems to me that obliviousness about white advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly inculturated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all. Keeping most people unaware that freedom of confident action is there for just a small number of people props up those in power, and serves to keep power in the hands of the same groups that have most of it already.

Though systematic change takes many decades, there are pressing questions for me and I imagine for some others like me if we raise our daily consciousness on the perquisites of being light-skinned. What will we do with such knowledge? As I know from watching me, it is an open question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage to weaken hidden systems of advantage, and whether we will use any of our arbitrarily-awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems on a broader base.

[1989] Wellesley, Massachusetts



First turn, last turn.

A listening practice that reveals each person's different ideas, because each person gets a chance to speak uninterrupted. (10 - 12 minutes)

- Read over the quotes. Choose the one that speaks to you, has a new idea or one that you find useful.
- The person with the longest hair starts.
- The person who starts reads the quote that they chose, without comment.
- Each other person in turn comments on that first quote, without discussion, talking about what it means to them. Thus, the first turn person gets to hear the ideas of others.
- Last turn then goes to the person who chose the quote, because now that person talks about why he or she chose the quote.
- Each person gets that first/last turn, sharing the quote that they chose and then listening to the comments of others, and sharing why they chose the quote, before any general discussion.

Discussion among the group. (5 minutes)

Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?, Tatum

Part II: Understanding Blackness in a White Context- Tatum: Ch. 3, The Early Years

“Is my skin brown because I drink chocolate milk?” Tatum

..the fact is that children as young as three do notice physical differences such as skin color, hair texture and the shape of one’s physical features. Certainly preschoolers talk about what they see, and often they do it in ways that make parents uncomfortable. How should we respond when they do?” p. 32

- Why don’t they match, Mommie?
(about a child and parent of different skin colors)
- Eddie says my skin is brown because I drink too much chocolate milk. Is that true? P. 33

“I decided to ask a staff member how she and other preschool teachers were handling children’s questions about racial differences. She smiled and said: “It really hasn’t come up.” I was amazed. I knew it had come up: after all, Jonathan had reported the conversations to me. How as it that she had not noticed?” p.35

“Mommy, look at that girl! Why is she so dirty?” The White mother, embarrassed by her child’s comment, responds quickly with “Ssh!”...
I see the legacy of this silencing in my psychology of racism class. My students have learned that there is a taboo against talking about race... p. 36

Blackness, Whiteness, and the Painful History

Jonathan tries out the language of color:

‘I am not Black I am brown.’

“If Africa is so great, what are we doing here?”

pp. 37-39 (at age 4)

“... While I think it is necessary to be honest about the racism of our past and present, it is also necessary

to empower children and adults with the vision that change is possible.” Pp.37-39

“The concept of race constancy, that one’s racial group membership is fixed and will not change, is not achieved until children are 6 or 7 years old. (The same is true of gender constancy.) Young black children may express a desire to be White. Though such statements are certainly distressing to parents, they do not necessarily mean that the child has internalized a negative self image. It may, however, reflect a child’s growing awareness of White privilege, conveyed through the media... Though such comments are not necessarily rooted in self rejection, it is important to consider what messages children are receiving about the relative worth of light or dark skin.” P. 43

“Learning to spot that stuff ... is an important skill for children to develop... We are better able to resist the negative impact of oppressive messages when we see them coming than when they are invisible...p. 46. ...I was dismayed at the use of ethnically identifiable voices to identify the hyenas, clearly the undesirables in the film (The Lion King). The Spanish accented voice of Cheech Marin and the Black Slang of Whoopi Goldberg clearly marked the hyenas racially... My sons countered that the Black actor James Earl Jones as the voice of the good lion offset the racial characterization of the hyenas. ... Whether we agree or not, the process of engaging my children in a critical examination of the books they read, TV they watch, films they see and the video games they play and (the school work they do we might add) is essential.” P. 48

Tatum quotes: Anti-Bias Curriculum by Derman Sparks.” For children to feel good and confident about

themselves, they need to be able to say” That is not fair” or ‘I don’t like that’ if they are the target of prejudice or discrimination. For children to develop empathy and respect for diversity, they need to be able to say:” I don’t like what you are doing” to a child who is abusing another child. If we teach them to recognize injustice, we must also teach them that people can create positive change by working together...” ..“The task of talking to our children about racism and other isms may make us uncomfortable, and we may not have a ready response.” p. 50

Chaper 4, Identity Development in Adolescence, Tatum Why Are All of the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?

“The search for personal identity that intensifies in adolescence can involve several dimensions of an adolescent’s life: vocational plans, religious beliefs, values and preferences, political affiliations and beliefs, gender roles and ethnic identities. James Marcia described four identity statuses to characterize the variation in the identity search process: 1. Diffuse: (not explored).., 2. Foreclosed (committed w/o much thought).. 3. Moratorium (active exploration).. and 4. Achieved: a state of high personal commitment following a period of high exploration.

An individual is not likely to explore all identity domains at once... Given the impact of dominant and subordinate status, it is not surprising that adolescents of color are more likely to be actively engaged in and exploration of their racial or ethnic identity that are White adolescents.

‘Why do Black youths in particular think about themselves in terms of race? Because that is how the rest of the world thinks of them.’ P. 53

Coping With Encounters: Developing an Oppositional Identity:

...When feelings(of Black students experiencing

offensive behavior), rational or irrational, are invalidated, most people disengage. They (Black student) not only choose to discontinue the conversation but are more likely to turn to someone who will understand their perspective.” (therefore sitting together in the cafeteria) p. 52

The Black students turn to each other for the much needed support they are not likely to find anywhere else....In adolescence, as race becomes more personally salient for Black youth, finding the answer to questions such as “What does it mean to be a young black person? How should I act? What should I do? Is particularly important...

Fordham and Ogbu identified a common psychological pattern found among African American high school students at this stage of development.... Anger and resentment that adolescents feel in response to their growing awareness of the system of exclusion of Black people from full participation in US society leads to oppositional social identity....p. 60

“We need to understand that racial grouping is in response to an environmental stressor, racism. Joining with one’s peers for support in the face of stress is a positive coping strategy. What is problematic is that the young people are operating with a very limited definition of what it means to be Black, based largely on cultural stereotypes....“

Unfortunately for Black teenagers, those cultural stereotypes do not usually include academic achievement...” p. 62

“The developmental need to explore the meaning of one’s identity with others who are engaged in a similar process manifests itself informally in school corridors and cafeterias across the country. Some educational institutions have sought to meet this need programmatically....p. 71

Quotes selected by M. Swaim, 2016

EXAMPLES OF RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

THEME:	MICROAGGRESSION:	MESSAGE:
Alien in Own Land <i>When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born</i>	<i>"Where are you from?"</i> <i>"Where were you born?"</i> <i>"You speak good English."</i>	You are not American.
	A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.	You are a foreigner.
Ascription of Intelligence <i>Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race</i>	<i>"You are a credit to your race."</i>	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites.
	<i>"You are so articulate."</i>	It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent.
	Asking an Asian person to help with a math or science problem.	All Asians are intelligent and good in math/sciences.
Color Blindness <i>Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race</i>	<i>"When I look at you, I don't see color."</i>	Denying a person of color's racial/ethnic experiences.
	<i>"America is a melting pot."</i>	Assimilate/acclturate to the dominant culture.
	<i>"There is only one race, the human race."</i>	Denying the individual as a racial/cultural being.
Criminality/Assumption of Criminal Status <i>A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race</i>	A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes.	You are a criminal.
	A store owner following a customer of color around the store.	You are going to steal/ You are poor/You do not belong.
	A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.	You are dangerous.
Denial of Individual Racism <i>A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases</i>	<i>"I'm not racist. I have several Black friends."</i>	I am immune to racism because I have friends of color.
	<i>"As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority."</i>	Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you.
Myth of Meritocracy <i>Statements which assert that race does not play a role in life successes</i>	<i>"I believe the most qualified person should get the job."</i>	People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race.
	<i>"Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."</i>	People of color are lazy and/or incompetent and need to work harder.

EXAMPLES OF RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS *(continued)*

THEME:	MICROAGGRESSION:	MESSAGE:
<p>Pathologizing Cultural Values/ Communication Styles <i>The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/ White culture are ideal</i></p>	<p>Asking a Black person: “<i>Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down.</i>”</p> <p>To an Asian or Latino person: “<i>Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal.</i>” “<i>Speak up more.</i>”</p>	<p>Assimilate to dominant culture.</p>
	<p>Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school setting.</p>	<p>Leave your cultural baggage outside.</p>
<p>Second-Class Citizen <i>Occurs when a White person is given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color</i></p>	<p>Person of color mistaken for a service worker.</p>	<p>People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn't possibly occupy high-status positions.</p>
	<p>Having a taxi cab pass a person of color and pick up a White passenger.</p>	<p>You are likely to cause trouble and/or travel to a dangerous neighborhood.</p>
	<p>Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer behind you</p>	<p>Whites are more valued customers than people of color.</p>
	<p><i>“You people...”</i></p>	<p>You don't belong. You are a lesser being.</p>
<p>Environmental Microaggressions <i>Macro-level microaggressions, which are more apparent on systemic and environmental levels</i></p>	<p>A college or university with buildings that are all named after White heterosexual upper class males.</p>	<p>You don't belong/You won't succeed here. There is only so far you can go.</p>
	<p>Television shows and movies that feature predominantly White people, without representation of people of color.</p>	<p>You are an outsider/You don't exist.</p>
	<p>Overcrowding of public schools in communities of color.</p>	<p>People of color don't/shouldn't value education.</p>
	<p>Overabundance of liquor stores in communities of color.</p>	<p>People of color are deviant.</p>

Derald Wing Sue, 2007

RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE: IS SUBTLE BIAS HARMLESS?

By Dr. Derald Wing Sue

Not too long ago, I (Asian American) boarded a small plane with an African American colleague in the early hours of the morning. As there were few passengers, the flight attendant told us to sit anywhere, so we choose seats near the front of the plane and across the aisle from one another.

At the last minute, three White men entered the plane and took seats in front of us. Just before takeoff, the flight attendant, who is White, asked if we would mind moving to the back of the aircraft to better balance the plane's weight. We grudgingly complied but felt singled out as passengers of color in being told to "move to the back of the bus." When we expressed these feelings to the attendant, she indignantly denied the charge, became defensive, stated that her intent was to ensure the flight's safety, and wanted to give us some privacy.

Since we had entered the plane first, I asked why she did not ask the White men to move instead of us. She became indignant, stated that we had misunderstood her intentions, claimed she did not see "color," suggested that we were being "oversensitive," and refused to talk about the matter any further.

Were we being overly sensitive, or was the flight attendant being racist? That is a question that

people of color are constantly faced with in their day-to-day interactions with well-intentioned White folks who experience themselves as good, moral (/basics/ethics-and-morality) and decent human beings.

The Common Experience of Racial Microaggressions

Such incidents have become a common-place experience for many people of color because they seem to occur constantly in our daily lives.

When a White couple (man and women) passes a Black man on the sidewalk, the woman automatically clutches her purse more tightly, while the White man checks for his wallet in the back pocket. (Hidden Message: Blacks are prone to crime (/basics/law-and-crime)and up to no good.)

A third generation Asian American is complimented by a taxi cab driver for speaking such good English. (Hidden Message: Asian Americans are perceived as perpetual aliens in their own country and not "real Americans.")

Police stop a Latino male driver for no apparent reason but to subtly check his driver's license to determine immigration status. (Hidden message: Latinas/os are illegal aliens.)

American Indian students at the University of Illinois see Native American symbols and mascots - exemplified by Chief Illiniwek dancing and whooping fiercely during football games. (Hidden Message: American Indians are savages, blood-thirsty and their culture and traditions are demeaned.)

In our 8-year research at Teachers College, Columbia University, we have found that these racial microaggressions may on the surface, appear like a compliment or seem quite innocent and harmless, but nevertheless, they contain what we call demeaning meta-communications or hidden messages.

What Are Racial Microaggressions?

The term racial microaggressions, was first coined by psychiatrist Chester Pierce, MD, in the 1970s.

But the concept is also rooted in the work of Jack Dovidio, Ph.D. (Yale University) and Samuel Gaertner, Ph.D. (University of Delaware) in their formulation of aversive racism - many well-intentioned Whites consciously believe in and profess equality, but unconsciously act in a racist manner, particularly in ambiguous situations.

Racial microaggressions are the brief and everyday slights, insults, indignities and denigrating messages sent to people of color by well-intentioned White people who are unaware of the hidden messages being

communicated. These messages may be sent verbally ("You speak good English."), nonverbally (clutching one's purse more tightly) or environmentally (symbols like the confederate flag or using American Indian mascots). Such communications are usually outside the level of conscious awareness of perpetrators. In the case of the flight attendant, I am sure that she believed she was acting with the best of intentions and probably felt aghast that someone would accuse her of such a horrendous act.

Our research and those of many social psychologists suggest that most people like the flight attendant, harbor unconscious (/ basics/unconscious) biases and prejudices that leak out in many interpersonal situations and decision points. In other words, the attendant was acting with bias-she just didn't know it. Getting perpetrators to realize that they are acting in a biased manner is a monumental task because (a) on a conscious level they see themselves as fair minded individuals who would never consciously discriminate, (b) they are genuinely not aware of their biases, and (c) their self image of being "a good moral human being" is assailed if they realize and acknowledge that they possess biased thoughts, attitudes and feelings that harm people of color.

To better understand the type and range of these incidents, my research team (basics/ teamwork) and other researchers are exploring the manifestation, dynamics and impact of

microaggressions. We have begun documenting how African Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians and Latina(o) Americans who receive these everyday psychological slings and arrows experience an erosion of their mental health (/basics/health), job performance, classroom learning, the quality of social experience, and ultimately their standard of living.

Classifying Microaggressions

In my book, *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation* (<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-047049140X.html>) (John Wiley & Sons, 2010), I summarize research conducted at Teachers College, Columbia University which led us to propose a classification of racial microaggressions. Three types of current racial transgressions were described:

- **Microassaults:** Conscious and intentional discriminatory actions: using racial epithets, displaying White supremacist symbols - swastikas, or preventing one's son or daughter from dating (/basics/mating) outside of their race (/basics/race-and-ethnicity).

- **Microinsults:** Verbal, nonverbal, and environmental communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity that demean a person's racial heritage or identity (/basics/identity). An example is an employee who asks a co-worker of color how he/she got his/her job, implying he/she may have landed it through an affirmative action or quota system.

- **Microinvalidations:** Communications that subtly exclude negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of color. For instance, White people often ask Latinos where they were born, conveying the message that they are perpetual foreigners in their own land.

Our research suggests that microinsults and microinvalidations are potentially more harmful because of their invisibility, which puts people of color in a psychological bind: While people of color may feel insulted, they are often uncertain why, and perpetrators are unaware that anything has happened and are not aware they have been offensive. For people of color, they are caught in a Catch-22. If they question the perpetrator, as in the case of the flight attendant, denials are likely to follow. Indeed, they may be labeled "oversensitive" or even "paranoid." If they choose not to confront perpetrators, the turmoil stews and percolates in the psyche of the person taking a huge emotional toll. In other words, they are damned if they do and damned if they don't.

Note that the denials by perpetrators are usually not conscious attempts to deceive (/basics/deception); they honestly believe they have done no wrong. Microaggressions hold their power because they are invisible, and therefore they don't allow Whites to see that their actions and attitudes may be discriminatory. Therein lays the dilemma. The person of color is left to question what actually happened. The result is confusion, anger (/

basics/anger) and an overall draining of energy.

Ironically, some research and testimony from people of color indicate they are better able to handle overt, conscious and deliberate acts of racism than the unconscious, subtle and less obvious forms. That is because there is no guesswork involved in overt forms of racism.

Harmful Impact

Many racial microaggressions are so subtle that neither target nor perpetrator may entirely understand what is happening. The invisibility of racial microaggressions may be more harmful to people of color than hate crimes or the overt and deliberate acts of White supremacists such as the Klan and Skinheads. Studies support the fact that people of color frequently experience microaggressions, that it is a continuing reality in their day-to-day interactions with friends, neighbors, co-workers, teachers, and employers in academic, social and public settings.

They are often made to feel excluded, untrustworthy, second-class citizens, and abnormal. People of color often describe the terrible feeling of being watched suspiciously in stores, that any slip up they make would negatively impact every person of color, that they felt pressured to represent the group in positive ways, and that they feel trapped in a stereotype (/basics/bias). The burden of constant vigilance drains and saps psychological and spiritual (/basics/spirituality) energies of targets and

contributes to chronic fatigue and a feeling of racial frustration and anger.

Space does not allow me to elaborate the harmful impact of racial microaggressions, but I summarize what the research literature reveals.

Although they may appear like insignificant slights, or banal and trivial in nature (/basics/environment), studies reveal that racial microaggressions have powerful detrimental consequences to people of color. They have been found to:

- (a) assail the mental health of recipients,**
- (b) create a hostile and invalidating work or campus climate,**
- (c) perpetuate stereotype threat,**
- (d) create physical health problems,**
- (e) saturate the broader society with cues that signal devaluation of social group identities,**
- (f) lower work productivity (/basics/productivity) and problem solving abilities, and**
- (g) be partially responsible for creating inequities in education (/basics/education), employment and health care.**

*This article can be found on the web at:
www.coloradoinclusivefunders.org/.../racial_microaggressions_in_every_day_life
 Published by Derald Sue, 10/5/2010 in
[Microaggression in Every Day Life](#)*

PREPARATION FOR SESSION 4

- *Tatum, Chapter 8, Critical Issues in Latino, American Indian, and Asian Pacific American Identity Development*
- *Microaggressions in the Classroom, Joel Portman*
- *Materials in the Workbook and handouts.*
 - *Letter from the Birmingham Jail, excerpt*
 - *Black Panthers, 10 Point Program*

We look forward to seeing you next session, February 15th!

SESSIONS 4 - 5: Please Return for All of the Sessions.

THE SERIES WILL ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

SESSION 4: Black Lives Matter and Other Political Movements for Change, and
– **Beyond Black and White:** Race and Identity Issues for Other People of Color.

SESSION 5: Race and Education: Achievement Gaps in APS.

The Partnership is pleased to be working with the organizers of *Challenging Racism: Through Stories and Conversations* to design and facilitate this Community Conversation. For more information on Challenging Racism, please visit www.challengingracism.org.

Sponsored by Arlington County Dept. of Human Services, Child and Family Services Division, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Services Unit, and the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Families Foundation.

Microaggressions in the Classroom

JOEL PORTMAN, UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT;

Tuyen Trisa Bui, Undergraduate Student; Javier Ogaz, Undergraduate Student;
and Jesús Treviño, Associate Provost for Multicultural Excellence

Microaggressions in the classroom committed against students representing a diversity of groups continues to be a challenge at the University of Denver. Students report that they are often subjected to micro-insults and micro-invalidations (see definitions below) by faculty (and other students) based on race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, age, socioeconomic status, and other diverse dimensions. Inappropriate jokes; malicious comments; singling-out students; setting exams and project due dates on religious holidays; and stereotyping are but a few examples of microaggressions that DU students continue to experience and report in the classroom. It is clear from the literature that microaggressions are often committed by well-intentioned, good people not meaning to hurt anyone. Nevertheless, the outcome of microaggressions is anger, frustration, and withdrawal by those who are the recipients of insensitive comments and actions. Thus, in the case of the classroom, microaggressions are not being committed by spiteful and bigoted professors who want to intentionally hurt students from diverse groups, but rather are undertaken at the unconscious level by well meaning and caring professors. The bottom line is that microaggressions result in hostile and unwelcoming classroom environments.

Given the above, this document was developed by the authors (three DU students and an administrator) to assist faculty, instructors, and teaching assistants in

addressing and preventing microaggressions in the classroom. The information on this page emerged out of a student led workshop for faculty on the topic of microaggressions in the DU classroom that took place during the 2009 University of Denver's Annual Diversity Summit. It is important to note that although the focus of this document is on faculty microaggressions, it is also a fact that students are committing microaggressions against other students. Faculty must also be vigilant about those incidents.

Both students and faculty play a role and have a responsibility in creating safe and inclusive classroom environments. The following two sections contain information about the definitions and specific examples of microaggressions. The examples of microaggressions were generated from actual experiences of DU students. It is also important to recognize that microaggressions are not germane to social science classes. Many of these incidents have been reported from courses representing different colleges and departments throughout DU. The concluding section offers specific suggestions for faculty on how to prevent and address microaggressions. Instructors are not required to adopt the suggested guidelines. However, we hope that these will be helpful to those professors who would like to work toward building inclusive classrooms.

Definitions of Microaggressions

Microaggressions are defined as "brief and

commonplace daily verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults that potentially have harmful or unpleasant psychological impact on the target person or group." (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000)

Micro-insults are behaviors, actions, or verbal remarks that convey rudeness, insensitivity, or demean a person's group or social identity or heritage. (Sue, et. al. 2007)

Micro-invalidations are actions that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of people who represent different groups (Sue, et. al. 2007).

Microaggressions cut across all social identities including race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability status, socio economic class, and other important social dimensions. At the University of Denver, these insults and invalidations also occur across all majors, departments, and colleges.

Examples of Microaggressions

- Continuing to mispronounce the names of students after they have corrected you time and time again. *"Is Jose Cuinantilla here? I am here, but my name is Jesús Quintanilla."*
- Scheduling tests and project due dates on religious or cultural holidays. *"It has just been pointed out to me that I scheduled the mid-term during Rosh HaShanah, but we are okay because I don't see any Jewish students in the class."* See DU's religious accommodations policy at: http://www.du.edu/studentlife/religiouslife/DU_religious_

[accommodations_policy.html](#)

- Setting low expectations for students from particular groups or high schools in Denver. *"Oh, so Robert, you're from Montbello High School? You are going to need lots of academic help in my classes!"*
- Calling on and validating men and ignoring women students during class discussions. *"Let's call on John again. He seems to have lots of great responses to some of these problems."*
- Using inappropriate humor in class that degrades students from different groups. *"Anyone want to hear a good ethnic joke? Okay, well there was a Jew, a Mexican, and a Black. The Mexican says to the..."*
- Expressing racially charged political opinions in class assuming that the targets of those opinions do not exist in class. *"I think illegal aliens are criminals because they are breaking the law and need to be rounded up and sent back to Mexico."*
- Hosting debates in class that place students from groups who may represent the minority opinion in class in a difficult position. *"Today we are going to have a debate on immigration. I expect the three Latino students and a few of you to argue in favor of immigration. The rest of you will provide arguments against immigration."*
- Denying the experiences of students by questioning the credibility and validity of their stories. *"I've eaten and shopped plenty of times in West Denver and it's nothing like you describe it. How long have you lived there and who are you hanging out with?"*
- Assigning class projects that are heterosexist,

sexist, racist, or promote other oppressions. *"For the class project, I want you to think about a romantic relationship that you have had with a member of the opposite sex. Think and write about your observations."*

- Using heterosexist examples or sexist language in class. *"Atoms sometimes attract each other like this male and female here. At the same time, atoms sometimes repel each other like these two males here."*
- Assigning projects that ignore differences in socioeconomic class status. *"For this class, you are required to visit four art galleries located in the downtown area. The entrance fees vary but I am sure you can afford it."*
- Singling students out in class because of their backgrounds. *"You're Asian! Can you tell us what the Japanese think about our trade policies?"*
- Assuming that all students are from the U.S and fully understand the English language and culture (i.e., be aware that there may be International students in the class). *"What do you mean you have never heard of The Cosby Show? Where have you been hiding?"*
- Discouraging students from working on projects that explore their own social identities. *"If you are Native American, I don't want you to write your paper on Native Americans. You already know everything about that group and besides you will be biased in your writing."*
- Asking people with hidden disabilities to identify themselves in class. *"This is the last time that I am going to ask. Anybody with a disability who needs extra help, raise your hand!"* See the Disabilities Services Program at: <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/dsp/>

- Ignoring student-to-student microaggressions, even when the interaction is not course-related. *"Don't be retarded! That party this weekend was so gay."*
- Making assumptions about students and their backgrounds:
 - Assuming that all Latino students speak Spanish. *"You're Latino and you don't speak Spanish? You should be ashamed of yourself!"*
 - Assuming that all Asians are good at math. *"I know who I'm calling on a lot to work some of the math problems in this class – Mr. Nguyen!"*
 - Assuming that all African Americans know about poverty and the "Ghetto." *"Mr. Summers! We just read about poverty among Blacks in America. Does this fit your experience and can you tell us about it?"*
 - Assuming that all Native Americans are knowledgeable about the 500 plus diverse tribes that exist in the U.S. *"Many Native American tribes are in favor of using casinos to increase revenues and many others are against it. Mr. Begay, as a Navajo what are your thoughts?"*
 - Assuming that all Jewish students are well versed in the Israeli –Palestinian conflict and history and that they all have the same opinions about that complex situation. *"Oh, your Jewish! Can you tell us about what the Israelis think about Jewish settlements in the West Bank?"*
- Assuming the gender of any student. Moreover, continuing to misuse pronouns even after a student, transgender or not, indicates their preferred gender pronoun to you. *"I would like for Mike to share her stories related to her life as a young woman growing up in New York City."*

- Assuming all students fit the traditional student profile and are proficient in the use of computers. *"All you millenials are on Facebook , I will post the evite for the class project on the site."*

- Disregarding religious traditions or their details. For example, Ramadan involves fasting from sunrise to sundown, so pressuring observant students to attend a food-focused event is disrespectful. *"I am inviting you all over to my house for dinner after class next week to discuss your projects. Ali, I know its Ramadan, but hope you'll join us anyway."*

- Forcing students with non-obvious disabilities to "out" themselves or discuss them publicly. *"If anyone has a disability, raise your hand right now so that we can make special accommodations for you."*

Suggestions to Faculty for Addressing Microaggressions in the Classroom

1. Do not expect students to be experts on any experiences beyond their own and do not make them speak for their entire group (or others). For example, just because a student is Latino does not mean that they have an academic background in the study of Latinos. The same can be said about African Americans, members of the GLBTIQ community, Jewish students, Students with Disabilities, etc. (See website: <http://ctl.du.edu/index.php/teaching-resources/du-teaching-resources/236-singled-out>).

2. Do not assume that the groups that you are talking about are not represented in the classroom. A professor who states "Illegal aliens are criminals because they have broken the law in coming to the U.S." may be assuming that there are no undocumented students in the classroom. Moreover,

they are not aware of how unsafe those students feel after hearing those comments. The same goes for making pejorative statements about people from different areas of the region, U.S., or the world (e.g., "People from Aurora, CO are on welfare and lazy," "People from Boulder are left-wing nuts").

3. Set high expectations for all students. For example: *"You are all very bright and talented. I know that you will do well in my class. I have high expectations for everyone of you."* In contrast, do not say: *"Those of you from West High School will probably need a lot of help in my class."*

4. Do not assume that all students in your class have good command of the English language or have intimate knowledge of U.S. culture. Many International students are not familiar with U.S. slang words or other language idiosyncrasies. Often, many of these students are using electronic translators in class as you lecture and present information.

5. When you are studying and discussing in class different group identities or issues related to specific groups (immigration, same sex marriage, affirmative action), do not lock eyes with a student whom you think represents one of those groups. Your action assumes the identities and opinions of the students, potentially "outs" that student, and puts the individual on the spot. In addition, all the other students in your class will also notice what you are doing.

6. Work to create a safe environment for all identities in the classroom by establishing ground rules and expectations regarding discussions about and presentations on issues of diversity. (See website: <http://ctl.du.edu/index.php/teaching-resources/du-teaching-resources/213-diversity-in-the-classroom>)

7. Debates are one technique that instructors often use in class to explore and get students engaged in issues. However, it is important to distinguish between debates and dialogues. Debates are about people discussing issues and competing to see who has the “best” response. They have the explicit assumption that someone will win and someone will lose. Dialogues, on the other hand, are about achieving greater levels of understanding by listening to each other as we delve deeper into issues. In the end, whichever technique you use, make sure that you establish ground rules and set the context for the activity.

8. If you are going to express your political opinions in the classroom, understand that there is a risk of silencing students who do not agree with your views. As a faculty member, when you express your views to students you are doing so out of a position of power. That is, students maybe afraid to express themselves given that they know your position on an issue and that their grade maybe on the line. Similarly, be aware of how balanced you are in challenging student opinions that do or do not agree with your own.

9. If you are going to bring in guest speakers, make sure that your objectives are clear in bringing those individuals to class—clear to you, the class and the guest. If the reason is to introduce a particular perspective, try to balance the discussion by inviting different guest speakers with other perspectives.

10. It is okay to use humor in class. However, make sure that it is appropriate humor that does not target or degrade any student in the class or group of people overall. Classrooms are for engaging issues and learning concepts and new ideas; not having students, faculty or guests mock or denigrate people.

11. Be cognizant that microaggressions are also directed by students against other students. Be prepared to interrupt those incidents, too. Even if you are not sure how to address the climate issue in the moment, it is appropriate classroom management to stop problematic behavior immediately. You can follow up with individual students or the entire class later, after reflecting and/or consulting with colleagues on how best to do so.

12. In those cases where students do have the courage to contact you and point out that they were offended by a remark that you made or an action that you undertook, listen to them. As indicated above, given that you are in a position of power it probably took a lot of courage for them to raise the issue with you.

13. Know that there are resources at DU to support you in addressing microaggressions in the classroom.

Jesús Treviño, Center for Multicultural Excellence 303-871-2591.

Thomas Walker, Center for Multicultural Excellence 303-871-4614.

Gary Brower, University Chaplain 303-871-4488.

References:

Sue, D. W.; Bucceri, J.; Lin, A. I.; Nadal, K. L.; and Torino, G. C. (2007). Racial microaggressions and the Asian American Experience. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology. Vol. 13. No. 1. pp. 7281.

Solorzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. The Journal of Negro Education, 69, 6073.

1963 - *Letter from the Birmingham Jail*

1963 to 9 White Clergy. Excerpts.

(These Clergy wrote a public statement calling the current Birmingham protests "unwise and untimely").

Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct action movement that was "well timed" according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity... We have waited more than 340 years for our constitutional and God given rights....I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, "Wait". But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; **when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick and brutalize and even kill your black brothers and sisters with impunity, when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an air tight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society.... When you are harried by day and haunted by night with the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect and plagued with inner fears and outward resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodiness" then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.** There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of injustice where they experience the blackness

of corroding despair. I hope sirs, that you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.".....

I am coming to feel that the people of ill will have used time more effectively than the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and action of bad people, but for the appalling silence of good people. We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work time itself becomes an ally of the forces of stagnation...

...I gradually gained a bit of satisfaction from being considered an extremist. Was not Jesus an extremist about love? Love your enemies, bless them that curse you.

Was not Amos an extremist for justice? "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a might stream."

Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist? "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free."?

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Selections, M. Swaim, 2016

1967 – *Black Panthers: 10 Point program:* The Ten-Point Program

What We Want Now!

- We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
- We want full employment for our people.
- We want an end to the robbery by the white men of our Black Community. *(later changed to “we want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our black and oppressed communities.”)*
- We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
- We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society.
- We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.
- We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.
- We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
- We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black Communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
- We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

2016

- 2 YEARS *since the founding of Black Lives Matter*
- 49 YEARS *since the Black Panther 10 point program*
- 53 YEARS *since the Letter from the Birmingham Jail*
- 64 YEARS *since Brown vs. The Board of Education and school desegregation.*

Notes, Thoughts, Questions...



Evaluation and Reflection: Session 3

Date: _____

Location: _____

1. What part of the session was most useful to you?

2. What was the most interesting?

3. What would you like us to know about anything related to this conversation?

What do you need?

What didn't you like...?

What didn't you understand?

Thank you so much for your feedback!





EVALUATION - Session 3

Your feedback is important to us! Please complete our brief survey.

LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE, SESSION 2:

White Advantage and Privilege: Race as a Social Construct and Socialization to Race

(Please Circle One)

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

This event was high quality and worth my time.

1 2 3 4 5

This event increased my knowledge and/or abilities.

1 2 3 4 5

The format of the event was effective.

1 2 3 4 5

Will you do anything differently as a result of this session? Please explain:

What was least useful? What was most useful?

What topics would interest you in the future?

How did you hear about this event?

Please provide any additional comments on the back side.

Please add me to the mailing list for updates and information:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Thank you so much for your feedback!

