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Building Asian American Studies
Curricular/Keywords Project

Key Word - Racialization

Goals/Outcomes:

At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

1. Understand the process of racialization in the United States in terms of the construction of Blackness, *Black* bodies and the cultural, social/socio-economic, political and historical meanings ascribed to such.
2. Critically analyze notions and constructs of race.
3. In taking a comparative approach, evaluate especially how Asian/American racialization is shaped by anti-Black racism and how *Blackness* may also refer to “a projection onto certain peoples who are deemed *Black*.¹

Readings:

THEME	READINGS
The Construction of Race	<p>Michael Omi and Howard Winant. 2004. “Racial Formations.” In <i>Race, Class and Gender in the United States 6th Edition</i>, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers. 12-21</p> <p>Ian F. Haney Lopez. “The Social Construction of Race.” In <i>Critical Race Theory. The Cutting Edge</i>, edited by Richard Delgado.191- 203. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.</p>
The Politics of Slavery and Reconstruction and Civil Rights	<p>The “Three-Fifths Compromise:” The United States Constitution, Article 1, Section 2</p> <p>Dred Scott v. Sandford, 1857.</p> <p>W.E.B. Dubois. 2004. “The Black Codes.” In <i>Race, Class and Gender in the United States 6th Edition</i>, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers. 474-481</p> <p>Michael, Carpini. 2000. “The Black Panther Party 1966-1982”</p> <p>Martin Luther King Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”</p>
Understandings of <i>Blackness</i> – A Comparative Perspective: India	Vijay Prashad. 2000. <i>The Karma of Brown Folk</i> . Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 159 – 183.

	Nico Slate. 2012. "The Dalit Panthers: Race, Caste and Black Power in India." In <i>Black Power Beyond Borders: The Global Dimensions of the Black Power Movement</i> , edited by Nico Slate. New York City: Palgrave Macmillan. 127-146
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Audiovisuals:

1. Reconstruction (excerpt from PBS documentary *A History of US*)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJLBrDSTgng>
2. Black Panthers Revisited, Op- Docs. New York Times. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGZpDt6OYnI>
3. India's Dalit Revolution – Al Jazeera English 101 East - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdGY9UX1Gr8>

Other Materials:

1. The Dalit Manifesto. Accessible at: <http://raiot.in/dalit-panthers-manifesto/>
2. Varnas/Caste System. Accessible at: <https://jesiwagle.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/chamar3.jpg>
3. Black Panther Party for Self Defense Ten Point Program

Readings	Notes and Important Excerpts	Discussion Questions
Michael Omi and Howard Winant. 2004. "Racial Formations." In <i>Race, Class and Gender in the United States 6th Edition</i>, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers. 12-21	Omi and Winant - In 1982-83, Susie Guillory Phipps unsuccessfully sued the Louisiana Bureau of Vital Records to change her racial classification from black to white; she was designated "black" in her birth certificate in accordance with a 1970 state law which declared anyone with at least one-thirty-second "Negro blood" to be black.	Why would Susie Guillory Phipps and the Wrights want to change their racial classifications?
Ian F. Haney Lopez. "The Social Construction of Race." In <i>Critical Race Theory. The Cutting Edge</i>, edited by Richard Delgado. 191- 203. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.	Lopez – In 1806, one's status followed the maternal of line; the children of enslaved women, were deemed slaves as well. The Wrights – three generations – grandmother, mother and daughter) sue for freedom in Virginia on the ground that they came from a free maternal ancestor – a free Indian woman. To make a decision, the judge looks at phenotype – "...the complexion, the hair, the eyes...copper color..."	What does this say about Blackness and Whiteness or understandings of such in the US today? But what really is race?

<p>What is Race? History→</p> <p>Omi and Winant - “When European explorers in the New World "discovered" people who looked different than themselves, these "natives" challenged then existing conceptions of the origins of the human species, and raised disturbing questions as to whether <i>all</i> could be considered in the same "family of man,"” ... “or were indeed human beings with redeemable souls. At stake were not only the prospects for conversion, but the types of treatment to be accorded them. The expropriation of property, the denial of political rights, the introduction of slavery and other forms of coercive labor, as well as outright extermination, all presupposed a worldview which distinguished Europeans—children of God, human beings, etc.—from "others." Such a worldview was needed to explain why some should be "free" and others enslaved, why some had rights to land and property while others did not.”</p> <p>[Important to add to lecture → Dr. Samuel Norton (1820's/30's) who measured human skulls in order to confirm that there were differences among the races.]</p> <p>Race is a social Concept →</p> <p>Omi and Winant - There is no biological determinant for race.</p> <p>“Race is indeed a pre-eminently <i>socio-historical</i> concept. Racial categories and the meaning of race are given concrete expression by the specific social relations and historical context in which they are embedded. Racial meanings have varied tremendously over time and between different societies.”</p> <p>“In the United States, the black/white color line has historically been rigidly defined and enforced. White is seen as a "pure" category. Any racial intermixture makes one "nonwhite."</p> <p>Lopez – “There are no genetic characteristics possessed by all Blacks but not by non-Blacks...” (pp. 194). Race is a social construct – human interaction rather than natural differentiation (pp. 196).</p>	
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	<p>Omi and Winant - Consideration of the term "black" illustrates the diversity of racial meanings which can be found among different societies and historically within a given society. In contemporary British politics the term "black" is used to refer to all nonwhites. Interestingly this designation has not arisen through the racist discourse of groups such as the National Front. Rather, in political and cultural movements, Asian as well as Afro-Caribbean youth are adopting the term as an expression of self-identity. The wide-ranging meanings of "black" illustrate the manner in which racial categories are shaped politically"</p> <p>What is racialization? →</p> <p>Omi and Winant - The authors define racialization as "the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group. Racialization is an ideological process, an historically specific one." They contend that in the US, the racial category of "black" evolved with the consolidation of racial slavery. By the end of the seventeenth century, Africans whose specific identity was Ibo, Yoruba, Fulani, etc., were rendered "black" by an ideology of exploitation based on racial logic—the establishment and maintenance of a "color line."</p>
	<p>These readings help us understand black racialization in the US and especially how Blackness is embedded with historical, social and political meaning.</p> <p>First enslaved Black bodies come to the US beginning in 1619; explain chattel slavery; The American Revolution as an act to overthrow what were seen as colonial oppressors; Declaration of Independence ("We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,) and US Constitution (the idea of the US forming a "perfect Union.")</p> <p>How does chattel slavery construct the Black body and Blackness?</p> <p>What does the Three-Fifths</p>

<p>The “Three-Fifths Compromise:” The United States Constitution, Article 1, Section 2</p>	<p>The Three-Fifths Compromise (1787) – compromise between the northern and southern states as to how slaves would be counted for population legislation and taxing purposes. Southern states with a larger population of enslaved people would have a greater population thus greater political power. Compromise made to count 3 out of every five enslaved persons.</p>	<p>Compromise say about slavery and representation? Were enslaved persons then property or persons? How does this reinforce or further subscribe to understandings of Blackness?</p>
<p>Frederick Douglass. “What to the Slave is the 4th of July”</p>	<p>Douglass states, “But such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity, and independence bequeathed by your fathers is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony.”</p> <p>Look at the text of Declaration of Independence</p>	<p>What to the Slave is the 4th of July? How is Independence Day a mockery or a hypocrisy?</p>
<p>Dred Scott v. Sandford, 1857</p>	<p>Make connections with the Missouri Compromise – movement of Scott from Missouri (slave state) to Illinois (free state) back to Missouri. Enslaved, freed and then enslaved again, sues for freedom. Case goes to US Supreme Court. Decision of the court by Taney, “In the opinion of the court, the</p>	<p>What does the Dred Scott decision say about the Declaration of Independence? What then is the status of the “class of persons who had been imported as slaves” and</p>

	<p>legislation and histories of the times, and the language used in the Declaration of Independence, show, that neither the class of persons who had been imported as slaves, nor their descendants, whether they had become free or not, were then acknowledged as a part of the people, nor intended to be included in the general words used in that memorable instrument.” Read all of decision and also look at the Declaration of Independence.</p>	<p>their descendants” in the US at this time?</p>
<p>W.E.B. Dubois. 2004. “The Black Codes.” In <i>Race, Class and Gender in the United States 6th Edition</i>, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers. 474-481</p>	<p>Dubois says that the Black Codes were an attempt “on the part of Southern States to makes Negroes slaves in everything but name?” He also gives examples of Black Codes in Southern States. Note that the Black Code are enacted in Southern States after the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and during the Reconstruction period (1865-1877). Discuss the Reconstruction Amendments – 13th (1865 – end of slavery except as punishment for crime); 14th (1868 – citizenship); 15th (1870 – the right to vote).</p>	<p>What does W.E.B. Dubois mean when he says that the Black Codes were an attempt “on the part of Southern States to makes Negroes slaves in everything but name?”</p>
<p>Martin Luther King Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”</p>	<p>Martin Luther King Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail” – Discuss the arguments that King makes in the letter especially the four steps to non-violent direct action – collection of the facts, negotiation, self-purification, direct action. Frame the letter in terms of the civil rights movement. Important events – Brown v. Board of Ed (1954), Murder of Emmett Till (1955). Relate to Plessy v. Ferguson (1896).</p>	<p>Why is King in Birmingham and who is he writing this letter to?</p>
<p>Michael, Carpini. 2000. “The Black Panther Party 1966-1982”</p>	<p>Discuss the founding of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense; the social, economic and political contexts; the construction of Black Power → ideologies of Marcus Garvey; Malcolm X and Black nationalism.</p>	<p>What is the state of the Black body at this time?</p>
<p>Vijay Prashad. 2000. <i>The Karma of Brown Folk</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 159</p>	<p>Prashad argues that there are no Black bodies. He says, “This is the root of anti-blackness, for it is “blacks” who are mainly denigrated. I’ve put “blacks” in quotes deliberately, since it is not a self-referential category. Blackness signifies emptiness, failure; it does not refer</p>	<p>What does Black Power mean?</p>

<p>- 183.</p> <p>Nico Slate. 2012. “The Dalit Panthers: Race, Caste and Black Power in India.” In <i>Black Power Beyond Borders: The Global Dimensions of the Black Power Movement</i>, edited by Nico Slate. New York City: Palgrave Macmillan. 127-146</p>	<p>directly to “black bodies” (of which there are really none). Rather, it refers to a projection onto certain peoples who are deemed Black. The idea of blackness does not necessarily refer to those of African ancestry; it is white supremacy’s attitude toward people whom it designates as “black” and who are then assumed to be inferior” (pp. 158-159). Prashad then describes the racialization of Indians as Black by the British during British colonialism.</p> <p>Analysis of racism → Racism existing in structures of exploitation; “it refers to the historical appropriation of values and the monopolization of power by an elite that is wedded to class privilege and white supremacy” (pp. 164).</p> <p>Explain positionality of the Dalits. Discuss the political and economic goals of the Dalit manifesto.</p>	<p>How does Prashad allow us to understand the construction of Black bodies and Blackness?</p> <p>How would you now then define the process of racialization?</p> <p>How were/are Indians (some Indians today) constructed as Black?</p> <p>How do you understand racism as present in structures?</p> <p>How are the Dalits positioned in Indian/Hindu society?</p> <p>How are Dalits blackened and what are the connections to class?</p> <p>How do the Dalit Black Panthers borrow from an ideology of Black Power because of understandings and experiences of Blackness.</p>
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