Intersectionality of Race & Poverty

Marvin Lynn, Dean and Professor
Critical Race Theory
Handbook of Critical Race Theory in Education
Race

- DuBois described “Race as a matter of skin and bone.”
- Phenotype: skin color, hair texture, facial features.
- Not genotype: no biological basis.
- Race is ascriptive.
  - Racial groups are ascribed certain “characteristics” assumed true.
  - Automatically “ascribe” class status to certain races.
- Racial ascriptions guide institutional policies and practices, e.g. extrajudicial killings of black men, etc.

Social Class

- Social class historically a signifier of intelligence, decency, talent and overall character
- Increasing divide between haves and have nots
- Critiques point to lack of mobility between the classes
- Society reproduces poverty by ghettoizing poor and limiting opportunities for advancement
  - Sociologists - class segmentation/stagnation

Race and Poverty

● In pairs of 2 or 3, speculate the ways you think race and poverty might interact. (5 mins)
● Share your speculations with another group. (5 mins)
● Reconvene
## Race and Poverty

### 2015 Federal Poverty Thresholds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Threshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One person</td>
<td>$12,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two people</td>
<td>$15,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three people</td>
<td>$18,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four people</td>
<td>$24,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five people</td>
<td>$28,741</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual income for 2015 federal poverty thresholds by household size. Poverty thresholds vary by number of people in a family and their age. Thresholds shown are weighted averages for each household size. Source: OCPP presentation of U.S. Census Bureau data.
The Intersection of Race & Poverty in the U.S.

- White - 9%
- Latinx - 20%
- Black - 22%
- Other - 13%
  - Native American - 25%


Race & Poverty in Oregon

Most Oregonians of color more than twice as likely to live in poverty than white Oregonians

- Black/African American: 30.7%*
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 29.2%*
- American Indian/Alaskan Native: 28.0%*
- Latino: 26.4%*
- Asian: 13.6%
- Non-Hispanic white: 12.9%

2015 share of Oregonians in poverty by race and ethnicity. * indicates poverty rate statistically different from non-Hispanic white rate. Source: OCPP analysis of American Community Survey data.
“Many of Oregon’s communities of color faced significant barriers to economic security. While the median income for non-Hispanic Whites in 2016 was $59,521, the median income for Latinos, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, and Blacks was substantially lower, at $46,180, $38,436 and $35,723, respectively. Only non-Hispanic Whites saw a significant increase in median income over the prior year.”

“Likewise, while 11.1 percent of non-Hispanic Whites in Oregon lived below the official poverty line in 2016, communities of color fared much worse. In 2016, 14.3 percent of Asians, 21.6 percent of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, 22.1 percent of American Indian and Alaska Natives, 22.6 percent of Latinos, and 27.0 percent of Blacks in Oregon lived below the poverty line. Only non-Hispanic Whites and Latinos saw significant declines in poverty rates over the prior year.”

Janet Bauer. (September, 2017).
Race and Poverty

● In a different group of 2 or 3, share your reactions to what we’ve discussed so far on the interactions between race and poverty.
● What surprised you?
● Do you disagree with something you’ve heard? Why?
Broader Implications

- Racism impedes economic progress for racially marginalized people.
- Black, Native and Latinx folks are less likely to escape poverty.
  - Results more positive for Latinx communities.
- Racial ideology frames all racially marginalized people as poor and negatively shapes social interaction. See Ellis Cose’ “The Rage of the Privileged Class.”
Implications for Schools

- Racism and Classism blur the unique identities and contributions of students, their families and some of our staff.
- Teachers and school leaders must embrace the “community cultural wealth” that all students bring to school.
  - Revisit ”The American Dream” mythology.
- Schools need “wrap-around services” to address the social needs of families living in poverty.
  - Respect for families’ economic conditions, culture, language, ability, gender identity, sexuality, religion and other factors must shape the ”delivery” of those services.

General Discussion

- What steps can we take to embrace the “community cultural wealth” of our poor Black, Native and Latinx students?
- What kind of “wrap-around services” can be put into place to support families, of any race, dealing with poverty? How do we ensure that all families have equitable access to these resources?
- Let’s keep talking about race.

Thank you