

RACE MATTERS: EVERYDAY RACIAL RELATIONS AT UD AND BEYOND

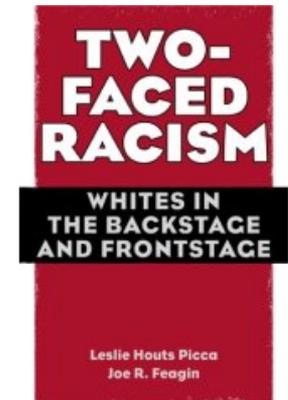
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HOW DOES RACE IMPACT YOUR DAILY LIFE?

- Journals by white students
 - Frontstage (w/ people of color)
 - Colorblind, non-racist
 - Backstage (only “whites”)
 - Can relax frontstage expectations
 - Racial joking common



WHITE MALE: FRONTSTAGE/BACKSTAGE

- I was walking back from KU with my roommate [white male]. We are in a fraternity together and we had just gotten out of a chapter meeting around 9pm and I was telling him about this hilarious Christmas song I had heard earlier that day. ... I can't remember all the lyrics but the gist of the song was [for] all terrorists to know about Jesus' birthday, ...and for all the black people in Africa to not have AIDS and come to America for Christmas and experience racism. I got to the part about Africans, and my roommate hit me in the side motioning for me to shut up. Right across Lawnview were three black guys dressed in baggy clothes and big poofy jackets. All I would think is please don't them hear the things I just said about the Christmas song, I don't want to get beat up or killed. As soon as we were certain we were out of ear shot of the three black guys I continued talking about the Christmas song.



WHITE FEMALE: WHO BELONGS?

- Saturday. At 11pm, my three roommates, my roommate's boyfriend, two of his friends [everyone is white, early 20s], and I all left Campus South to go to a party on Lawnview. Walking in front of us was a guy (African American, early 20s), walking alone with his head down. When we were halfway to Lawnview, a cop stopped to question the guy walking in front of us. My one roommate said that she knew he wasn't a student here at UD. When we passed by the guy that the cops stopped, I realized that it was a boy that was in my Bio Lab last year. I told my roommate that I knew him and that he was in fact a student here. She shrugged her shoulders and gave no reply. We all kept walking toward the party.



BACKSTAGE RACIAL JOKING

- A couple friends were gathered at a house on Saturday evening. They were discussing funny stories over drinks, all the people were white UD seniors. One person, Adam, told everyone [aggressively racist jokes].... during casual conversation people that are not actively racist joke about extremely racist things.



JOURNALS WRITTEN BY STUDENTS OF COLOR

- *Some anti-white comments*
 - Not as frequent, vicious, or damaging
 - Usually based on a specific event
 - Lack institutional support to have real consequences
- Students of color were often assumed to fit the stereotype of their racial group.
- Focused on differential treatment



“NOT THE ‘TOKEN’ BLACK GUY”

- I went to a house party with my white roommate to link up with my other white roommate and some friends (all white). We arrived at the party and there were about 100 people of all ages drinking and enjoying each other's company. I didn't feel out of place at all until this somewhat random white person, which was talking to our group of parents and friends, stopped mid-conversation and asked “are you the token black person?” I was shocked and had no clue as to how to positively respond. I thought to myself that I can't be a token black person because I was there on my own free will. I thought that regardless of me being there, the party would be the same. Even though I was telling myself that I wasn't the token black person, I jokingly told them that I was because I didn't know what else to say that wouldn't take from or negatively add to the party. I just internalized my feelings and eventually went home.



RACIAL/ETHNIC VIOLENCE AT UD

- Freshman year I lived in Marianist Hall with Eduardo. We went to high school together. It was a cold Friday night, and I remember we were at this party in the neighborhood. I left early because I was tired, and then later on that night, Eduardo comes into our dorm room bleeding in his hands and face. I asked what the hell had happened to him. He told me the story of how he got beat up by three white males on his way back to the dorm. The reason why he got beat up was because he was fighting on the phone with his girlfriend of the moment, screaming out in Spanish while he walked back. The white guys that beat him up told him that “This is America, and we speak English only” and beat him up. I think that this experience was ridiculous. It’s absurd to beat someone up because he was speaking in another language. I had a similar experience on my freshman year, too, where I was called a “Spic.” I almost lost it and I’m glad I was with a friend of mine that just pushed me in the other direction because if not I would have tried to fight the guy.



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Micro interactions support & maintain macro social structure



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO ME?

- We ALL impact the UD racial climate
- Increasing racial & ethnic diversity in the U.S. and employment competition in the global economy
 - ... *[V]irtually every major study of employers' interests in recruiting recent college graduates indicates that employers are looking to universities to prepare students for fruitful, collaborative work in multicultural settings.*
(P. Benson 8/28/09 address to UD Faculty)



I WANT TO KNOW MORE!

Picca:

- Two-Faced Racism: Whites in the Backstage and Frontstage (with Joe Feagin, Routledge, 2007)
- Students can enroll in SOC 328 Racial/Ethnic Minorities (Cross-Cultural Cluster, Human Rights Studies, Africana Studies Minor)

Broader Connections on Campus:

- Student Development: Office of Multicultural Affairs, Residence Life
- Campus Ministry: Center for Social Concern
- CAP conversations



○ THANK YOU!

