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://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ny6azgJth57Kk4hujYFnaeoQcJ4e5x-qMlRaY5jtcs/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
- White Parents Self-Segregating Neighborhoods & Schools
- Eurocentric Curriculum
- White Savior Complex
- Spiritual Bypassing
- Education Funding from Property Taxes
- Discriminatory Lending
- 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 Murdersing 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

Covert White Supremacy
(Socially Acceptable)
Common Tendencies of White Dominant Culture

-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?
"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/


http://www.cwssworkshop.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)

Additional Resources, Cont.

Books:

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