I. Sociological Perspective and Race

A. Race is a socially constructed – word “race” created late 18th/early 19th cent.

1. word, concept and its use

2. Even though it is socially constructed: race matters (in its consequences)

3. Our Approach

a. social construction of race

i. colonialism and race

ii. “science” and race

b. history of race in U.S.

c. race still matters: institutional racism in the U.S.

B. Race is not a scientific category

1. racial categories change through time for unscientific reasons

a. Jewish people, Italians, Irish

b. 3 to 200+ races depending on criteria

2. racial categories differ in different countries

3. racial categories are determined by those who have the power

4. genetic science

a. no genetic marker for race

1. 95-99% of all genetic material
2. no pure race
3. monogenesis

e. all differences are the result of adaptation to environments

C. Social Construction of race

1. Colonialism

2. early colonialism 1492- mid 18th century

a. race was not a category

i. Spanish: Requirement of 1512

ii. Puritans: heathens and savages

iii. Americans: Savages, like animals

3. later colonialism mid18th to WWII

a. imperialism and science

b. race scientists

4. racial theory: biological determinism

a. humans can be classified and categorized into homogenous groups base on shared physical characteristics

b. transferred from generation to generation

c. homogenous groups share other traits

i. intelligence

ii. morals

iii. hard work

d. superior and inferior races

i. Anglo-Saxon race superior

ii. White Man’s Burden

5. Social Darwinism

a. evolution is working through capitalism

b. successful individuals, groups and countries are

are example of survival of fittest

c. imperialism is natural outcome of superior races and proves their superiority

d. extermination of race is natures verdict on it.

6. Eugenics

a. early 20th century

b. perfect race: White

c. 30 states/forced sterilization

d. social construction of feeble minded

1. Nazi Germany

7. Justified

a. slavery

b. Manifest destiny

c. segregation

i. Dredd Scott: “beings of an inferior order”

ii. Plessy v Ferguson

d. genocide

i. Native Americans

ii. Holocaust

iii. “Jewish Question”

II. Genocide

A. Raphael Lemkin:

1. biography

a. Greek geno meaning race or tribe

b. Latin cide meaning killing

2. Third count of Nuremberg indictment: Nazis

“conducted deliberate and systematic genocide, the extermination of racial and national groups, against the civilian populations of certain occupied territories”

B. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime

Of Genocide adopted by General Assembly in 1948

1. Any of the following acts committed with intent

to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical,

or religious group, such as

a. killing members of the group

b. causing serious bodily or mental harm to members

c. deliberately inflicting on the group the conditions of life calculated to bring about its

physical destruction in whole or in part

d. imposing measures intended to prevent births

within the group

e. forcibly transferring children of the group to

another group

2. To be found guilty

a. carry out one of the aforementioned acts

b. with the intent to destroy in all or part

c. one of the protected groups

d. motives for wanting to destroy a group not relevant