

Theater and Cultural Diversity in the United States  
21M.621  
Spring 2008  
Walker  
Thomas Defrantz  
Written Assignment One: Ethnic Notions response

For Wednesday, February 13, view the film Ethnic Notions available on the course website. Write a three-page response to the film in which you both challenge and substantiate points made by Riggs and others in the film. Your response should refer to either specific information from the film; specific scenes dramatized within the film; or ideas about stereotypes or representations of ethnicity suggested by the film.

Attempt to tie your assessment of the film to the reading from the Schechner text ("What is Performance?"). Considers questions that Schechner ignores: What are the differences between performance and representation? Is cultural identity represented by the media in terms that are familiar to its practitioners? Do people always perform ethnicity well?

Your paper should be 'written,' that is, you should frame specific arguments in English with an attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Be sure to both 'challenge' some points and 'substantiate' others; that is, you should find a point that the film makes and challenge its truth, and also support a point or two that the film suggests about the construction of ethnic identities. Your paper need only be three-pages long, so you probably will only have time to take on two or three points in your response. Be particular, and offer examples or evidence **from your own experience and awareness** to underscore your arguments.

The film will be available on the course web site or in the Film Office and lasts approximately 60 minutes total. Good luck!

Any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me.

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