TEACHING GOAL

Students will achieve an understanding that many disparagements used to refer to males are based on comparing them with stereotypically female traits, such as weakness.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Students will analyze words that disparage males for their underlying referents.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

Male-gendered pejoratives, including: bastard, pussy-whipped, sissy, son of a bitch, wimp, wuss (for more, see *Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States,* available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Bastard *(Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers, p. 15)*: In the sixteenth century, Shakespeare used the word in the sense of a contemptible person, and by the eighteenth century the word had begun to replace the now archaic whoreson, meaning, literally, the son of a whore, with all that word's derisiveness.

Pussy-whipped *(Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers, p. 234)*: A description for a man said to be henpecked, one who, like a horse, suffers under a whip; a colloquialism from the mid-twentieth century. The term insults the man but also reflects on conventional definitions of women as enjoined to hold their tongues and control their inclinations to dominate.

Sissy *(Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers, p. 256)*: Usually, a boy or man considered weak, effeminate or cowardly. ...The person called a sissy is accused of having supposedly undesirable childish or feminine characteristics, such as passivity, softness, artistic sensitivity and dependence.

... When applied to a man, a sissy is a male who doesn't measure up to manhood. Being called a sissy or a girl is part of the sanction against males looking or acting in feminine ways.

Son of a bitch *(Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers, p. 263)*: A man regarded as contemptible; sometimes also a pitiful man or simply any fellow. The term is also used to express strong emotion, especially anger or disgust.

... Although usually used for men, the term, in all its opprobrium, reflects back on women: the "bitch" is the man's mother.

Wimp *(Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers, pp. 294-295)*: A person, traditionally and still usually a male (though increasingly used for females as well), regarded as weak or ineffectual.

... The usage is often heard among males, especially in male-dominated institutions, groups or occupations, such as soldiering and many sports. In national defense discourse, Cohn (1998) has pointed out, wimp is used as a gendered pejorative and polarizes human characteristics in terms of male and female, the former being valued and the latter, scorned.

Wuss *(Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers, p. 305)*: A weak person or coward, traditionally a man; a combination of the w in wimp with the last three letters in puss (wussy is even more like pussy, since they rhyme). Like wimp and pussy, this is a hurtful term for a male, used with the implication that he lacks strength and other virtues of masculinity (it compares a man with a woman, thus demeaning women in general as well as the particular male targeted).

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY

Brainstorming • Problem-solving

MATERIALS NEEDED

• This lesson plan
• Chalkboard and chalk, large "post-it" notes and markers, or pen and paper

TIME RANGE

10 to 20 minutes, depending on depth of discussion

GROUP SIZE

Small to large (2 to 20+). Large groups may wish to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. List words that describe "typical" characteristics of:
    a. Men
    b. Women

2. List pejorative (disrespectful or insulting) words or phrases that apply to men. (Instructor may want to add words from the above list if not generated by the students.)

3. Look for patterns in the words you generate. Group them as appropriate.

DEBRIEF
Questions for debriefing:

• Why are these words insulting to men?

• What characteristics are insulted? What associations or implied meanings are there?

• To whom do these words really apply?

• Why is this insulting to women?

• Did this exercise give you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

• Will you change any of your language or behaviors as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

VARIATIONS
Generate pejorative words for men that refer to homosexuality. Follow the instructions above.

TEACHING GOAL
Students will develop an awareness of the stereotypes (assumptions)
associated with various ethnicities or regional groups.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students will associate "ethnic-sounding" names with hypothetical occupations and then examine assumptions behind the associations.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED
Stereotype (from *The Color of Words,* pp. 212-213, available from www.interculturalpress.com): A generalization about what people are like; an exaggerated image of their characteristics, without regard to individual attributes. Newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann coined the term, calling a stereotype a "picture in our heads" (*Public Opinion,* 1922, 95-156). Stereotypes of groups are based on salience — whatever usually stands out about that group. In the United States, so-called racial characteristics, in particular skin color, hair texture and facial features, are a common basis of stereotyping.

All people hold certain stereotypes of members of other groups, including groups based on "race," ethnic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability and occupation. Many stereotypes are merely cultural expectations about our world, shorthand ways of dealing with its complex reality. But prejudiced people in particular think in terms of these images, and do so in ways that are potentially abusive. The stereotype in effect says that to know one member of the group is to know them all. Regarding ethnic stereotypes, for example, all Jews, according to the traditional prejudice, are "shrewd" and "money hungry." All black people are "ignorant" and "welfare dependent." All white people are "cold" and "smug." Seeing individuals who resemble our stereotypes, however unrepresentative they may be, sustains the stereotype by a process of selective perception.

Ethnic group (*The Color of Words,* pp. 79-80): Any category of people within a larger society who possess distinctive social or cultural traits, shared history and sense of their commonness, regardless of the group's size, power, race (the perception of certain common biological traits), or time of immigration. The term is popularly used for such groups in U.S. society as Jews, who identify themselves in terms usually of common history as well as religion, or groups designated by national origin, such as Polish Americans or Japanese Americans. The term has been popular since the 1960s.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
Brainstorming • Problem-solving • Debate • Attitude scales •
Experiential learning

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Copies of the handout

TIME RANGE
• 5 to 10 minutes for the matching exercise
• 20+ minutes for discussion, depending on depth of discussion

GROUP SIZE
Small, medium or large (2 to 20+ people). Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups and compare responses.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Draw a line connecting each name on the list (see handout, page 3) with that person's occupation (use each occupation only once; there will be some left over).

2. Share your responses. Look for patterns:
   • Did many people connect certain names with the same occupations?
   • If so, which names and occupations did your group associate with each other? Why?

3. Consider the definition of stereotype. Did any of your responses to the exercise express conscious or unconscious stereotypes you hold about various ethnic groups? If so, what were they?

DEBRIEF
Discuss the following questions in small groups, or as a class:

1. Respond to this phrase: ". . . to know one member of the group is to know them all." Answer the following:
   • Is this true of the ethnic group(s) to which you belong? Why or why not?
   • It is true of other ethnic groups?

2. How would you feel (or how do you feel) to be judged based on a stereotype about your ethnic group(s)?

3. What types of traits or characteristics are emphasized in stereotypes? Why?

4. Where do we get some of the ideas that contribute to stereotypes about people of other ethnic groups? What things reinforce those ideas? What things counteract them?

5. Did this exercise give you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

6. Will you change any of your language or behaviors as a result of this exercise? If so, how?

Draw a line connecting each name on the list below with that person's occupation (use each occupation only once; there will be some left over).

NAMES

Jamal Jackson

Eli Goldstein

Mohammed Al-Saaidi

Alison Running Bear

Jiang Wu

Consuela Garcia

Faiza Shirazi

Naomi Herschberger

Steve Smith

Twila Sue Poole

George White Feather

Latisha Johnson

Jorge Enriquez

Machiko Matsumoto

Bubba Ray Deere

Shannon Roberts

OCCUPATION

Middle manager

Flight attendant

Truck driver

Massage therapist

Corporate vice president

High school teacher

Computer programmer

Farmer

Secretary

Professional basketball player

Diamond broker

Oil company executive

Agricultural worker

Hotel maid

Homemaker

Social worker

University professor

Lawyer

Blackjack dealer

Waitress

TEACHING GOAL

Students will achieve an understanding of the concept of anti-Semitism. Students will develop an awareness of the effects of anti-Semitic and other hate propaganda in modern and historical contexts.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Students will consider the connections between anti-Semitic and other hate speech, prejudice and oppression, and violence.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

Antisemitism/Anti-Semitism, hate speech, anti-Semitic terms, including: Christ-killer, Hebe/Heeb, Hymie, kike/Kike, Shylock, Yid, (for more, see *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States,* available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Antisemitism/Anti-Semitism (*The Color of Words*, pp. 13-14): Anti-Semitism is prejudice and discrimination against Jews.

... Along with the difficulties of the seemingly timeless issues of anti-Semitism has gone the difficult problem of defining the term. Not surprisingly, for many Jews the term anti-Semite carries with it the memories of Nazism and the smell of mass murder. More broadly, the anti-Semitic label has been used to refer to those who are prejudiced against Jews seen as a race or against Judaism, the religious beliefs and the observation of Jewish practices. In the "new" anti-Semitism described by Forster and Epstein (1974), it means those who criticize the policies of Israel or institutions that oppose those policies.

Hate speech (*The Color of Words*, pp. 103-104): Talk or communication that is likely to be perceived as offensive by a minority group or a group that defines itself as a victim. Groups considered to be the targets of such speech are usually racial, ethnic, religious or national; also targeted are certain categories including gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status and physical capacity.

Christ-killer (*The Color of Words*, p. 53): From the second half of the nineteenth century, a hostile, insulting reference to a Jew, considered as someone whose ancestors made the mistake of betraying Christ to the Romans and failing to recognize the true Messiah.

Hebe/Heeb (*The Color of Words*, p. 105): From Hebrew, this term is a disrespectful or derogatory nickname for a Jewish person (usually a man) that appeared in the 1920s.

Hymie/heimie (*The Color of Words*, p. 113): Recent offensive slang word for a Jew, from the Hebrew word hayyīm, meaning "life."

Kike/kike (*The Color of Words*, p. 133-134): A highly pejorative term meaning an uncouth Jewish merchant, but may be used for any Jewish man or woman.

Shylock (*The Color of Words*, p. 206): An anti-Semitic epithet meaning a "loan shark" or "extortionist." As a verb, it means to "lend money at exorbitant interest rates."

Shylock was the name of a character in Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice.* He was a Jewish man portrayed as a bloodsucking usurer. The image of a practitioner of commercial deception, however, was a part of the stereotype of the Jew long before Shakespeare.

Yid/yid (*The Color of Words*, p. 239): (pl. Yidden, "the Jewish people"). A Jew, particularly an eastern European Yiddish-speaking Jew, which is what the term denotes.

... Pronunciation reflects whether the usage is intended to slur: Yid, rhyming with did, as anti-Semites pronounce it, is offensive; but Yeed, rhyming with deed, is not.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY

Case studies • Research • Problem-solving

MATERIALS NEEDED

• This lesson plan
• Teaching Tolerance's free video "The Shadow of Hate" (order form included below)
• One or more of the following links to archives of Nazi propaganda:
  The Eternal Jew
  www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/diebow.htm
  Caricatures from Der Stuermer
  www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/sturmer.htm
  Nazi Propaganda (1933-1945)
  www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/ww2era.htm#Antisem
  Cartoons from Die Brennessel
  www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/brenn1.htm

TIME RANGE
- Several hours for research
- 2 class periods

GROUP SIZE
Small to large (2 to 20+). Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Before your group meets, visit one or more of the websites listed above and view some of the archives of anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda. Notice the visual imagery as well as the language used.

2. View the Teaching Tolerance video "The Shadow of Hate." Listen for the types of language used about or directed against the groups and individuals who were targets of acts of hatred.

3. In small groups, share your impressions. Answer the following:

- What emotions did you feel as you were watching the video? Did you feel anger, compassion, fear, embarrassment or sorrow?

- What did you notice about the language used?
  - What were some of the labels used?
  - What were some of the descriptive adjectives used?
  - How does this kind of language affect people's impressions of individuals before they meet or get to know them?

4. Consider the definition of hate speech.

5. Using that definition, and your insights from viewing the video, analyze the piece(s) of anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda you researched. Free-write for 10 minutes, explaining the connections between propaganda (hate speech); an environment that dehumanizes people; and acts of violence, killing and genocide.

6. In small groups, share your responses.

DEBRIEF
Questions for debriefing:
- What strategies do hate mongers have in common?

- What are the connections between language and hate?

- How has anti-Semitism continued?

- Has this exercise given you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

- Are there some ways you have consciously or unconsciously engaged in anti-Semitic speech or behavior (or other hate speech or behavior)?

- If so, are there ways you can change this speech or behavior?

- Do any contemporary groups use similar strategies today? How do they use them, and to what success?

VARIATION
1. View the Simon Wiesenthal Center film "Genocide," available from www.wiesenthal.com/.

2. Starting at the Southern Poverty Law Center (www.splcenter.org/index.jsp), Simon Wiesenthal Center (www.wiesenthal.com/) or Anti-Defamation League (www.adl.org), research a current anti-Semitic hate group.

3. Follow the instructions detailed above on page 2.

TEACHING GOAL

Students will develop an understanding of the dynamics of social power differences as they relate
to the evolution of racial, gender, and sexual orientation-based epithets (pejorative language).
Students will develop an awareness of the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexual orientation bias.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Students will debate the pros and cons of reclaiming pejorative
words (assigning or re-establishing a positive connotation for a
neutral term that currently has negative associations).

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

Pejorative (disrespectful) words relating to religion, sexual orienta-
tion, gender, age and ethnicity (or a combination of these), includ-
ing: bitch, dyke, hag, nag, pagan, squaw (for more, see *Wimmin,
Wimps and Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender
and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States* and *The Color of
Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United
States*; both available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Bitch (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers* pp. 25-26): Generally an
abusive word for a woman regarded as malicious, domineering,
blunt, brassy or spiteful; or for any highly disagreeable woman
or thing. A common implication is that the woman does not know
how to hold her tongue (she talks in ways that do not conform to
men's ideas of femininity). But the word implies more than this,
defining — and degrading — women in terms of an animal meta-
phor, a female dog.

Dyke/dike (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers* pp. 78-79): Origi-
nally, any lesbian; today, in particular, a lesbian who takes an
aggressive role and adopts "masculine" behavior. ... The term is
usually a strong put-down when coming from nonlesbians, but
since the 1970s it has often been used among lesbians as a blunt,
political and conscious self-designation.

. . . Among heterosexuals, dyke may be applied to any lesbian, the
generalization all the more a term of contempt. In fact, some men
find the "dyke" label convenient for putting down women who are
seen as unattractive, who do not act "feminine" or who show no
interest in them.

Hag (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers* p. 131): Originally, since the
fourteenth century, an old woman deemed ugly and sometimes
vicious; since the sixteenth century, a witch.

. . . Hag later shifted in meaning to something less diabolical,
usually any unattractive woman regarded by men as either
sexually worthless or bad-tempered. ... It has also been used
for women in general or for the stereotypical ugly, domineering
mother-in-law.

Nag (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers* p. 211): Since the nineteenth
century, a word meaning someone, often a woman, who is always
scolding and finding fault. ... Used for a woman, the implication is
that she complains endlessly, often about or at her husband for
not behaving as she wishes he would. ... Also usually reserved for a
woman is nag in the sense of an old horse ("old nag").

Nigger (*The Color of Words*, p. 164-166): A pernicious slur that
is without a doubt the most disparaging epithet used for black
people. ... It is especially abusive when used by white people. ...
Among African Americans, usage has taken a number of turns
and has had its landmarks. ... Young black people have used the
term since at least the 1990s in nonderogatory, nonracial ways,
such as "man," "person," "man" or "woman."

Pagan/pagan (*The Color of Words*, p. 176): An observer of a poly-
theistic religion, sometimes mistaken as someone who professes
no religion. According to *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1989),
pagan comes from the Latin *paganus*, which originally meant "vil-
lager" or "rustic" but also "civilian" or "nonmilitant." In Christian
Latin, however, it meant "heathen," that is, neither Christian nor
Jewish. Christians, who saw themselves as "soldiers of Christ,"
called non-Christians "pagans." It came to signify a worshiper
of false gods. It may also connote hedonism and primitiveness
and can be offensive to those who practice a religion other than
Christianity, Judaism or Islam. At the same time, worshipers who
wish to stress the pre-Christian practices of their religion may
take pride in their paganness.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY

Debate • Role-playing • Drama • Assigned listening • Simulation

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Copies of handout
• Access to research materials: library, Internet, etc.

TIME RANGE
• Several hours for research and writing
• 1 class period

GROUP SIZE
Small to medium (4 to 20+ people)

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Research a word, either your choice or as assigned to you, from the list of pejorative words above (neutral words referring to a particular group based on gender, race, religion, etc., that currently have negative or disparaging connotations).

2. In small groups, formulate your stance, either your choice or as assigned to you, for or against reclaiming the word (assigning or re-establishing positive connotations for the word). (An example of a word that has been reclaimed by the group to which it refers: "queer," at one time used very disparagingly by heterosexuals to refer to homosexuals, is now sometimes used by homosexuals to refer to themselves with pride.)

3. Argue your position on reclaiming the word (five minutes). Address:

History/etymology:
• What is the social meaning of the word (connotation)?

• What is the factual meaning of the word (denotation)?

• What traits or aspects of the people targeted are being disparaged (gender, race, etc.)?

• Why do some people want to reclaim the word (use it in its original neutral or a new positive sense)?

• Why are some people uncomfortable with reclaiming it?

• Any costs associated with your stance on reclaiming: Financial, emotional/social, physical/material?

• Any benefits associated with your stance on reclaiming?

• The effects of reclaiming the word: Will it reduce or increase understanding/communication with other groups?

4. Listen to the opposing group's argument.

5. Make your rebuttal to the opposing group's argument (five minutes).

6. Listen to the opposing group's rebuttal.

7. Summarize your stance on the issue of reclaiming (five minutes).

8. Listen to the opposing group's summary.

9. As a group, vote on the issue of reclaiming.

DEBRIEF
Questions for debriefing

• What did you decide, and why?

• Who "owns" a word — the dominant group or the group to whom it applies?

• How can negative connotations be changed to positive ones?
   • Who has the power to make these changes? Why?
   • What resources are needed?
   • How long does it take?

• Did this exercise give you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

• Will you change any of your language or behaviors as a result of this exercise? If so, how? Why?

Word: _____

1. History/etymology

    • What is the factual meaning of the word (denotation)?

    • How was the pejorative connotation (association) acquired?

    • What traits or aspects of the people targeted are being disparaged (gender, race, etc.)?

    • How do these aspects interact with each other? Why?

2. Why do some people want to reclaim the word (use it in its original neutral or a new positive sense)?

3. Why are some people uncomfortable with reclaiming it?

4. Are there any costs associated with reclaiming the word? (Financial, emotional/social, physical/material costs, for example)

5. Are there any benefits associated with reclaiming the word?

6. Will reclaiming the word reduce or increase understanding/communication with other groups?

7. Other considerations:

TEACHING GOAL
Students will increase their awareness of the effects of using language that reinforces stereotypes.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students will write and discuss definitions of words that express or reinforce various stereotypes.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED
Stereotype; words and phrases that reinforce stereotypes, including: fairy, ho, jungle bunny, poor white trash, paki/Paki, wetback (for many more, see *Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States* and *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States*; both available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Stereotype (*The Color of Words*, pp. 212-213): A generalization about what people are like; an exaggerated image of their characteristics, without regard to individual attributes. Newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann coined the term, calling a stereotype a "picture in our heads" (*Public Opinion*, 1922, 95-156). Stereotypes of groups are based on salience — whatever usually stands out about that group. In the United States, so-called racial characteristics, in particular, skin color, hair texture and facial features, are a common basis of stereotyping.

All people hold certain stereotypes of members of other groups, including groups based on "race," ethnic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability and occupation. Many stereotypes are merely cultural expectations about our world, shorthand ways of dealing with its complex reality. But prejudiced people in particular think in terms of these images, and do so in ways that are potentially abusive. The stereotype in effect says that to know one member of the group is to know them all. Regarding ethnic stereotypes, for example, all Jews, according to the traditional prejudice, are "shrewd" and "money hungry." All black people are "ignorant" and "welfare dependent." All white people are "cold" and "smug." Seeing individuals who resemble our stereotypes, however unrepresentative they may be, sustains the stereotype by a process of selective perception.

. . . Stereotypes are more often negative than positive. Even when they seem to be positive, however, they may convey negative or offensive judgments about the group in question. For instance, when black people are viewed as being good dancers, the stereotype conveys an offensive image of carefree entertainers.

Fairy (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers*, pp. 89-90): A term with two different meanings since the nineteenth century, both reflecting on femininity and tending to degrade it. It was once used for women, but its common slang use today, probably American in origin, is (especially among heterosexuals) to disparage a gay man.

Ho/hoe/'ho (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers*, p. 140-141): Twentieth-century variant pronunciation and respelling of whore, "prostitute." This usually demeaning epithet is based on black English pronunciation but is used also by white people. Ho may also refer to any woman regarded as sexually promiscuous — sometimes any woman: "You don't have to be one to be called one" (Sharp 1993, 39). In any case ho is likely to be taken offensively.

Jungle bunny (*The Color of Words*, pp. 131-132): Derogatory term for a black person, originally for a slave newly arrived from Africa, alluding to primitiveness; also African bunny. Perhaps because of the diminutive-sounding bunny, this term may sometimes be used with jocular intent. Nevertheless, it is racist and figures into the white supremacist lexicon.

Paki/Pakky/Packie (*The Color of Words*, p. 176): Slur by abbreviation, mainly British (1960s), but also used in Canada and the United States, for a Pakistani or immigrants from Bangladesh and other South Asian nations as well.

Poor white trash (*The Color of Words*, pp. 184-185): Phrase used for white people of the very lowest social status — those viewed as ignorant and shiftless as well as economically backward — including, in slave days, southern white people who were ranked in social status beneath slaves. ...Poor white trash is used by both white and black people, largely as a term of contempt. The term may connote not only squalor but also moral turpitude. In the North, especially, the phrase often implies that those so labeled are racist.

Wetback (*The Color of Words*, pp. 228-229): A twentieth-century

slur deriving from the practice of Mexicans entering the United States by swimming or wading the Rio Grande (even though the Rio Grande is not always high enough to wet the back of a wader). Wetback was later changed to the [presumably] less offensive illegal alien.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
Open-ended sentences • writing definitions

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Pen and paper

TIME RANGE
10 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of definitions generated and the depth of discussion.

GROUP SIZE
Small to large (2 to 20+). Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Individually or in small groups, write a definition of one or more of the terms in the list above, or as assigned, about two sentences to a paragraph.

2. Share your definition with the rest of the group(s).

3. In small groups, share your impressions.

DEBRIEF
Questions for debriefing:

• What is the "picture in your head" when you think of this term?
• Where did you learn or acquire it?
• Where else have you seen or heard it?
• What connotations (associations or implied meanings) does it have?
• Are the connotations positive, negative or neutral?
• How does this term reinforce stereotypes (i.e. what assumptions does it make about people who fall into this category? Which traits does it emphasize or disparage)?

• How does use of this term perpetuate oppression and domination?
• How does it harm people in the group to whom the term applies (the "outgroup")?
• How does it harm people in the dominant group (the "ingroup")?
• How does it harm you?
• Did this exercise give you any new ideas? If so, what are they?
• Will you change any of your language or behaviors as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

VARIATION
Follow the **Learning Activity Instructions** above to generate or research terms that describe the same groups, but are neutral or positive and do not embody the stereotypes.

TEACHING GOAL
Students will develop awareness about the ways intention, perception and the use of stereotype-laden language can affect communication.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students will perform and analyze a script in which the use of stereotypes in language contributes to miscommunication.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED
• Pejorative terms, including FemiNazi, PC Police, redneck

• Neutral terms used as pejorative, including gay, liberal, PC, radical

• Social justice terms, including oppression, discrimination, homophobia

• Words related to language or communication, including stereotype, intention, perception, communication, denotation, connotation

FemiNazi A pejorative blend of feminist and Nazi, stigmatizing almost any feminist or liberal female activist. … [These slurs], thought to be jocular by some people, are not likely to be used outside politically far right discourse and have been on the wane even there.

Homophobia A reference to a conscious or unconscious aversion to and fear of homosexual — also bisexual or transgendered — people, homosexuality and homosexual communities and culture.

PC/politically correct/political correctness A term that became popular on American university campuses around 1990, used for a set of ideas, concerns, principles and directives that stresses social nonoppressiveness, inclusiveness and sensitivity to diverse groups of people. …The terms political correctness and politically correct have been surrounded by a great deal of critical rhetoric and attempts to explain, mock and discredit them.

(For more, see *Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States* and *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States*.)

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
Skit/drama • Assigned listening • Experiential learning

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Copies of Listening Prompts Handout, one for each student
• Two copies of the script page, one for each actor
• Adequate space for the actors to move around

TIME RANGE
• 5 minutes to perform the skit
• 10 to 20 minutes for assigned listeners to report
• 10 to 30 minutes for discussion

GROUP SIZE
Small to large (two students assigned as skit actors; remaining students divided into six listening groups)

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Select two students to serve as actors.

2. Assign students to listening groups, and ask each group to listen for one of the following:
   • Stereotypes;
   • Intentions of each speaker;
   • Perceptions of each listener;
   • Denotation (factual meanings of words);
   • Connotation (implied or associated meanings of words); or
   • Effects of pejorative language on each of the actors.

3. The actors perform the provided skit.

4. Each assigned listening group reports on what they heard (from both actors).

5. Individually or in groups, rewrite the skit, making suggestions for ways to have the same conversation without the pejorative terms.

DEBRIEF
Discuss the following questions in small groups, or as a class:

• Which words were openly pejorative? Which words were neutral but used as pejoratives?

• How did the use of stereotypes contribute to miscommunication
  between the actors?

• How can miscommunication occur even when both speakers
  have good intentions?

• Did the use of any of the terms make you uncomfortable? If so,
  which ones? Why?

• Did this exercise give you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

• Will you change any of your language or behaviors as a result
  of this exercise? If so, which ones? Why?

(Actors laughing at something.)

David: "Oh, man, that is so gay."

Maria: "Wait a minute — I can't believe you said that."

David: "Why, what's wrong with that?"

Maria: "It's homophobic, that's what."

David: "Oh, please; don't go all PC on me."

Maria: "Well, don't go ignorant redneck on me."

David: "Oh, so if I don't agree with your liberal rhetoric, I'm a redneck?"

Maria: "Well, duh! It's so obvious — are you insecure in your sexuality or something?"

David: "Oh, come on! It doesn't mean *that* — it just means lame. Everybody knows that."

Maria: "Now you're being ableist."

David: "Good grief! What are you — some kind of FemiNazi? You're like the PC police!"

Maria: "And you are such a retard."

David: "Yeah, well, who's being 'ableist' now?"

Maria: "Oh, stop it. You know, I am really amazed at your homophobia."

David: "Look, I'm not homophobic. I knew this guy Paul, and he was totally gay, and he was a really nice guy. I didn't hold anything against him."

Maria: "How nice of you to forgive him."

David: "You're just being too sensitive. Don't I have a right to my opinion?"

Maria: "Not when it oppresses other people."

David: "That's reverse discrimination. You're oppressing me right now."

Maria: "Oh, please; that's not what 'oppression' means."

David: "Look, I didn't mean anything by it. Can't you take a joke?"

Maria: "Dork."

David: "Radical."

Maria: "OK, let's just forget it . . . What were we talking about before all this came up?"

David: "I don't know. Something about our assignment for Women's History Month."

Name _____

I am in the *(check one)*:

☐ "Stereotypes" Listening Group

☐ "Intentions of Each Speaker" Listening Group

☐ "Perceptions of Each Listener" Listening Group

☐ "Denotation" Listening Group

☐ "Connotation" Listening Group

☐ "Effects of Pejorative Language" Listening Group

What I heard:

TEACHING GOAL
Students will achieve an understanding of the concepts of ethnocentrism and xenophobia.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students will investigate and report on experiences of immigrants to the United States.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED
Ethnocentrism; xenophobia; words for immigrant populations, including: Chink, Jap, Jerry, raghead/towelhead, Russkie, Spic (for many more, see *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States*; available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Ethnocentrism (*The Color of Words*, p. 80-81): The tendency of people to put their own group (ethnos) at the center: to see things through the narrow lens of their own culture and use the standards of that culture to judge others. ... An ethnocentric point of view usually leads to a biased belief in the inferiority of other groups and, at the extreme, to cultural chauvinism. The differences we encounter in others — in dress, speech, manners, politics or any other cultural attribute — test our sense of trust in them and might even threaten or offend us.

... The negative effects of ethnocentrism ... are also ubiquitous in the world. They are seen in the bigotry, discrimination and often even violence that keeps "them" apart from "us."

Xenophobia (*The Color of Words*, p. 235): From the Greek word meaning "fear of strangers," the fear or hatred of anything that is foreign or outside of one's own group, nation or culture. Xenophobia is an overt form of prejudice and ethnocentrism that may contribute to feelings of nationalism.

. . . When xenophobes take to unprovoked attacks on foreigners, the term may be used synonymously with basher.

Chink (*The Color of Words*, p. 50): An American and British slang term for a Chinese, possibly an abbreviation of Chinese ching-ching, a courteous exclamation, or an alternation of Ch'ing, the name of a Chinese dynasty.

... Although most commonly applied to the Chinese, Chink has also been used as a derogatory reference to any Asian person.

Jap (*The Color of Words*, p. 125-126): Pejorative dating from perhaps as early as the mid-nineteenth century for a Japanese person; also used for things made in Japan.

Jerry/Gerry (*The Color of Words*, p. 126): One of several epithets used by British and U.S. troops for German soldiers during both world wars, but especially World War I. ... In general, "a German" or "Germany."

Derogatory slang for a German, usually a German soldier during wartime, or for someone of German descent.

Raghead/towelhead (*The Color of Words*, p. 195): Derogatory name for an Arab or an Asian Indian, used throughout the twentieth century. The allusion is to the practice among Gulf Arab men of wearing a headdress, or turban — U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War spoke of the locals as "ragheads"—or to that of Sikh men, who also wear turbans. Sometimes also towelhead. In black English, it refers to a black man who wraps a kerchief around his head.

Russkie/Russky/Roosky (*The Color of Words*, p. 199-200): Member of a Slavic group that constitutes about 82 percent of the current Russian Federation. In addition, the term is used for the language of Russian people and for a member of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Spic/spig/spik (*The Color of Words*, p. 211): Until 1915, an epithet for an Italian, possibly deriving from spaghetti (Flexner 1976). It is also often said to derive from the expression that parodies the speech of Spanish or Italian people, "no spica da English." Later, spig and spic were applied especially to Mexicans, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, but also to anyone from Latin America, to Spaniards and the Spanish language, and to Portuguese. In fact, it was used for any immigrants whose foreignness was visible, including even Pacific Islanders.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
Research • Brainstorming

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Access to research materials: library, Internet, etc.
• Pen and paper
• Teaching Tolerance's free video "A Place at the Table"
  (order form attached)

TIME RANGE
• 2 class periods

GROUP SIZE
Small to large (2 to 20+). Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Before your group meets, look up current events relating to the experiences of immigrant people in the United States (either positive or negative).

2. As a group, brainstorm words for people from other countries. (Instructor may want to add to the list if students do not generate words above.)

3. Answer the following:
   • What do these words have in common?
   • What ideas or traits do they emphasize?
   • How do they harm the group to whom they apply
     (the "outgroup")?
   • How do they reinforce the privilege(s) of native-born American citizens (the "ingroup")?
   • How do they mask similarities between people of different groups?

4. Watch the Teaching Tolerance video "A Place at the Table."

5. Share your articles with the group.

6. Answer the following:
   • What reasons do U.S.-born citizens learn to fear immigrants?
   • How do some of these fears play out?
   • What are some of the realities of immigrants' experiences?

DEBRIEF
Questions for debriefing:

   • Have you ever been in another country?
      • If so, answer the following:
      • Did you speak the language?
      • Did many people in that country speak your primary language?
      • How did you communicate?
      • How did you know what to do?
      • Were you comfortable? Why or why not?
      • What was it like to be from another country?

   • If not, answer the following:
      • What would it be like to be in another country, especially one where the primary language was different from yours?
      • What would be some positive or interesting aspects of it?
      • What would be some negative or intimidating aspects of it?
      • How would you feel?
      • Would you be comfortable? Why or why not?

   • Has this exercise helped you to feel empathy for people who have immigrated to the United States from another country? Why or why not?

   • Has this exercise given you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

   • As a result of doing this exercise, will you change any of your language or behaviors? If so, how?

VARIATIONS
• Interview any immigrant students in your group using the above questions. Ask them to describe their experiences.

• Invite an immigrant or a panel of immigrants in your community to visit the group and answer questions or talk about their experiences.

• Interview your family members and/or do genealogical research about your family's origins. Answer the following:

   • What is your family's ancestry?
   • If they were not Native Americans, how and when did they come to the U.S.?
   • What were some of the experiences they had, both positive and negative?
   • Did any of this surprise you?

- Did you get any new ideas as a result of doing this exercise? If so, what are they?
- Will you change any of your language or behaviors as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

TEACHING GOAL

Students will increase their awareness of some of the issues faced by people of mixed ethnic or racial heritage, including those who are biracial and multiracial.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Students will consider several case studies of individuals of mixed racial heritage and discuss terminology used to classify people by race and ethnic background.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

Words for people of mixed racial or ethnic backgrounds, including: biracial, mestizo/a, mulatto, multiracial (for more, see *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States*; available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Biracial (*The Color of Words*, p. 26): Being of, combining, or representing two different races. The parents of a biracial person may be of different racial heritages, or one or both parents may have a mixed ancestry. The racial identity of a biracial person may actually be fluid and dynamic, as the person who is free to do so shifts affiliations from one group to another, or from one time to another. An identity that is relatively fixed often revolves on more than one axis, including the tone of one's skin, the texture of the hair, and the social and cultural background of one's parents. Pressure from others, including labeling by the dominant or minority group, may also be involved. For example, persons who are part black and part white and claim to be biracial may draw criticism from black people who think the biracial identity presumes superiority to them or who may wish to have biracial individuals identify as black for reasons of consolidating political clout.

An American obsession with classifying people into neat racial categories has traditionally produced a set of epithets for biracial people.

Mestizo/a (*The Color of Words*, p. 144-145): A person of mixed blood. From Spanish mestizo, from Latin mixtus, past participle of miscēre, "to mix." ... Commonly in Latin America it has referred to a European-Native American mix, especially the offspring of a Spaniard and a Native American, a product of the Spanish conquest. The racial mix may also include black African. ... The designation has acquired so many meanings in Mexico that it was dropped from census reports. ... In the United States it is used largely for Mexican Americans — who are predominantly of mixed Spanish and Indian background — but also sometimes for the mixed white-black-Native American people of the eastern United States.

... As mestizos increased in numbers, however, eventually becoming the large part of Mexican society, they acquired legitimacy. The modern Mexican and Mexican American is a result of the post-Colombian mestizaje blending of cultures and genes.

Mulatto/a (*The Color of Words*, p. 153-154): From Spanish and Portuguese mulatto, from mulo (from Latin mulus), "a mule"; in other words, a hybrid. ... In early ethnic discourse, mulatto loosely meant a person of mixed descent, especially someone half African, or someone half Native American and half black; but typically and now almost always white and black. More specifically, it refers to a person descended from one black-identified and one white-identified parent. ... The mulatto category was part of the U.S. Census until 1920.

... Today in the United States, mulatto is common but may still be associated with its historical context of enslavement (hence its potential derogatory connotation). The term is not necessarily used today with pejorative intent and in fact may be a self-identification, preferred because it is more specific than biracial.

Multiracial (*The Color of Words*, p. 155-156): Consisting of or involving more than one race, often more than two (biracial is used when only two races are involved). The term is often heard in reference to persons from mixed-race backgrounds or in a mixed-race relationship (also called interracial), but it is also frequently used to refer to the variety of minorities that make up American society.

... The identity, and thus self-description, of an individual of multiracial background will be expressed differently depending on the individual and his or her family preferences, on the social and political context (and often pressure), or on the legal definitions of the state the individual lives in.

Typically, an individual with a black and a white parent, or parents of even greater mix, has been regarded by the broader society as black, and the individual often grows up with that identity.

… Some multiculturalists have expressed concern that creating a new classification only divides communities of color and distracts from the central issues of injustice, thus buttressing racism. Others see it as a challenge to the traditional system of racial classification in the United States, which shoves mixed-heritage people into definite racial boxes.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
Case studies · Storytelling · Research

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Copies of the case studies handouts
• Access to research materials: library, Internet, etc.

TIME RANGE
• Several hours for research
• 1 class period for presentation of research findings and discussion

GROUP SIZE
Small to medium (2 to 10+). Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups for presentations and discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
Assign, or let students select, one of the three case studies presented in the handouts which follow. Allow students time to conduct research and complete handout activities before beginning this exercise.

Group students by completed handout; let them share findings with one another. Ask each group to select a representative to brief the class on the case study and the group's discussion.

As a whole class, debrief each case study using the following questions.

Case Study 1: Tiger Woods
• Why do you think Tiger Woods created the term "Cablinasian"?

• Why do you think some people objected to it?

• Why do you think some people supported it?

• Why do you think many people continue to see him as black?

• Were you surprised at what you found? How did you feel about your findings?

Case Study 2: Susie Guillory Phipps
• Why might Ms. Phipps care that the birth certificate identified her as black? Why might she have wanted to change it?

  • Do you think the court's decision was fair? Why or why not?

  • What might be a state's compelling interest in identifying a person as black (or as white)?

  • How did the "one-drop rule" come into use? What factors perpetuate its use?

  • Why is this rule used only in the United States? How does it differ from classifications used in other countries?

  • Why does the rule apply to people with black ancestry but not to any other ethnic group?

  • What are some of the possible advantages and disadvantages of this rule for people with mixed racial heritage who are identified as black?

Case Study 3: Ethnic Ambiguity
Consider this quote from actress Jessica Alba: "Everyone keeps wanting to pigeonhole me as something, but I'd rather be known as American" (Young 110). Answer the following:
  • What is one argument for, and one argument against, using the 'American' label rather than a more specific ethnic or racial one(s)?

  • Why do you think some people would be in favor of it, and some others would not? Could it be a method to increase equality?

  • Could it be a method to obscure inequality?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What is the origin of the term "Hispanic"? What does it mean? What group(s) does it include?

2. What do some of the other listed terms mean?

3. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages for celebrities of the popularity of "ethnic ambiguity"?

4. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages for people who are not celebrities?

5. Who else benefits from the "ethnic ambiguity" trend? How was it started?

6. In what other areas besides the entertainment and fashion industries, if any, is ethnic ambiguity becoming more popular? Does this benefit people of mixed racial heritage? If so, how?

7. In which parts of the U.S. are people of multiracial background more accepted, or more prevalent? In which parts of the country are they less accepted, or less prevalent? Why?

8. Who decides what race a person is? How? Why?

9. Do you think racial classification is important? Why or why not?

10. Why do you think racial classification is so important to some people?

11. Who has the power to label people?

12. Who has the right to label people?

13. Has this exercise given you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

14. Will you change any of your language or behavior as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

VARIATION
Research and report on the history of racial categories as used in the U.S. Census. Answer the following questions:

• How have the racial categories used in the U.S. Census changed over time?

• What are some of the factors that have influenced the creation or disuse of various categories?

• Are some groups now included under the category "white" that were not included at one time or another? If so, which ones? Why did the category change?

• What is at least one racial category that is no longer in use? Why was it discontinued?

• How do the racial categories used in the U.S. Census compare to the categories used for "ancestry or ethnic origin"?

• Why does the Census include both?

• What are the most recent changes to these categories?

• Which factors, if any, are currently at work?

• What is one argument for, and one argument against, continued use of any racial categorization on the Census?

• Has this exercise given you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

• Will you change any of your language or behavior as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

CASE STUDY 1 · TIGER WOODS

After professional golfer Tiger Woods won the prestigious Masters Tournament in 1997, he received much media attention for being the first African American to accomplish this feat. Many people were surprised when he expressed, in an interview with Oprah Winfrey, that in fact he does not classify himself as African American, but as "Cablinasian," a word he invented to describe his ethnic background, which includes Thai, black, white and American Indian ancestors.

1. Conduct Internet or library research to gather some responses to Tiger Woods' declaration about his ethnicity.

2. Share your findings with the group. Include the following:

- What did you find?

- Who expressed approval of his statement?

- Who expressed disapproval?

CASE STUDY 2 · SUSIE GUILLORY PHIPPS

In 1983 a Louisiana resident, Susie Guillory Phipps, was denied a passport because the race she had indicated on the passport application did not match the race listed on her birth certificate (she had indicated "white" on the application; her birth certificate listed her as "black"). Because she was surprised at this discovery, had lived as white, and considered herself white, she requested the Louisiana courts to change the race listed on her parents' birth certificates so she could be designated as "white." In a case that went to the state Supreme Court, Ms. Phipps' request was ultimately denied because of a common practice called the "one-drop rule," of which the court took judicial notice (that is, they stated they would abide by the practice even though it was not a law). The "one-drop rule" or "one black ancestor rule" says that a person with any black African ancestry is designated as black, regardless of any factor, such as how they classify themselves.

1. Conduct Internet or library research to learn more about the case and about the "one-drop rule."

2. Share your findings with the group.

- What did you learn?

- Did anything surprise you? If so, what was it? Why was it surprising?

CASE STUDY 3 • ETHNIC AMBIGUITY

A current trend in the entertainment and fashion industries is a preference for what some people call "ethnically ambiguous" physical appearance, meaning people whose ethnic or racial heritage is difficult to determine based only on their looks. While at one time the idea of beauty that was most popular was a Caucasian person with blonde hair and blue eyes, the popularity of ethnic ambiguity means that people with mixed ethnic backgrounds may now be considered mysterious, chic and beautiful. This trend is directed primarily at young people, what is being called "Generation E.A.: Ethnically Ambiguous." Although some people point out that this trend is a marketing tool that helps to sell products to a younger, more diverse market segment, it is also true that actors, models and athletes with mixed racial heritage are finding greater popular interest and acceptance.

1. Consider the following list of celebrities. Classify each according to what you think her or his ethnic background is:

   • Halle Berry

   • Jessica Alba

   • Benjamin Bratt

   • Mariah Carey

   • Dean Cain

   • Christina Aguilera

   • Derek Jeter

   • Vin Diesel

2. Now do some library or Internet research on some or all of the people listed above. Answer the following:

   • What did you discover about each person's ethnic background?

   • How did each person say she or he prefers to be classified?

   • What were some of the reasons they gave for their preference?

   • What are some of the difficulties of classifying people of mixed ethnic background? What are some of the advantages?

   • Did anything you found surprise you?

TEACHING GOAL
Students will achieve an understanding of the concepts of heterosexual/heterosexuality and obligatory or compulsory heterosexuality.

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students will begin to explore some of the effects of compulsory heterosexuality on various aspects of society.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED
Heterosexual/heterosexuality (from *Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers*, p. 139-140; available from www.interculturalpress.com):

Heterosexual, a person whose main emotional or romantic and sexual attraction is to people of the other sex.

… In our society, heterosexuality is considered the rule, the preferred form of sex, while other orientations are commonly regarded as deviant. Boys at a fairly early age learn to see heterosexuality as basic to masculinity — it is associated with being "a real man" — while girls similarly learn to see heterosexuality as central to femininity. But it is not usually an identity in the way or degree to which homosexuality may be. Heterosexuality is not marked as is homosexuality, and most people we would call heterosexual give little thought to themselves in this role, and make little use of the term, unless they are confronted with homosexuals. The privileged status of heterosexuals frees them from having to deal with labeling, which is part of the privilege.

Compulsory or obligatory heterosexuality (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers*, p. 140): Compulsory heterosexuality (sometimes also obligatory heterosexuality) is a term used especially by some feminists to suggest society's systematic and coercive production of a different-sex eros (Rich 1980).

… Abuse, such as the verbal attacks described in this dictionary, is only one way that society has of restricting options to heterosexuality. Implicit in institutions such as marriage and family, compulsive heterosexuality becomes a means of structuring gender relations … and keeping women dependent sexually, emotionally, socially and economically. Its enforcement also serves to exclude homosexuality as an acceptable choice.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
What-if scenario • Brainstorming • Storytelling

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Pen and paper

TIME RANGE
1 class period

GROUP SIZE
Small to large (2 to 20+). Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
1. Consider the question: "What if homosexuality were the norm (standard)?"

2. Write for 20 minutes, describing some of the possible effects on:
- marriage
- insurance
- family structure
- procreation
- media/TV
- advertising
- names & naming
- education
- inheritance practices
- gender stereotypes
- religion
- medical research
- gender-segregated places and activities, such as dormitory rooms, sports teams, locker rooms, sororities and fraternities, bathrooms, etc.
- other aspects you can think of

DEBRIEF
Questions for debriefing:

• How would you feel if you were a heterosexual person living in a world of compulsory homosexuality?

• What would your life be like?

• Has this exercise helped you to feel compassion for homosexual people living in cultures where heterosexuality is compulsory? Why or why not?

• Has this exercise given you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

• Will you change any of your language or behavior as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

VARIATION
1. Collect clippings on societies in which heterosexuality is brutally enforced. As a starting place, see "A 'Witch Hunt' for Gays in Egypt" at www.tolerance.org/news/article_tol.jsp?id=749

2. Brainstorm ways in which heterosexuality is enforced through policies at your school or laws in your community and in our nation — through opposite-sex couples-only proms, through state bans on marriage protections for gay couples or through exemption of gay couples in social security benefits, for example.

TEACHING GOAL
Students will develop an awareness of various terms and phenomena associated with the social justice movement(s).

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY
Students will formulate a plan for social justice in the United States.

TERMS/CONCEPTS ADDRESSED
Words related to social justice, including: discrimination, diversity, feminism, prejudice, racism (for many more, see *Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States* and *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States*; both available from www.interculturalpress.com).

Diversity (*The Color of Words*, pp. 70-71): Most often a reference to the varied national, ethnic and racial backgrounds of U.S. citizens and immigrants but also to categories of class, gender and sexual orientation. Diversity, however, has come to mean a number of things in our multicultural society and has taken on new significance with the rise of the politics and economics of diversity. Its meanings and uses depend to a great extent on the social, economic or political view of the user.

… In the United States, there have been mixed feelings about ethnic diversity and the affirmation of separate ethnic identities.

… In spite of the many objections to the idea of diversity, however, much of the country holds some positive feelings for its mixed cultural and racial heritages and the benefits they bestow (analogous to the biologist's contention that a population benefits from maintaining a large gene pool). In fact, diversity, while a problem or curse to some, is a symbol and a cause for celebration by poets, politicians and educators alike.

Feminism (*Wimmin, Wimps and Wallflowers*, pp. 95-97): [Feminism is] a belief in the full equality of men and women.

… There has always been confusion about what feminism is and attempts to attack it as a kind of aberration of femaleness. … As with feminist, considerable bias has been attached to the word, making it virtually a term of reproach among many men and anti-feminists.

We can say generally that is has taken on at least two broad, related senses. The first is a perspective on social, economic and political inequality between the sexes. The other is an organized movement, also known as the feminist or women's liberation movement, concerned with furthering the rights and interests of women and giving them equal status with men, if not a world better than that in which there is mere social equality.

Prejudice (*The Color of Words*, pp. 185-186): An attitude toward a category or group of people or toward individuals by virtue of their membership in the group. Although this attitude may be favorable or positive, common usage connotes (and sociological usage denotes) an unfavorable or disparaging attitude, including bigotry and hatred.

Discrimination (*The Color of Words*, pp. 185-186):Behavior that denies equal treatment to people because of their membership in some group — parallels the beliefs, feelings, fantasies and motivations of prejudice. Stereotypes, or generalizing beliefs about others; ethnocentrism, which judges others on the basis of one's own group standards; and racism, rooted in the notion of the biological inferiority of other groups, are all related to prejudice and often entwined with it.

Racism (*The Color of Words*, pp. 193-195): A system of beliefs, held consciously or otherwise, alleging the inferiority of members of one supposedly biologically different group to those of one's own group. Racism focuses on perceived innate or "natural" differences between groups. It is grounded in the assumption that the differences are associated with (or even determine) behavior, culture, intellect or social achievement.

TYPE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY
Problem-solving • Research • What-if scenario

MATERIALS NEEDED
• This lesson plan
• Access to research materials: library, Internet, etc.

TIME RANGE
• Several hours for research
• 2-5 class periods, for presentations, election and discussion

GROUP SIZE
Medium to large (10 to 20+), depending on the number of candidates, or the size of the "committee" group. Large groups may want to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

LEARNING ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS
You are running for President of the United States on the platform "Creating a Just World."

1. Individually or in groups, develop that platform, including your plan to ensure social justice (equality) on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, age, ability and other factors, in one or more of the following areas:

- Health, safety, and well-being
- Health care and medicine
- Education
- Government assistance (for individuals, agencies, corporations, etc.)
- Peace
- Employment and workforce issues
- Foreign relations
- Marriage and family life
- Access to resources
- Media
- Social and scientific research
- The law
- Immigration
- Nationalism/national identity
- Any other area you are assigned or wish to include

2. Answer the following questions:
- What would a just (fair) world be like?
- What do we need to do to get there?

3. Shape your plan using one of the following strategies:

- Research some or all of the following currently available resources and report how you will include them in your plan:
  - Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC): www.splcenter.org/index.jsp

  - Tolerance.org: www.tolerance.org

  - American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU): www.aclu.org/

  - National Organization for Women (NOW): www.now.org/

- Feminist Majority Foundation (FMF): www.feminist.org/

- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP): www.naacp.org/

- Greenpeace International: www.greenpeace.org/international_en/

- Anti-Defamation League: www.adl.org/adl.asp

- Simon Wiesenthal Center: www.wiesenthal.com/

- Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG): www.pflag.org/

- Human Rights Campaign: www.hrc.org/

- Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network: www.glsen.org

- Any other social justice or advocacy organization you wish to include

- Using the model of candidate Dennis Kucinich in the 2004 Presidential election, develop a proposal for a "Department of Peace" to parallel the current "Department of Defense." Include a structure, budget, operating procedures, areas of responsibility, mission statement and the like.

- Use a just and effective local or state agency as a model to develop your national "just world" platform. Follow the instructions above.

4. Present your platform, in the form of a speech, debate, television advertising campaign or other format as assigned.

5. Hold an election! Use the two-party system and hold a primary, etc., or come up with a new system of your own. Vote for the candidate (or group) of your choice.

DEBRIEF
Discuss the results. Questions for debriefing:

- What were some of the more creative or imaginative platforms? Who saw the "biggest picture"?

- Which were the best researched?

• Which were the most convincing?

• Which were the most realistic?

• What were your group's priorities? What values, programs or ideas did they vote for?

• Did anything surprise you? If so, what was it? Why was it surprising?

• Did this exercise give you any new ideas? If so, what are they?

• Will you change any of your language or behavior as a result of doing this exercise? If so, how?

• In what ways can you put your chosen platform into practice today?

VARIATION

Your group is the President's "Just World Committee." Develop and report on your plan for a just world, following the instructions above.