**Chapter 1: Diversity in the United States: Questions and Concepts**

[Byng, M. (2008). Complex Inequalities: The Case of Muslim Americans After 9/11.](http://etn.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/13/6/689?ijkey=8jonR7fH.mqWs&keytype=ref&siteid=spetn)*[American Behavioral Scientist,](http://etn.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/13/6/689?ijkey=8jonR7fH.mqWs&keytype=ref&siteid=spetn)**[51](http://etn.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/13/6/689?ijkey=8jonR7fH.mqWs&keytype=ref&siteid=spetn)*[(5), 659-674.](http://etn.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/13/6/689?ijkey=8jonR7fH.mqWs&keytype=ref&siteid=spetn)

This article discusses the redefining of religious minority identity for Muslim Americans after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, arguing that when religious identities become a central focus in American political conflict, they shift from supporting incorporation into society to facilitating inequality. The article analyzes the ways in which Muslim religious identity has come to mimic the inequality of race identity, supporting her broader argument that any identity that designates a group boundary has come to be the ground upon which social inequality is organized.

Questions to Consider:

1. What specific markers does Byng propose as those most clearly indicative of Muslim religious identity?
2. How are these identity markers used to construct essentialist images of Islam?
3. In what critical ways do the inequalities focused at Muslim religious identity work like the inequalities that are racially oriented?
4. How do these kinds of inequalities, either racially based or religiously based, prevent a society from even beginning a policy of social justice?

[Bell, J., & Hartman, D. (2007).Diversity in Everyday Discourse: The Cultural Ambiguities and Consequences of "Happy Talk". *American Sociological Review,* *72*(6), 895-914.](http://asr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/72/6/895?ijkey=9zTUWVnqnZ3WI&keytype=ref&siteid=spasr)

The authors conduct interviews in four major metropolitan areas to explore popular conceptions of diversity, detailing how their research revealed understandings that were undeveloped and often contradictory. On critical point they address is the conflict generated by the group oriented nature of most rhetorics of diversity, and the deeply embedded notions of individualism that ground American core values, allowing diversity to be an abstract concept that is not actualized in individual interactions, particularly with racialized others. The authors deconstruct the whiteness rubric in order to understand their findings relative to the intersections of racism and colorblindness in the contemporary moment.

Questions to Consider:

1. Define diversity, first academically (look in a good sociology text) and second according to popular interpretation (Google the term).
2. How do you see the individualism that is central to the American mainstream as being specifically in conflict with these definitions of diversity?
3. What do you think best explains the difference between respondents’ abstract definitions of the term diversity (generally positive), and the more ambiguous responses to questions about respondents’ experiences of diversity?
4. The authors claim “People have the ability to explicitly talk about race without ever acknowledging the unequal realities and experiences of racial differences in American society.” Explain what they mean by this statement, and discuss why this would hamper a non-racist public discourse about race.

[MacLean, V., & Williams, J. (2008). Shifting Paradigms: Sociological Presentations of Race. *American Behavioral Scientist,* *51*(5), 599-624.](http://abs.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/51/5/599?ijkey=gPA05P/VAib3o&keytype=ref&siteid=spabs)

This article provides a brief history of theories of race and race relations in the United States, arguing that the “new” racial paradigms in sociology have been repackaged around the same background assumptions that grounded the “old.”

Questions to Consider:

1. Define the term “paradigm.” How are paradigms a product of the social context within which they are devised?
2. What does this brief history of the theories of race and race relations tell us about the way these concepts have changed in their deployment in the sociological realm?
3. Why is it important to understand the trajectory of change in the paradigms of race and race relations? What does this understanding enable us to do?

[Thomas, J. (2014). Affect and the Sociology of Race: A Program for Critical Inquiry. *Ethnicities,* *14*(1), 72-90.](http://etn.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/14/1/72?ijkey=nCtXZVIXxoQBI&keytype=ref&siteid=spetn)

This article details the idea that race remains a centrally important issue within the social sciences. However, there are two key problems that continue to surface, particularly in the US context: a reductivist account of the role of culture in the production of race and racism and the essentializing of the political identity of racial others. The author proposes an affective program in order to correct these key problems.

Questions to Consider:

1. Define and detail the 2 key problems relative to race in the social sciences.
2. Describe the affective program as proposed by the author. Do you think this is a reasonable way to address the problems of race in the social sciences? Why or why not?

[Rocco, T., Bernier, J., & Bowman, L. (2014). Critical Race Theory and Human Resource Development (HRD): Moving Race Front and Center. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *16*(4), 457-470.](v)

This article argues that racism, sexism, and discrimination continue to impact a person’s complete identity. As proponents of Critical Race Theory, the authors argue that systems and organizations must engage in radical change, particularly to power structures, in order to improve conditions for workers. They advocate the abandonment of policies and programs that are purportedly “race neutral” in favor of an acknowledgement of race and racism as central to the working of institutions and organizations. They base their conclusions on the idea that all people have a stake in making racism and bias visible in order to work to eliminate these problems.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is critical inquiry and why is it an important approach in the study of race according to Thomas?
2. Briefly describe the four programs that dominate critical race inquiry in the US.
3. What does the author mean by “an affective program”? What are the two central components of such a program that are identified in the article?

[Lee, E., Edwards, S., & La Ferlee, C. (2014). Dual Attitudes Toward the Model's Race in Advertising*. Journal of Black Studies*, *45*(6), 479-506.](http://jbs.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/45/6/479?ijkey=uMQzySP4e8fTU&keytype=ref&siteid=spjbs)

This article looks at the way a model’s race can affect the way that advertising is viewed and internalized. The authors compared responses to both African American and Caucasian American models and the responses of both African American and Caucasian participants. They found that the amount of time the participants were given to view the advertisements directly affected the attitudes they reported towards the ads.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the main differences in the models the researchers chose? Why were these differences important to the study?
2. Do you agree with the researchers’ conclusions about the dual attitudes of participants in this study? Why or why not?

[Martinez, A., & Merlino, A. (2014). I Don't Want to Die Before Visiting Graceland: A Collaborative Autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry,* *20*(8), 990-997.](http://qix.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/20/8/990?ijkey=Q0NXe683xuyT2&keytype=ref&siteid=spqix)

This article details the violent events witnessed by the authors at a hotel in Memphis, TN. They argue that issues of race, class, gender, and ethnicity are differentially experienced at first hand, and thus must be simultaneously assessed through subjective experience as well as objective analysis.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does the title mean? What is a collaborative autoethnography?
2. How do the authors describe the differences in their interpretation of race and class through the lens of their experience in Memphis? Does it improve their analysis of these critical issues? Why or why not?

[Rocco, T., Bernier, J., & Bowman, L. (2014). Critical Race Theory and Human Resource Development (HRD): Moving Race Front and Center. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 16(4),](http://adh.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/16/4/457?ijkey=zalnCM/LWFEyc&keytype=ref&siteid=spadh)

This article discusses the problems, solutions to, and stakeholders relative to critical race theory and its utility in addressing equity in identity and other characteristics that are socially problematic. By advocating sweeping change in both institutions and systems, critical race theory criticizes and suggests changes in power structures such that embedded racism can be challenged openly. From the level of policy and law stakeholders to the level of individuals, clients, and consumers, the possibilities to challenge racist structures can be used to eliminate racism as an institutional component.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the central problem in Human Resource Development relative to race, as identified by the authors?
2. What solutions do the authors suggest? How effective do you think these programmatic changes are?
3. Identify and discuss the various stakeholders as identified by the authors. Is there any group of people missing from their discussion?