


Spring June 3rd, 2017

Intersections: A Theology and Social Justice Curriculum for Christian High Schools

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INTERSECTIONS:

A THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CURRICULUM FOR CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOLS

by

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A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University Scholars Program

Seattle Pacific University

2017

Approved _____

Date _____

ABSTRACT

Despite much writing on the intersection of race and ethnicity and theology, there are few suitable resources for high school teachers at Protestant Christian schools, so this project seeks to fill that gap by providing a curriculum written for conservative, Christian high schools. The curriculum emphasizes the study of scripture and theological witness in conjunction with relevant literature and media to challenge students to consider a more holistic understanding of the role of identity, inclusion, justice, and reconciliation in their faith. This will be facilitated by asking thought-provoking questions, thinking through issues of faith, providing a foundation for theological exploration, and connecting embodied faith to the world with the intention of preparing students to be citizens who are involved in their communities and aware of the diversity of experiences and resulting effects on individuals. By engaging and learning these topics, students will learn to communicate, think critically, and create connections, which will be imperative for their future lives. The curriculum was developed and curated from research drawn from a myriad of sources including blogs, articles, books, and lectures. It is designed to be a semester long course where it can be adapted to meet the schedule of the school.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE CURRICULUM

Motivation behind the Curriculum

Twitter, Facebook, CNN, *The New York Times*, and countless other sources report frequently on such issues as poverty, race, and incarceration, a list that could continue for several pages. These topics can be classified as issues pertaining to social justice. Students in schools across the nation come face to face with these issues on a regular basis in a variety of ways, but students at private Christian schools are often sheltered from some of these realities. This lack of engagement does not seem to be in keeping with the faith that is professed within these schools. Rather than creating bastions of seclusion and safety, Christian schools should be providing ways for their students to interact with these pressing issues while being in conversation with a Christian theological perspective. However, in my experience at both a Christian high school and university and in talking with other students who attended other Christian schools, there is little to no engagement of these issues. After spending four years at Seattle Pacific University (SPU), I came to realize the necessity of Christians engaging in the fight for justice.

Christian high schools have an opportunity to share with millions of students how a Christian theological understanding encourages social action that works for the wellbeing of all people. Christians are called to love those around them and need to be well-equipped to converse and act in love (Micah 6:8, Romans 12:9-21), but social justice and theology can be challenging subjects which might be intimidating to teach without proper materials. Thus, the project is driven by and is an attempt to present a solution to the questions: what does interacting theologically and biblically with social justice issues—particularly race and ethnicity—look like in a Christian high school? More specifically, what is an effective way to teach and engage students in social justice topics?

My project is designed to meet needs within a Christian high school setting. I intend for the curriculum to be used in a theology or Bible class as it will provide a current and tangible understanding of how students' position in society changes the way they see and interact with the world. Although it will be written for high school in broad terms, I imagine it being used with later high school students who are closer to entering college. For those reasons, I wrote a semester-long curriculum, modeled after college courses, with the Church of Christ denomination in mind. Locating it in a specific denomination will provide a target audience for the curriculum, which I believe will keep the curriculum grounded, prevent abstraction, and

maintain the possibility of the project being used in an actual classroom.

I chose to use the Church of Christ denomination as my guiding framework because I was raised in a Christian school associated with the Church of Christ denomination. This first-person experience provides an understanding of what is plausible to place in a curriculum for a more conservative form of Christianity. I also have connections to other high schools associated with the Churches of Christ that will allow me to ask questions as needed about the feasibility of curricular elements. Having such a specific target allows me to visualize the people and practices involved in those schools. I believe this ability will create a better product.

The curriculum topics will focus on macro-level social justice issues that intersect with race and ethnicity in the U.S, which I have chosen because encounters with the tensions race and ethnicity bring have been prominent in my own life. There will be an emphasis on recent events in an effort to make it applicable and real to students. It is intended to raise awareness about social justice in schools while demonstrating that Christians might hold a different and needed perspective. In my experience in conservative churches and para-church organizations, there is a dearth of information about and discussion of the realities of life outside those specific contexts. I believe, after my time at SPU, these are not issues to be ignored but rather they need to be brought up and discussed in classrooms where teachers are encouraging students to think about whether faith changes the way in which they interact or engage with issues of social justice.

For me, this project is significant for two practical reasons. First, it seeks to meet a need for curriculum in conservative Christian high schools that often struggle to have material to teach. Second, it allows me to practice a skill I plan to use as a high school teacher after graduating. The intention of the curriculum is to raise awareness of some of the social justice issues that are often overlooked in these contexts where students are often majority white and privileged with middle to upper class socioeconomic realities. My hope is that this curriculum will open students' eyes to some of the realities of the world and present them examples of how other Christians have navigated some of the challenges of that reality. I hope they will form ideas about how the church can actively support people who are doing social justice work and will join the people doing this work in pursuing equity and justice.

Although I am neither an education major nor concentrating on Educational Ministry for my theology degree, I have taken many classes that provided learning on these topics. The most important theology topical classes I have taken are *Introduction to Christian Reconciliation*,

Introduction to Global and Urban Ministry, and *Christianity and Society*. I was also privileged to attend the Student Congress on Racial Reconciliation at Biola University. During my senior year, I worked in Multi-Ethnic Programs and with Catalyst, SPU's student organization that facilitates conversations around diversity on campus. With my math degree, I have taken several classes that required the creation of lesson plans and assignments as well as being a Learning Assistant in a math classroom for two quarters. So, I felt prepared to embark on the project, knowing I would be able to fill in the gaps with my research.

It seemed appropriate then, to write to and for the context, the conservative, Protestant Christian church, I know well and which needs to be reminded that theirs is not the only story, their reading is not the only one, and their power is crippling to others. So, it is with love and desire for growth, healing, and welcome that I write this curriculum.

Theological Vision

My vision is that this curriculum will help students understand there is not a divide between sacred and secular but that all is God's and all shall be reconciled to God again. I want them to know the call to engage in justice and reconciliation has biblical precedence and is present in Christian tradition. Second Corinthians chapter five details the way Christians are called to be reconcilers. The text notes that Christ is the manner through which we, as humans, are reconciled to God, and this means, as Christians, we are called to step into this "ministry of reconciliation."¹ Now, we are to join Christ in the work of making a reconciled, renewed, and recreated world.

The curriculum is not a biblical but a theological one, because being a Christian is not about being restricted to the Bible or to sacred spaces. We see this in Christ's example that is not one of seclusion to a sacred realm but rather is a beautiful example of engaging with the world in its ugliness and pain. Christ's ministry was to the marginalized, the oppressed, and the downtrodden, and thus, as Christians, this is our ministry as well. He did not do so through a savior complex but as one who served and gave dignity to those whom he encountered. As such, being reconcilers means being present in hard spaces, living into God's graces, and seeking to be

¹ 2 Cor. 5:18 (New Revised Standard Version)

made and to make right.

I hope students are able to see the brokenness of a world where all is not right with God and to understand there are Christians working toward a world where humans are reconciled to each other and to God. Part of this journey is recognizing the history of complicity of Christianity as persecutors and perpetrators, though often unconsciously, of systems of inequality and injustice, particularly in arenas pertaining to race and ethnicity. For me, reconciliation encompasses aspects of justice and reparation and without either of those is incomplete. As Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil suggests in her book *Roadmap to Reconciliation*, reconciliation as the pursuit of God's plan involves "forgiveness, repentance and justice."² At the end of the semester, I want students to be able to articulate a Christian perspective on social justice, a vision of a world reconciled to God, and an understanding of ways to engage in making the vision a reality.

Curriculum Explanation

My curriculum may look different than some people's ideas of curriculum as a bound, very delineated, artistically appealing book that is professionally published. While I believe those serve a purpose in many settings, I did not envision my curriculum being so prescriptive. Rather, I designed this curriculum with the intention of giving overall structure and providing lessons plans that could be adapted by a teacher to fit the needs of the school and its specific schedule. I want it to be flexible enough that if it does not fit perfectly within their religious curriculum, it could be adapted into a history or English curriculum.

Part of the rationale for a less prescriptive curriculum is that the teachers I know who teach at the secondary level, particularly in Christian high schools, get very little theology or Bible curriculum that is akin to the bound variety. These teachers are often relegated to developing their own curriculum or adapting that which was left by their predecessor. In conversations with high school educators in these setting, I found that they find very prescriptive things to be challenging to adapt. I do not intend for the curriculum to be prescriptive but rather to provide a teacher a guide where he or she can then be an active participant in the classroom

² Brenda Salter McNeil, *Roadmap to Reconciliation: Moving Communities into Unity, Wholeness, and Justice*, (Dovers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, and imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2015), 22.

rather than a rote instructor. My intention and goal is to have this curriculum available for schools and teachers to use in whatever manner they need and desire.

I designed each of the lesson plans to take roughly an hour. However, I did not delineate specific times within the hourly plan for two reasons. One is because none of these lesson plans have been tried in a classroom, so I have no idea how long they will actually require. Second, I desired to provide sufficient flexibility for teachers to change the lesson to meet their class' needs. I also thought the idea of spending energy on superfluous design would take away from time and energy I could spend working on the content. All lessons that contain recent news articles are places where teachers could change the article to something more current. It is my intent for the curriculum to address the current social and cultural climate, because religion becomes irrelevant if it does not connect to what is happening in the world.

Mission and Purpose

The mission of the course is to inspire study of scripture and theological witness in conjunction with relevant literature and media from other sources to challenge students to consider a more holistic understanding of the role of identity, inclusion, justice, and reconciliation in their faith. This will be facilitated by asking thought-provoking questions, thinking through issues of faith, providing a foundation for theological exploration, and connecting embodied faith to the world with the intention of preparing students to be citizens who are involved in their communities and aware of the diversity of experiences and resulting effects on individuals. The purpose of the course is to demonstrate the intrinsic connection of social justice with the Biblical and theological witness to students at Christian high schools.

Students will be exposed to a theological approach in which faith and social interaction are not exclusive but are uniquely tied. The course is different from other classes that fulfill this credit in that it is intended to provoke thought about the ways faith informs our engagement with and understanding of others. Students should take this course as preparation for entering these conversations in college and the workplace where knowing their identity will be important, especially as it relates to the work of justice. At the completion of the course, they should have more language with which to have these conversations, a deeper understanding of what those words mean in a variety of contexts, and an understanding of the myriad of ways one can be a

justice-seeker. By engaging and learning these topics, students will learn to communicate, think critically, and create connections, which will be imperative for their future lives. This topic is important, because it is no longer hidden in our world today and affects everyone whether we are aware of the severity, stress, and fear it invokes in some people's lives.

Explanation of the Final Form

I set out to complete a whole curriculum, but along the way, but I learned that was unrealistic as curriculums take an enormous amount of work to do well. For the project, I have taken the months of research I did on the topics of social justice, theology, and pedagogy and outlined a semester-long curriculum. I then created lesson plans for the week of Introduction as well as Unit I on *Identity*. The reasons I chose to submit *Identity* as the fleshed-out portion of my curriculum. Identity is critical to human growth and formation, and growth and formation are important components to any education, but particularly a high school one. Additionally, individuals will struggle to engage issues of reconciliation and justice if they do not understand their own identity, because it is challenging to interact with others if one does not know oneself.

Also included are outlines for each of the other three units. For the content of this project, I will not be completing the other three sets of lesson plans. I do intend to fill them in after graduation, and I would eventually like to publish the curriculum on a website as a way for people to have access to the materials I worked so hard to create.

Since my project is a curriculum, it does not have cited sources throughout the curriculum unless I took something directly from the source. I used the research and knowledge to craft the lessons, which is why it was necessary to do both research on topic and on practice, because there is not much literature on theology and social justice in a high school setting. The creation of the lesson plans and outlines is the result of my research, assimilation, and learning. I have presented the curriculum in this format for submission of this University Scholars project, which is not the ideal form for use by a teacher.

Curriculum Learning Outcomes

- Students will recognize experiences that shaped and are currently shaping their identity.
- Students will consider the differences between their own experiences and those of others.
- Students will use terms and theories associated with social justice in conversation.
- Students will examine the Bible and theology in conjunction with current events.
- Students will observe society through experiential learning.
- Students will generate material, in a variety of media, that communicates the things they have learned on topics of justice and reconciliation.
- Students will investigate the complicity of Christians in perpetrating injustice and inequality.
- Students will be challenged to live into Christian practices of reconciliation and justice.

Notes to the Teacher

Depending on your class dynamic or typical practice, you might consider assigning students into groups for the semester sometime during the first week. This is not a necessity, but some of these activities and conversations require a significant amount of trust, and this might be better facilitated if students are sharing with the same group of people every time. As with many things, you could decide to switch them during the semester if they appear to not be working well. Taking some time to appraise the layout of your classroom is also important. Small groups or pairing and sharing will be used frequently in this curriculum, and it would be good to have your classroom conducive to such arrangements on a regular basis. If your classroom has desks, you should designate how the desks be clumped for small groups and arrange your seating chart by those groups. It is also important for students to be able to see each other's faces when they have these conversations as body language and eye contact are crucial.

I have included explanatory material at the beginning of each lesson plan. This is intended to give you background knowledge and rationale. It will also serve as explanation for why and how you will be doing some of the activities. In addition to these explanations, I have, when appropriate, included possible or suggested answers along with some explanation of why those were selected as potential answers. At the end of most lessons, I include a "Wrap-Up Assignment," but I am intending it to be an optional way to check on students' learning.

To wrap up the week and continue discussion, I included a blog in the curriculum. There are many platforms on which this can be facilitated and one might be connected to your school's resources in some way. Every weekend, students will be asked to complete a blog assignment, which is included at the end of the week of introduction. I wrote the curriculum with the blog assignments due, in its entirety, on Mondays. However, to encourage more depth you could have responses and questions due on Monday, followed by the comments on a later day of the week.

Unless it is a formal assignment, you could encourage students to express themselves in whatever manner they desire. This would mean that some responses will be prose, poetry, art pieces, and music. While this might be more challenging to assess, it will provide individuals and their classmates incredible insight. Some assignments should be non-writing to vary the assessment style and the exploration of understanding.

INTRODUCTION: FOUNDATIONS

Introduction Overview

The week's objective is intended to introduce students to the topics of social justice and theology. In the conservative church and para-church K-12 education, conversations related to these topics are typically lacking or absent. As such, it seemed practical to take a week to introduce not only the topics and their intersection but also language and classroom practice for these sensitive topics. Having common language helps level the playing field for students who enter the classroom with a diversity of experiences, and knowing the appropriate language is an extremely important practice for civil discourse. In addition, the first week will contain elements normally expected in an introduction, which include going over the syllabus, clarifying expectations, and answering questions. While laying the foundation, you will also be setting the tone for interactions during the semester.

Topic: Foundations

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify the course requirements and expectations.
- Students will discuss basic ideas of social justice and its biblical connection.
- Students will be able to describe classroom norms.
- Students will write a class covenant using classroom norms.
- Students will define key terms for the semester.
- Students will discuss the terms as they relate to the course outline.

Introduction Hour 1

Week Topic: Foundations

Hour Topic: Course Introduction

Hour Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify the course requirements and expectations.
- Students will discuss basic ideas of social justice and its Biblical connection.

Overview

It might seem logical to include class norms in the initial session to set the tone of the class, but students are going to read biblical covenants, for examples and to provoke thought, before writing their own class covenant. In reading other covenants, hopefully students will begin to make connections about what it means to be committed to each other even when the other person does not uphold their end of the covenant. Thus, all of this will be done in the second hour.

Students will likely know each other better than you will know the students as that is the reality of a private school setting. However, names are incredibly important for identity and for trust, so students will still go around the room and introduce themselves.

Students will choose a word for the semester. This practice is popular both within and outside Christian circles. The word is intended to be a reminder of the things students are trying to achieve in life. However, it is not supposed to be goal oriented like “graduate” but rather a way to infuse their life with more healthful practices; hence, such suggestions as “savor” and “adventure.” In this sense, if the word is kept at the forefront of an individual’s mind, it becomes akin to a spiritual discipline, which is a God-given “means of receiving [God’s] grace...[a practice that] allow[s] us to place ourselves before God so that he can transform us.”³

Ideally, this word will be used as a way for the student to connect social justice to theology. Students can refer to their words throughout the year to re-center themselves and can

³ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 7-8.

analyze how their word connects to social justice practices. Using a word for the semester also provides a way to connect the social justice practices included in this curriculum to something students believe is important to their life and provides places to interject the lessons with creative connections. The hope is students will use the word to place themselves in a posture that will allow God to transform the way they think of and approach social justice. To help students in this endeavor, make note of or collect the words and display them in the room as a reminder of the journeys students are on throughout the semester.

After this brief exercise, proceed into the rote course introduction. While going over the syllabus and other extraneous documents, try to give an overview of the course and what students should expect to encounter throughout the semester. When both students and teachers know the direction of the class, conversations and learning are maximized.

The questions and brainstorms at the end are intended to stimulate students' thoughts about what they know about the topic as well as provide a way for you to learn about the mental models students are bringing to the topics of social justice and theology. After each one, pause and take a few minutes to discuss, share, or make note of possible answers to these questions. There are no right and wrong answers, because this is intended to draw students in and give you an understanding of what knowledge and preconceptions they have. It will also allow students to learn from each other and begin getting to know each other at a deeper level.

The closing question is intended to encourage students to begin connecting what they know of faith and faith communities to practices of justice that are part of the life of the community and to encourage students to think about areas where their churches might improve their justice work. The Wrap-Up Assessment at the end ask students to quickly jot down something; it is a way to check student learning and continue to engage with the topics.

Homework Due: None

Homework to be Assigned:

- Fill out “Get to Know Me” handout
- Read a selection of covenants from the Bible. The intent is for students to begin thinking about the elements of relationships and what how relationships function between two people with differing levels of power.
 - Covenant with Noah – Genesis 9

- Covenant with Abraham – Genesis 15
- Covenant with Moses – Exodus 24
- Covenant with David – 2 Samuel 7:1-17
- Covenant with Jeremiah – Jeremiah 31:31-34
- Covenant between David and Jonathan – 1 Samuel 18:1-8
- Note one or two similarities and one or two differences between the covenants

Materials:

- Syllabus
- “Get to Know Me” handout
- Paper and writing utensil
- Bible

Readings: None

Lesson Plan

Introduction: This will be the part of the “Get to Know Me” handout shared aloud during the class session.

- Name
- Word for the semester – make note of the choice of each student

These are suggested answers.

- Savor – think savoring life, savoring relationship with others and God
- Breathe – think of its necessity to life, think of breathe as a way to remind oneself to practice self-care in the often draining work of justice and reconciliation
- Adventure – think of the adventure of Christ’s and Christians’ journey, think of learning about these practices as an adventure where the route is hidden
- Hope – think of it as essential to fighting for justice in the world, without hope there is no reason to continue
- Question – think of questioning as necessary to learning and journeying in faith through the intersection of social justice and theology
- Ask students for one more thing, a favorite coffee shop or Starbucks drink, candy, etc. Using a lighter question brings about a different type of connection between students and, if chosen well, could be incorporated into the semester by emphasizing the relational and communal aspect of sharing food as well as provide connection over shared favorites.

Official Introduction:

- Talk through syllabus
- Give an overview of the course
- Detail expectations for course including the course projects⁴

Opening Question: What do you know about social justice?

⁴ When the curriculum is completed and used in an actual classroom setting, the intention is to have students complete a semester-long project to demonstrate their learning and further their engagement with these topics.

Have students free-write on words of ideas that come to mind. Give them a couple of minutes to do this individually, and then have them pair and share. At the end, have one person from the group write a word or concept they discussed on the board.

Group Brainstorm: Is there Biblical and/or theological foundation for social justice?

Rather than trying to convince students there is a foundation for social justice, ask further questions to collectively unpack concepts of social justice. Remember students do not yet have a clear definition of social justice. Below are some suggested passages.

- Jesus and Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10
 - What elements of this story suggest it is related to the concept of social justice?
 - During this time, how did Jews view tax collectors?
Tax collectors were definitely marginalized people as they were thought to steal money from people for their own gain.
 - What does this interaction demonstrate about the practices of Jesus in the work and what might it suggest about the way Jesus compels people to the work of justice and reconciliation?
- Exodus 23:1-9
 - Have students read the passage.
 - Discuss the way it talks about interpersonal relationships and the way God's people are called to live.

Closing Questions:

- In what ways do you see your church engaging in justice activities?
- If you do not see your church engaging in justice activities, where might you suggest it could incorporate them?

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students write and then collect:

- One way they think their church or community could incorporate or improve upon an element of justice in their spheres.
- One question they have about justice.

Get to Know Me

18

Name:

Word for the Semester:

Favorite Restaurant:

Do you have any food allergies? If so, what are they?

What is your religious affiliation/church denomination?

Have you been on a mission experience/trip? If so, where and doing what?

Have you visited another country? If so, where and why?

How would you describe your race/ethnicity?

What do you think when you hear the word “theology?”

What do you think you might find challenging about this course?

Introduction Hour 2

Week Topic: Foundations

Hour Topic: Classroom norms and class covenant

Hour Objectives:

- Students will be able to describe classroom norms.
- Students will write a class covenant using classroom norms.

Overview

Hour two is intended to delineate the way the classroom and class sessions will be structured. As a way to root the curriculum in theology, you should connect classroom interactions to the idea of covenant found throughout the Bible. The idea of a class covenant appears frequently in education resources, and a class covenant gives students a sense of ownership and community. The classroom norms are drawn from norms in several college classrooms and some research. This is not an exhaustive list, but these are important ones, and provide a place to start. Make sure to give examples for the norms that lend themselves to doing so. Otherwise give some explanation of how the norm functions and why it is important. Beginning the course by unpacking the meaning and practicality of “covenant” also pushes students to think about the nature of their relationship with God and the way it interacts with their identity.

Creating a covenant together will elicit conversation as students begin to get to know one another. The task will also encourage students to think about the ways in which they want to be treated and how God calls individuals to interact with each other. The small group brainstorm should provide ideas and statements for use on the covenant. The covenant will be something to which all members of the class can refer throughout the year and should be placed in a visible location in the classroom. There will be no Wrap-Up Assignment for this day, because creating the covenant will delineate whether they understood the day’s material as a class and bringing students back together after writing the covenant will be challenging.

Homework Due:

- "Get to Know Me" handout
- Similarities and differences from reading the covenants

Homework to be Assigned:

- Write down 5-10 terms that you think are related to social justice as it pertains to race and ethnicity.
- Read Isaiah 10:1-4 and Isaiah 16:1-5
These passages are intended to initiate student thought on concepts and terms related to social justice.
- Read [The Impact of Stereotyping](#)⁵

Materials:

- Handout with classroom norms
- Projector and screen
- Examples of covenants
- Paper and writing utensil
- Bible

Readings:

Selection of covenants from the Bible

- Covenant with Noah – Genesis 9
- Covenant with Abraham – Genesis 15
- Covenant with Moses – Exodus 24
- Covenant with David – 2 Samuel 7:1-17
- Covenant with Jeremiah – Jeremiah 31:31-34
- Covenant between David and Jonathan – 1 Samuel 18:1-8

⁵ McNeil, *Roadmap to Reconciliation*.

Lesson Plan

Opening Exercise:

- Respond to the quote below in conjunction with the relationship of God to God's creation—including all people—that you noticed in the covenants you read for homework. The quote connects to the idea that a covenant creates an environment where the members fulfill obligations even when other members fail to do so. A covenant demarcates a relationship in which one does not necessarily give or receive in equal proportions.
 "...we have obligations to our neighbors that are not invalidated by our neighbor's failure to fulfill corresponding obligations to us; our relationships are not strictly reciprocal."⁶
- Questions to pose:
 - How do you think the statement encompasses the relationship of God to God's creation as described in the covenants?
 - Can you think of a relationship in your life where the relationship is not directly reciprocal?
 - A parent to child relationship
 - A mentoring relationship
 - A teacher to student relationship
 - What is the difference between a relationship between friends and one between a teacher and student?
- Do a pair and share after a few minutes.

Classroom Norms: Make sure to give examples as needed.

- Use "I" statements → no blanket statements.⁷
 - I think Texas is the best state ever.
 - In my experience, people have the freedom to choose their careers.
- No interrupting.
- Maintain confidentiality.

⁶ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 66.

⁷ First four adapted from Brenda Salter McNeil, "Ground Rules," (lecture, Introduction into Christian Reconciliation, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, WA, October 10, 2014).

- Be present (mind, body, and soul) and participate.
- "Use the language that people use for themselves."⁸

For example, if someone uses *black* in speaking about themselves use *black* rather than *African American*. Similarly, if an individual uses *Latino*, do not use the term *Hispanic*. In many cases, there are very particular reasons why an individual is choosing one identifier over another.

- Be open to someone else's experience.

Small Group Brainstorm: What would be important components to a classroom covenant?

Have students make a list of the items, because students are more likely to share in a big group if they have some thoughts written down. Then have students share with the larger group. Once you have exhausted group discussion, put up or hand out the sample covenants to facilitate more conversation and move toward establishing a course covenant.

Group Activity:

1. Create a class covenant. Make sure to have a target number of statements before beginning.
2. Approve it with a vote.
3. Put it somewhere in the classroom where it will be visible throughout the semester.

⁸ "Inclusivity - Suffolk University," Accessed July 7, 2016.
<http://www.suffolk.edu/campuslife/27886.php>.

Classroom Norms

1. Use "I" statements → no blanket statements.
2. No interrupting.
3. Maintain confidentiality.
4. Be present (mind, body, and soul) and participate.
5. "Use the language people use for themselves."
6. Be open to someone else's experience.

From the Catechists Journey⁹

CLASSROOM COVENANT

I have the right to be **HAPPY** and to be treated with **KINDNESS** in this classroom. I have the responsibility to treat others with kindness.

This means that no one will **LAUGH** at me, **IGNORE** me or **HURT** my feelings, nor will I do this to others.

I have the right to be **MYSELF** in this classroom. This means that no one will treat me **UNFAIRLY** because I am **FAT OR THIN, FAST OR SLOW, BOY OR GIRL**. I have the responsibility to treat others fairly.

I have the right to **HEAR** and be **HEARD** in this classroom and the responsibility to **LISTEN** to others. This means that no one will **YELL, SCREAM, OR SHOUT**. My opinion and needs will be considered in any plans we make and I will respect the opinions and needs of others.

I have a right in this classroom to learn about **MYSELF, OTHERS, AND GOD**. This means that I will be free to express my thoughts, feelings, and opinions without being interrupted or made fun of. I have the responsibility to respect the feelings and opinions of others and to not interrupt them or make fun of them.

I look forward to **RESPECTING** your **RIGHTS** and **MINE** and **RESPECTING** the person's desk I am sitting at and the classroom I am in. I will not destroy, write on, or misuse the things at their desk or in this classroom, because I do not want anyone to destroy the things that belong to me.

⁹ Joe Paprocki "PDFs from 'Teaching During a Year of Faith' Webinar, *Catechist's Journey*, Last modified August 29, 2012, <http://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2012/08/pdfs-from-teaching-during-a-year-of-faith-webinar/>.

From Reframing Israel¹⁰

Sample Classroom Covenant

This covenant guides the way we interact with each other.

- We will strive to be kind to each other and to respect each other's opinions. We will be careful with our assumptions and ask our classmates questions that can help us to understand their opinions. If there is a misunderstanding, we will attempt to clarify what was meant.
- We will refrain from putting down other people's ideas or making fun of their beliefs.
- We will not engage in *lashon hara*—gossip and slander—either inside or outside the classroom.
- We will strive to create an environment in which everyone is comfortable sharing and no one dominates the conversation. We will be mindful of how much we are talking and encourage our classmates to share their ideas. We will also respect our classmates who choose to listen instead of speak.
- We will refrain from blaming or judging each other. We will strive to be gentle with each other, remembering that sometimes we will be discussing sensitive or painful topics.
- We will speak only for ourselves and not for other people.

Although we commit to keeping this covenant, sometimes we will fall short. We will try to recognize those times and apologize when we hurt someone's feelings.

¹⁰ "Sample Classroom Covenant," *Reframing Israel*, accessed April 29, 2017, <http://reframingisrael.org/2015/05/sample-classroom-covenant/>.

Introduction Hour 3

Week Topic: Foundations

Hour Topic: Key Terms

Hour Objectives:

- Students will define key terms for the semester.
- Students will discuss the terms as they relate to the course outline.

Overview

As the week of introduction ends, students are asked to think about social justice broadly. Similar to the question on the first day, when they were asked to reflect on their experiences with social justice in the church, students are being asked to reflect on what they have encountered or heard in society. While this is intended as an exercise for them to learn the terms that are cogent to this course, it is also a chance for the teacher to learn the mental models students are bringing into the classroom. The main point is still for them to encounter these terms and have some framework for using them and thinking about the associated ideas throughout the course.

To get a good sense of where students' knowledge and understanding are, give them the list of terms and ask them to mark the ones they think they understand and for which they could give a definition. This will also create opportunity to see how their learning shifts over the course of their study this semester. Next, split your students into small groups and give them a list of the definitions for the terms. In their groups, they will be matching the definition to the term. As you go over which definitions and terms go together, tally the words for which groups did not choose the correct definition. Then discuss the questions as a big group.

After going over the terms and discussing them, play the trailer from *Glory Road*. This activity is intended to further unpack a few of the terms and create conversation on how social justice intersects with theology and ecclesiology. While watching the clip have students jot down which terms they see represented or engaged in the clip. Have a short discussion about some of the terms they saw at play in the clip. Throughout the conversation encourage them to have concrete examples. Start with *stereotype*, because they read a blog post about it and it is featured

in their wrap-up assignment. Connecting these terms and topics to the Isaiah passages will also create a space to begin laying the framework for the latter unit on justice. To close the day, the Wrap-Up Assignment will have students write down words or ideas that would be considered stereotypes. Although this is a common term, it will give them a way to think about it in conjunction with the terms that were new to them as well as provide you some knowledge of their understanding of things that can be considered a stereotype.

Homework Due: List of 5-10 social justice terms that are related to race and ethnicity.

Homework to be Assigned:

- Matthew 1:1-17 (The Genealogy of Jesus)
Students will use this to think about how Jesus' identity is described and contrast it with the images they have in their heads.
- Pick two of the Key Terms and write a paragraph about each word's impact in your life.
- Weekly Wrap-Up Blog Assignment – included at the end of this lesson

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensil
- Bible
- List of social justice terms
- List of social justice definitions
- Projector and screen
- [Glory Road Trailer](#)¹¹

Readings:

- Isaiah 10:1-4
- Isaiah 16:1-5
- [The Impact of Stereotyping](#)¹²

¹¹ "Glory Road (Trailers)," *Glory Road*, YouTube video, 2:31, posted by "mboll," July 30, 2006, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvsICT_HLf.

¹² Sally Raskoff, "The Impact of Stereotyping."

Lesson Plan

Opening Activity: Have students share, with a partner, three of the terms related to social justice they turned in and why they selected them.

Individual Activity: Give students a list of terms and have them mark the ones they think they know/understand.

Group Activity:

- Give small groups a list of the definitions and ask them to match the terms to the definitions.
- After they have spent some time working in small groups, bring the groups together and go through the list, and make sure they have the terms and definitions matched correctly.
- Make a tally of the words groups got incorrect. This is more data for you as you are tailoring this curriculum to meet the needs and location of your students.
- Either give them a handout with both the terms and definitions on it or when you give them the definitions, have a blank where they can write the terms. It does not make sense to have them write the definitions down, so do not do it that way.

Follow-up Questions: Possible answers or reasons are listed under the question

- Why do you think you incorrectly matched the ones that you did?
 - Never thought explicitly about the subtle differences.
 - Have not encountered such experiences, and thus, did not need the language.
- Why do you think it is important to know what these terms mean?
 - Language is crucial to communication.
 - Language makes a first impression.
 - Having the proper language will likely make individuals more confident in having conversations even when the topics are challenging.
 - This quote gives good context for why the first part of the curriculum is devoted to learning, practicing, and using the appropriate language. It will be very helpful as you think about the way you want to frame the discussion. There is not

necessarily a need to share it with students.

"Indeed, language at once frames who we are, ensnaring individuals in self-perpetuating identities while also providing the means to explore alternatives, shatter barriers that inhibit physical and intellectual border crossing, and raise consciousness beyond taken-for-granted attitudes. Language, in short, captures current experiences, sorts individuals into in-and out-groups, and offers hope for new idioms that provoke change."¹³

- Based on your earlier list, do you think there are any words that are not on the list that should be included?

Activity:

- Watch the [Glory Road Trailer](#)¹⁴.
- Have students jot down terms they see represented or engaged in the clip. Below are some possible answers. Begin with stereotype as they read a brief blog on stereotyping to give some context for the conversation on the video and terms.
 - Stereotype
 - Racism
 - Prejudice
 - Bias
 - Privilege
- Discuss or suggest ideas of Christian response to some of the situations. Draw the passages they read from Isaiah into the discussion to begin the conversation on justice as it pertains to the terms, current activity, and course as a whole.

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect: What are two or three words or ideas that could be considered a stereotype?

¹³ Donna Adair Breault, David M. Callejo-Pérez, and William L. White, *Curriculum as Spaces: Aesthetics, Community, and the Politics of Place*, (New York, Peter Lang, 2014), 19.

¹⁴ "Glory Road (Trailers)."

Weekly Wrap-up Blog Prompt:

- What is a remaining question you have about the conversations this week? Or something you do not think was addressed?
- Write a 200-word response discussing where you were at the beginning of the week and a moment where you encountered new insight.
- Respond to three of your classmates' questions.

Social Justice Terms and Definitions¹⁵

Bias

Prejudice; an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

Choose

To select freely and after consideration.

Color-blind

Based in the well-meaning but ultimately insufficient belief that including everyone “equally” by treating everyone the same. It is founded in the presumption that differences are by definition bad or problematic, and therefore best ignored.

Culture

The system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning.

Equality

Access to or provision for the same opportunities and assistance, where individuals are protected from being discriminated against by others.

Equity

All people in a given society are given access to or provision for the resources they need to achieve equal rights and opportunities.

Ethnicity

A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Grace

An undeserved gift from God. Further explained, it can be defined as the love and mercy given to us by God because God wants us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it.

Identification

The action or process of classifying someone based on visible or discernable features.

Identity

The distinguishing character traits, practices, and of an individual that an individual uses to categorize oneself.

¹⁵ Definitions taken verbatim from websites unless noted in the citation, and for the purposes of this project, the citations will be noted via a page at the end of the document and included in the bibliography. They should be included when distributed to students.

In-group

A social group to which a person psychologically identifies as being a member that gives that person a sense of belonging that leads to formation of an identity. The group discriminates against those not in the group.

Institutional Racism

This refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as non-white.

Justice

The maintenance or administration of what is right especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments.

Marginalize

To treat someone or something as if they are less important.

Mercy

Compassion shown to one who does not deserve it.

Meritocracy

The allocation of resources, whereby excellent individuals are over-benefited in relation to others based on the perceived belief that they earned it.

Oppression

The expression and reinforcement of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness.

Out-group

A social group that is not the in-group.

Prejudice

A pre-judgment or unjustifiable (usually negative) attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members.

Privilege

An unearned special advantage, immunity, permission, right, or benefit granted to or enjoyed by an individual because of their class, caste, gender, or racial/ethnic group.

Race

A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color of skin, type of hair, and shape of eyes), ancestral

heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time.

Racism

The belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another, that a person's social and moral traits are predetermined by his or her inborn biological characteristics.

Reconciliation

An ongoing spiritual process involving forgiveness, repentance and justice that restores broken relationships and systems to reflect God's original intention for all creation to flourish.

Social justice

A vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

Solidarity

A firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.

Stereotype

Characteristics ascribed to groups of people involving gender, race, national origin and other factors. These characteristics tend to be oversimplifications of the groups involved.

Stranger

An individual who is unidentified or unknown and is likely to be perceived negatively, often viewed as an enemy.

Tokenism

Actions that are the result of pretending to give advantage to those groups in society who are often treated unfairly, in order to give the appearance of fairness.

Tolerance

Acceptance and open-mindedness to different practices, attitudes, and cultures; does not necessarily mean agreement with the differences.

White privilege

Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are identified as white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

Social Justice Terms List

Bias	Meritocracy
Choose	Oppression
Color-blind	Out-group
Culture	Prejudice
Equality	Privilege
Equity	Race
Ethnicity	Racism
Grace	Reconciliation
Identification	Social justice
Identity	Solidarity
In-group	Stereotype
Institutional Racism	Stranger
Justice	Tokenism
Marginalize	Tolerance
Mercy	White privilege

Social Justice Definitions

1. To treat someone or something as if they are less important.
2. To select freely and after consideration.
3. This refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as non-white.
4. The expression and reinforcement of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness.
5. The system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning.
6. The maintenance or administration of what is right especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments.
7. The distinguishing character traits, practices, and of an individual that an individual uses to categorize oneself.
8. The criteria of allocation of positions, roles, prestige, power, and economic reward, whereby excellent individuals are over-benefited in relation to others.
9. The belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another, that a person's social and moral traits are predetermined by his or her inborn biological characteristics.
10. Based in the well-meaning but ultimately insufficient belief that including everyone "equally" by treating everyone the same. It is founded in the presumption that differences are by definition bad or problematic, and therefore best ignored.
11. The action or process of classifying someone based on visible or discernable features.
12. Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are identified as white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.
13. Prejudice; an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.
14. Characteristics ascribed to groups of people involving gender, race, national origin and other factors. These characteristics tend to be oversimplifications of the groups involved.

15. Characteristics ascribed to groups of people involving gender, race, national origin and other.
16. An ongoing spiritual process involving forgiveness, repentance and justice that restores broken relationships and systems to reflect God's original intention for all creation to flourish.
17. Actions that are the result of pretending to give advantage to those groups in society who are often treated unfairly, in order to give the appearance of fairness.
18. All people in a society are given access to or provision for the resources they need to achieve equal rights and opportunities.
19. Acceptance and open-mindedness to different practices, attitudes, and cultures; does not necessarily mean agreement with the differences.
20. A vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.
21. Access to or provision for the same opportunities and assistance, where individuals are protected from being discriminated against by others.
22. An unearned special advantage, immunity, permission, right, or benefit granted to or enjoyed by an individual because of their class, caste, gender, or racial/ethnic group.
23. A social group to which a person psychologically identifies as being a member that gives that person a sense of belonging that leads to formation of an identity. The group discriminates against those not in the group. A social group that is not the in-group.
24. A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.
25. A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color of skin, type of hair, and shape of eyes), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time.
26. A pre-judgment or unjustifiable (usually negative) attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members.
27. A firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.

28. An undeserved gift from God. Further explained it can be defined as the love and mercy given to us by God because God wants us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it.
29. Compassion shown to one who does not deserve it.
30. An individual who is unidentified or unknown and is likely to be perceived negatively, often viewed as an enemy.

UNIT I: IDENTITY

Identity Overview

Without understanding one's own identity, individuals will realize that navigating these conversations on social justice and theology are extremely challenging; if individuals do not fully understand their identities, they might continue to live into their socially prescribed roles that likely perpetuate oppression. Students will begin the unit by unpacking their own identity and experiences as well as the people and places that have shaped and are shaping them. The second week will be spent investigating the idea of representation as it unfolds in conjunction with how one's identity is developed. Last, students will be asked to assess how privilege and perception are related to how one identifies oneself and is identified by others.

Topics by Week:

- Who Am I?
- Representation
- Privilege

Objectives:

Week 1

- Students will recognize and explain components of identity by analyzing the way scripture represents Jesus.
- Students will reframe their identity within their social context.
- Students will explore facets of identity.
- Students will investigate the power of a story.
- Students will separate identity from identification.
- Students will describe and share their understanding of their identities with each other through "I am From" poems.

Week 2

- Students will appraise the representation they encounter in their daily lives.
- Students will encounter the disparity in media representation.
- Students will examine the power of stories.

- Students will investigate the way stories are told “Two Names, Two Worlds” by Jonathan Rodriguez.
- Students will assess how power affects the way stories are represented.
- Students will question whether situations are representative of the larger population.

Week 3

- Students will break down the role of place in privilege and identity.
- Students will appraise the meanings of equity and equality.
- Students will unpack implicit privilege associated with their identity.
- Students will connect representation to power.
- Students will model societal inequity.

Identity Week 1 - Who Am I?

Hour Topics:

- Identity Basics
- Identity Exploration
- Identity Articulation

Learning Objectives:

- Students will recognize and explain components of identity by analyzing the way scripture represents Jesus.
- Students will reframe their identity within their social context.
- Students will explore facets of identity.
- Students will investigate the power of a story.
- Students will separate identity from identification.
- Students will describe and share their understanding of their identities with each other through "I am From" poems.

Overview

During week one students are asked to reflect on their own identities. They will learn what some major components of identity are and how they are framed by the current social context. The first hour is intended to help students unpack their own identity and give language to facets of identity. In hour two, students will be asked to explore how their method of curating identity might look different from others' methods of establishing their identity. The last hour will be devoted to differentiating between identity and identification, investigating the history of students' identity, and learning to articulate their identity to some of their classmates.

Identity Week 1 Hour 1

Week Topic: Who am I?

Hour Topic: Identity Basics

Hour Objectives:

- Students will recognize and explain components of identity by analyzing the way scripture represents Jesus.
- Students will reframe their identity within their social context.

Overview

Begin the week by checking in with students by asking what remaining questions or concerns they have about the previous week. Then begin the new material. To stimulate student thought on elements that shape individuals' identities, students are asked to reflect on the question "What has shaped me?" Instead of asking students to write, they are asked to select abstract images with the hope that images will elicit more emotional connection. Using images also sets up the activity in such a way that students are not required to have language nor feel restricted about the things they might deem to be part of their identity. If possible, you could provide an example of images you selected to depict your identity. The picking of pictures is then paired with choosing words from a list provided to them. Again, this is a way to begin giving students, who do not have an understanding of the necessary terms, the language they need for this course and to engage students in multiple ways of knowing themselves.

In the follow-up section, put the list of words somewhere and tally beside them as students share the words with which they identify. By doing this, students will be able to see a visual representation of the ways in which they identify themselves without the pressure to verbally articulate their identities in a space they might or might not trust. Students are asked to translate, visualize, choose, and then articulate their identity.

Rather than begin by unpacking an individual student's experience, it seemed better to investigate identity together as an entrance into the nature of what it means to unpack identity. To further the theological connection, Jesus will be the individual whose identity the class will

investigate. Jesus will be an excellent example as there are many accounts of who Jesus is by many different people, and there are aspects of Jesus' identity that are often not considered in church settings that intersect with social justice themes.

The last section is intended to begin conversations on broad categories. Students will think about which one of the five has been the defining principle in their life in the last few years. Have students order them by level of influence, and then group students up and have them share. End the class period asking students to write down a question about identity to assess where students are after the lesson.

Homework Due:

- Paragraphs on Key Terms
- Blog assignment

Homework to be Assigned:

- Follow-up passages on Jesus' identity

These passages are intended to provide further information about who the Bible says Jesus is for students to use in creating "I am From" poems for Jesus.

- Matthew 13:54-58 and Mark 6:1-6b
- Matthew 3:13-17 and Luke 9:34-36
- Luke 18-20
- John 11:28-37
- "Who am I?" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer¹⁶
- Write three observational questions about the readings.
- Write 150-300 words on the blog in response to this statement while thinking about who and what is present in the place where you live.

"It is the interplay of internal and external forces in the midst of social interaction that allows for the construction of identities."¹⁷

¹⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Who Am I? By Dietrich Bonhoeffer," *DBonhoeffer.org*, Accessed February 6, 2017, <http://www.dbonhoeffer.org/who-was-db2.htm>.

¹⁷ Jane Danielewicz, *Teaching Selves: Identity, Pedagogy, and Teacher Education*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 11.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensil
- Magazines and newspapers
- List of words related to identity
- "Who am I?" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer handouts
- Bible

Readings: Matthew 1:1-17 (The Genealogy of Jesus)

Lesson Plan

Check-in: Use this space at the beginning of each week to make sure students do not have any lingering questions or thoughts about the prior week's activities.

Opening Activity: Think about the question "What has shaped me?"

- Select three images, without any people, that reflect a part of you
- Select some words out of a list with which you identify.

Follow-up Questions:

- What are some words with which you identify?
- Given the words you chose, what can you learn about the primary sources of your identity?
- How do those sources differ from those of your classmates?

Reflection:

1. Respond to the question "What has shaped me?" by listing 5-10 things
2. Narrow your list down to two things.
3. Write 2-3 sentences about what it was like to narrow down your list.

Group Brainstorm: Based on Matthew 1:1-17

- What do we learn about Jesus' identity from the genealogy?
- Are there things that surprise you about the genealogy?
- Are there important aspects of Jesus that are missing from the genealogy of Jesus?
 - Point out the women in the story. Ask questions about what is known about the women, and then ask if it is surprising that the genealogy of Jesus has Gentiles and a prostitute. What does this suggest about Jesus? How does it affect us today?
 - Point out the number pattern and compare it to the genealogy in Luke.

Follow-up:

- What sticks with you about the genealogy?
- Does reading the genealogy of Jesus affect how you feel about your identity?

Introduce Categories of Identity: This is just intended as a brief introduction of some larger categories that give language to and give shape to human identity. It should be brief. If possible, you could touch on some of the ways these categories intersect. At this point, it is not intended to point out the embodiment of privilege and inequity. Have students list the categories from most important and influential to least.¹⁸

- Race/ethnicity
- Class/money
- Gender
- Faith/belief system
- Education

What surprises you about the way you ranked these categories?

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect: What is one question you have about identity?

¹⁸ Tali Hairston, "Keynote 1: 'Listening to Other's Stories'," (Presentation, ASSP Leadership conference, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, WA, September 18, 2016).

Words for Identity Exercise

This is not a comprehensive list, but it is intended to give you some ideas to stimulate your thought on words and word groups with which you might identify.

Christian/Muslim/Jewish/Buddhist

Sister/Brother

Daughter/Son

Athlete

Artist

Student/Academic

Bookworm

Man/Woman

Actor/Actress

Singer

Instrumentalist

Debater

Employee (and words associated with your position)

Texan/New Yorker

American/Canadian

“Who Am I?” by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Who am I? They often tell me
I stepped from my cell's confinement
Calmly, cheerfully, firmly,
Like a Squire from his country house.

Who am I? They often tell me
I used to speak to my warders
Freely and friendly and clearly,
As though it were mine to command.

Who am I? They also tell me
I bore the days of misfortune
Equably, smilingly, proudly,
like one accustomed to win.

Am I then really that which other men tell of?
Or am I only what I myself know of myself?
Restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a cage,
Struggling for breath, as though hands were compressing my throat,
Yearning for colors, for flowers, for the voices of birds,
Thirsting for words of kindness, for neighborliness,
Tossing in expectations of great events,
Powerlessly trembling for friends at an infinite distance,
Weary and empty at praying, at thinking, at making,
Faint, and ready to say farewell to it all.

Who am I? This or the Other?
Am I one person today and tomorrow another?
Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,
And before myself a contemptible woebegone weakling?
Or is something within me still like a beaten army
Fleeing in disorder from victory already achieved?

Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions of mine.
Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am thine!¹⁹

¹⁹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “Who Am I? By Dietrich Bonhoeffer,” *DBonhoeffer.org*, Accessed February 6, 2017, <http://www.dbonhoeffer.org/who-was-db2.htm>.

Identity Week 1 Hour 2

Week Topic: Who Am I?

Hour Topic: Identity Exploration

Hour Objectives:

- Students will explore facets of identity.
- Students will investigate the power of a story.

Overview

After garnering some basic language on identity in the first session, hour two begins to unpack why understanding identity is important. The initial question is intended to draw students into the conversation while doing some assessment of the mental models with which the students are entering the classroom. Ideally students will begin to think about forces that impact their need to know identity. As the conversation or writing wanes, transition into talking about the Bonhoeffer poem and the ways in which he talks about the forces by which he feels defined.

Students will then shift to thinking about Jesus' identity. The first part of the exercise will be based on the readings they did for homework. Next, make a chart with the students helping them to visualize what various groups believed about Jesus. This is in preparation for conversations on both internal and external forces and identity and identification. Then give them free range to draw to write an "I Am From" Poem for Jesus. Caution them that things that are literary/historical about Jesus' life should be drawn from the gospel accounts. The follow-up questions are essentially asking students to talk about the difference in the internal and external forces and identity and identification but without using that technical language. The intention is for students to realize that they cannot discount the way identity and identification are at play if they have come to those conclusions, without that language, for themselves. Similarly, starting with Jesus and then themselves is a way to prepare them for discussing the ideas of identity and identification in regard to race and ethnicity.

From there students are asked to transition to group time to discuss the nature of internal and external forces on their identity. Rather than having them ponder this question for the

entirety of their lives, restrict in some way such as the suggested “in the place where you live.” Everyone lives somewhere, but there are probably rather significant differences in the physical locations in which students live. The Wrap-Up Assignment will give students a chance to phrase their learning about identity and identification in their own words.

Homework Due:

- Three observational questions about the readings
- Blog response

Homework to be Assigned:

- Write an "I am From" poem for yourself
- Esther 2 and 8 – These passages are intended to briefly highlight the differences in identifying oneself and having someone tell an individual their identification.

Materials:

- "I am From" poem template
- Paper and writing utensil
- Maybe synopsis of lives of famous people/bible characters
- Projector and screen
- [“Who lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Our Story”](#)²⁰
- [Lyrics for the Hamilton Song](#)²¹

Readings:

- Bible Passages:
 - Matthew 13:54-58 and Mark 6:1-6b
 - Matthew 3:13-17 and Luke 9:34-36
 - Luke 18-20
 - John 11:28-37
- "Who am I?" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer²²

²⁰ Lin Manuel-Miranda, *Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story*, 3:37, YouTube Video, posted by "Original Broadway Cast of Hamilton - Topic," 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jyg3Lo_-Ep8.

²¹ Lin Manuel-Miranda, "Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story Lyrics," *The Musical Lyrics*, Accessed May 20, 2017, <http://www.themusicallyrics.com/h/351-hamilton-the-musical-lyrics/3661-who-lives-who-dies-who-tells-your-story-lyrics.html>.

²² Bonhoeffer, "Who Am I? By Dietrich Bonhoeffer."

Lesson Plan

Opening Question: Why do I need to know my identity?

Connect this question to the Bonhoeffer poem students were asked to read for class.

Class Discussion: As a class, discuss how identity shows up in the poem. Each of these phrases speaks to an internal or external force Bonhoeffer is attempting to parse to understand his identity. Phrases you might consider bringing up if students do not point anything out are:

- “They often tell me”
- “I used to speak”
- “Am I then really that which other men tell of?”
- “Or am I only what I myself know of myself?”
- “Am I one person today and tomorrow another?”
- “Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am thine!”

Question:

When people tell you are something other than how you envisioned yourself, what does that do to your identity?²³

- Give students time to think individually.
- Have them pair and share.
- Give students the opportunity to share in the big group.

Possible ideas to discuss are how it might make individuals question that part of their identity or their identity as a whole. It might also push individuals to consider trying to change that part of their identity.

Class Discussion on passages about Jesus:

- Make a list of other characteristics or parts of Jesus' identity that arise from the new passages.

²³ Kurt Johns, “Identity: The Intersection of Our Stories,” (presentation, Seattle Pacific University Intercultural Retreat, Camp Casey, WA, November 6, 2016).

- Make a chart of how Jesus is viewed by his disciples, Jews, and Gentiles .

Group Activity: Break students into small groups and have them write an "I am From" Poem for Jesus.

Follow-up Questions:

- Are your poems all the same?
- Did your groups highlight different elements of who Jesus is?
- Do you think all of these are viable descriptions of Jesus?

The idea is for students to realize how often the way individuals' identification of other people is different from another individuals' identification of them and from what the individual themselves would likely say about their identity.

Group Brainstorm: Play "[Who lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Our Story](#)"²⁴ while groups brainstorm. You might want to select a version with lyrics or put CC on. [Here are the lyrics for the Hamilton Song](#).²⁵ They are not included in the plan, because they are very long, and you might choose to only play a clip of the song and would not need all of them.

- Can we choose our identity? Or can we choose our social identification?
- Are there people who do not get much choice?
- Who makes the decisions about what is recorded and termed as history? eg...who writes the history books? Some possible answers are:
 - The people who win the wars.
 - The people who conquer.
 - The people who have power.

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect: How would you define identity and identification in your own words?

²⁴ Manuel-Miranda, *Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story*.

²⁵ Manuel-Miranda, "Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story Lyrics."

About "Where I'm From"²⁶

"Where I'm From" grew out of my response to a poem from **Stories I Ain't Told Nobody Yet** (Orchard Books, 1989; Theater Communications Group, 1991) by my friend, Tennessee writer Jo Carson. All of the People Pieces, as Jo calls them, are based on things folks actually said, and number 22 begins, "I want to know when you get to be from a place." Jo's speaker, one of those people "that doesn't have roots like trees," tells us "I am from Interstate 40" and "I am from the work my father did."

In the summer of 1993, I decided to see what would happen if I made my own where-I'm-from lists, which I did, in a black and white speckled composition book. I edited them into a poem – not my usual way of working – but even when that was done I kept on making the lists. The process was too rich and too much fun to give up after only one poem. Realizing this, I decided to try it as an exercise with other writers, and it immediately took off. The list form is simple and familiar, and the question of where you are from reaches deep.

Since then, the poem as a writing prompt has traveled in amazing ways. People have used it at their family reunions, teachers have used it with kids all over the United States, in Ecuador and China; they have taken it to girls in juvenile detention, to men in prison for life, and to refugees in a camp in the Sudan. Its life beyond my notebook is a testimony to the power of poetry, of roots, and of teachers. My thanks to all of you who have taken it to heart and handed it on. It's a thrill to read the poems you send me, to have a window into that many young souls.

"Where I'm From" By George Ella Lyon²⁷

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch. (Black, glistening, it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush the Dutch elm whose long-gone limbs I remember as if they were my own.

I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls and the pass-it-ons,
from Perk up! and Pipe down!
I'm from He restoreth my soul with a cottonball lamb and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch, fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost to the auger, the eye my father shut to keep his sight.

Under my bed was a dress box spilling old pictures, a sift of lost faces to drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments-- snapped before I budded -- leaf-fall from the family tree.

²⁶ George Ella Lyon, "Where I'm From," George Ella Lyon | Writer & Teacher, Accessed April 30, 2017, <http://www.georgeellalyon.com/where.html>.

²⁷ "I am From Poem," Santa Ana Unified School District, Accessed April 30, 2017, <http://www.sausd.us/cms/lib5/CA01000471/Centricity/Domain/3043/I%20Am%20From%20Poem.pdf>.

“I am From” Poem Template

I am from _____
(specific ordinary item)

From _____ and _____
(product name) (product name)

I am from the _____
(home description)

_____, _____, _____
(adjective) (adjective) (sensory detail)

I am from _____,
(plant, flower, natural item)

(description of above item)

I'm from _____ and _____
(family tradition) (family trait)

From _____ and _____
(name of family member) (another family name)

I'm from the _____ and _____
(description of family tendency) (another one)

From _____ and _____
(something you were told as a child) (another)

I'm from _____,
(representation of religion or lack of), (further description)

I'm from _____
(place of birth and family ancestry)

_____, _____
(a food item that represents your family) (another one)

From the _____
(specific family story about a specific person and detail)

The _____
(another detail of another family member)

(location of family pictures, mementos, archives)

(line explaining the importance of family items)²⁸

²⁸ Adapted from “I am From Poem,” Santa Ana Unified School District.

Identity Week 1 Hour 3

Week Topic: Who Am I?

Hour Topic: Identity Articulation

Hour Objectives:

- Students will separate identity from identification.
- Students will describe and share their understanding of their identities with each other through "I am From" poems.

Overview

The class will open with students returning to the topic of identity and identification. Students will be asked to discuss the two pairs of words from the previous class period—internal and external and identity and identification—as they relate to the difference in the way individuals identify themselves versus the way groups identify people. Use this time as brief review of the concepts from the previous class.

After the opening question that is intended to connect to the previous class, give a short lecture on the difference between identity and identification. You should draw on the definitions of those terms from the term list as well as connect them to the terms internal/external and individual/communal. These are all important characteristics of how people interact in society. The readings from Esther for the class can be used to highlight the split between identity and identification and to investigate what characteristics or qualities are being used to determine her identity. Once you are done lecturing on identity and identification, remind students to keep this in mind as their classmates share their “I Am From” poems, emphasizing the opportunity this presents for students to identify themselves.

Students will then take turns sharing their “I Am From” poems. This will necessitate some trust and might prove challenging for some students. It can become an emotional process, so you should caution them to be respectful of their classmates and their feelings. They will be filling in a response form for each classmate, which is intended to keep them engaged as much as possible. Hopefully it will also serve as a way for them to further retain information about their

classmates. The better students know their classmates, the more smoothly the semester will go and the better prepared students will be to engage at a deeper level.

You should use the time that is left after students finish sharing their poems, to review the topics that were covered throughout the week. It might be helpful to use visual representation, so students can see the progress that has been made. As students leave remind them they have a “Weekly Wrap-Up” assignment on the blog.

Homework Due: "I am From" poems

Homework to be Assigned:

- Weekly Wrap-Up Blog Assignment
- Flint Water Crisis- you might choose from these articles:
 - [Extensive History of Flint Water Crisis](#)²⁹
 - [Washington Post on Faith and Flint](#)³⁰
 - [Is it because the residents are black?](#)³¹
- David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11) – This passage is used to bring up topics of representation, particularly looking at whose story is represented and how it is done so.
- Have students choose, and email to you, a song/rap/spoken word (preferably with audio) that tells a story with which they resonate.

Materials:

- “I am From” Poem
- Lollipops – will help students sit quietly and listen to each other
- Bible
- “I am From” poem response form
- Paper and writing utensil

Readings: Esther 2 and 8

²⁹ Sergio Hernandez, “Poisoned City: The Full Story Behind the Flint Water Crisis,” *Mashable*, Accessed May 6, 2017, <http://mashable.com/2016/01/24/flint-water-crisis/>.

³⁰ Kevin R. den Dulk, “Wake up, Christians: The Flint water crisis is an issue of public justice,” *Washington Post*, February 9, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/02/09/wake-up-christians-the-flint-water-crisis-is-an-issue-of-public-justice/>.

³¹ Michael Martinez, “Flint, Michigan: Neglected because city is black, poor?,” *CNN*, January 28, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/01/26/us/flint-michigan-water-crisis-race-poverty/index.html>.

Lesson Plan

Opening Brainstorm: Have students write three things that might be differences between how we talk about individual identity and the way we discuss the way others within a group identify individuals.

Mini Lecture:

Difference in identity and identification

- "Being racialized against our will is not a reality most White people have to contend with because Whiteness usually does not get mentioned or recognized."³²
- Here it will be helpful to point students back to the definitions of these words.

Identity

- It might be helpful for students to think about *identity* as the way individuals determine and describe themselves.
- Miroslav Volf discusses identity in relation to other people in his book *Exclusion and Embrace*. These quotes might be more than you want to give your students, but they will help you frame the discussion. They also give some context for understanding identity in relation to someone else's identity rather than purely as a distinctive. You can focus your teaching on the way humans engage with those who are not known, and you can focus on how the way individuals understanding their own relationship with other individuals affects how categorization transpires.
 - Identity is often associated with pushing others away, but Miroslav Volf ponders whether it is possible to have identity in such a way that pushing others away is not necessary. He draws on his understanding of "creation as 'separate-and-binding'" to prevent that phenomenon, and therefore allows identity to contain the ideas of "connection, difference, and heterogeneity."³³

³² Ali Michael, *Raising Race Questions: Whiteness and Inquiry in Education*, (New York: Teachers College Press, 2015), 10.

³³ Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 66.

- "Identity is a result of the distinction from the other *and* the internalization of the relationship to the other"³⁴

Identification

- It might be helpful for students to think about *identification* as the way individuals classify and describe other individuals.
- Who determines the identification of other people? What are some ways individuals identify others? Why might physical features play into the way people identify others?
- Do people accept others' way of identifying themselves or reframe their identity in light of their belief about the individual?

Investigating the interplay between identity and identification in Esther

- In the two passages from Esther, how is Esther being identified?
- Is she identifying herself? Are other people identifying her?
- What characteristics or features are being used in the descriptions?

Activity: Share "I am From" poems

- Give students lollipops to help them stay quiet and focused while others share their poems.
- Have students fill out the response form as they listen to each other share. Make sure they know they will be turning the paper in at the end of the period.

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect:

- Things that affect identity formation – place, people, and experiences
- Are there forces shaping you that you might not know about? Can you give an example?

³⁴ Ibid.

“I Am From” Poem Response

Student Sharing:

I did not know that or I am surprised by...

One question I would like to ask is:

Identity Week 2 - Representation

Hour Topics:

- Whose stories are represented?
- How are stories represented?
- Is this representative?

Learning Objectives:

- Students will appraise the representation they encounter in their daily lives.
- Students will encounter the disparity in media representation.
- Students will examine the power of stories.
- Students will investigate the way stories are told “Two Names, Two Worlds” by Jonathan Rodriguez.
- Students will assess how power affects the way stories are represented.
- Students will question whether situations are representative of the larger population.

Overview

After learning about and working through aspects of identity, this week will be devoted to learning about the representation of identity. For example, representation addresses how people point out differences in the way the media represents a person of color and a white person after the individual has committed a crime. The week starts broadly with students investigating what/whose stories are represented using a biblical example and one from recent events.

Hour one is intended to give students a framework for whose stories are represented in the media and in the Bible. The second hour asks students to analyze the power dynamic of representation by analyzing the Chimamanda Adichie’s TedTalk and a poem by Jonathan Rodriguez. Adichie will help students to put language and framework around the idea that sometimes only one side of a story is told, which will prepare students to discuss the tension but necessity of holding two stories together in the poem by Rodriguez.

The last hour will be spent looking at several stories to assess if how the story is proffered is representative of the people engaged in the situation. This will also ask students to think about who is representing the story and how that affects whether it is representative of a

larger population, whether what is being represented is biased, and whether it directly benefits a specific group of people. Throughout the week, students will learn how the presentation of a story can affect the way individuals create belief about the content of the story and the groups or people represented therein.

Identity Week 2 Hour 1

Week Topic: Representation

Hour Topic: Whose stories are represented?

Hour Objectives:

- Students will appraise the representation they encounter in their daily lives.
- Students will encounter the disparity in media representation.

Overview

As you begin the new week, take a moment to ask if students have any clarifying questions about previously covered material before moving into the new topic. Students should have read the story of David and Bathsheba for homework. Begin the conversation by creating a list of things students noticed were different from the versions of the story they had heard previously. Likely students will be surprised by their reading as many things of note are left out when the story is told to children. After this initial foray, you should take some time to discuss the individual characters in the story. Begin with Bathsheba, because she is the one whose character and image is given no voice in the story. Although there is a long history of Bathsheba being presented as a seductress, recent literature suggests, due to many unknowns, she could have been taken advantage of by David. You should ask why Bathsheba's story is often not presented, or why Bathsheba's character is overshadowed by David's. As you transition into comparing the two stories, you should spend a bit of time discussing the way David's story is presented. You might consider contrasting the way David's story is presented with the way Uriah's story is.

The next part of the class period is designed to make a brief connection to students' reality. Choose two or three very different song/rap/spoken word/hip hop lyrics they submitted to briefly have students think about whose story is being represented in the piece.

Students will begin conversation about the Flint Water Crisis. This activity could be updated if another subject is more recent and similarly relevant. The Flint Water Crisis is more of a conversation about whose story is not represented rather than whose is represented, because

recognizing whose story is not being represented is sometimes more important. There are several articles suggested from which you can choose, or you can find another one. Contrast their knowledge about Flint with their knowledge about September 11, 2001, an event that transpired before they were born. You want students to recognize the water crisis in Flint is not really represented in media or discussed in many circles.

Last, you will give students several news articles, and they will investigate whose stories are being told. You might try charting their results. For example, you could note whether the stories of white people or persons of color are told more often. Or you could note whether men or women's stories were told more often. Conclude the day by asking if students have noticed a pattern in whose stories are represented.

Homework Due:

- Song/rap/spoken word via email
- Blog Assignment

Homework to be Assigned:

- "Two Names, Two Worlds" by Jonathan Rodriguez³⁵
- Read [HuffPost on Media and Black Victims](#)³⁶
- Write a 100-200 word response to the poem by Rodriguez.

Materials:

- Projector and speakers
- Paper and writing utensil
- Newspapers or some other source of news students can access
- Bible
- Jonathan Rodriguez handout
- Flint Water Crisis articles

Readings:

³⁵ Jonathan Rodriguez, "Two Names, Two Worlds," *Facing History and Ourselves*, Accessed June 3, 2017, <https://www.facinghistory.org/reconstruction-era/two-names-two-worlds>.

³⁶ Nick Wing, "When The Media Treats White Suspects And Killers Better Than Black Victims," *HuffingtonPost*, August 18, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/08/14/media-black-victims_n_5673291.html.

- David and Bathsheba – 2 Samuel 11
- Song/rap/hip hop/spoken word
- Flint Water Crisis- you might choose from these
 - [Extensive History of Flint Water Crisis](#)³⁷
 - [Washington Post on Faith and Flint](#)³⁸
 - [Is it because the residents are black?](#)³⁹

³⁷ Hernandez, "Poisoned City: The Full Story Behind the Flint Water Crisis."

³⁸ Dulk, "Wake up, Christians: The Flint water crisis is an issue of public justice."

³⁹ Martinez, "Flint, Michigan: Neglected because city is black, poor?"

Lesson Plan

Check-in: Use this space at the beginning of each week to make sure students do not have any lingering questions or thoughts about the prior week's activities.

Conversation on David and Bathsheba

- Begin by making a list of things students noticed when reading the text versus when they had been told the story in the past.
- Unpack the way Bathsheba is typically portrayed in conservative church contexts versus what is written in the text. Ask who is telling Bathsheba's story.
- Discuss the way David is portrayed in contrast to his actions.

In-Class Assignment: Display one or two of the songs/raps/spoken words/hip hop that students submitted. Have students write down whose story is and how those stories are being communicated and collect these at the end of the class period.

Discussion on Flint Water Crisis:

- Had you heard about the Flint Water crisis before doing your homework?
- Ask students to contrast this with their knowledge of September 11, 2001.
- Discuss what has happened in Flint and reasons why students do not hear much about something that happened so recently when they know so much about an event that transpired before they were born. Some topics to address are the way race and location play into the representation of the story to the population at large.
 - Race: black vs. white
 - Location: rural vs. urban

Individual Activity:

- Have students read through several news articles identifying who is being represented and by whom. If you need to, you can have students email or turn in their identification.
- Collect synopsis of results.

- Maybe create a chart depicting who and by whom stories are represented.
- Is there a certain group of people who continually has a voice?

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect: What surprised you in the juxtapositions of the stories?

"Two Names, Two Worlds"

by Jonathan Rodríguez⁴⁰

Hi I'm Jon.....No—Jonathan
 Wait—Jonathan Rodríguez
 Hold on—Jonathan *Rodríguez*
 My Name, Two names, two worlds
 The duality of my identity like two sides of
 the same coin
 With two worlds, there should be plenty of
 room
 But where do I fit?
 Where can I sit?
 Is this seat taken? Or is that seat taken?
 There never is quite enough room is there?
 Two names, Two worlds
 Where do I come from?
 Born in the Washington Heights of New
 York City
 But raised in good ol' Connecticut
 The smell of freshly mowed grass, autumn
 leaves
Sancocho, Rice and Beans
 The sound from Billy Joel's Piano Keys
 And the rhythm from *Juan Luis Guerra*
 I'm from the struggle for broken dreams
 Of false promises
 Of houses with white picket fences
 And 2.5 kids
 The mountains and *campos de la Republica*
Dominicana
 And the mango trees
 I'm not the typical kid from suburbia
 Nor am I a smooth Latin cat
 My head's in the clouds, my nose in a comic
 book
 I get lost in the stories and art

I'm kinda awkward—so talkin' to the ladies
 is hard
 I listen to *Fernando*
Villalona and *Aventura* every chance I get,
 But don't make me dance *Merengue*,
Bachata
 Or *Salsa*—I don't know the steps
 I've learned throughout these past years

I am a mix of cultures, a mix of races
 “*Una Raza encendida*,
Negra, Blanca y Taina”
 You can find me in the parts of a song, *en*
una cancion
 You can feel my African Roots *en la*
Tambora
 My *Taino* screams *en la guira*
 And the melodies of the lyrics are a
 reminder of my beautiful Spanish heritage
 I am African, Taino and Spanish
 A Fanboy, an athlete, a nerd, a student, an
 introvert
 I'm proud to say: *Yo soy Dominicano*
 I'm proud to say, I am me
 I am beginning to appreciate that I am
Una bella mezcla
 I am beginning to see that this world is also
 a beautiful mix
 Of people, ideas and stories.
 Is this seat taken?
 Or is that seat taken?
 Join me and take a seat,
 Here we'll write our own stories

⁴⁰ Rodríguez, “Two Names, Two Worlds.”

Identity Week 2 Hour 2

Week Topic: Representation

Hour Topic: How are stories represented?

Hour Objectives:

- Students will examine the power of stories.
- Students will investigate the way stories are told “Two Names, Two Worlds” by Jonathan Rodriguez.

Overview

The opening question, which is whether the HuffPost article surprised students, is extremely important, and if students seem very engaged with it, then give it due diligence. This is a very important topic of conversation in general and particularly in a class session that is devoted to how stories are represented. It is likely many of your students will not have realized how prevalent it is for white people to be displayed in a positive light whereas persons of color who are often presented in unpleasant ways.

The bulk of the class will be spent watching and discussing Chimamanda Adichie’s TED Talk about a single story. Encourage students to jot down things that strike them as it will create better conversation flow. The take-away for the class is to have students realize how often only one side of a story gets told or represented. You want students to learn how to ask questions of the sources they read, watch, and listen to in their daily lives. The goal is for students to realize the impact of only having one-side of the story, to discover what sides of stories they are getting, and to change their sources as needed.

The follow up questions are intended to facilitate dialogue directly related to the TED Talk. If students’ comments wander from the TED Talk, that is okay as long as they are drawing from the content of the TED Talk when they are making points. If they are not, then guide them back to mostly discussing the video. The next section is intended to be a broader conversation drawing on the contents of the TED Talk and connecting it to the article they read and to other class conversations.

At this point, you will draw on the poem by Jonathan Rodriguez to help students parse the effect of what having only side of a story would mean for his life. Engage them in questions about how a story is and whose story is represented. Ask students what a single story would do to his identity. The end of this section should be to posit a question about what the state of the country would be like if only one side of his story was ever told.

The closing exercise should be quick but require them to pull all the parts of the class together. It might be a good activity to ask them to write down their answers and then have them turn it in on their way out of class.

Homework Due: Response to the Jonathan Rodriguez poem

Homework to be Assigned:

- Read John 4:1-42 and John 3:1-21.

These passages continue to provide framework for students as they question if how stories are told is representative.

- Write ten observations about the John passages.
- List of TV shows and/or movies that students have recently watched or are watching currently.

Materials:

- Projector and ability to play the TED Talk
- Paper and writing utensil
- Jonathan Rodriguez handout

Readings:

- “Two Names, Two Worlds” by Jonathan Rodriguez⁴¹
- [HuffPost on Media and Black Victims](#)⁴²

⁴¹ Rodriguez, “Two Names, Two Worlds.”

⁴² Wing, “When The Media Treats White Suspects And Killers Better Than Black Victims.”

Lesson Plan

Opening Question: Did the HuffPost article surprise you? Use a simple yes/no or thumbs up/down to gauge student response. If they seem engaged by the article, you can follow up with a brief conversation.

Group Activity: Watch [Chimamanda Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story](#)⁴³

Follow-up Question(s): Begin discussing these questions in their small groups and then move to a larger group discussion

- What are some reasons she gives that a single story is dangerous?
- What do we learn about the importance of identity? What are some essential components?
- What are some ways you can think of that would help us to combat a single-story narrative?
- What is the effect of proffering a single story? How are individual identities invalidated when this happens?
- What do we learn about the interplay of power and storytelling?

Group Brainstorm:

- How might the idea of a single story intersect with identity?
- Recall last week, we discussed identity vs identification. How might that conversation influence the idea of a single story?
- How does this interact with the article you read?

Group Discussion: After watching the TED Talk by Adichie, present the poem by Rodriguez to students. Ask students how the story is represented and whose story is represented. Another question to ask is what races/ethnicities are depicted in the poem and why is it important that they are all depicted.

- How do Adichie's words about a single story impact the way you view this poem?
- Is the way race and ethnicity depicted in the poem different from what you would expect?

⁴³ Chimamanda Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story." TED Global, 18:49, filmed July 2009, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.

- What is the effect of choosing just one of his names or the other? Where do you see examples of this happening in America or in American history?

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect: Based on today's class, do you think the media to which you are privy does a good job at sharing multiple sides of a story? Why?

Identity Week 2 Hour 3

Week Topic: Representation

Hour Topic: Is this representative?

Hour Objectives:

- Students will assess how power affects the way stories are represented.
- Students will question whether situations are representative of the larger population.

Overview

Open the last hour of this week reflecting on where it began: on the media and its level of representation in their journals. The first activity is intended to connect the question of representation to stories in the Bible. Specifically, you will be thinking about two stories in John: Jesus' interaction with Nicodemus and Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan Woman at the Well. Students will be asked to think about the ways they have had the story represented to them in the past in conjunction with some explanations scholars suggest that students might not have encountered in their Bible classes before this. Next, you will compare the representations of the two different stories. You should note the textual differences but also think about how this would have appeared in the context of the first century. Drawing on these two pieces, discuss with students how either individually or in contrast, these stories depict the idea of a single story.

Then, you will show a clip from *McLintock!*, where McLintock is asked to speak to the government officials on behalf of the Comanche. Analyze the clip for various elements related to identity, representation, and the intersection of those two elements. You want students to discuss why McLintock, the white man, is asked to speak for the Comanche. Try to see if there are patterns that can be deduced between this clip and the John readings.

The last activity is to watch clips from a couple of the TV shows/movies students suggested and analyze the representation in the shows. As above, it might look like white people always being in charge, or it might be there are no persons of color on the show/movie. Close the class by having students ask what population the data they collected represents.

Homework Due:

- Differences between the John readings.
- List of TV shows and/or movies that students have recently watched or are watching currently emailed the night before.

Homework to be Assigned:

- Weekly Wrap-Up Blog Assignment
- Read 2 Chronicles 3-7:11

This section includes details for the temple and will be used to engage students in a conversation about the privilege of place and the way place effects identity.

- Make a list of five specific details about the temple the student thinks is connected to identity and a brief explanation of why the student thinks it does.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensil
- Projector and screen
- Bible
- *McLintock!*
- Clips from the TV shows/movies

Readings:

- John 4:1-42
- John 3:1-21

Lesson Plan

Opening Question:

The first class this week ended with each of you picking out perspectives in a news articles. Did you sense a theme that could be connected to the question: Is this representative? Answer this question based on your life experiences and the media you choose as your sources.

Lecture and Discussion on John Passages:

- Discuss the differences students saw in the two John passages.
- Juxtaposition of the two John passages: Jesus and Nicodemus and Jesus and the Woman at the well.⁴⁴

Nicodemus	Samaritan Woman
Jew	Gentile
Man	Woman
Night	Noon
Educated	Likely uneducated
Respected	Outcast
Came to Jesus	Jesus came to her
Shallow responses	Deep responses, extended conversation
No record of belief	Believes
Leaves	Rushes to tell others

- Talk about the difference in how these two stories have traditionally been represented.
 - Nicodemus as the "converting" religious leader who is being culturally subversive.
 - Woman as the prostitute who is bothering and dirtying Jesus.
- Talk about how that, particularly with the woman, likely misrepresents the story.
- Based on the text, are these single stories? In the text, do we see identity happening or identification? Most importantly, in our readings of the story, are we creating a single story? How are we allowing identity vs. identification to play out?

Activity: Present a one-sided story to the students. Show the “Speech on behalf of the

⁴⁴ Brooke Hollingsworth, “A Surprising Contrast,” (lecture, John, Brentwood Christian School, Austin, TX, September 2012).

Comanche” clip from *McLintock!*.⁴⁵ You will need to borrow this from the library, rent it, or find it on YouTube.

Follow-up Question(s):

- Ask students what they noticed about the story.
- Who is relating the story?
- Were all the characters listened to in the story?
- If not, who were the people that were not listened to? Is there a common characteristic?

Group Activity:

- Have selected two or three clips from some of the TV shows or movies students said they watched.
- Watch the clips together, and ask students to take notes on these three things. Tally them.
 - How many of the characters are persons of color?
 - Have students try to identify the racial/ethnic background of the characters.
 - How many of the characters are women?
- Is this representative of...
 - The world?
 - The community in which the TV show or movie is set?
 - Your circles?

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect: What are some ways you can assess whether something you see or hear is representative?

⁴⁵ Andrew V. McLaglen, *McLintock!* (Old Tucson Studios: Batjac Productions, 1963).

Identity Week 3 - Privilege

Hour Topics:

- Physical Place
- Implicit Power
- Underlying Narrative

Hour Objectives:

- Students will break down the role of place in privilege and identity.
- Students will appraise the meanings of equity and equality.
- Students will unpack implicit privilege associated with their identity.
- Students will connect representation to power.
- Students will model societal inequity.
- Students will perceive hidden components of identity and story.

Overview

Many people believe they have some understanding of their identity in terms of who they are in their immediate circles, but they have no idea about the role their identity plays in the world or the ways in which it is shaped by individuals and experiences in their lives. This week is intended to help students recognize subliminal ways their identities are shaped by systems and practices of large institutions or communities. In looking at the influence these places have on their lives, students will gain an understanding of how privilege manifests itself in spaces where it is so common as to go unnoticed but drastically affects the identities of the persons within those spheres. Similarly, it should demonstrate how identification is often related to privilege. This is probably the most emotionally draining week of the unit, which is why it is last. Additionally, you want students to be comfortable with each other before embarking on some of these conversations.

While there are many areas in which privilege is evident and manifest, the three on which this curriculum focuses are physical place, implicit power, and underlying narrative. In many books on social justice education, physical place is noted as an often unaccounted for part of

privilege, and for a curriculum directed at high school students, this seems like it would be a good way to think about privilege, because it is easy to visualize. The second hour is devoted to Peggy McIntosh's famous article on white privilege in which her statements address privilege that often goes unnoticed.

For the third hour, students will participate in the *Race Race*, or *Privilege Walk*. This is a very emotionally draining exercise that gives students a corporeal and visual experience of their privilege by forcing them to think about the underlying parts of their life stories that worked together to create the students' identity and life trajectory. The level of impact and resulting emotion will depend on the diversity of people contained in the room. Some of the diversity will not be evident, so there is no way to know what impact to expect. If differences are not very evident, then you can facilitate a discussion about why there were not a lot of differences between individuals in the room. The activity will still be productive and provide opportunity to discuss privilege, but it will come through a different lens and might be a bit harder to facilitate.

Identity Week 3 Hour 1

Week Topic: Privilege

Hour Topic: Physical Place

Hour Objectives:

- Students will break down the role of place in privilege and identity.
- Students will appraise the meanings of equity and equality.

Overview

In several books on education and others on social justice, the role of physical place in both identity and education is stressed. This tie seems to be one that is seldom discussed but is also one that could prove quite a powerful connection to draw. As students are embarking on a week discussing privilege, often a hard matter for individuals to visualize, it seemed logical to begin the week with the tangible nature of physical place.

Students will begin by reflecting on their patterns of life, contemplating the places they frequent, and honing in on a particular location to analyze. In performing this exercise, they are drawing on the learning from both identity basics and representation that was covered in the previous two weeks. Follow this with a brief discussion on the Temple in 2 Chronicles 3-7:11. This section of text presents a very detailed image of physical spaces and associates physical spaces with specific groups of people.

For this lesson, you will only be presenting the graphic on the difference in *equity* and *equality*, but if you have time, consider having students read the entirety of the article. It depicts some excellent points about the way we understand those terms in conjunction with justice, and it will foreshadow the third unit of the curriculum.

The last exercise is reflection on a poem from *Cultural Reflections* by John Gaughan. You might consider having the poem read aloud either by you or one of your students. This act will add power and credence to the poem. Students will be asked to give their general thoughts as well as reflect on what the poem elicited from them emotionally. To close the hour on privilege

of physical place, students will reflect upon the power they have to choose the people and places with whom they come in contact.

Homework Due:

- Blog Assignment
- Details of the temple assignment

Homework to be Assigned:

- Read "[White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)" by Peggy McIntosh⁴⁶
You might want to create a handout for this.
- Mark five that made you pause and think
- Read Genesis 16
You will be using this passage to talk way implicit power is wielded to oppress others.

Materials:

- "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" handout to give students
- Bible
- Projector and screen
- Paper and writing utensil

Readings: 2 Chronicles 3:1-7:11

⁴⁶ Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," *National SEED Project*, Accessed April 30, 201, <https://nationalseedproject.org/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack>.

Lesson Plan

Check-in: Last class we discussed the idea of a single story. Can you write down one thing you remember from that conversation? Also, check to make sure there are no lingering questions or comments from the previous week.

Opening Question: How do you think your physical location informs your understanding of privilege?

Individual Activity:

Think about the people you interact with, places you shop or eat, and places you regularly visit (church, school, etc).

1. Make a list of the places you go on a regular basis.
2. Pick one of those places and write a description that contains the answers to the questions below.
 - What does the physical space look like? Where is it located? How would you describe the area?
 - What do you notice about the people you see? What are characteristics they share? Are they representative of the demographics of the city or area?
 - What does your circle of people look like? What are some characteristics you share? What are some differences?
3. Make a list of some of the places where all students can see them
4. What could this suggest about a facet of your identity?

Group Discussion: In 2 Chronicles 3-7:11, there is a description of the temple. Begin the conversation by asking students what details they noted and why. Then discuss how the physical location of the temple functioned in Israelite society. You could talk about who could enter, where they could enter, and when they could enter. Another option would be to discuss the nature of the items themselves and what that says about the space. The discussion could address the way physical location and space plays into the formation of culture and identity of

individuals and people groups. Additionally, you could address the ways in which physical space communicates meaning to those who view or frequent it.

Activity:

- Give the dictionary definitions of equity and equality, which are intended to be different from the definitions given during the first week.
 - **Equality**- condition or state of being the same in number, amount, degree, rank, or quality⁴⁷
 - **Equity**- justice according to natural law or right; specifically: freedom from bias or favoritism⁴⁸
- Have students write about the terms equity and equality and respond to the question: Do you think they connote similar ideas or do they reference different things? Explain.
- Now, remind them of the definition they received at the beginning of the quarter that particularly pertains to social justice and have them write on any contrast they might see between the dictionary definitions and that of the given ones.

Present Image: [Equity vs. Equality Graphic](#)⁴⁹

You can have a brief conversation on this, but having the graphic is intended to further instantiate the conversation you just had with your students by presenting a visual representation and bringing the discussion out of the ephemeral realm.

Closing Activity:

Below is an excerpt from a poem in *Cultural Reflections*.⁵⁰

All his worldly possessions can fit on his lap
The sunset for both is exactly the same

⁴⁷ "Definition of EQUALITY," *Merriam-Webster*, Accessed May 9, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/equality>.

⁴⁸ "Definition of EQUITY," *Merriam-Webster*, Accessed May 9, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/equity>.

⁴⁹ Paul Kuttner, "The Problem with That Equity vs. Equality Graphic You're Using." *Cultural Organizing*, October 29, 2016, <http://culturalorganizing.org/the-problem-with-that-equity-vs-equality-graphic/>.

⁵⁰ John Gaughan, *Cultural Reflections: Critical Teaching and Learning in the English Classroom*, (Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1997), 53.

The Empire State Building has the same height.
The glitter of Broadway for each has its fame
While the Brooklyn Bridge gives to both the same light.
But when viewing the city through two separate faces,
One which does poorly, the other well,
New York can seem to be two different places.
To one it's heaven, the other a hell.

~ Melissa Luckrnan, first-year college

In response to the excerpt, have students free write about the poem for two to three minutes. Ask them to focus their writing on what the poem evoked from them emotionally, but assure them it is all right if they did not feel anything.

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students answer and then collect:

- Do you (or your family) get to choose the people and places with whom you interact or are/were they chosen for you?
- Do you think this is a common experience or a privileged one?

Identity Week 3 Hour 2

Week Topic: Privilege

Hour Topic: Implicit Power

Hour Objectives:

- Students will unpack implicit privilege associated with their identity.
- Students will connect representation to power.

Overview

As you transition from hour one to hour two, emphasize that students should keep the privilege of place in their minds as they move to thinking about ideas of white privilege. You want them to be able to conceive how the physical location of whiteness impacts the privilege of individuals. The initial opening should ask students to think about the relationship of race/ethnicity and power. To provide a biblical connection, open with the story of Hagar running away from Sarah in Genesis 16. You want to point out who is the oppressor, who has power, who is the racial/ethnic superior by their cultural standards. After pulling what is obvious from the text, discuss God's response. Students might point out that God sends Hagar back to Sarah, and if they do so, you can suggest that God was working in the cultural context. You want to shift their focus to the end of the story where God creates a nation for Hagar's son, which is what he did for Sarah's son, too, which could be considered an act of justice. This should not be a long conversation/lecture—just enough to get the point across to students. Using this text might elicit challenging questions, but questioning and wrestling with the text are important.

You want to spend the majority of the day discussing Peggy McIntosh's article. This is often very eye-opening for students who have had little exposure to ideas of privilege and who have been told they can do anything they set their minds to doing. If students did actually read the article before coming to class, they will likely enter the space with lots of questions. Try to begin the engagement here. It might be a conversation that is not particularly focused, which is okay. You will need to be able to gauge the room and see what students need. It might work better to have students discuss this in small groups before conversing with the big group.

Another possibility would be to give them specific questions to answer by asking them questions such as which one surprised them the most or which triggers further questions.

Once past the initial processing that began with the journaling, make the transition into the big group discussion. Begin with the statements students said gave them pause. As you begin this conversation, you will probably need to address the divide between what is implicit and what is explicit. Sometimes things are implicit to one group that are explicit to another group. Building on the intersection of privilege and implicit/explicit understanding, you can engage students with the idea of implicit racism. Due to the implicit nature of many of the items McIntosh points out, students would experience the benefits of the privilege but would be unlikely to know it was a form of privilege and consequently could be viewed as a form of racism. After unpacking the reality and implications of privilege being implicit, transition to what that suggests about race/ethnicity as a social construct.

This article is going to have a lasting effect but its effect will be more lasting if you can connect it to what is going on in the world when you are teaching it. The goal is for students to not only believe that it exists but to have this belief change the way they navigate society, which involves action as well as recognition. Students' recognition of unequal representation will show in the way they discuss the Corey Batey/Brock Turner article. Once you have finished talking about the article, one of the points you want to have emphasized is how this is only an example not a singular case.

As a closing exercise, have students write for two to three minutes about their feelings on McIntosh's article now, especially in light of the relevant example. You can determine if you would like the two in-class writings to be collected.

Homework Due: Tally the ones that made students pause and think

Homework to be Assigned:

- Have students write a three hundred-word response about their experience reading and conversing with McIntosh's article. They should dedicate at least a portion of their response to reflecting on the question below as it pertains to earlier conversations of identity and identification and those terms' intersection with the article.

"Are we asking people to become us or allowing their story to be heard?"⁵¹

Materials:

- McIntosh handout, which students should have brought to class
- Bible
- Paper and writing utensil
- Projector and screen

Readings:

- "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"⁵²
- Genesis 16

⁵¹ Jennifer Harvey, *Dear White Christians: For Those Still Longing for Racial Reconciliation*, (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014) 201.

⁵² McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."

Lesson Plan

Opening Questions:

- Respond to the question: How do you think a person's race/ethnicity affects the power that person can wield?
- How do we see the intersection of race and power playing out in the story of Hagar in Genesis 16?
 - Who has power in this story?
 - Who has privilege in this story?
 - What does God do in response to the oppression?

Individual Activity: Take three minutes to write down your initial reaction when reading "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." Encourage writing down questions or emotions. For example, it is normal for them to write:

- This makes me angry.
- I had no idea.
- What does that mean for me, as a white person?
- Is this true?
- I am not a racist.
- I do not believe this is true.

The last answer is the one that is most challenging to answer and to engage, but it is also the most important. You might suggest some scenarios such as a black man wearing a black hoodie into a store is much more likely to be followed or questioned than a white man wearing a black hoodie in a store. Point out that the above phenomenon is white privilege.

Group Discussion: Begin the discussion with the statements that gave students the most pause as determined by your tally.

- Discuss the idea of implicit privilege and racism.
 - The framework we use here—racialization—reflects that adaptation. It understands that racial practices that reproduce racial division in the contemporary United States

“(1) are increasingly covert, (2) are embedded in normal operations of institutions, (3) avoid direct racial terminology, and (4) are invisible to most Whites.”⁵³

- Move the discussion toward understanding race/ethnicity as a social construct.
- How does being aware of some of these things change the way we interact in society?
 - "the ability to name one's social location with regard to power and privilege is a critical first step in forming students to be socially responsible citizens who respect the dignity of all persons."⁵⁴
 - [Cory Batey/Brock Turner Article](#)⁵⁵

Wrap-Up Assignment: As a short assessment of student learning, have students write and then collect: take three minutes to write down how you feel or what you think about "White Privilege" now.

⁵³ Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 11.

⁵⁴ Anna Floerke Scheid and Elisabeth T. Vasko, "Teaching Race: Pedagogical Challenges in Predominantly White Undergraduate Theology Classrooms," *Teaching Theology & Religion*, 17, no. 1 (2014): 27-45

<http://ezproxy.spu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip&db=aph&AN=93392991&site=ehost-live>.

⁵⁵ Shaun King, "King: Brock Turner, Cory Batey Show How Race Affects Sentencing," *NY Daily News*, June 7, 2016, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/king-brock-turner-cory-batey-show-race-affects-sentencing-article-1.2664945>.

Identity Week 3 Hour 3

Week Topic: Privilege

Hour Topic: Underlying Narrative

Hour Objectives:

- Students will model societal inequity.
- Students will perceive hidden components of identity and story.

Overview

To close the week on Privilege and unit on *Identity*, the last exercise is the *Race Race* or what is sometimes called the *Privilege Walk*. It is on the last day of identity, because it is challenging emotionally and relationally. Students need to be prepared for the gamut of experiences that will ensue. For this exercise to be most successful, trust, vulnerability, and honesty is needed. It is unlikely that you will have anything close to a perfect experience in regard to the activity, but students will still have an eye-opening experience. Students do not need to do any prep work, because part of the exercise is for it to be a very immersive experience. Since they are going in relatively unaware of the activity in which they are about to participate, you will be doing a lot of debriefing. This is where you will be emphasizing what you want students to take away from the unit and carry with them into the next unit.

You will need to do a bit of preparation for executing the *Race Race*. There are two different versions that will need to be assessed for your particular school situation, your class, and the relevancy of the statements to the current age of society. This activity also necessitates a space larger than a classroom, maybe the school's gym or an outside location. The logistical directions are in the links to the questions. A minimalistic description is that students begin in a straight line and take steps forward or backward depending on their answer to the question that is asked.

After completing the *Race Race* return to your normal classroom and have students journal/free write for five minutes. They will need this time to process what they experienced individually before you debrief as a class. As the teacher, you need to be aware of the students in

your classroom and their emotional reactions and needs after you complete the *Race Race*. When five minutes concludes, begin by asking about practicalities like what did you notice about where you started in relation to other people versus where you finished in relation to your classmates. Slowly transition from practicalities to how the exercise made them feel. Take as long as you have or need. There is a flex week built in, so if you need some extra time, you can finish debriefing the next time you have class. There is no Wrap-Up Assignment as there is a reflection on the activity that students are being asked to write, and it would seem awkward to transition to something else. Thus, to close the class, read the prayers by Walter Brueggemann together.

Homework Due: Three hundred-word writing on McIntosh’s article.

Homework to be Assigned:

- Write a double-spaced page reflection on this activity. Include what surprised you, what made you feel guilty, and whether you feel like your perspective has shifted in any way.
- Weekly Wrap-Up Blog Assignment

Materials:

- Questions for the *Race Race*
- Paper and writing utensil
- Projector and screen
- *Prayers for a Privileged People* by Walter Brueggemann

Readings: In-class reading of “Our Charter of Entitlement” and “The State of the Union” by Walter Brueggemann.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Walter Brueggemann, "Our Charter of Entitlement" and "The State of the Union," *Prayers for a Privileged People* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 17-18, 23-24.

Lesson Plan

Group Activity: *Race Race* (also called a *Privilege Walk*)

Here are two sets of statements that can be used. The first one needs the least amount of modification. You should read through the list before using, amend as needed to fit your class demographic, and make it sufficiently modern.

- <https://people.creighton.edu/~idc24708/Genes/Diversity/Privilege%20Exercise.htm>⁵⁷
- <http://www.culturalbridgestojustice.org/resources/written/level-playing-field>⁵⁸

Follow-up Question(s):

Have students journal on these questions for five minutes. Possibly pair and share before moving to a conversation in the big group.

- What did you notice as you were participating in this activity?
- How did it make you feel? What emotions did it bring up?
- What does the activity suggest about equality?

The most important thing to remember is to be sensitive.

Closing: Read the prayers by Walter Brueggemann together out loud.

⁵⁷ “Privilege Exercise (race Focus).” *Creighton University*, May 8, 2004.

<https://people.creighton.edu/~idc24708/Genes/Diversity/Privilege%20Exercise.htm>.

⁵⁸ Jona Olson, “Level Playing Field,” *Cultural Bridges to Justice*, Accessed May 7, 2017, <http://www.culturalbridgestojustice.org/resources/written/level-playing-field>.

Prayers by Walter Brueggemann

“Our Charter of Entitlement”⁵⁹

We are mostly the kind of people who do well and
who mean well.

We know how to do what must be done and
we get up and do it.

We have a sense of our worth and our capacity to perform.

We care for our children and our futures
and our good schools.

And after good schools come college
and learning and degree and profession
and security.

We sit in and enjoy our responsible entitlement that we have
surely earned.

But along with success and well-being,
we wish our children happy,
so we protect and extend adolescence;
we build barriers against ugliness and failure,
and struggle with too much work and stress.

We have and treasure all the signs of entitlement,
all the props of affluence,
all the symbols of well-being.

How peculiar that we have it all and worry about
immigrants who might acquire some small part of our legacy.

In this moment of candor before you,
we step into that gap in our life
between assured entitlement and the threat of immigrants,
between our indulgence of our children and
the violence that mostly lacks shame.

Move us by your hovering that we may come to ourselves,
that we may notice the ways in which we are
far from home,
that we may reckon how we have betrayed
ourselves for quick fixes.

Give us the capacity to return to you,
to be welcomed home, to be forgiven,

⁵⁹ Brueggemann, *Prayers for a Privileged People*, 17-18.

to be invited to dance
 and then to a fatted calf,
 to receive it all as a gift from you.

As people of entitlement and violence, we converge with
 immigrants,
 we learn together how deeply in need we are;
 receive us and move us that we may accept
 your welcome to newness.

Return us to innocence,
 even while we are frightened.

Exhibit to us your great simplicity among
 our complex habits.

Call us at last by our right names,
 because we are yours.

“The State of the Union”⁶⁰

We will watch and listen tonight for the State of the Union
 message:

We will hear as the Sergeant of Arms says dramatically,
 “Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States.”
 We will watch the choreographed procession down the
 aisle with much backslapping, applause, and good humor;
 We will all be there:
 the leading military people, the chief justice,
 the senate leader,
 the house leader,
 no doubt a few momentary “heroes” in the balcony.

We will listen to hear that the union is in good shape:
 the war is being won;
 the economy is coming back;
 migrants are facing new rigors;
 unemployment is down.

There will be much applause—
 and we will be glad for such political performance.

Except, of course, we know better.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 23-24.

For this is not an assembly of the union,
 this is a gathering of “the suits,”
 the men—and some women—who have good educations
 and even better connections.
 It is a meeting of wealth, and entitlement, and privilege.

We will watch and notice with some wistfulness
 all of those who are absent from the meeting:
 the poor who lack voice,
 the pensioners who lack health coverage,
 the unemployed who lack benefits,
 the gays who still live under threat,
 the victims of disasters who still need our help,
 the prisoners who live at the very edge of
 their constitutional rights.

We will embrace the buoyancy of the speech with gladness
 and with great dis-ease,
 because we know better.
 We know better because our Lord has told us about
 the lame and the blind,
 the hungry, the homeless, the poor,
 the prisoners, the ones who thirst.
 And we are in touch, by our baptism, with them.

We hope and pray and work for a more perfect union,
 a binding of all by dignity and security and well-being,
 and less binding by money and connections and power.

Our Lord is so weak and so foolish and so poor,
 and yet he is our Savior.
 We are pulled apart by our double awareness
 of self-satisfaction and dis-ease.
 We submit to your goodness our vexed lives
 that we cannot resolve.
 Give us honesty and openness that we may become aware
 of the true state of our union.

OUTLINE OF THE OTHER UNITS

Inclusion

While *Identity* focuses on understanding one's self, *Inclusion* is centered on how one interacts with other people. Service to and inclusion of the marginalized are at the root of Christ's ministry. The purpose of having a unit on inclusion is to think about the ways in which people are or are not included in our society. The unit on inclusion will parse the idea of creating a category for the *stranger*—those with whom one's society does not wish to interact. Students will be asked to think about the people they consider to be strangers and the ways they treat those people. The hope is students will begin to see those people not as "other" but rather as fellow people made in the image of God. To begin, the unit will unpack the dynamics of in-groups and out-groups as well as the role of the stranger in biblical and theological tradition.

In the second week, lessons will shift toward unpacking the role of community in standing with marginalized groups. Miroslav Volf talks about this practice in conjunction with the idea of embrace, or the drawing in of people. Students will investigate the nature of community through exploration in actual communities. The third week, on solidarity, emphasizes that inclusion is not just knowing how to and having the ability to include people but also the necessity of showing it. Learning about solidarity will begin with the interdependent nature of the human reality. The last two days will be spent understanding how members of the majority culture stand in solidarity with those who are marginalized by the majority culture.

Learning Objectives

- Students will break down the differences between in-group and out-group identification.
- Students will differentiate between Christian ideas of the stranger.
- Students will be able to articulate the difference between a community and a group.⁶¹
- Students will collaborate with community organizations.
- Students will investigate the interconnectedness of individuals.
- Students will engage in acts of solidarity with community organizations.

⁶¹ "What Is Community?" *Facing History and Ourselves*, Accessed January 29, 2017, <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/identity-and-community/what-community>.

Outline

Week 1: Other/Stranger

1. In-group identification
2. Out-group identification
3. Christian engagement with the *stranger*

Week 2: Community

1. Defining community
2. Examining community
3. Practicing community

Week 3: Solidarity

1. Investigating interdependence
2. Letting others lead
3. Standing in solidarity

Justice

Student discussions utilize the language of justice and injustice in this conversation, but since the focus is on bringing justice, the unit is presented with that terminology. Together *Identity* and *Inclusion*, give students an understanding of themselves and the social circles they inhabit. In doing so, they have been asked to look at their areas of social location and assess differences they see between their experiences and those of people who identify with a different racial or ethnic group. The unit will delve into understanding the way justice is invoked in the Bible. One of the connections students will learn is that justice is synonymous with “righteous.” They will think about what it means that “making right” is critical to the work of justice. The first week students will spend time unpacking that connection.

Students will use their biblical understanding to engage questions surrounding issues of systemic injustice and what it would look like for Christians to engage in the pursuit of justice. The first day is designed to lay foundation for the other two as questions of education and policy are compounded by other factors. Last, students will learn about the way an individual’s identity impacts the way they navigate questions of justice. They will then assess and practice ways to engage in justice in their communities.

Learning Objectives

- Students will compare how justice appears in different sectors of society.
- Students will discover the role of justice in the Bible.
- Students will perceive the differences between individual and systemic justice.
- Students will interpret systemic and individual justice in light of Biblical justice.
- Students will unpack the unequal treatment of certain groups of people by systems.
- Students will consider the role of the individual in justice work.

Outline

Week 1: Biblical Justice

1. Prophets
2. Gospels
3. Pauline works

Week 2: Systemic Justice

1. Intersections of race and class and race and gender
2. Education and prison system
3. Policy practices

Week 3: Individual Justice

1. Learning about individual injustice
2. Advocating for justice
3. Practicing justice

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is the culmination of the curriculum, because the practice of reconciliation draws on the learning of the other three units, bringing it altogether. To bring reconciliation, one needs to know one's own identity as well as those of the other people involved and be willing to navigate the experience with them. Hence, the practice of reconciliation centers on relationships, often following engagement in justice work. As with *Justice*, the unit on reconciliation will begin by investigating the manner in which reconciliation is employed in the Bible. From there, students will be asked to think about the ways they see reconciliation being made manifest in the world at large before delving into the process of reconciliation itself. People often think reconciliation entails recreating the scenario or relationship as it was before when, in reality, reconciliation is about coming to a healthful situation for both parties.

In learning about reconciliation and justice, one of the first things that arises is the effort and energy it takes to constantly be seeking reconciliation and fighting for justice. Therefore, it is important to address not only the process that transpires as reconciliation happens but also the specific activity that is necessary for it to happen. The last week is similar to the last week of *Justice* as the intention of the week is to engage in reconciliation practices. To do so, students will be learning about what it means to work with the end desire in mind but to remember that the process of reconciliation is not an individual-focused journey. This unit will also focus on the challenge it can be to hold justice and reconciliation together, the many perspectives that exist for these terms, and the tension adding Christian faith brings to the conversation.

Learning Objectives

- Students will connect learning from the other three units to reconciliation.
- Students will analyze the biblical and theological foundation for reconciliation.
- Students will compare justice and reconciliation.
- Students will develop an understanding of the process of reconciliation.
- Students will consider the variety of ways reconciliation can be enacted.
- Students will discuss ways and identify places where Christians can work for reconciliation.

Outline

Week 1: Unpacking Reconciliation

1. Biblical understanding of reconciliation- reconciliation as the work of God
2. Reconciliation in the world
3. Process of reconciliation: comparing Miroslav Volf and Brenda Salter McNeil

Week 2: Knowing what it takes

1. Identify with others
2. Stand with others
3. Knowing the cost

Week 3: Engaging in reconciliation

1. Work with the end in mind
2. Not about me
3. Tangible practices

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