**CHAPTER 14**

**Minority Groups and U.S. Society: Themes, Patterns, and the Future**

**Classroom Activities and Suggestions for Discussion**

1. Have students write about their own prejudices in class or as part of a homework assignment. Have them reflect back on what they wrote. Next, have them consider what they’ve learned throughout the course. How have their prejudices changed or been affirmed or overturned?
2. How would students summarize the key ideas of the class? How has the course changed their ideas about race or about different groups of people? For example, have their prejudices changed at all? If so, how? To what do they attribute that change? If not, why do they suppose that is? What surprised them most about what they learned? Did anything surprise them?
3. This text has used a great deal of information from the most recent U.S. decennial Census. Have students look online (http://www.census.gov) and read about the change in racial and ethnic categories used by the government. Perhaps the biggest change is allowing people to select all racial categories that apply to them. What do the students think of this change? What about the categories overall? How is this classification scheme useful? What are its limitations? (For example, you might look at racial classification in Brazil. [NOTE: You might want to start your conversation by asking about what it means to be “white” in the United States. It’s often interesting to hear differing ideas from dominant and minority students.] You might also look at how Census categories have changed over time. For example, in 1860 the Census offered three categories (i.e., white, black, mulatto). In 1890, it offered eight possible categories: white, black, mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, Chinese, Japanese, and Indian. How do students understand these changes in racial classification over time in light of what they’ve learned? How do these categories reflect the social construction of race?)
4. What information in the 2010 census stands out to the students? Have them examine the economic data generated by the latest census. Have racial disparities in income and wealth been reduced? Why not?
5. People sometimes homogenize women into one large group, yet there are approximately 3 billion women on the planet. Ask students to discuss the ways in which women’s experiences are alike and different based on race, ethnicity, and class. In other words, using what they know from their text, how do these variables affect women in unique ways? You might also ask students to consider how women’s experiences have changed and continue to change over time. Related to this, you might ask how men and women’s experiences vary by race, ethnicity, and class.
6. Research the California “gender neutral bathrooms” law. When did you first learn about this law? Who was behind its creation? Find out if any other states have adopted similar laws. What are some of the limitations/issues with this law? Consider locations, budgets, campus size.
7. When you hear the term “the browning of America,” what are your thoughts? Try to find the beginnings/origins of this term/ideology. What did you find? How is this term used.