

11.945
Katrina Practicum
Session 6

Race in New Orleans/ Reflections/ Student Presentations

Whiteness:

- 18th/19th century: whiteness did not exist.
- Irish, trying to differentiate themselves from blacks. (Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White.*)
- Same thing with other European immigrants, trying to associate themselves with the elites of the city rather than the African Americans.

Thomas Jefferson:

- Virginian, slave owner, rural agricultural base of slave owners
- 1803: article describing his new scientific discovery:
 - o Rather than purchasing slaves, can rape slave women and reproduce slave population.
 - o Virginia became a slave-producing state.
- Fighting Alexander Hamilton and other northern industrialists
 - o Industrialists looking to raise taxes for infrastructure improvements to make their investments more profitable
 - o Jefferson fighting to keep taxes low, especially on slave owners/property owners.
- At the time, no concept of whiteness
 - o Anglo
 - o Catholics/Jews/Slavs/Irish: not Anglo-Saxon
 - Somewhere around Blacks/Moors
- Jefferson looking to build political formula to gain numbers against the north (not a large number of property owners)
 - o A number of Europeans working in factories in the north
 - o Sought to make the workers landowners: American frontier
 - Rather than live in a hovel in New England, workers should be able to go west to farm and become independent.
 - o Western territories controlled by Native Americans.
 - England originally intended to make a treaty with Native Americans like with Ireland
 - Jefferson claims that the land belongs to “white people” as distinguished from Native Americans and black slaves.
 - Unites very diverse groups of people
 - o Democracy in America totally associated with race and whiteness.
 - o Irish in Ireland resisted this fiercely – wanted Irish in America to unite with the slaves and fight slavery.

- Promoted seizure/extermination of Native Americans from their own territory
 - Promoted rigid caste line: white vs. other (Native American/African American)
- New Orleans
 - New Orleans was founded in 1718 and governed by the French in Native American territory
 - Slaves (almost all men) come in 1719 (come mostly in 12 year period after 1718).
 - Enslaved Native American women to grow crops
 - Slaves and settlers both tend to marry Native American women
 - Small settler populations
 - No cohesive white elite governing
 - Retained a lot of African culture
 - Difficult to keep slaves enslaved – easy to slip out into the marshland
 - Native Americans could help them escape
 - Could not easily manage the slave population
 - Natchez Indians massacred a population just outside of New Orleans in 1720
 - Many slaves supported the Natchez in the massacre
 - French colonists armed slaves and encouraged them to attack the Natchez
 - Slave militias in New Orleans going back 100 years before the civil war.
 - Spain took over in 1763 and governed for 40 years (after 7 Year War).
 - Spain had more liberal laws
 - Number of free blacks greatly increased during that period
 - 129-1500
 - Lewis, Pierce. *New Orleans: The Making of an Urban Landscape*. Sante Fe, NM: Center for American Places, 2003
 - Free people of color were a distinct group (founded the Treme)
 - Intermarried heavily with slaves and Native Americans
 - Racial pattern much more like Latin America than in English-controlled colonies
 - African-Native American
 - African-French
 - African

- Native French-African (Creole) population followed events in France and French colonies more than they followed events in America.
 - Haitian revolution of 1803 when Haiti rebelled and kicked the French out
 - Many émigrés came from Haiti to New Orleans afterward: French and African
 - Haiti and Cuba have close relationships with New Orleans
 - Other anti-colonial fights had big impact on slaves and free blacks in New Orleans
 - 1848 French abolished slavery.
 - French granted citizenship to former slaves
 - Believed that when slavery ended, blacks were entitled to full voting rights, full citizenship
 - 1795 rumors of a slave rebellion terrified the Spanish and slaves were hanged.
 - Spanish couldn't maintain control
 - Creoles and Slavery
 - Some Creoles owned slaves
 - A lot was made of that by Americans when they came into New Orleans during Reconstruction
 - By and large, creoles were very liberal in their thinking about slavery, most did not own slaves
 - More expansive view of race relations than the American view
 - Started first black daily newspaper
 - Supported by black creoles and white French radicals
 - Taken aback by American view of race
 - A lot of anti-Catholicism interwoven into the American project
 - Plessey vs. Ferguson
 - Plessey was a Creole
 - Creole widely spoken in Southern Louisiana through 20th century
 - Dying out now
- Ernest "Dutch" Morial: A radical Creole who ran as an insurgent against more conservative protestant blacks
 - Moon Landrieu: mayor during the 1960s – credited with supporting African Americans and bringing them into government through normal patronage structure
 - Dutch was from the NAACP with a grassroots base, ran against the machine.
 - Did not get the support of the black political structure
 - Elected through his grassroots connections

- Fought against the political machine during both terms as mayor
 - Mantra: get rid of the machine, bring in competent people
 - Racial agitator
- Sydney Barthelemy: Moderate Creole. Elected primarily by whites in New Orleans
- Ralph Nagin: More of the Barthelemy school. At odds with the Morial school. White voters were strategic in their choice of black candidates.
- New Orleans does not conform directly to black/white dichotomy
 - Total Intermixing + Rigid Separation
 - Blacks and whites both participate in Mardi Gras
 - Blacks not allowed to march on St. Charles Street
- Rogers Smith. *Civic Ideals*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997. ISBN: 0300069898. Offers a good treatment of the early origins of race and citizenship.
- Price, Richard (ed.), *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*, Johns Hopkins, 1979

Reflection

This course will use reflection as a way to help the students structure a process for what they are learning about themselves and the world. The reflection will provide an opportunity for you to looking back at your work that you did as a vehicle for understanding how you've incorporated your learning experience into your work.

Most of the reflection will take place after the trip to New Orleans.

The instructors will send exercises for each week to build data for reflection. Students should construct a scenario and reflect on three things related to the scenario. Imagine three things that might happen in the future.

After the trip, the class will do some critical moments reflection and use that data.

Phil gave a broad overview on the context of race in New Orleans, which is likely different from what most of us grew up with. All of us have a context that we are coming into this project with. We are going to try to get some of that out.

Exercise:

1. 10 minute free writing exercise. Write for ten minutes without removing your pen from the paper:

- What struggles around race do you bring to your work and are concerned with in your work in New Orleans.

2. Identify stories associated with what you wrote. Circle the moments in your writing that have stories related to them.

3. Anyone who feels comfortable doing so should share either their reflection or their stories with the class.

Presentations

1. Treme Neighborhood Demographics – Kiara Nagel, Eric Espino
 - a. Demographic Analysis
 - b. Most information from the 2000 Census from GNOCDC
 - c. Most information is prior to Katrina
 - d. Will Bradshaw is sending updated materials
 - e. 65% of the population is still not back
 - i. July 2005: 458,393
 - ii. October 2005: 138,681
 - iii. Jan. 2006: 156,140
 - iv. Treme (Prior to Katrina):
 1. 34% of population under 18 years
 2. Racial:
 - a. 92.4% Af Am; NO: 66.6%
 - b. 4.9% white
 3. Household:
 - a. 32% Female-head household
 - b. 61% children living with mother
 - c. 58% have no children under 18
 4. Owner/Renter
 - a. 78% renter occupied
 - i. Run numbers with public housing and without
 - ii. Politically rental is more difficult
 - iii. Get demographics on renters vs. owners/public housing vs. no public housing
 - iv. Housing Authority will have numbers for the housing developments themselves for yearly report to HUD
 - v. How stable is the rental population?
 - b. 80% occupied housing
 5. Housing Age
 - a. 69% built post 1949
 - b. 35% has lived in neighborhood for 25+ years.
 - c. Lots of shot-gun hosues
 - d. Very little recent construction (0.8% past 1990)
 6. Historic Buildings:

- a. Treme got historic status later than adjacent neighborhoods (1980s)
- 7. Income
 - a. 44% of households earn less than \$10,000/year
 - i. Public housing/not public housing
 - b. Highest percentage of children enrolled in schools in Treme (across entire city)
 - c. Average rent \$264 (\$404 in NO)
 - d. 24% of renters paying more than 50% of income on rent
 - e. 49% of owners paying more than 40% of income on mortgage
- 8. Poverty:
 - a. 22-100% of people living below twice the poverty level
- 9. Employment
 - a. 52% not in labor force
 - b. Highest employers:
 - i. Accommodation and food service
 - ii. Health care and social assistance
 - c. Does this account for musicians and workers active in the informal economy?
- 10. Transportation:
 - a. 52% have no vehicle
 - b. 76% less than 30 minutes to work (private-transport) – similar for NO
 - c. Clusters of no vehicle around Lafitte
- 11. Education
 - a. 7.5% BA or higher (23% NO)
 - b. How many people graduated high school by age group
- 12. What is missing?
 - a. Value of cultural history/heritage
 - b. Proximity to French Quarter and CBD
 - c. Free people of color and Creole roots – settled by skilled artisans and craftsmen
 - d. Gave rise to 2nd line culture – many famous jazz musicians, clubs and festivals.
 - i. This hasn't been recovered after Katrina
 - e. Legacy of organizing history
 - f. Importance of Social/Pleasure Clubs as backbone of society and support
 - i. Borrowing money
 - ii. Being underutilized in rebuilding efforts
 - g. Neighborhood character

- i. How will it be preserved?
- h. Familial character
 - i. People have been rooted in this place for a long time.

2. Housing Options

a. Transitional Housing

- i. Private Units
- ii. Rent generally on sliding scale based on income
 - 1. charged but not enough to cover the services
- iii. Usually targeted toward specific populations
 - 1. This is different – targeted toward people who were displaced
- iv. Temporary
- v. Includes on-site services (case management, housing search assistance, etc.)
- vi. Target Population: depends on what service to provide and to whom
 - 1. probably for people who want to live in Treme who were from the neighborhood
- vii. Advantages:
 - 1. More people can move in immediately
 - 2. Serves a large number of people per unit or building (as people move in stages)
 - 3. Multiple dwelling types
 - a. Residential
 - b. Apartment Building
 - c. Hotel
 - 4. Fills gap of disrupted social services
- viii. Disadvantages
 - 1. Management
 - a. Managing transitions of residents in an uncertain time
 - i. Will there be somewhere else for them to go?
 - ii. Managing actual building needs and social services
 - 2. Only temporary housing
 - 3. Labor intensive
 - 4. May be no appropriate multi-family dwellings for this
 - 5. If it were a large facility, what happens to it when the neighborhood becomes more stable?
 - a. How do you transition the building to another use?
 - 6. Long history of litigation on community preference:
 - a. Community preferences have been struck down in the past by the courts.

- ix. Costs:
 - 1. Get numbers from Board of Housing Management to get numbers on cost, ratio of direct housing/social services
 - 2. Varies depending on housing type and services
- x. Phil contacted by someone running a program for felons to be released during the day to build housing in the city.
- xi. Camfield Estates: good material on making transitional housing work
 - 1. Churches in NO trying to think this through
- b. Community Land Trusts
 - i. Private, nonprofit corp.'s create a pool of permanently affordable housing
 - ii. Land leased to homeowners through long-term renewable leases
 - iii. Innovative sources of funding
 - iv. Target neighborhoods:
 - 1. new investment, rapidly rising real estate values
 - 2. disinvestment
 - v. Advantages:
 - 1. residents have a high degree of control over land use and real estate development
 - a. flexible community development options:
 - i. economic development
 - 2. Resale value determined by CLT's formula, not by market
 - a. Determined contractually
 - b. Limits the cost of the housing
 - 3. Lease fees are often less than taxes paid on the land if owned.
 - 4. Land trust boards are made up of community members and any donor organizations
 - a. It is a community-run organizations
 - b. The community has a greater degree of control
 - vi. Disadvantages:
 - 1. Rely heavily on local government for funds to develop projects
 - 2. The idea is difficult for many people
 - a. Marking/resale can be difficult
 - b. In NO, where the idea of losing land is so poignant, giving it up to a land trust might not be attractive
 - c. Not possible for individuals to build equity through land ownership
 - 3. Limited by the market

- a. They are more effective when they are larger and have a greater ability to acquire land
- b. The market can make land prices volatile
- 4. Marketing/education can be difficult/expensive

Cont. Session 7.

- c. Rental
- d. Limited Equity Co-ops
- e. Home Ownership