

Assignment 1: Gender Diversity, Equity and Justice

Stereotyping and prejudicial treatment based on outwardly visible factors is an exceptionally timely topic for me at school, as my students have been working diligently over the last four weeks on an extensive U.S. Civil Rights era unit involving racial inequality. As we are wrapping up this unit, the topic of gender stereotypes is a perfect springboard for us to continue our study on injustice and inequality in America, as well as abroad. For this assignment, I selected Action Research Activity 3.4, Sex Stereotyping, and gave the written questionnaire to my students in both my History classes. I selected this particular activity primarily because I wished to do a pre-assessment on the level of gender stereotyping in my classes prior to starting our unit on women's rights. As evidenced in our reading for this assignment, it is critical that teachers "must be aware of what students say and do to recognize stereotypes, which many students do without realizing it" (Grant & Sleeter, 2009). This questionnaire seemed to be a great opportunity for me to gauge student awareness, or lack thereof, of gender stereotypes they feel and project on a daily basis.

*Clear, important focus*

I originally introduced this topic in late January, when I brought up a current event story that U.S. Defense Secretary Panetta is removing the ban preventing women from serving in combat positions in our military. As a group, we openly discussed the benefits and disadvantages of this paradigm shift in gender equality. Many of my female students agreed with the decision, and stated that it was time for the military to be "fair to women" with assignments and jobs. A few of my male students voiced the opinion that it would be harder for male soldiers to go to war with women around because they would have to protect the women while trying to win the battles themselves. This sparked a heated and lengthy debate about the physical differences between men and women and the need for men to protect those women they deemed "weaker" than they. We also discussed the reality that both men and women killed in wartime activities, including combat, leave families behind who need protection as well. As we continued our discussion, it became clear that several of the class members were responding from a stereotypical view of women, particularly in relation to being the "weaker" sex who needs protection from a "strong" male. This type of gender prejudice referenced in our reading that "stereotyping involves making an oversimplified opinion or uncritical judgment" (Grant & Sleeter, 2009) made it clear that we have some areas of growth and understanding required in this area in my class.

*Interesting!!  
Potential unit for your final paper!*

As I gave my students the survey, I didn't present much in the way of background or introduction, as I did not want to prep them or give them information that would unduly bias their responses. They completed the surveys quickly, with relatively little verbal responses or questions, although a few students needed assistance answering the first few questions until they understood the expectation of the assignment. A number of students in my upper grades asked about halfway through the meaning of the survey, and one student asked, "Where are you going with this?" I found it very interesting that none of my lower grade students questioned the reason for the survey, nor did they discuss any of their responses afterward, as the students in the upper grades did. I encouraged the

*do too*

discussion in my upper grades, and answered inquiries from my lower grades as they occurred, as I felt it important to continue the human relations approach that "highlights the difference and worth of each and every individual" (Grant & Sleeter, 2009). Each student is at a different academic and developmental level, and I want to view all students as members of a group of individuals with varying abilities, knowledge and understanding.

Did you add all the survey of

After analyzing the results of the survey, it became clear that there was a solid gender line drawn in relation to professions and activities as evidenced by student responses. An overwhelming 97% of students selected male names and pronouns for the doctor, dentist, principal, astronaut and mechanic. Similarly, 95% of students selected female names and pronouns for roles such as shopping, cleaning, nursing and librarian. I utilized the results of the survey as an introduction to the idea of gender stereotypes, and shared with the students the information gained in the survey results. As we looked at the overall summary data, all students expressed surprise that they had categorized the information based on gender. Many of them stated that they don't think only men can be doctors or principals, and they were shocked at the results the surveys had shown. In this way, I introduced the human relations concept of "having students participate in activities that make them realize the inaccuracies of stereotypes" (Grant & Sleeter, 2009).

Moving forward, I plan to integrate some of the other activities identified in this chapter, particularly the "After" lesson on stereotypes as well as "Quintessentially Me" (Grant & Sleeter, 2009). I feel that this will underscore the human relations principle that "lesson plans that help to correct the problem of stereotyping involve giving correct information to replace stereotypes" (Grant & Sleeter, 2009). As we move forward in our unit on women's rights and social justice regardless of gender stereotypes, I hope that we are able to identify stereotypes and replace them with realistic and factual knowledge that breaks down gender bias and allow for greater cultural and community awareness and understanding.

You might want to include material from Christensen, Schroeder, and Zinn.

### References

Grant, C.A., & Sleeter, C.E. (2009). *Turning on learning: Five approaches for multicultural teaching plans for race, class, gender and disability*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

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Outstanding demonstration of your understanding of HR goals and features, and action research methods, and how to design, implement, and critique lessons and activities from these perspectives.

E. Shaw

<b>CI 241 Scoring Rubric</b> <b>Interacting Substantively and Succinctly with Course Resources to Refine MSJE Approach, Model, Theory via the Lesson/Unit, AR Activity, or Critique</b>	
<b>Originality (4 points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Highlights and amplifies particular ideas in the lesson/unit, ar activity, approach and/or tradition, reading(s), video, etc.; not a mere summary.</li><li>Creative use of ideas when analyzing, reflecting on, critiquing the lesson/unit, ar activity, approach or tradition, reading(s), video, etc. and its usefulness for teaching for equity, achievement and social justice.</li></ul>	4
<b>Critiques the Reading(s) and other Program Resources in Attempting to Implement the After lesson/unit, AR Activity, etc. (6 points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reflects on the core ideas of the approach and/or tradition, reading(s) as the main sources for critiquing its usefulness for teaching for equity, achievement, and social justice.</li><li>Reflects on previous schooling/teaching experiences, current schooling/teaching experiences, program or other relevant readings, responses of colleagues in program, school and/or community, etc. in attempt to implement lesson/unit, ar activity, etc.</li></ul>	6
<b>Depth of Thought &amp; Analysis (6 points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Carries the ideas of the approach and/or tradition, ar activity, reading(s), etc. further or adapts the idea in a classroom setting or other possible classroom contexts</li><li>Makes connections between lesson/unit, ar activity, reading(s), etc. to other ideas or theories.</li><li>Maintains complex discussion without repetition, etc.</li></ul>	6
<b>Significance or Importance of the Information in this Critique of the Case Study and Reading(s) (4 points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ideas presented in such a way(s) that they will lead to classroom application.</li><li>Looks beyond potential obstacles, missed or failed attempts, etc. to envision how to improve the classroom activity consistent with the major ideas in this approach and/or tradition, ar activity, and other related reading.</li><li>Thoughts consistent with promoting greater equity, achievement, social justice, higher quality or quantity of learning, etc.</li></ul>	4
<b>Total</b>	26