



Incorporating Diversity & Inclusion in a History of Psychology Course

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ABSTRACT

From the student perspective, the history of psychology course can be viewed as peripheral to their understanding of the field, due to its dates and litany of deceased Caucasian men¹. In an effort to make historical content more relevant to an increasingly diverse student body, two assignments were designed and implemented.

1. An assignment on implicit racial attitudes (evaluations that occur outside of conscious awareness and control).
2. A creative project on psychologists from underrepresented groups.

IMPLICIT RACIAL ATTITUDES

Special Unit during Black History Month

Prior to Class 1 Students:

- ❖ Read *Introduction to African American Psychology* by Belgrave and Allison (2014)²
- ❖ Read *Racial Identification and Preference in Negro Children* by Clark and Clark (1947)³
- ❖ Submitted 2 discussion questions total to Blackboard on Belgrave and Allison (2014) and/or Clark and Clark (1947)

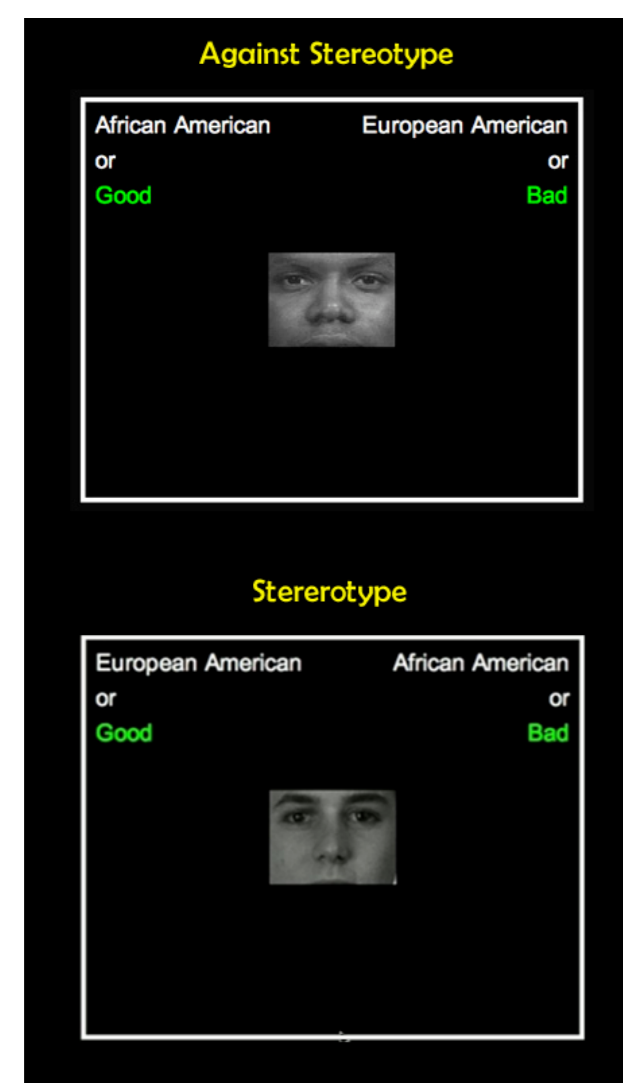
During Class 1 Students:

Prior to Class 2 Students:

- ❖ Read excerpt from *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* by Tatum (1997)⁴

Prior to Class 2 Students:

- ❖ Completed and uploaded completed IAT⁵ assignment on race to Blackboard



IMPLICIT RACIAL ATTITUDES

During Class 2 Students: Discussed IAT & Answers to Questions

1. What was your score on the IAT? Were you surprised at all by your score on the IAT? Why or why not? Explain.
2. At the beginning of the IAT you were asked to select the statement that most closely matches your explicit (publicly-expressed) attitudes about race. What do you think it means if the answer choice you selected and your actual implicit attitudes do not match?

Student Responses to Questions:

1. “The results of my test stated I had a slight automatic preference for European American compared to African American. I do not think these results are an accurate reflection of my preference because I believe people prefer the race they’re in because of the similarities they share. I think my results came out the way they did because I live with and love all of the European Americans girls that live on my floor. We get along great and have grown to love and appreciate each other and our differences.”
2. “It could mean people have been raised in a biased or unbiased manner toward a race, but they answer according to society’s standards. But I think it is important to point out that just because people have automatic preferences, it doesn’t mean they are going to act on them.”

CREATIVE PROJECT

- ❖ The exact nature of the creative project was up to the student; some possibilities included, but were not limited to, a dream catcher, drawing, poem, board game, or scrapbook.
- ❖ Students were provided with a list that included 35 well-known and lesser-known individuals in the field of psychology.
- ❖ Students were asked to include a
 1. Brief biography with birth and death dates
 2. One major contribution and describe the contribution in detail
 3. One fun fact about their chosen individual
- ❖ All creative projects were presented to the class for 10-15 minutes.

STUDENT EXAMPLES

Inez Beverly Prosser



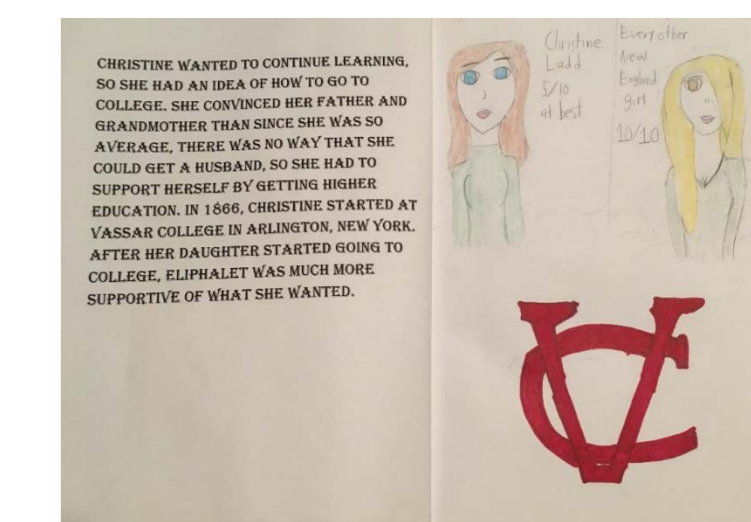
Reiko True



Carlton Goodlett



Christine Ladd-Franklin



CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ As student bodies have become more diverse, increasing diversity and inclusion efforts has become a focus in higher education.
- ❖ The mere presence of diversity does not guarantee benefits to students; diversity must be “activated”⁶.
- ❖ Faculty members have the responsibility to create spaces for diverse viewpoints to be studied and heard, as well as to facilitate discussion so all students benefit⁷.
- ❖ The assignments support research, discussion, presentation, and infusion of diversity and inclusion efforts that benefit both faculty and students.
- ❖ The assignments aid in expanding the social and cultural relevance of the history and systems course for students.

REFERENCES

¹ Woody, W. D. (2011). Engaging students in history and systems of psychology courses. In R. L. Miller, E. Balctetis, S. R. Burns, D. B. Daniel, B. K. Saville, & W. D. Woody (Eds.), *Promoting student engagement: Activities, exercises, and demonstrations for psychology courses* (Vol. 2, pp. 129-134). Retrieved from <http://teachpsych.org/ebooks/pse2011/vol2/index.php>

²Belgrave, F. Z., & Allison, K. W. (2014). *African American psychology: From Africa to America* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers.

³Clark, K. B., & Clark, M. P. (1947). Racial identification and preference in negro children. In T. M. Newcombe & E. L. Hartley (Eds.), *Readings in social psychology* (pp. 169-178). New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

⁴Tatum, B. D. (1997). *Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race*. New York: BasicBooks.

⁵Project Implicit (2011). Race IAT. Retrieved from <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>

⁶Marin, P. (2000). The educational possibility of multi-racial/multi-ethnic college classrooms. In *Does diversity make a difference? Three research studies on diversity in college classrooms* (pp. 61-78). Washington, DC: American Council on Education and American Association of University Professors.

⁷Haslerig, S., Bernhard, L. M., Fuentes, M. V., Panter, A. T., Daye, C. E., & Allen, W. R. (2013). A compelling interest: Activating the benefits of classroom-level diversity. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 6(3), 158-173.