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SOC 147 Our America

Our America

In this class I was able to learn and understand many things such as the 1619 Project, religions impact on American society, racial justice and reconciliation, the Civil Rights movement, and many more. Some key sociological perspectives that I learned about race and values were critical race theory, cultural relativism, symbolic interactions, and conflict theory.

I was able to comprehend critical race theory's focus on the intersections between race and other social constructs like gender, class, and sexuality that lead to the development and maintenance of systemic inequities. Racism, according to critical race theorists, is a systemic issue that is established in social structures and affects everyone, not just one individual. In contrast to judging others based on one's own cultural values, the cultural relativism perspective places emphasis on the benefit of understanding various cultural values and behaviors on their own terms. Since there is no definite "right" or "wrong" way to live, this strategy acknowledges that diverse groups have varied values and lifestyles. The construction of race through social interactions and symbols is also highlighted by symbolic exchanges. Symbolic interactionists argue that race is not an inherent biological characteristic, but rather a social construct that is created and reinforced through social interactions. Finally, conflict theory focuses in the way that race is used to maintain power and control over certain groups. Conflict theorists argue that racism is a tool used by dominant groups to maintain their power and privilege, and that racial inequality is a result of this power imbalance.

The history of the United States is deeply intertwined with the issue of race. Many events throughout the country's history have had a significant impact on the understanding of race and its role in society. Some of the events are slavery, the civil war, the civil rights movement, etc. These occasions and movements have changed how Americans view race and society, and they have had an impact on the ongoing fight for racial equality in the country. Through their lessons on the significance of identifying and tackling structural racism and inequality, these historical incidents in the US might help us rethink how race and society interact. They serve as examples of the effectiveness of activism, serve as reminders of the ongoing fight for civil rights, and serve as a call to action for every one of us to contribute to the development of a more just and equal society.

Besides learning about the topic mentioned before, the 1619 project, the Jim Crow Law, and the Doctrine of Discover, are also topics that I can add to that list. The 1619 Project shows how slavery shaped America and its impact today, while Jim Crow laws were a system of racial segregation. The Doctrine of Discovery gave Europeans the right to claim land inhabited by non-Christians, reshaping people's views of indigenous people. The model minority myth portrays Asian Americans as successful due to cultural values, and the Immigration Act of 1965 ended discriminatory immigration policies. Finally, the Civil Rights Movement fought against racial discrimination and inspired social justice. Learning about these topics has reshaped many people's views of American history and society. Overall, learning about these topics has challenged many people to confront the difficult truths of American history and to consider how they can work towards a more just and equitable society.

In addition, the newfound perspectives that I have on the groups we covered in class is that it has significant contributions that various groups have made to American society, including

African Americans, Latino/a/x/Hispanic, Asian Americans, Indigenous Peoples, and undocumented/immigrant people. Despite facing institutional barriers, racism, and other challenges, these groups have contributed to American culture, economy, and society in various fields such as art, literature, music, sports, science, civil rights activism, sustainable living, and entrepreneurship. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing and appreciating the diversity and contributions of all individuals in shaping American society. The impact that religion has had on American society, including its influence on culture, politics, and social norms. The United States has a diverse religious landscape, with Christianity as the dominant religion, followed by other faiths such as Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Religion has been a driving force behind social movements, shaping American politics, and contributing to the economy. It has also had a significant impact on American culture, with religious holidays, themes, and symbolism being prevalent in art, literature, and music. Religious institutions have played a vital role in American communities, providing spiritual guidance and social services.

Furthermore, what most caught my attention in the class was the racial justice and reconciliation which I did a presentation about in the class which I explained the importance of it and how the different people of each race face some disparities in their daily life. Again, my presentation discussed the critical importance of racial justice and reconciliation, defining each term and outlining what is needed to achieve them. Racial justice involves fair and equitable treatment of people of all races, achieved through dismantling institutionalized racism and promoting inclusivity. Reconciliation involves repairing relationships between different racial groups damaged by historical injustices and requires acknowledging and addressing the harms caused by systemic racism and discrimination. Reconciliation also requires addressing the

ongoing impact of past injustices, acknowledging, and addressing trauma, and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity in society.

In conclusion, this class has been a valuable learning experience that has provided insights into various topics related to race, culture, and society in the United States. Through exploring historical events, sociological perspectives, and the contributions of different racial and ethnic groups, we have gained a deeper understanding of the ongoing struggle for racial equality and the importance of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity in society. We have also learned about the significance of religious institutions in shaping American society, and the need for racial justice and reconciliation in repairing relationships between different racial groups. Overall, this class has challenged us to confront difficult truths and has inspired us to work towards building a more just and equitable society.