FOTL: De-centering Whiteness in the Classroom

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Overview

Group Agreements

Tendencies of White Dominant Culture and breakout

Examples of de-centering and struggles

Discussion/Brainstorming/Next Steps

Group Agreements

Creating a Brave Space for Honest Dialogue

- Speak honestly from your own experiences
- Seek understanding over agreement
- Make room for all voices
- Confidentiality: 'Plot can leave, but the characters can't'
- Let go of your perfectionist impulses
- Be mindful of distancing/intellectualizing
- Turn to wonder, pay attention to your body

Defining White Supremacy Culture in the US

"In this country, American means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate."   *-Toni Morrison*

"A socio-political system of domination based on racial categories that empowers those defined and perceived as white and elevates whiteness as the standard for human, while simultaneously marginalizing People of Color."

Tendencies of White Culture

https://www.newsweek.com/smithsonian-race-guidelines-rational-thinking-hard-work-are-white-values-1518333#slideshow/1610610

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ny6azgJth57Kk4hujYFnaeoQcJ4e5x-qMlRaY5jtcjs/edit?usp=sharing

Overt White Supremacy
(Socially Unacceptable)

Lynching
Hate Crimes
Blackface   The N-word
Swastikas   Neo-Nazis   Burning Crosses
Racist Jokes   Racial Slurs   KKK

Calling the Police on Black People   White Silence   Colorblindness

Covert White

White Parents Self-Segregating Neighborhoods & Schools

Supremacy

Eurocentric Curriculum   White Savior Complex   Spiritual Bypassing

(Socially

Education Funding from Property Taxes   Discriminatory Lending

Acceptable)

Mass Incarceration   Respectability Politics   Tone Policing

Racist Mascots   Not Believing Experiences of BIPOC   Paternalism

"Make America Great Again"   Blaming the Victim   Hiring Discrimination

"You don't sound Black"   "Don't Blame Me, I Never Owned Slaves"   Bootstrap Theory

School-to-Prison Pipeline   Police Murdering BIPOC   Virtuous Victim Narrative

Higher Infant & Maternal Mortality Rate for BIPOC   "But What About Me?"   "All Lives Matter"

BIPOC as Halloween Costumes   Racial Profiling   Denial of White Privilege

Prioritizing White Voices as Experts   Treating Kids of Color as Adults   Inequitable Healthcare

Assuming Good Intentions Are Enough   Not Challenging Racist Jokes   Cultural Appropriation

Eurocentric Beauty Standards   Anti-Immigration Policies   Considering AAVE "Uneducated"

Denial of Racism   Tokenism   English-Only Initiatives   Self-Appointed White Ally

Exceptionalism   Fearing People of Color   Police Brutality   Fetishizing BIPOC   Meritocracy Myth

"You're So Articulate"   Celebration of Columbus Day   Claiming Reverse-Racism   Paternalism

Weaponized Whiteness   Expecting BIPOC to Teach White People   Believing We Are "Post-Racial"

"But We're All One Big Human Family" / "There's Only One Human Race"   Housing Discrimination

-Classroom examples

-Attempts to challenge/interrupt these patterns

Tendencies of White Dominant Culture - Discussion Questions

1) If you identify as white, which of these tendencies resonate with you? If you identify as BIPOC, how have you experienced these dynamics?

2) How do these tendencies show up in my classroom culture? How do they impact relationships in my classroom and with colleagues?

3) What have you done to interrupt these tendencies/patterns when they emerge?

Improving Anti-Racist Practice

"It is not a shame to have unintentionally internalized subtle racist assumptions, but it's one's ethical and human responsibility to explore and question these assumptions so we do not operate from them in practice, policy, knowledge, and education."

-Becky Fields and Joanne Hall

Where to go from here? A Call to Action:

Warning: Increased awareness *without* concrete anti-racist action can serve to perpetuate white supremacy culture.

- How can I leverage my places of privilege to create more equity within my agency/my community/US Society?

- What am I willing to give up to create a more anti-racist organization/community/country?

Additional Resources

https://culturalbridgestojustice.org/detour-spotting/

https://www.cacgrants.org/assets/ce/Documents/2019/WhiteDominantCulture.pdf

http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html

Service Learning as a Pedagogy of Whiteness by Tania D. Mitchell , David M. Donahue & Courtney Young-Law in *Equity & Excellence in Education* (2012)

Ahmed, Sara. The Nonperformativity of Antiracism Meridians, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2006), pp. 104-126 Published by: Duke University Press Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/40338719)

Additional Resources, Cont.

<u>Books</u>:

Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown

Me and White Supremacy by Layla Saad

We Want to Do More Than Survive by Bettina Love

Colluding, Colliding, and Contending with Norms of Whiteness by Jennifer S. Chandler

Feminist Accountability: Disrupting Violence and Transforming Power by Ann Russo