**Chapter 11: The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity**

Discussion Questions:

1. What commonalities can you find in how race and ethnicity factor into the construction of identities in the articles?
2. Can you find examples of quiet racism in these articles? What are they?
3. Does racial transparency play a part in any of the articles presented?

Lelia Lomba DeAndrade

Negotiating from the Inside: Constructing Racial and Ethnic Identity in Qualitative Research

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 29, No. 3, 268-290 (2000)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/29/3/268?ijkey=.1qSUDyVBGiuA&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This article provides a critical analysis of the role of the "insider" researcher in qualitative fieldwork in race and ethnicity. The analysis is based on research conducted on the construction of racial and ethnic identity in the Cape Verdean American community of southeastern New England. Reflections are presented on the various ways that the researcher's status as an "insider" was evaluated and negotiated during fieldwork. It is suggested that these negotiations reveal the manner in which group members define the boundaries of the group, the attributes they associate with it, and the meaning of the group itself. This interpretation of insider status, as involving complex and ongoing definitions and negotiations of group membership, highlights the way that researchers and participants are simultaneously engaged in the construction of race and ethnicity.

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David S. Sizemore

Ethnic Inclusion and Exclusion: Managing the Language of Hispanic Integration in a Rural Community

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 33, No. 5, 534-570 (2004)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/33/5/534?ijkey=uZmPI31y9u3EQ&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This article is part of a larger qualitative project on the processes of Hispanic social integration in a rural Southern Illinois community. Findings indicate that Anglo insiders and outsiders describe the changes associated with Hispanic settlement by using a dualistic language of ethnocentrism and paternalism. I suggest that the discourse of inclusion is double edged because (1) it treads lightly on the sensitive nature of interethnic relations so that no one is offended, yet (2) it allows for the sentiment, especially among Anglos, that this is "our country" and Hispanics should "fit-in." A complex language of quasi-ethnocentrism is in operation that allows for Hispanic incorporation but only to the extent that it is "fair" and not based on "special" ethnic considerations. Building on critical race theory and other linguistic frameworks, several theoretical approaches are employed to understand the relationship between normative exclusion, language, paternalism, and ethnicity.

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Pamela Perry

White Means Never Having to Say You're Ethnic: White Youth and the Construction of "Cultureless" Identities

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 30, No. 1, 56-91 (2001)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/30/1/56?ijkey=hL7gRVtzR7IXE&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This article examines the processes by which white identities are constructed as "cultureless" among white youth in two high schools: one predominantly white, the other multiracial. The author proposes that whites assert racial superiority by claiming they have no culture because to be cultureless implies that one is either the "norm" (the standard by which others are judged) or "rational" (developmentally advanced). Drawing on ethnographic research and in-depth interviews, the author argues that in the majority-white school, processes of naturalization—the embedding of historically constituted practices in what feels "normal" and natural—produced feelings of cultural lack among white students. Contrarily, at the multiracial school, tracking and add-on multiculturalism helped constitute cultureless identities through processes of rationalization—the embedding of whiteness within a Western rational paradigm that subordinates all things cultural. The implications of these findings for critical white studies, sociology of education, and racial identity formation are discussed.

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Rainier Spencer

Assessing Multiracial Identity Theory and Politics

Ethnicities, Vol. 4, 357 – 379 (2004)

<http://etn.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/4/3/357?ijkey=uSYNAHSAAzYLY&keytype=ref&siteid=spetn>

**Abstract:**

It is increasingly possible to detect a split in regard to currentanalyses of multiracial identity in the UnitedStates. On the one hand there remains a relativelynaive brand of multiracial activism and identity politicsthat has deep roots in the recent movement toinstitute a US federal multiracial category;while on the other hand we find a steadily maturing body ofscholarship on mixed-race identity that is severallevels removed in terms of intellectual rigor and objectivity. As this latter movement continues to mature,it increasingly forces the former to acknowledgeand to confront important issues of logical consistency in the multiracial identity debate. This articlerepresents an effort to guide and shape thatdiscussion in assessing the ideological foundation of multiracialidentity politics in the United States.

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Amy Steinbugler et al.

Gender, Race, and Affirmative Action

Gender & Society, Vol. 20, 805 – 825 (2006)

<http://gas.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/20/6/805?ijkey=dig7zWDIJLofc&keytype=ref&siteid=spgas>

**Abstract:**

In this article, the authors operationalize the intersectionof gender and race in survey research. Using quantitative datafrom the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality, they investigatehow gender/racial stereotypes about African Americans affectWhites’ attitudes about two types of affirmative actionprograms: (1) job training and education and (2) hiring andpromotion. The authors find that gender/racial prejudice towardsBlack women and Black men influences Whites’ oppositionto affirmative action at different levels than negative attitudestowards Blacks as a group. Prejudice toward Black women hasa larger effect on Whites’ policy preferences than doesprejudice toward Black men or Blacks in general. In future research,survey methodologists should develop better intersectional measuresto further document these gender/racial attitudes.

Geoffrey Hunt, Molly Moloney, and Kristin Evans

“How Asian Am I?”: Asian American Youth Cultures, Drug Use, and Ethnic Identity Construction

*Youth & Society, March 2011; vol. 43, 1: pp. 274-304., first published on March 17, 2010*

<http://yas.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/43/1/274?ijkey=arMp.CbjJrK.6&keytype=ref&siteid=spyas>

**Abstract:**

This article analyzes the construction of ethnic identity in the narratives of 100 young Asian Americans in a dance club/rave scene. Authors examine how illicit drug use and other consuming practices shape their understanding of Asian American identities, finding three distinct patterns. The first presents a disjuncture between Asian American ethnicity and drug use, seeing their own consumption as exceptional.The second argues their drug consumption is a natural outgrowth of their Asian American identity, allowing them to navigate the liminal space they occupy in American society. The final group presents Asian American drug use as normalized and constructs identity through taste and lifestyle boundary markers within social contexts of the dance scenes. These three narratives share a sense of ethnicity as dynamic, provisional, and constructed, allowing one to go beyond the static, essentialist models of ethnic identity that underlie much previous research on ethnicity, immigration, and substance use.

Kim, Esther Chihye

**'Mama's family': Fictive kinship and undocumented immigrant restaurant workers**

Ethnography, Dec 2009; vol. 10: pp. 497-513

<http://eth.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/10/4/497?ijkey=MoOGdulkd4.bM&keytype=ref&siteid=speth>**Abstract**:

Undocumented workers create social cohesion, which serves as a source of solidarity and identification for individuals who are otherwise pushed to the periphery by the dominant society. This article is based on a larger study examining the personal, social, and working lives of undocumented restaurant workers using an ethnographic approach in conjunction with the life history method. Based on observation of their day-to-day interactions in the restaurant and in conversations, this article discusses the family' or fictive kin relationship they establish with their co-workers and their employer. Despite their illegal status and low earnings, this group of undocumented workers is able to maintain their dignity, find ways of bringing joy to their lives, and attain a sense of belonging. Integration into the restaurant's pseudo-family averts feelings of frustration and loneliness that are often the consequences of marginalization.

**The White Girl's Burden**

Finnegan, Amy C.  
Contexts, Feb 2013; vol. 12: pp. 30-35

<http://ctx.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/12/1/30?ijkey=mzwt70NbeQjEE&keytype=ref&siteid=spctx>

**Abstract**:

Sociologist Amy C. Finnegan provides a critical analysis of the movement behind the Kony 2012 campaign and how this unique form of activism coalesces with the biographies of the activists, who are notably white, privileged, Christian, adolescent females.