

Suggested Activities for *Racial Perception* (videos 8-9)

Guiding Questions

1. How does race influence how people perceive others and the world around them? How does race influence how people perceive themselves?
2. How are people's ideas about what is good, right, normal, and valuable shaped by how we do race? What about people's ideas about what is bad, deviant, abnormal, and less valuable?
3. What can we do to change how people perceive race? How can this help us work to undo racism?

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. How does being a member of society shape our racial perceptions?
 - What about being a member of certain groups within society, like police officers?
 - Why might how we see ourselves differ from how others see us?
2. Jonathan Rosa says that racial perceptions are “structurally produced in very powerful ways.” What kinds of structures in society influence or shape our racial perceptions?
3. How can racial associations become automatic, unconscious, and/or implicit?
 - What are the implications of this for how we do race?
4. How can stereotypes affect how we perceive others? In what ways can they affect us—for example, how can they affect students' performance in school?
5. Paula Moya talks about how literature can both reflect and shape racial perception. What are some examples?
6. How can people work to challenge or change negative or detrimental racial perceptions?
7. Hazel Rose Markus says that an essential way to change the racial biases in people's heads is to change the world that they live in. If you could change one thing, what would it be?
8. How can diversifying representations or people's experiences change their racial perceptions?
9. Jennifer Eberhardt, Hazel Rose Markus, and Paula Moya offer specific suggestions and solutions for how to change people's racial perceptions and start to undo racism.
 - What are these suggestions and solutions?
 - What are some other ideas that are not mentioned in the videos?

RaceWorks Toolkit
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10. How do the topics discussed in the films intersect with social class, gender, sexual orientation and other significant social distinctions?
 - Can racial perception operate differently for people from different social classes, genders, sexual orientations, etc.?

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Example Activity 1: Disrupting Negative Racial Associations

Remind students or co-workers about using the culture cycle to map how race is done across different levels of society: the individual level, the interactional level, the institutional level, and the ideological level. Refer back to the activities in [STEP 3](#) and the [culture cycle concept guide](#).

To change people's negative racial associations, we need to disrupt the links between the biases and stereotypes in people's heads and the cultural and historical ideas about race that they are exposed to in society and the world around them. That is, we need to disrupt the links between the individuals and ideas levels through what people experience at the interactional and institutional levels of society. How might we start to do this?

Divide students or co-workers into small groups. Assign each group either the institutional or interactional level. Have each group brainstorm how biases or stereotypes about the following racial or ethnic groups in the U.S. are reinforced at their assigned level in society (institutional or interactional): African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinxs, Middle Eastern/North African Americans, Natives or Indigenous Peoples, and/or White Americans. Then ask each group to brainstorm how these racial associations or biases could be disrupted, diversified, and/or changed, leveraging strategies or solutions within their assigned level (institutional or interactional).

Bring the groups together and have each group share their observations and strategies for change with the larger group.

(Suggested time: 45 minutes)

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Example Activity 2: Diversifying Representations

Ask students or co-workers to find a recent advertisement, TV show, movie, play or performance, or other type of artistic product (e.g., a song, painting) that challenges or counters negative stereotypes or biases about racial groups in society. First, ask students or co-workers to identify how the cultural product that they selected works to counter or change the representation or narrative around different racial groups in society. Then, ask students or co-workers to imagine that they had the opportunity to design their own cultural product of a similar type to the one they selected. What would their product look like? How would it challenge or counter negative stereotypes or biases about racial groups in society? How would they ideally disseminate or share their product with people? Why does having more diverse representations matter?

Have students or co-workers present their cultural product analysis and design idea to the larger class or group to demonstrate how negative racial perceptions can be challenged or undone through diversifying the representations of race that people are exposed to in society.

(Suggested time: 30 minutes to find cultural product, 1 hour in-class activity)