

‘Droppin’ Science’ on Whiteness: An Anthropological Paradigm for A Pedagogy of Whiteness Studies

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This text is under review.

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- 1. Introduction**
- 2. One Mentor; Two Mentees**
- 3. The Anthropology of Whiteness: A Graduate Seminar**
- 4. Analytical Framework**
- 5. Whiteness Seminar Films**
- 6. Whiteness Seminar Literature**
- 7. The Lessons of Whiteness**

The creation and execution of a course featuring that peculiar phenomenon called whiteness can be a fearful proposition. Despite how many students appreciate such a course, and what it may do for them, the teacher can experience opposition to rigorous whiteness theorizing and application. This opposition can emerge subtly, or volcanically, from all sides from those antiracists whose true commitments to whiteness are offended by this work. Because this work can have dire consequences for the racial status of students and teachers of whiteness, many avoid this potential eruption of their lives by evading the full implications of whiteness theory. They discuss whiteness, intellectually and superficially, either in class, at a conference, or in a coffee shop, but they discuss it at a distance, and typically they are unwilling to apply this theory in the self-rectification of their own lives, work, activism and research.

Many who take whiteness studies seriously also take it lightly. They study whiteness like having a little milk with their coffee, and some whiteness students want it the other way around, a little coffee with their milk. These are no empty similes because they unveil and metaphorically codify how different commitments to whiteness studies are managed. Those who sip whiteness studies gingerly, like a cup of steaming hot coffee with a little milk, want the benefit of knowing how to talk whiteness theory without burning their tongues. They season their racial world view with a dab of whiteness studies to stay on top of current theory. They position themselves within whiteness studies because they know the demographic shift is upon us. As Vanessa Adel points out, they use whiteness studies to upgrade their racial identities, seeking to pass into the new racial horizons brought on by the demographic shift as one who can anticipate how emergent whiteness theory will implicate them for decades to come. They make flirtatious gestures in the direction of assuming an anti-whiteness stance while keeping themselves supercharged with the seductive caffeine of white privilege.

There also are those who, in contrast, more deeply imbibe whiteness studies like a warm cup of milk flavored with less coffee. For them whiteness studies is the sweetness of milk that tones down the caffeine zing of their bitter white privilege. They know they have access to this privilege and this knowledge becomes bitter because they feel ambivalent. On the one hand, they want the notoriety of doing whiteness work but they also know they will never allow their commitments to whiteness theory launch an attack their own white privilege. They see their interest not in having more caffeine, because they have enough racial privilege already. Rather they see their interest in masking the bitterness of their privilege with the milk of whiteness studies.

With café latte in hand, they position themselves to appear as those who learn to keep their privilege while steeping themselves in a working knowledge of whiteness. These café latte people come to the struggle with their own ideas about how it should progress, and their ideas are designed to keep their privilege intact. Consequently, their ideas about how to struggle against racism often conflict with those held by most people of color with whom they work. The café latte people fail to suspend their assumptions about how to end racism but their colleagues cannot say these people are not doing whiteness work. In this case, the visible work they do is masking their own privilege. It is hard for them to see how their approach to racism leaves their privilege undisturbed. This is because their way of fighting racism seeks to change race relations in their favor, in ways that preserve their privilege and they call this enlightened racism or the new racism, but I don't see how it can be new. You see, since we became fully human, we have changed a lot in terms of how we do things, how we physically are built and how we behave, but we are not new humans just because we have learned to do the same things in new ways. We are evolving our same old ways of meeting our basic needs.

The coffee and milk drinkers think they are doing something new when they start doing whiteness work and they get the same white privilege each day. The whiteness work they do seems new, to them, because their old way of keeping racial privilege became less effective when antiracist movements grew. They were once seen as racist but doing whiteness work now gives them a way to construct themselves as antiracist and they think this places them beyond the critique of people of color. For example, they often foster integration while many activists of color strive less for integration and more for the eradication of white privilege.

It is not unusual to see this conflict of goals in the same antiracist organization with few governing members. I have seen it in three local organizations in the past five years and two out of three of these organizations have fallen apart over this key issue. Such an organization will always shed people, and especially people of color who might have been its leaders because they are pulling in one direction and those organization members who have more white privilege to defend are pulling in an opposite direction, away from an assault on white privilege, which they seek to protect, and are pulling instead towards more racial integration and diversity.

Both are talking whiteness theory to achieve their divergent goals, but both are not using whiteness theory to end racism the same way. One faction of the antiracist organization places its attention on ending racial discrimination, certainly a necessary step, while the other side of the antiracist team, that is often less well heard, strives to end discrimination *and* white privilege. Both factions consume whiteness theory more than their neighbors and this enables them to pose as organic intellectuals, or as academic intellectuals, who serve as the knowledgeable way-showers of the general population. They espouse anti-whiteness concepts that seem appropriate of a seriously engaged whiteness theorist, but they generally fail to face how their own conceptions of ending racism through racial integration differs sharply from goals held by many people of color with whom they work as members of their own antiracist organizations.

So here is the problem that confronts us: both milk and coffee drinkers avoid any approach to whiteness theory that requires them to modify their survival behavior in situations where they interact daily with the agents of whiteness whose production of white privilege is just their usual thing. With less caffeine charge in their drink of choice, some whiteness wannabes behave in ways that have two effects: 1) they become the most preferred consultants for organizations wanting to deal with whiteness 'just a bit;' and 2) they become the most well publicized whiteness theorists because they embed whiteness theory vaguely in more acceptable paradigms. In the name of furthering their own whiteness agenda, they seize any platform provided for them and see no reason to defer to others who may have instructed them or whose prior commitment to whiteness may be stronger, more clear, and less encumbered. And those who, in contrast, drink whiteness theory like café latte participate in anti-racist actions that are dampened and curbed within an ambit that permits them to pander to the masses without risking cash flow. These advocates of whiteness theory engage in anti-whiteness performances without sacrificing racial privilege. Rather than push for conceptions of whiteness that will undo white privilege, they settle for forms of whiteness theory that cater to their desires for reformed racial identities. They want antiracist identities that firmly remain ensconced in a historical critique of racism with little concern about how to dispel their agency of whiteness that perpetuates white privilege even in their own organizations, and thus in their own interest.

Here, I mean to suggest that these milk and coffee drinkers of whiteness studies pragmatically strive to preserve themselves by avoiding confrontations with white privilege and they do this while acknowledging in private that more rigorous action to dismantle white privilege may be demanded by their situation. Although they know that they continue to benefit from white privilege while teaching whiteness theory, they seem at a lost about how to undo the basis of their and all of their actions against racism evade this undoing. They work for integration or they work for diversity because they know they can have this improved racial arena

while keeping white privilege intact. Improving the racial arena this way shields them from being the target of racial critique, and they get very angry when their attempt to evade racial scrutiny fails. In fact, they use their whiteness work, as racial subjects who manage the practice of diversity, to effectively mask how they are also using racial integration to protect their own class status from racial critique.

We see these drinkers of café latte embodied in the happy valley as some of the most vocal antiracist activists, students and professors, but their conception of anti-whiteness does not compel them to critique their own white privilege or what they do each day to sustain their active maintenance of it. We see these as scholar activists who advertise whiteness studies and who publish along these lines, but who mainly adhere to their disciplinary boundaries without making whiteness theory central to their disciplinary work. We see these drinkers embodied in students of color who learn their professors are racist and who use professors of color to circumvent them but who, at the same time refuse to support their professor of color in confronting and documenting the behavior of the racist professor, and this leaves the same racist professor with her white privilege intact and free to deal unfairly with the professor of color who saved the distressed student's skin, and the professor of color is left to suffer the unchanged situation long after the student has graduated. We see these drinkers embodied in multiracial leaders of all white classrooms who do not intervene in opposition to white privilege when two students of color are told by the white students that it should be ok, as a matter of constitutional freedom, to burn a cross when protesting Christianity. We see these drinkers of café latte in the all white classroom where the student of color who speaks up against racism is unprotected by the supposedly antiracist teacher when that student is ostracized by white students outside the classroom in a field-trip situation in which all class members are required to participate in career-enhancing professional activities organized off-campus for future lawyers.

In such cases, those who claim to be antiracist and who sustain their white privilege deflect penalties. They claim to act in good faith as antiracist activists, professors and teachers, but they actually act in bad faith as the agents of whiteness who manage antiracist activism in ways that benefit their privilege. These café latte drinkers must be seen as weak anti-whiteness agents whose drag on the movement to dismantle white privilege must be recognized, theorized and interrupted. I do not suggest we reject or castigate them, but I do suggest we learn to identify them, better educate them and remove them from positions of authority until they remediate their behavior, because they are the ones who most get paid, who best get grants, who get the most perks, and who more frequently get kudos when called upon to oppose overt racism.

Of course there are more than two polar types of whiteness studies consumer, but I break them into these two categories just to simplify the problem, to illustrate the oppositional tension that can arise in antiracist organizations, and to make this simple point: that most people who currently do whiteness studies are avoiding an application of this knowledge in ways that would eradicate white privilege. We can't say they just don't know because in the examples I mentioned above, they generally refuse to discuss it or if they do discuss it in their antiracist groups, they find ways of casting blame instead of owning responsibility.

Partly, this is happening because the field of whiteness studies largely has been misunderstood as a question of white identity. While identity is a key factor, I do not find this over-emphasis on any racial identity to be useful unless we are discussing the privileges of those identities and how those privilege pay and protect some and not others. In my view, reading whiteness as identity politics is masking the central problem of white privilege, which is less about identities, and is more about the divergent aspirations of those who benefit from the racial status quo and those who do not. In other words, the antiracist aspirations of the racially oppressed differ dramatically from those of the racial oppressors.

This divergence of goals seemed most clear when we were just talking about was racism, but that analysis was always incomplete. Under theories of racism, the dominant population racially discriminates against formerly enslaved and colonized populations so it can reap advantages denied to those populations whose members are racially subjugated. Here the racial aspiration of the dominant population is to have economic and cultural ascendancy over the diminished subordinate population. And when people of color reject this subordinate position, this leads to the production of theories of racism and anti racism that conceptualize the problem of race relations purely in terms of discrimination, and this conception mistakenly saw integration as the only solution. But integration does not solve the problem of racial injustice. That is because racial injustice was never fully contained in overt acts of discrimination. Achieving integration addresses the discrimination problem, but fails to explain why we see unequal indicators of success in the absence of discrimination. It fails to explain why the most educated people of color still remain less wealthy than their white peers or it fails to explain why some of our most brilliant young people end up in prison rather than in college.

This is where whiteness theory can illuminate the problem of racism, by keeping the focus on white privilege where racism is outlawed. This is important because even after overt discrimination has been abolished, we see that racism remains and how it operates in this unlawful context must be masked. So we must remember there are different kinds of whiteness theory, some of it works to eradicate white privilege and most of it does not eradicate white privilege because it offers a mask to protect white privilege. We can see this mask most often when whiteness theory has been misunderstood as white identity. The faulty logic goes something like this: if the racial oppressors define themselves as white then we need a theory to understand why they need

to discriminate and why they don't appreciate diversity. This theory is not all bad because it does teach us a few things we need to know, but it is not a sufficient theory. It is insufficient because it keeps the attention on exploring the angst of the white racial subject and it does not more generally interrogate whiteness as a phenomenon that also is a cultural strategy available to people of color. A sufficient theory of whiteness must surpass the anti-discrimination and pro-integration strategy. Whiteness theory is capable eradicating white privilege and discrimination even where integration is no longer the goal. Those who push integration have a greater interest in it than those who don't and many who don't push it are people of color like myself. I believe that social integration should be the natural outcome of racial justice and until we abolish white privilege racial and social justice in general cannot exist.

Now, let's look closely at what I mean when I speak of anti-whiteness agents who fail to dismantle white privilege. Standing firm against overt racism while espousing whiteness theory as a more sophisticated racial dialogue, they manage remediate their own whiteness and that of anyone else who agrees with them. They seem heroic when they subvert anachronistic racism and in their victory no one can see that the less informed racist has been set down by a well-informed racist in sheep's clothes, by a racist who can claim not to be racist because he or she can theorize whiteness in a way that makes the less informed racist look silly and seem misinformed. But in their daily lives the apparently new racist is just a better informed old racist who uses whiteness theory to redefine the discursive field of whiteness. And whiteness is defined by them in such a way that moderates their critique of white privilege, so they will fare well. Whiteness theorists who wish to fare well only will oppose the overt racism of colonialism, but they will not oppose the more covert post colonial racism of their close friends and allies who learn from them how to update their own racial strategies and who support their soft whiteness studies approach.

In this essay, let me declare that my syllabi were developed using whiteness as an analytical tool about the same time that David Roediger was pondering the whiteness theme. In 1993 I became frustrated with the sloppy understanding of racism that I faced in scholarly discourse with fellow anthropologists and developed a working definition of racism that I handed out at anthropology conferences and this definition was posted on the web.

At the same time, I also started to build whiteness theory in my undergraduate class called *Unlearning Racism Through Film*. I taught that class for three years (1994, 1995 and 1997) and during that time I began to define and utilize the term whiteness in my professional conference presentations [List them]. I also began dialoguing with Arlene Avakian about this work. That is when she created her whiteness course for undergraduates in Women's Studies. Her course set the standard on campus for undergraduate work in whiteness. Her students were involved in anti-whiteness activism organized around helping white women to become critical of their whiteness and the role it plays in racism. Arlene's class also published with her an important essay on whiteness pedagogy and she has been a most highly valued colleague and friend.

Arlene's undergraduate course became a feeder for my graduate seminar and it also stimulated wider campus interest that fostered a more open context in which my seminar could find its grounding. Until Arlene got involved, I had been alone in this work and had taken some hits. No open arms welcomed this course in my department although there certainly was enough tolerance to allow the seminar to exist and find its audience. Since some students tended to react badly to the seminar, I initially was scared about the threat that teaching whiteness posed to my career. Arlene's commitment to fostering an academic inquiry into whiteness now meant I was no longer alone on my campus. There suddenly were two academic departments explicitly and systematically addressing the historical and contemporary problem of whiteness.

One Mentor; Two Mentees

A few years after I began to theorize whiteness in courses and in lectures saw the advent of David Roediger's, *The Wages of Whiteness*. This synchronicity was neither accidental nor coincidental. It reflects our joint intellectual lineage through our mutual connection to the same mentor -- the late Jewish socialist historian, George Rawick. For a three year period, I spent many hours with George taking about how current studies of racism failed. George passed on some of his most cherished insights to his young colleagues before his death, but he saw us both separately. Roediger and I passed each other coming and going. We never had a discussion between us.

George had always been an activist scholar, keen to understand how whites came to benefit from racism and how racism enabled privileged whites to sustain their power by subverting interracial coalitional efforts. He pushed us to question how racism is sustained. Recognizing racism as a system of discrimination designed to exclude, George drew our attention beyond racial exclusion and its effects. He challenged me to explore how exclusion was constructed by practices involved less with building privilege and more with keeping privilege already built. His perspective contradicted the received view of seeing racial exclusion only as a structure of inequality. Seeing racism this way tended to naturalize it, because inequality refers to highly visible status quo arrangements that could be identified, but the sociocultural process of erecting white privilege on a daily basis remained hidden as long as we looked primarily at the effects of discrimination.

George urged us to identify the specific cultural process of organizing those routine daily actions that enable the white benefactors of institutionalized racism to establish discriminatory systems and modify such systems over time to the advantage of protecting their racial privileges. He urged us to comprehend how white populations, including people like himself, habitually engage in forms of self-activity that constitute discriminatory institutional arrangements. As an observer of US society, I began to call racially dominant self activity *white cultural practices*.

It was George Rawick who challenged David Roediger and me to question not white identity, per se, but the routine daily acts that construct the higher racial status ascribed to that identity. He suggested that the act of subscribing to whiteness be theorized as a white form of self-activity that is primarily responsible for creating the white cultural tradition of excluding varieties of blackness (non-whiteness) from equal access to resources in the global arena.

The Anthropology of Whiteness: A Graduate Seminar

My seminal undergraduate foray into the analysis of whiteness led to the development of a 1997 graduate seminar that I have taught once each year since then. In this seminar I began to articulate theories of *white cultural practices* and *white public space*, the two analytical concepts that I formulated.

Most of the students who take this course tend to come from American Studies and from the Social Justice Program in the school of Education. One very satisfied graduate came from the Sociology Department and very few anthropology students are brave enough to take a course that most social science colleagues will not recommend. The last course enrolled two people of color from the anthropology department. I normally enroll 15-20 graduate students in this seminar, so it may be allowed because it helps to pay the department's bills.

It is by means of teaching this seminar that I quickly came to understand the construction of whiteness as a historical process without confusing it with racism. If racism was a structural system that organized racial subordination, then whiteness began to emerge as white cultural practices that allow less discriminatory racial inclusions while daily legitimating the presumed necessity of white privilege. Of course the construction of white privilege is the goal of the racist white supremacy system.

My pedagogical paradigm distinguishes whiteness from racism and recognizes whiteness as a necessary adjunct to racism. I set out to train graduate students to regard whiteness as racism's shadow. I help them to see the cultural agents of whiteness as the Wizard of Oz making tactical moves behind the curtain of legalities where only Toto can smell him. I train my students how to define white public space and how to identify white cultural practices.

My whiteness seminar is conceptualized as applied anthropology. It is designed to intervene in daily life through the agency of my students when they enter the world of work. For instance, in our discussions they are asked to delineate the white cultural practices they have adopted. They are encouraged to interrupt white cultural practices that invade our class which is deconstructed as a form of white public space that we can reclaim. The primary aim of their graduate training in my seminar is to empower them with knowledge they can use to protect themselves as people of color or to enhance their capacity to function as reliable and effective white allies in their professional roles as gatekeepers.

Knowledge that is produced within the seminar empowers each of my students with a choice about what kind of gatekeeper they wish to be. Will they choose to be the kind who will seek to advance themselves professionally each time they agree to ratify and re-enforce racism even if by silent complicity, or will they be the kind who will work to dismantle white privilege and bring racism down?

We normally find actual or potential gatekeepers in our seminar who want only to integrate, who want only to bring down the racial barriers that block their personal ascendancy. Such students often claim throughout the course that they are unwilling to confront whiteness as frequently as would be necessary in order to contest the exclusion of the masses. They are not upheld to ridicule but rather are challenged to study harder and learn that it ultimately is not in their long-term best interest to maintain their positions uncritically. Some white students literally are transformed by the course and undergo a period of shock as a result of having suddenly become acutely aware of whiteness. They are the ones most apt to share personal histories of racism that are often in their families or in their own biographies. This also happens for a few students of color, but most of students of color simply feel validated for the first time in their lives. Those students, unfortunately, are the most apt to take our seminar for granted.

In the history of the seminar only one white male graduate anthropology student tried to publish with me. He presented a paper we wrote at the AAA meetings which won much acclaim, but the essay was never published because through a subtle process of ostracization and marginalization he was run out of our department. Recently three white female students are attempting projects with me, but it remains to be seen if these publication efforts will come to fruition. One Latina student published an essay on her own that was particular to her discipline in Library Science. It became necessary for me to counsel and advise her for weeks through her writing of this essay which emerged as a way for her to process the adverse reactions that arose when she began to share whiteness information at her campus job.

Analytical Framework

Until I created this seminar the racism research in anthropology was quite weak. Not many scholars had published on racism and those who did confined their studies either to documenting evidence of racism within our discipline or evidence of racial discrimination in our community-based ethnographic studies. No one had advanced how we conceptualize racism beyond the novel idea, postulated by Faye V. Harrison, which held that anthropology had to be decolonized.

As I began to make arguments for extending our anthropological conceptualization of racism with the addition of my new concepts, the debate on racism began to heat up and the ensuing controversy led to a reactionary disciplinary response. The anthropological establishment set out to eradicate racism by recommending a modification of the census categories. The modifications recommended were designed to diminish the impact of racism on the census by recognizing that racial classification is arbitrary. According to the changes that have occurred so far, no one who responded to the census had to define themselves as black and every one was more free to define themselves as white. According to my theories of whiteness, this move should be recognized as a strategic white cultural practice that manages to expand the white population at this critical juncture when we are facing a demographic shift.

My analytical framework for the seminar requires that we understand whiteness as a shifting set of cultural practices in which common sense is made of institutional racism, so that it comes to seem natural and tends to flourish. This racial work is partly discursive but it is mainly the work of cultural actions or behavior. It is cultural work done in ways that create an arena in which racism and whiteness are free to reinforce each other. The arena in which whiteness conspires with racism is where dominant white interpretations of reality are constructed, implemented and validated. It is an arena where the exclusionary function of racism is legitimated as how things are and have to be.

This discourse of racist legitimation takes many forms and becomes most visible in the media, but its presence is truly ubiquitous. It is such a prevalent discourse that it can become as taken for granted as the water in which fish swim. Wherever one responds to an acutely effective analysis of racism with dismissal, then that is when one aims, in accordance with Jürgen Habermas, to legitimate or defend racism's discriminatory function.

Legitimations of racism are rarely overt behaviors in the Post-Civil Rights era, because they can be cloaked in the subtle imperatives of whiteness without appearing to overtly racist in their intent. They can take the form of outright arguments or can be strategic denials, evasions and deflections that serve the same purpose of racism's defense.

I see the agents of whiteness producing legitimations of racism routinely every day and I can help my students see them by giving examples from current events. I see legitimations being launched in the highly mobile public arena I call *white public space*.

I was probably the first scholar to use this or a similar term, but it is important to record the fact that other scholars (Feagin 1991; Fiske 1998; and McCann 1999) had clues to the process and formulated some of its parameters. But to illustrate what I mean by this term, please note that the average black home is less racially private than the average white home. The home of a black person like Amadou Diallo, who has been subjected to racial profiling, is instantly redefined as white public space the moment police feel free to invade and start shooting without asking any questions or producing a search warrant. We know such actions are racist, but the agents of whiteness are definitely operating behind the scenes when a gang of white officers get no reprimand commensurate with the repudiations they would suffer if they treated the average white home with the same cavalier disregard. In white public space the officers are immune to racial scrutiny and the legitimation of their actions in terms that falsely claim to be nonracial carries the day. Hence, we can define white public space as that momentarily erected domain in which the presence of blackness evokes a white cultural practice or a set of them designed to defend white privilege.

The concept can be found operation wherever white control over an event or situation is being organized. This is why I train my students to recognize and sense the compelling danger of white public space. Even if it is not a space where one can be killed, it is a space in which blackness can be whitened.

By studying the behavioral deployment of white public space (in which racist actions are dressed for public enactment as if they are nonracial and hence can occur with impunity), my students learn to identify white cultural practices and their observable effects. They began to see white cultural practices operating whenever the agents of whiteness presume the right to interpret black resource allotment and define the black experience from their own points of view.

At the same time that certain forms of blackness routinely are excluded from white public space there is taking place within that space a strategically stereotyping commoditization of blackness. The commoditized blackness deployed in white public space relies on stereotypes (bad and good ones) designed to indicate to the global public what constitutes an acceptable interpretation of proper and necessary white relations to blacks and other minorities.

If there were no white cultural agents engaging in white cultural practices that operate in defense of racism without appearing to racist, then confrontations with racism and legal injunctions against its selective exclusions might have been sufficient to bring the system down. But to keep its institutional foundations in good status quo condition, it became clear to me, as it did to George, who believed with me that something had to be going on behind the scenes that kept resuscitating and reformulating racism during and after the Civil Rights Movement. Something had to be going on behind closed doors and in subtle public ways that enabled the benefactors of racism to seduce people of color into pursuing, acquiring and adorning themselves with whiteness. Something had to be going on in order to reorganize an updated configuration of national and global raciality for the 21st century.

That something going on behind closed doors is the routine affirmation of whiteness that happens most readily in a homogenous group of scared or frustrated whites. Hence, I define whiteness as a shared cultural paradigm that assumes and legitimates the permanent inferiority of blackness without permanently excluding blacks. The cultural agents of whiteness assume that blackness or any form of non-whiteness exists only in relation to itself. They therefore regulate the admission of blacks into whiteness. Judging all forms of marginality only in terms of itself, marginal identities are allowed to exist in white public space, as Signithia Fordham shows, only as long as those who embody those identities will agree to whiten-up, just like the former minstrels used to blacken-up.

Most significantly, let us not forget that the cultural work of preserving racism through the enactment of white cultural practices is not relegated only to the discursive fields managed by the agents of whiteness. Their work is also coercive. White cultural agents will resort to coercion when need be, but in the post civil rights era it has become more expedient to avoid coercive force in most instances. Overt coercion can be reserved for the despised classes and genders now that intensified media control has enhanced the capacity of whiteness agents to construct increasingly hegemonic racial control.

In my graduate course, called the Anthropology of Whiteness, hegemonic racial control is understood in the Gramscian sense of consent of the ruled. The fact that 89% of those in the Puerto Rican census have defined themselves as white without any direct coercion to make them do so, suggests that more and more people of color are consenting each day to play the game of whiteness in their pursuit of upward mobility in the nation.

Whiteness Seminar Films

In the whiteness seminar I use lecture, literature, discussion and film to train white students -- who initially claimed they had no knowledge of racism -- to notice routine daily behaviors that I call white cultural practices. They are required to notice those of others as well as their own. Some of the films I use facilitate this training. I select films that provide an excellent gender, race and class analysis of whiteness. Some of the films I prefer to show include: *Sankofa*, Haile Gerima (1993), *Posse*, Mario van Peebles (1993), *Paris Trout*, Stephen Gyllenhal (1991), *Assault at West Point*, Harry Moses (1994), *Daughter of the Dust*, Julie Dash (1996), *Cadence*, Martin Sheen (1990), *Pinkie*, Elia Kazan (1949), *Rosewood*, John Singleton (1997) *Twilight of the Golds*, Ross Kagan Marks (1997). Two new films that I recently have added are called *Storytelling*, Todd Solonz (2001) and *The Believer*, Henry Bean (2001).

I won't go into the content of each here, but I urge you to see them. These films tell many stories about whiteness. They tell the story of slavery from an African point of view in which there is no white point of entry. They address the westward movement of black soldiers in the reconstruction era. They examine the rampage of white male authority against blacks and against transgressive white womanhood in a 1930s southern town. They chronicle a legal case that emerges after a racial conflict at a 19th century military academy. They expose the racial practices that characterize the management of a Viet Nam era military stockade. They provide insight into the strategy of passing for white and returning home where one can only be a nigger. They highlight the violence envious poor whites resort to when accusations that a white woman was raped become a pretext for lynching better off blacks. They explore the Jewish acquisition of whiteness against the conundrum of refusing Jewishness. They render problematic the interracial power dynamics between the sexualized relationship between a white female student and a black male professor. They reveal how blind suburban whiteness makes a white family so racially insensitive that it predisposes them to disregard the humanity of their non-white domestic staff. They critique the identity wounds of a Jewish man whose ethno-racio self-hatred escalates to such an extent that he comes to identify and behave like a neo-nazi as a means of laying claim to the racial superiority he ascribes to whiteness.

To study these films carefully, students begin to identify the white cultural practices that overtly or covertly operate to deny and legitimate racism. To do this carefully, we first see a film and then go through its major scenes in class. Then we stop to analyze the behavior in those scenes as if we were conducting ethnography. We cannot interrogate the actual characters, but we can interrogate their positions. We insert ourselves into the film by placing ourselves in the shoes of the various character's and we try to understand the world being experienced from their standpoint. We also try to see how much the depiction of a story resonates of fails to resonate with our knowledge of real life.

Students begin to see in the selected films how those characters in film who make the top claims on whiteness condescend towards those who are regarded as having no claims or questionable claims, at best. You will see how whiteness strives to subvert blackness and how blackness at the same time becomes a

victim of whiteness while blackness also strives to transcend whiteness by appealing across interracial lines to virtue and humanity. You will see how white masculinity and femininity are constructed in direct superior relation to blackness. Most importantly, you see the punishments allotted by whites to whites who dare to transgress the boundaries of whiteness in alliance with blackness.

In the Whiteness seminar most students hope to become reliable allies in the fight against racism. To achieve this status, I inform them that they must learn to see whiteness in these films as a shadowy, less tangible underside of very tangible racism. They are not looking for racist individuals; they are looking for evidence of a racist regime that predispose individuals to behave in a certain way. They must come to understand the dominant racial politics inscribed in and by the recent publication of a plethora of whiteness literature. They must avoid falling into some of the conceptual traps installed invisibly in some of the film and also in some of the literature. They must learn to keep their analytical focus primarily on the behavior of the white cultural agent in order to grasp their relationship to people of color and in this way, they come to assess the parameters of whiteness. They must be willing to understand how people of color can and often do make strategic adoptions of white cultural practices. They must learn to see how whiteness becomes, *en toto*, a collective field of practices organized by dominant racial agents who routinely aim to diminish, obscure or deny their own involvement with and commitments to the daily operation of racism.

Whiteness Seminar Literature

Now, let me refer you to a few of the readings assigned in my *Anthropology of Whiteness* seminar that have proven invaluable to my graduate students. The discussions of select readings that follow below, include: 1) my take on Theodore Allen's *Invention of the White Race*; 2) my synthesis of two articles on the whiteness of Franz Boas authored by anthropologists Geyla Frank (1998) and Kamala Viweswaren (1998), 3) my analysis of an article on the white cultural practice of lynching behavior by sociologists, Stewart Tolnay and Glenn Deane (1996), as supplemented by Pem Buck, another anthropologist who wrote the recent book, *Worked to the Bone* (2002); 4) and finally, 5) and there is my synthesis of the white cultural practice of whitening the labor force and unions derived from Bruce Nelson's *Divided We Fall: American Workers and the Struggle for Black Equality* (2001).

In discussing these readings I aim to show how each work contributes to the development of particular analyses that just do not emerge from pedagogies of whiteness studies that overly focus on the question of identity with too little focus on the practices that give rise to and sustain whiteness as a privileged status. At the same time that one can accrue the privileges of one's racial status, so can one be subject to the wounds routinely associated with that status, as Brackette Williams once pointed out.

I show how these works enable my students to arrive at a conceptual synthesis that paints for them a broad, encompassing picture of racism that is non-essentializing, but that accounts for its production of white privilege on a national and global scale. The seminar centers mainly on investigating the theoretical topics of *whiteness*, *white privilege*, *white cultural practices* and *white public space*.

This focus and conceptual framework has a theoretical origin. It results from my understanding that racial domination relies on each of these concepts although most courses on whiteness or race ignore this fact. Educators and scholars may ignore it perhaps because they have not yet read my earlier work or possibly have not grasped its significant contributions to whiteness theory.

For example, in one early article published in the *American Anthropologist*, I performed a content analysis of news articles to build a case study in which I identified the surveillance of successful black males as one of the white cultural practices undertaken by white media agents who I showed will strive to enhance their own careers by using their power to damage the career of a successful black male who refuses to toe the racial line by acting as if his mouth or financial resources are not sufficiently under white control (Page 1997a). In another article, published in *Identities*, I demonstrated it is not only media agents who perform the function of controlling the black image in the public domain. This article reveals how the black image can be whitened in the public domain. This kind of racial work can be done by almost anyone in a managerial position such as the personnel who work in the corporate, museum, publishing, and governmental realms who helped to whiten a photographic exhibition called *The Songs of My People* (Page 1997b).

I performed an interpretive analysis of the images based on a quantification of sheer predominance of images out of balance with the lived experience of African Americans population in the United states. I set out to explain how an entrepreneurial project initially launched by three black men quickly become one in which the collective image of African Americans was whitened. This became possible through those black men's collaboration with whites who provided necessary institutional support for the project.

As a result, the black collective image was represented in ways suggesting that they generally are faring quite well in America, and probably are doing so well precisely because they appear to be uncritically adopting the dominant racial categories of whitened social identity and relationship as their own. The study shows that having whitened black photographic images, this show became a strategic cultural property easily appropriated to serve white corporate and governmental ends more than it served black communities in the United States.

My work is easily ignored by those who do not care to make theory of my findings and theoretical arguments. Some have even claimed that they can't understand what I wrote as if my writing at that time was too bad to comprehend. Similarly, white students and scholars often regard themselves as the innocent bystanders of racism. Consequently, they typically don't see themselves participating in the production of white privilege. Even a few of the scholars who seem to support my work have told me that they are willing to teach about whiteness, but when students balk, they often do not feel it is her responsibility to ask them to take a stand whereas in my class, students are required to take a stand and defend it; all positions are invited without grade prejudice as long as the student turns in the assigned work.

I set out with the pedagogical mission of showing students how they participate in whiteness and hence in racism even if they don't mean to do so or make no overt effort to engage in racist behavior. As some of them begin to see themselves more clearly ensconced on whiteness, some of them drop the class and most of them struggle through while gleaming new insights each class meeting.

Their painful lessons are accomplished when I manage to show them in data and in theory how they benefit from the white cultural practices that historically have been used to generate the preferential treatment known as white privilege that they still enjoy today. To convey this singular lesson, the five readings I have chosen to discuss reveal the intentionality of whiteness to defend privilege for whites who may not overtly engage in its defense. White privilege is defended by the agents of whiteness no matter who they might be.

The British Design of Irish Whiteness

It is most significant that Arlene and both use *Invention of the White Race*, by Theodore Allen as the only reading our courses have in common. I consider this book to be indispensable for it enables me to help my students to debunk the growing myth in whiteness studies which claims that racism and whiteness are unique to the United States. Students are amazed to learn that these ideas were generated first in England. This fact suggests they were imported into the United States and theoretically suggests in turn that along with US racism, American whiteness can be exported transnationally.

Allen reveals the historical process by which the British were able to construct the racial subordination of the Irish. He provides all the evidence we need to see how a colonized European population, defined as racially inferior, gradually attains whiteness in America by first being subjected to a historical process of deracialization.

We learn from Allen that racially dominant populations can qualify and disqualify classificatory racial categories. His work is too broad to summarize here, but I will offer the key lesson we take from his work. For instance, Allen reveals that some racially subordinate Irishmen could be accorded higher status in the colonial hierarchy. This happened most readily when the Irish Catholic clergy or the deposed Irish Chieftans became willing to collude with British domination as the first bourgeois Irish collaborators.

To keep ascendant Irishmen from consolidating a power bloc, the British sustained a policy of divide and conquer by cleverly importing Scotsmen to occupy managerial and policing positions assigned to the white Protestant group. Eventually, after successive legislative efforts to regulate race relations, ascendant Irishmen were required by law to convert to Protestantism in order to demonstrate a willingness to whiten-up. Conversion became the only legal means by which to achieve upward mobility.

Not everyone converted, but the most ascendant Irishmen adopted whiteness by shedding their Irish cultural practices and adopting British ones, even if they did not convert. Speaking English instead of Gaelic could get someone a job. Some Irish collaborators later became culturally qualified to move into occupations defined as white that had been vacated by Scots when they protested wage and working conditions and departed from Ireland.

In a series of moves and counter-moves, there evolved a reorganized system of racial subordination in Ireland. The strategy was designed to obscure the taint of racial inferiority that would hamper the performance of upwardly mobile Irishmen whose new function it was to operate as gatekeepers. Irish racial inferiority was then disqualified by the British who qualified a new process of religious or Irish Catholic subordination.

De-emphasizing the historical fact that the Irish formerly had been deemed racially inferior, the revised or clean-up British process of racial subordination set Irish Catholicism against British Protestantism. Despite the historical fact that the Irish were whitened by this regulatory British move, from the space of racial subordination to the slightly higher space of religious subordination, we no longer can see the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland as having racial roots. The second British strategy was naturalized so effectively that until Allen's book, the politico-religious conflict we know today seems to have no racial background.

Jewish Racial Identity Obscured by Anthropological Whiteness

In the American Anthropologist, Geyla Frank and Kamala Viweswaren each wrote their own article in the late nineties delineating how the agents of whiteness in our academic discipline included Franz Boas while he strove not to be excluded by the dominant society. Boas, after all, was the father of American anthropology,

but Frank explains that in their scholarly work white colleagues manage to excise his Jewishness. The fact that Boas and numerous other anthropologists were Jewish disappears from the literature when this ethno-racio character of their identities is rarely cited. Likewise, the theoretical significance of their research findings as Jewish scholars goes largely disregarded and remains largely uninterrogated.

Start

Since Boas produced seminal work at the turn of the century that effectively disproved the biological basis of race, he has long enjoyed the reputation of having single-handedly discredited the rise of biological racism. As a German Jew, he had suffered discrimination in Europe based on the idea that his own race was inferior to Tuetonics so he seemed to make common cause with blacks and other American racial minorities. He participated in their push for integration into American national life and shared their desperate dream of a color-blind society.

On the one hand, Frank's article demonstrates how the agents of whiteness within our discipline practiced a form of color-blindness with respect to Franz Boas. This means that white anthropologists systematically obscured Boas's Jewishness. Frank shows how Boas's Jewish identity, and that of numerous other anthropologists, was practically erased from the history of our discipline, at least until the appearance of her article in the late nineties. She reminds us that her Jewish identity had roots in our discipline that had been covered-up or hidden, perhaps by those who wanted to make Boas feel included.

In the seminar we contrast the Frank article with the article by Viweswaren who documents the historical role Boas played in America as an anti-racist activist. She explains how his positive role in publicly fighting racism has been glorified to such an extent that it unfortunately became sacrosanct and immune to analytical scrutiny. A closer look at Boas and his racial politics reveals evidence of his own internalized whiteness.

To illustrate, Viweswaren demonstrates how Boas clung to or extolled his German nationality and civility. He saw his national identity as proof that he should be considered equal to white men who also laid claim to civilized national identities. Selecting national identity as a more reasonable basis for equality is a predictable strategy in light of the fact that Boas relied on his knowledge of biology to demonstrate in one study how the racially stereotyped phenotype of eastern European immigrants became malleable under American environmental conditions.

Under American conditions different from those in Europe, European immigrants, having access to a better diet, showed evidence of increased height along with other visible changes, Boas argued, that seemed to racially equalize their immigrant phenotype as compared to that of the native whites.

How immigrant phenotype improved quickly exceeded American racial judgments about what it had been and about what it had meant when new European immigrants first escaped poor environmental conditions in Europe by fleeing to America. Producing this kind of study, Boas was able to demonstrate that improved environmental conditions in America was all it would take to reveal that European immigrants were just as phenotypically sound as were native American whites. Boas believed that European immigrants like himself could be better fed and housed in America and thus would soon produce American or national phenotypes similar to nativist anglo-European stock.

Quite to the contrary, he did not see much hope in resolving racism when it came to American blacks, as Viweswaren argues. Whereas the European immigrant would be able to escape the worst of racism by blending into white American society, Viweswaren demonstrates with primary documents that Boas blamed the victim when he expressed public concern that the black population would continue to exacerbate the problem of racism in America. That is because their phenotype lacked the ability, he suggested, to be reduced into American homogeneity.

In his view, blacks needed to be stirred into the American melting pot and in order to facilitate their melting, Boas felt that the federal government should take charge of stirring them into the American stew.

To wit, he argued that blacks should be compelled by government to intermarry with whites. Only by eliminating laws against miscegenation, and only by adopting this practice as a matter of federal policy, would the problem of racism begin to dissipate, he argued, because only then would the stubborn black phenotype finally start to disappear.

In this strategic and fundamentally racist policy recommendation to the American Department of Immigration, it could be argued that Franz Boas thereby secured his whiteness. As an official agent of whiteness he sought to erase the phenotypical blackness of African Americans. Whereas his own identity as a Jewish professional had been erased by his commiseration in constructing himself as a white (not Jewish) anthropologist, Boas recapitulated and extended the method of his own ethnic erasure. He did this by urging the federal government to adopt a systematic policy of fostering the erasure of biological blackness in America. It seemed reasonable to him to make this proposal so that biological blackness no longer would be a stain on the nation and so that it no longer would be allowed to play the regrettable role of being what he considered as the cause of American racism. Eliminate biological blackness and American racism would disappear, he believed.

Now please notice how clearly Viweswaren makes a theoretical point quite important to our understanding of whiteness. She shows that some Jews became white long before World War II when Jewish veterans, along with white veterans, were provided with federal FHA housing loans that black veterans generally were denied. Although the federal government did not adopt the Boasian proposal, its suggestion and consideration affirmed the inclusion of Boas as a fellow white American who had accepted the responsibility to help his fellow whites reflect on how to solve their negro problem.

As Allen points out, Irish immigrants initially supported blacks and quickly turned harshly against them in an effort to shed their own racial stigmatism. In this way they were able to confirm their whiteness and qualified to be granted the entitlement allocated to American whites. Like the Irish, Boas initially fought for racial equality, but later he proposed a final solution for blackness that did not require the messy and eventually prosecutable extermination of the black population. Blend blackness into whiteness, Boas suggested, and in this clever way, American racism will disappear as soon as blacks become as indistinguishable from whites as Boas himself had become.

The Regulative Function of Organized Lynching

Allen shows how viciously British violence was employed to compel Irish deference. We see similar tactics carried over into the American scene which is the primary focus of my seminar. To demonstrate how violence is the necessary first act of suppressing blackness, I encourage my graduate students to contemplate the lynching of racial subordinates as a white cultural practice designed to implement and sustain the racial hierarchy. It is important to note that initially in America, both some Irishmen and Jews were lynched, and a few other marginal whites, along with scores, if not hundreds, of blacks.

The article by demonstrates that lynching was more a method of coercion than a method of torture and was most favored among southerners, but in no way was it exclusive to the south. As the second national region to be taken from Native Americans, the south needed to impose white supremacist rights to southern land and thus had a special need for lynching.

To supplement the lynching article we read, Worked to the Bone, by anthropologist, Pem Buck, who examines how the basis for equality and unity among southern poor white, black and red Americans was tactically invalidated. Those groups were divided and stratified by white elites who, step by step, fashioned new racial privileges for southern whites. Seducing them into whiteness and away from being allies of non-whites required pitting them against people of color. This tactic was needed as much by the northern elites who sought to control the south as it was needed by the southern ones in whose hands southern control over labor and land would rest. In this way, northern industrial and southern agricultural elites could undermine and contain the southern insurgency of organized interracial coalitions.

Lynching was a non-random white cultural practice. For decades it had been academically explained as a contagious mob reaction. It was assumed that the occurrence of a lynching in one area increased the probability of another one happening nearby, but this is not what a quantitative analysis of their spatial distribution reveals. According to Tolnay and Deane, the occurrence of a lynching in a local area was more likely, through a process of diffusion, to cause a lynching hundreds of miles away. The area in which a lynching occurred was most likely one where a large black population resided that posed a competitive economic threat to whites. This kind of threat was regarded as so severe in the south that a lynching occurred about every six days between 1890 and 1919. This means that 1,748 blacks were lynched in that period of time. The killing of one or more blacks in any local area was found to have a deterrent effect in the wider area for hundreds of miles. Blacks were more apt to conform to white expectations and were less apt to challenge white authority by engaging in direct economic competition. Whites tended to believe in the prophylactic effect of lynchings; they were more likely to occur where there were a sharp dividing line between landowners and tenants. By whitening their behavior which meant showing deference to whites by adopting their demeanor, blacks could reduce their exposure to the threat of lynching (Tolnay and Deane 1996: 77).

The article shows not only that lynching events were normally well planned consumer activities, but it also indicates that organizing a lynching served the purely regulative function of deterring black ascendancy and the propagation of cultural blackness. To plan a lynching enabled white cultural agents to communicate a political message to blacks that gave the agents of whiteness freedom to kill with impunity and in this way the threat of a lynching enabled whites to insist on black self-subordination.

Organized assault upon black bodies was designed to remind black populations and other racial minorities that their ascendancy posed a threat to white privilege. So they should expect dire physical consequences for getting out of their proper racial place. The event was organized to impose a major setback not on the life of a person, but on the community which had failed to help that person learn his or her proper racial place. Therefore we might conclude that a lynching tended to secure the white privilege being organized in a geographical area that for a certain period of time was constituted as white public space and in this way was kept safe from the perceived threat of impudent black ascendancy.

The Whitening of Black Longshoreman Jobs

Finally, my students are required to read Divided We Fall by Bruce Nelson. This very excellent study advances our knowledge about how whiteness was organized far beyond the insights that Roediger was able to provide in Wages of Whiteness. Whereas the weakness of Roediger's study actually damaged the evolution of whiteness studies by leaving far too much room in his analysis for scholars to dwell on questions of white identity, Nelson leaves no such room.

In contrast to Roediger, Bruce Nelson definitively exposes the step by step process by which the longshoreman occupational identity took on increasing shades of whiteness as a result of a pattern of European ethnic ascendancy being imposed to manage access to dock and wharf jobs. In this fashion, jobs initially held almost exclusively by blacks were taken over first by Irishmen whose intimate experience of British and nativist American coercive regulation prompted them to rely on ethnic solidarity as they strove to reserve those jobs for the white privilege they thought only Irishmen deserved. In Nelson's chronicle we see this waterside occupational niche shift from black to white jobs and the shift happens along with the emergence of violent white ethnic solidarity. Nelson argues that when immigration flooded the labor market, the Irish longshoremen who wanted to sustain control of those jobs found it necessary to articulate a more generalized form of white identity in order to incorporate new European immigrants into their segregated ranks.

The strategic whitening of longshoreman jobs was not a *fait accompli*; rather the pattern reveals a curious history of excluding and including blacks under certain conditions favorable to white elites.

For instance, Nelson shows that unions competed on the basis of what racial positions they would take on the race issue. Those unions whose leaders found ways to profit most by exploiting white workers would collude with the agents of whiteness in order to keep blacks out of the shape, the daily organization of work crews for each pier. In contrast there were unions whose aim it was to collude more with management by pitting black strike breakers against white strikers who resented blacks all the more for daring to make a bid for their jobs by working for less than a white living wage.

The book chronicles the emergence of black unionism that emerges less as a process of union democratization and more as a means of union leaders learning how to use the managerial value of an integrated workforce to the advantage of profit. Managers and union leaders learned that the presence of black workers embodied at the worksite the likelihood that a white strike would probably fail or at least be blocked because black workers were trying to establish their access to those jobs.

The situation of racial competition for these jobs almost changed at a particular historical moment when there arose a fine chance for black and white longshoreman to join in solidarity in support of liberating Ireland. The notion of an interracial strike in defense of Irish freedom was inspired by Irish leaders like and Black leaders like Marcus Garvey.

Unfortunately, ethnically diverse white workers who felt a need to defend their racial privilege to control certain piers refused to compromise by indicating a willingness to integrate blacks into those worksites. They wanted black strike support on behalf of Irish liberation but they were unwilling to show equal support for black rights to work on white piers. As a result, the potential coalition fell apart and though some black workers made their way back onto certain piers, the few who had returned were rapidly driven out as longshoreman work became increasingly mechanized, leaving fewer and fewer jobs for the last remaining white workers.

Nelson's study demonstrates that our understanding of racism merely in terms of racial exclusion has been incorrect. My whiteness seminar provides the remedy when it requires students to delineate a politics of racial inclusion predicated on notions of whiteness, white privilege and white public space.

The history of longshoreman does not give credence to a pattern of excluding blacks simply on the basis of a prejudice against people who happen to be black. On the contrary, the data suggests that the rise of whiteness in the nation and the demand that the Irish be treated as nigger or else become white set them up to compete successfully against black longshoreman by pulling the white card.

The idea held by many people of color is that they suffer discrimination because they are black, but this perception is based on inaccurate analysis. They are made to suffer discrimination where European immigrants fear resource competition and rely on white supremacy as a means to manage their fears. Trumping black workers in the grab for their longshoreman jobs, the Irish were able to seize control of most American piers and turn them into white public space. They even remained white public space in the south where black workers remained predominant by segregated in the worst positions.

When European immigrants who were not Irish initially came on the scene, they were deemed less white and hence were more apt to make common cause with blacks against the Irish. To counteract this strategic move, they were coached in how to attain the wages of whiteness if they only would form alliances with Irishmen as fellow whites against black strike breakers who in the same move thereby were relegated to a racially subordinate position.

This kind of white ascendancy over blacks is a case of racism that relies more on how the nativist agents of whiteness successfully were able to whiten the old Irish immigrants who in turn were able to whiten the new immigrants and join with them in a white supremacist bid to keep jobs violently taken from blacks in white hands, even if it meant sacrificing European ethnicity.

The Lessons of Whiteness

Each of these studies reveal that whiteness usefully is conceptualized as a paradigmatic cultural framework in which certain racially dominant cultural practices (such as whitening or being whitened) are adopted and reproduced in ways that result in a nation steeped in white supremacy. In various ways white supremacy has been constructed in the nation by different racial agents who strategically have been allowed to claim white identity as a means of justifying their privileged racial access to resources in jobs, services and goods. And they typically have succeeded not simply by defining themselves as white, but initially by regulating or patrolling the white/non-white boundary by means of exercising coercive force.

Since claims to whiteness permit them to do this with impunity, their use of force eventually becomes secondary to their claim of needing to maintain a cultural tradition which holds that such resources have always been or should always be white ones. Threats to this claim have been met with racial violence or met with racial solidarity organized among diverse European ethnics having learned they have more to gain by banning together rather than remaining distinct. Their aim is to guard the channels of access so that those who are visibly black or non-white will not be admitted into their ranks where admission would require a sharing of resources access beyond the white identity.

We see that while white elites initially provided the means of establishing white identity in the nation, white employers have not always been the ones to initiate racial policies of exclusion at a particular worksite or in a particular geography. Where profitable they have been willing to foster **either an interracial worksite or segregated ones** depending on what pattern has proven most profitable at the time.

The ascendancy of those who identify as white up the ladder of success often has resulted in their eventual betrayal of the lower class agents of whiteness. To secure the new class status they have been apt, as were several of the key union leaders in the longshoreman case study, to turn against the same whites who helped them to ascend the class ladder. Acting more in alliance with upper class managers, those ascendant functionaries of white supremacy who have successfully benefited from white privilege typically even have been willing to commit violence against white workers in order to keep labor in line. The only loyalties shift away from underlings and towards the whites above them on the class ladder.

To the extent that violent white masculinity has been defined in terms of an affiliation with other men who agree to keep out black men or other men of color, then non-white men are feminized in this equation. They are treated as men less masculine because they tend not to have the numbers or else the will to risk mass lynchings by organizing similarly violent strategies against white workers. They know that their subordination is not a question of their femininity but rather is a question of the greater authority that the agents of whiteness can wield when they set out to constitute white privilege by designating certain resource domains as white public space.

On the whole, the students are trained to identify the white cultural practices they see being enacted in the literature and in the films. They learn to situate these practices within the whiteness framework of analysis that enables them to delineate not only the position of the various historical population and characters we study, but also to delineate their own positionality and modes of being white or pursuing whiteness whether they are people of color or white-identified.

The seminar demonstrates that whiteness is less a property of the body and is more of a cultural property and thus is available to be secured even by people of color who recognize its value to upward mobility in the nation's racial hierarchy. So, when we inquire into contemporary forms of whiteness educated people of color certainly cannot be excluded from the equation. Questions arise about how willing or unwilling they might be to betray fellow blacks in the same way that upwardly mobile whites have betrayed fellow whites. What becomes clear is that class mobility is predicated in the nation on one's willing to subscribe to the white cultural practices that enables one's ascendancy even if those practices at some point turn against those among whom one's ascendancy has been forged.

The analysis proves that the agents of whiteness ultimately do not remain loyal to those who are still trying to acquire white privilege. They are far more loyal to those who already have secured white privilege and who thus enjoy the profitable racial authority that empowers them to sanction others who similarly are willing (or impede the ascendancy of those who are unwilling) to adopt white cultural practices.

Students examine the extent to which they have adopted white cultural practices and become acutely aware of how their willingness to enact these practices, or not, has direct bearing on their chances for success under hegemonic white supremacy which has become a global racial regime. Even the space for resistance against this regime is compelled to operate in white public space, which ultimately is always under direct or indirect upper class and often masculine white control.

NAZI California

Another important book useful in my whiteness seminar (and Spiritual Activism class) is Edwin Black's *IBM and the Holocaust: The Strategic Alliance Between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*. In this work, Black chronicles the history of IBM's rise in the United States and its subsequent consulting agency in pre-war Germany through IBM-New York.

The German based IBM-NY subsidiary was called Dehomag, but in 1924 the American corporate name had been changed to IBM from its original name, Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company, or CTR (pp. 31, 44). By any name, this corporate alliance between IBM/Dehomag and Nazi Germany quickly facilitated population control with the highest technical efficiency. It allowed the German government to manage Jews demographically by counting the national population. As proposed in a business plan, this count was to be done by collecting data on "mandatory personal genetic-biographical forms" and "Reich employees had to be trained to use the [data] cards" (p. 49, 50). Advanced data-processing machines called Holleriths had to be "custom-designed" (p. 49).

Black reveals how the German statisticians who adopted this technique became the intellectual vanguard of Hitler's fascist machine. This included men like Friedrich Zahn, whose fame in Germany was vaulted by his rank as an "honorary member of the American Statistical Association" (p. 48). Relying on the ASA journal, and on similar technical journals, Zahn and his colleagues, in collaboration with Dehomag consultants, began to initiate and manage for the German government a computer-driven capacity to number the Jews.

In a 1937 article that he published in the ASA journal, Zahn overtly advocated racial hygiene, a practice he extolled in his essay's title, the "Development of German Population Statistics through Genetic-Biological Stock-Taking," p. 49. The proposed practice was quickly extended to conducting a national census to expedite control over the entire German population, and this precedent put in place an infrastructure especially useful for the occupying forces who later would modify and use on post-war Germans the same census tabulation schedules that the Nazi's had used to circumscribe the Jewish population. In addition, the Dehomag agents also helped the Nazi government to document the impact to the war by doing research to account for damage and responses to bombing as well as for the resultant social disruption. In great detail Black provides a history of Americans involved with Dehomag and how they told themselves, "its just business" but their business relationship gradually became more explicitly about genocide.

To counter those revisionists who sometimes creep into my classes, Black has included the most meticulous notes, bibliography, and list of sources I have ever seen. He lays out an argument that enables his readers to envision the transnational business relationship of the German industrialists seen in *Schindler's List*, another popular film. Black extends the analysis of that film by indicating that in relation to German business, IBM played a greater role, so vital to Nazi Germany. IBM machines designed by Nazi's from Germany and America helped the Germans to redistribute the national wealth by confiscating Jewish firms. He ironically establishes that while German commercialists were interrogated at Nuremberg, the American IBM magnates who initiated the US/Germany connection were never upheld to scrutiny, their white privilege was so impeccable. "Questions about Hitler's Holleriths were never even raised." p. 422.

At war's end, an American-owned IBM enterprise withdrew from Germany and took with it a sterling reputation for success by adopting as their advertising motto: "The Solutions Company" (p. 425). We may conclude that the cultural whiteness of this company was in no way tarnished and in fact was enhanced. IBM's role in the successful rise and implementation of Nazi Germany became such a key selling point in white the American business world, as Black points out, that in 1967 the corporation proudly published a book about their exploits called, *The History of Computing in Europe* (p. 425).

Of course, in order for students to recognize IBM's publishing action as a strategic white cultural practice, they must be encouraged to consider it in a larger racial context. Only by placing this action in relation to the intensification of black demands can we really

grasp the arrogance of publicly bragging about Dehomag success in 1967.

To check the facts, students can be referred to most any Civil Rights timeline on the web. For instance, I surfed to a site called, Greensboro Sitins: Launch of a Civil Rights Movement. Greensboro Library. **News & Record Online Copyright © 1998-2001 Greensboro News & Record, Inc.** www.thedepot.com <<http://www.sitins.com/timeline.htm>> At this website, we learn that a national protest was initiated on January 2nd, 1965 in Selma, Alabama when the Southern Christian Leadership Conference initiated a voting rights drive. Shortly thereafter, on February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated and by the 2nd of August, the Voting Rights Bill nullified local laws that had prevented blacks from voting. Just two years later, on June 13, 1967 Thurgood Marshall became the first black person to appointed as an Associate Justice to the Supreme Court. His ascendancy to the bench represented an incursion into an all-white bastion that had laid down the law of the land. That historic act of integration happened in a year of growing resistance to a general black ascendancy, and white resentment intensified. As a result, the weeks between May 1st and October 1st, 1967 saw the worst racial disturbances in United States history when more than 40 riots, and about a 100 other race-related disturbances, occurred. Quite strategically, this is the very moment when politically-correct racial politics were implement by IBM and began to set the stage for national integration and for the subsequent rise of corporate-managed diversity politics. We are reminded of how extensive was IBM's successful control over racial information when Edwin Black informs us that the published book was made to disappear. "It is no longer available in an publicly accessible library anywhere in the world" (p. 425).

Here is the citation: Edwin Black, *IBM and the Holocaust: The Strategic Alliance Between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2001.