Goodman et al. Chapter 12

Living with Race and Racism
Introduction

This last portion of the Goodman et al. book deals with the effects of the Thomas Theorem on race, that we treat biological race as a reality.

- We have developed a social, economic, and political system built on race concepts.
- We will explore the observation that some of these races have more privileges than others.
- This section of the book will view the myth of race as it impacts wealth, education, health and finally, how race is counted in the Census.

Race in popular culture

- With the election of Barack Obama many suggested that America had achieved a colorblind society, that an American Dream had been achieved.
- His father was a Kenyan immigrant, his mother an Euro-American (and an anthropologist, FYI).
- In fact, many argued his was a Horatio Alger story.
  - Horatio Alger was a late-19th century author who wrote a significant number of what are called “rags-to-riches” stories all based on the theme that if one worked hard enough and wanted it strongly enough ANYONE could succeed in the United States.
  - Of course, Alger was himself was not the product of such efforts; instead he was a Harvard graduate. Ironically, his story was one of riches-to-rags as he died impoverished in spite of making an excellent income during his life.
• Race in popular culture
  • Many suggested that Obama was in a unique place to lead discussions on American race relations.
    • Obama self-identifies as African American, he grew up in both Hawaii (a very culturally diverse state) and in Indonesia (his mother did anthropological fieldwork there and her second husband was Indonesian).
    • His personal successes really do represent a rags-to-riches story; his mother struggled financially during the time she was in college (a very familiar story).
  • So how HAS the media dealt with the ethnic group with which Obama identifies?
    • The Pew Trust suggests not in a very balanced manner.
    • The broader issues/themes of importance to African Americans were rarely reported.
    • In the first year after Obama took office 46.4% of all national news stories about African Americans centered on three stories:
      • The death of Michael Jackson.
      • The attempted bombing of a Northwest Airlines flight by Umar Farouk Abdulmatallab (“Underwear Bomber” born in Nigeria).
      • The arrest of Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates.
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- Race in popular culture (continued)
  - The arrest of Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates (continued)
    - When Gates and his driver tried to unjam his own front door a neighbor reported a break-in.
    - What happened next is debated, but the police arrested Gates for “disorderly conduct” stating he was uncooperative and verbally combative.
    - The arrest was deemed as racial profiling by some.
    - Obama commented on the arrest criticizing the police for acting stupidly.
      - The comment went national and the bringing together of Gates with the arresting officer was dubbed the “Beer Summit”.
      - Many suggest this event trivialized what was an sign of larger issues.
    - In 2010, the Chronicle of Higher Education reported on an independent panel that looked at the incident. They cited “failed communications”.
    - It was in the black press where the issues were brought forward for discussion. The mainstream press remained silent on this issue.
      - The black press discussed whether this was a case of structural racism (interactions between institutions; also called racialization).
        - In this case how the police and the press interacted.
        - Structural racism is different from individual racism; the actions of a single person are not the source of the issue. These interactions between institutions result from institutional racism (the specific institutional-level norms/values that inform the actions).
• Sports and education
  • Another example of structural racism is associated with sports in college.
  • Robin Lee Hughes reports on the issues in an article, Tennis anyone?: Race and class still matter in sports.
  • Hughes reports that on campuses there is the perception that blacks are poor and “colored”; that this ethnic group can not be both athletic and scholarly.
  • This is an example of where socioeconomic status (class) and race merge.
    • She suggests that middle/upper class whites (who play tennis) can be both excellent athletes and excellent students.
    • Poorer students are thus warned not to go into professional sports, but instead to concentrate on an education.
    • She goes on to suggest that campuses need to look closer at why many students without the financial resources make the choices they do.
  • College is a place where the ideal is a system based on meritocracy.
    • Back to Horatio Alger and the American Dream.
    • A meritocracy is one in which those with the most ability and drive will rise to the top; were everyone has an equal chance to succeed.
  • Goodman et al. conclude that this is a lack discussion on college campuses (as well as in the media) concerning structural racism as it relates to sports and professionalism.
### Median Yearly Income by Degree Earned, Race & Gender (2014)

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<th>Persons 25+yrs. Full/Part-time</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Some college</th>
<th>Associate’s Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree</th>
<th>Master’s Degree</th>
<th>Professional Degree</th>
<th>Doctorate Degree</th>
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<td>All Groups</td>
<td>30,731</td>
<td>32,237</td>
<td>37,317</td>
<td>52,308</td>
<td>61,387</td>
<td>100,072</td>
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<td>White (alone)</td>
<td>31,402</td>
<td>34,771</td>
<td>39,182</td>
<td>51,554</td>
<td>61,334</td>
<td>100,426</td>
<td>80,632</td>
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<td>Black (alone)</td>
<td>26,340</td>
<td>29,109</td>
<td>31,561</td>
<td>46,387</td>
<td>53,873</td>
<td>70,900</td>
<td>80,298</td>
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<td>Asian (alone)</td>
<td>24,425</td>
<td>31,299</td>
<td>36,561</td>
<td>55,217</td>
<td>76,287</td>
<td>100,841</td>
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<td>Hispanic (all races)</td>
<td>27,440</td>
<td>30,810</td>
<td>34,610</td>
<td>44,872</td>
<td>54,141</td>
<td>72,153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male (all races)</td>
<td>36,586</td>
<td>41,081</td>
<td>46,748</td>
<td>62,166</td>
<td>80,193</td>
<td>110,129</td>
<td>92,486</td>
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<td>Female (all races)</td>
<td>24,301</td>
<td>27,087</td>
<td>31,016</td>
<td>42,439</td>
<td>51,920</td>
<td>75,963</td>
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• Affirmation Action under attack
  • Affirmative action is not a single entity. This term refers to several landmark laws and executive orders that came out of the Civil Rights movement
  • For instance, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discriminatory labor practices.
  • In 1965 Lyndon Johnson signed Executive Order No. 11246 which mandated equal employment opportunity for all Americans.
  • In 1967 he expanded this with Executive Order No. 11375
  • Additional landmarks (testable): www.ode.uconn.edu/docs/AA%20history.pdf
  • Lyndon Johnson, in 1972, used an executive order to implement these “affirmative action” policies.
• Since the 1960s there has been a series of challenges to these mandates. Among these has been:
  • Bakke v. the University of California (1978): Separate applicant pools sorted by ethnicity are unlawful.
  • Grutter v. the University of Michigan (2003, actually called Grutter v. Bollinger) PLUS Gratz v. the University of Michigan (2003, actually called Gratz et al. v. Bollinger et al.) were brought to U.S. Supreme Court together.
    • Grutter was a white female law school applicant with GPA of 3.8 failed to gain entrance.
      • The case went against Grutter saying that using race in this case was “narrowly tailored” (read only one of a multitude of admission factors).
      • Her situation was not a “quota” system such as had been outlawed in Bakke v. the University of California.
  • White students, Jennifer Gratz (GPA 3.8) and Patrick Hamacher (GPA 3.0) failed to be accepted as undergraduates. [They won their case.]
    • The University of Michigan used a point system to determine entrance to undergraduate programs.
    • Gratz was offered a waiting list slot, refused. All other waiting list students were admitted that year. Further the point system was not even in place when she applied.
• Affirmation Action under attack
  • When looking at college admissions what is much less often discussed are the other factors most colleges use to determine admission:
    • Of course one’s abilities are assessed in the form of grades, SAT scores, interviews, and essays. (These have their own structural racism issues).
    • But often not discussed is that many wealthier families hire tutors, they pay for test preparations services, and contract with admissions consultants.
    • Some students are awarded admissions do to athletic ability as college sports is big business. Often (as discussed previously) athletic ability is linked to one’s academic ability.
    • Yet another way into college is as a legacy applicant. If your parent(s) went to the college and/or donated monies your chances go up. How much impact?
      • According to one study the impact may be quite significant.
      • Read here (testable).
    • A new term is cropping up: “institutional fit”. It means whatever the university says it does and it not consistent across campuses.
      • One study of 75 elite colleges determined two factors were most likely to be emphasized: underrepresented ethnicity/race (42%) and exceptional talent (42%)
      • Exceptional talent can be anything from debate to writing skills.
      • This concept of institutional fit is a secondary level filter. Legacy and academics are primary.
• What is “white backlash”?
  • Goodman et al. go on to describe what is called white backlash.
    • This is the claim that affirmative action is causing discrimination against whites.
    • Supporters of white backlash claim that the “Left” and non-whites are implementing racist policies, attacks against white Americans.
  • One well-known example used to legitimize the white backlash claims is the case of Shirley Sherrod in 2010.
    • She was reported as have been taped saying she discriminated against whites in her job at the Department of Agriculture.
    • She was fired then rehired. It was learned that her statements posted by a blogger (Andrew Breitbart) were taken out of context, misrepresented her comments.
      • In the full version of the tape she discussed how she overcame her anti-white thoughts formed earlier in life.
      • Breitbart died in 2012. Sherrod is suing the estate of Breitbart for slander.
    • This case suggests that Obama is not embracing the dialogue about structural racism. Further, Goodman et al. suggest that neither are the political conservative groups.
What is “white backlash”? (continued)

A second example is found in the language of U.S. Senator James Webb (D-VA) when he stated that diversity programs should be discontinued because they have “disadvantaged Whites and hurt the cause of racial harmony.”

This language reminds me of my late father (who I loved, but who was also a racist). My father used to say that the member of AIM (American Indian Movement) were outsiders who came in and railed up “our Indians” (the Lakota of SD). My father’s argument was based on “racial harmony”, too.

In the Wall Street Journal Webb wrote that affirmative action was no longer needed. Also inferred that it benefited immigrants more than either whites or blacks. His 2000 article co-mingles the concepts of affirmative action with quotas (false connection).

- He argues for class struggle at the same time as for the white underdog.
- In his books he also promotes this view.
- So he uses class, immigration debates and mislabeled statements about affirmation action to balance his need to retain black constituents during his time as a senator (he did not run in 2012).

The immigration debate as an example of xenophobia; it is epitomized by the Arizona Senate Bill 1070 (SB 1070; also called “Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act”) / House Bill 2162 (HB 2162) (both enacted in 2010).

- These bills set up a series of expectations for immigrants and employers which many label as racial profiling.
- Read the specifics at this link.
• What is the effect of “removing honor”?
  • The examples of the Confederate flag or playing Dixie have long been debated.
  • The case where a building named after a deceased Klansman is less well known.
    • There was a long tradition of elite community members being part of the KKK.
    • This practice was not limited to the South. Many Californians also embraced the KKK practices, for instance.
  • Perhaps the most famous movie linked to the Klan was made and premiered in California: *The birth of a nation*.
    • In 1913 it aired in the gym of the Riverside Polytechnic High School; its official release was in 1915 at a premiere in Los Angeles.
    • The film was developed from two books in this trilogy written by Thomas Dixon, Jr.: *The leopard's spots* and *The clansman*: *An historical romance of the Ku Klux Klan*. [FYI: The third in the trilogy was called *The traitor: A story of the fall of the invisible empire*]
      • In the fictional book called *The leopard’s spots* Dixon extolled the idea that blacks remained (and would remain) degraded subhumans. He also derided the practices of Reconstruction.
      • In the book *The clansman*, he cautioned Northerners to maintain segregation; he railed against the Republican Party which he saw as using the black vote as a mechanism to hold onto political power.
• **Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli)**
  
  Urciuoli reminds us that race is not an entity, it is an idea.
  
  Race is the idea that words such as white, black … or physical features such as hair texture, skin tone … signify origin linked to certain inherent qualities.
  
  She reminds us that it is hard to gain what sociologists call the sociological imagination (the ability to see a social classification system from the outside (neutrally) and not as a participant).
  
  In anthropology we use two terms to describe these alternative perspectives:
  
  • **Etic perspective** is where you are trying to view the system as an outsider, without your personal investment. This is the sociological imagination concept in sociology.
  
  • **Emic perspective** is where you are embedded in the system, where there is “buy-in” for the system.
  
  In anthropology the ability to use both the etic perspective and the emic perspective is the goal. It allows you to more fully understand how members of a culture/society view the world.
  
  She also reminds us that one category tends to dominate (the unmarked form) and others are subordinate (marked form). So in American English, the marked form tends to be that which indicates women and their activities, as well as non-White activities
  
  • **Unmarked forms** are those we consider to the neutral (but they are not), or broader, or even dominant version: man, mankind, actor.
  
  • **Marked forms** are those that are considered specific, narrower, or even subordinate version: woman, womankind, actress.
• **Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)**
  • Urciuoli talks to the relationship between ethnicity and social class in the United States.
  • Beginning with the relationships between colonists, servants and slaves access to resources
    has been a part of the system.
  • Racial classifications and markers changed over time, but what did not change was the
    privilege of whiteness.
  • All languages have distinct varieties that reflect the social conditions in which they formed and
    exist.
  • So, language varieties can reflect the conditions that generate racial categories.
  • In conjunction with the idea of language varieties is the understanding that the boundary
    between a dialect and a language is not distinct.
  • A language split into two or more varieties is called a dialect. Remember, they are
    mutually intelligible.
  • We tend to use the terms dialect and language loosely so that they become *fuzzy
    categories* (unbounded and poorly defined terms).
  • All languages and language varieties have their own coherent grammars and sound patterns.
  • We also assign some languages or varieties as being of “high-status”.
  • Our social system reinforces this concept. Your instructor does this when she grades your
    work; she is grading for what is called *prescriptive grammar* (‘proper’ speech, or
    standard) rather than *descriptive grammar* (language structure on its own terms).
Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)

- English derives from an Anglo-Saxon language around 1500 years ago (this link is funny, but a bit bawdy).
- English has been borrowing ever since.
- These borrowed words are called loanwords.
- This process of standardization has been true in much of Europe as well as the United States.
- The standardization and naming of languages with countries means other versions are subordinate, degraded.
- In the United States “standard” English is the dominant language; in fact, the spoken form of the dialect is called Midland.
- Interestingly, Midland has been slowly shifting west geographically.
- What we call “standard” English, then, is the product of centuries of standardization through publications and the teaching of dictionaries.
- Discourse is another area where biases are found.
  - Mock Spanish is best described as the deliberate perpetuation of racial stereotypes through the use of indirect indexing. Jane Hill gives one example: when an ‘o’ is added to the end of English words. “Passo meo the breado”.
  - The fake accents in Disney movies, such as that of the crab in the Little Mermaid or of the crows in Dumbo are other such instances where discourse reveals racism.
Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)

• Two examples of degraded languages are Spanglish and African American English (AAE, also called Black English or Ebonics).
  • Linguists such as William Labov and John Baugh have demonstrated they show grammatical and pronunciation that is linguistically complex
  • Even so most Americans continue to call them “sloppy English” or “broken English”.
    • Ana Celia Zentella noted that codeswitching was common between two generations of NY Puerto Rican bilinguals.
    • Codeswitching is the use of more than one language or dialect within a single social situation.
    • In the case of shifting between Spanish and English is called Spanglish.
  • I remember watching the 2004 movie, Spanglish and coming away with a sense of how correct these findings of one linguistic study are:
    • Mexican-born Spanish speakers overestimate their knowledge of English because they are heavily invested in being bilingual; American-born English speakers minimize their knowledge of Spanish.
    • Mexican-born Spanish speakers NEED to learn English, but not the reverse. American-born English speakers are passive learners of Spanish (seen as unnecessary; everyone should learn English).
    • Three-generation passage from Spanish to English dominance: Grandparents resist moving to English; parents as uneasy translators, and third generation use English.
• Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)
  • Two examples of degraded languages (continued)
    • There is also the now famous case of the Ebonics controversy (1996).
      • Teachers in Oakland began teaching bilingual classes in standard English and AAE after determining that AAE is primary language of the district’s African American students.
        • The premise was that as AAE is a distinct language and the goal was to create graduates AAE and standard English would both be taught.
        • Bilingual teaching practice was in place in California for Spanish and English already and had been shown that students were much more likely to graduate.
      • Oakland School Board denied that AAE was “broken English”; they stated that it was different language from English descended from African languages blended with standard English.
      • The controversy was from multiple directions.
        • Some did not want a policy of teaching bilingualism; these were the English-only supporters.
        • Others argued that AAE IS “broken English”.
        • Some objected to the wording of the Board resolution which used phrases such as “genetically based” when referring to AAE.
          • Misread this phrase as biological, but the term is linguistic (refers to a common language origin).
          • Language was rewritten to better articulate this concept.
        • African American leaders, such as Jesse Jackson, argued that the failure to teach standard English would place African Americans at a competitive disadvantage. He later shifted this view.
Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)

- The pattern in the U.S. for linking whiteness with English language is an old pattern.
  - Closely linked to this is the concept of English-only policies.
  - In the U.S. today we do NOT have an official language (what is called de jure), but we act as if we do (what is called de facto).
- Not only are Spanish and AAE degraded languages, there is a long history of eliminating the languages of American Indians and other indigenous groups around the world (remember the discussion about boarding schools in an earlier lecture?).
  - Language extinction is defined as the absence of any remaining speakers.
    - How many are at risk (endangered languages, defined as under 20,000 speakers) of linguistic extinction?
    - Perhaps ½ of all languages are at risk.
    - How many have fewer than 100 speakers? 1,000 speakers? 10,000 speakers?
      - Nearly 500, about 1500 and 3300 cultures.
      - Some on the verge of extinction
  - The impact of this policy in the U.S. has been profound. Here is the situation for American Indians:
    - Since 1950 (according to UNESCO), there have been 54 languages lost to extinction and another 137 are in danger.
    - In 2009 the last speaker of the Eyak (Alaska) language died.
    - Here is a list of all languages in the U.S. and their statuses (remember some American Indian languages died out before being recorded).
Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)

Language revitalization is defined as the efforts to help a culture to maintain endangered languages.

There are many efforts in place to combat language loss and according to Akira Yamamoto there are 9 factors that can help predict the success of a language revitalization effort:

- Dominant culture favors linguistic diversity.
- Speakers have strong sense of ethnic identity.
- There are educational/cultural programs.
- There are bilingual programs in the schools.
- Native speakers are trained as language teachers.
- The speech community is involved.
- There are easy-to-use language materials.
- There is literature in the language.
- There are environments where the language is used.

Here is a great website to learn more about this and related issues: Living Tongues

What do we lose when we lose a language? Read about the issues at Cultural Survival

Racialization of language is seen through acts of reference; for instance the writing of laws/publications and in everyday speech causes race categories to become more firmly entrenched.

For instance, at one time, in Louisiana, the line between black and white was legally expressed in blood quanta.

When we speak we are doing more than simply conveying a reference. With whom we speak and the social alliances we form are also important.
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- Language and race (Bonnie Urciuoli, continued)
- Racial epithets and other forms of racialization exist in our discourse.
- We all recognize the power and pain linked to racial slurs and racial jokes. We more often ignore the more “subtle” messages.
  - One example is the work of Jane Hill with Mock Spanish discussed earlier.
  - Another example is the controversy over the use of American Indians as mascots (Redskins, or the University of Illinois Fighting Illini, a made-up, Hollywood style “Indian’ mascot).
  - You may be interested to watch *Reel Injun* Or view how African Americans and American Indians are used in commercial settings.
    - Many of the images that portray stereotypes of African Americans are gone or “toned down”.
    - For American Indians this is not as true. Think about the Land O Lakes butter packaging. Just changed! Or the Redskins icon.