Core 1: Weekly Response Week #

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Due in hard copy and/or on turnitin.com the first discussion section class following lecture.

Name: Majok Ring Date:4/5/2015

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Lecturer: David Torres-Rouff

Lecture Title: “Space, Identity, and Public Power in Nineteenth-Century Los Angeles”

Lecture’s Central Argument: Water remains a foundation of all cities and has a strong connection to different cultures and economic environments. Where there is water, there will be new cities and flourishing environments. Within L.A in the 1800s, the changes in standard of living was only due to classification in which certain races such as Asians and Hispanics were discriminated against in terms of their resources and foundations.

Lecture’s Supporting Evidence/Examples:

The founding of Los Angeles in 1781 led to increased city growth and reached a period of infrastructural growth and social consequence in 1871-1855. Since our relationships with water is so extensive, we can use that as an indicator of the world we live in and compare that to certain standards of living. Race is argued as a sociohistorical concept within the U.S as it was based on phenotypes such as skin color and based its segregation off of that while in Spanish-Mexican California, phenotype was disregarded and only focused on achieved statues, behavior, dress, and retribution. In terms of space, we can inhabit any space and have a socially constructed idea of space in which we can have prejudices on certain areas and base our action off of that.

Three questions you have with respect to this lecture:

How does race play a factor in current times within L.A?

When this behavior change and what did was the primary factor in this change?

Does this also occur in areas of greater socioeconomic status?

Other Core 1 subjects to which the lecture might be related: Iyer, “Where Worlds Collide: In Los Angeles International Airport, the Future Touches Down” This reading was in direct relation to the lecture as it primarily focused on community relations and how we interact with other cultures and traditions.

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Within the lecture “Space, Identity, and Public Power in Nineteenth-Century Los Angeles” by David Torres-Rouff, we primarily focused our efforts around the impact that water can have on certain environments and how race plays a part in cultural identity as well as community relations. Here Torres-Rouff described the constructivist attitude in which we attempted to rethink both space and identity and argue that race and place are not natural. This is exemplified through Cornell and Hartmann’s statement “a human group defined by itself or others as distinct by virtue of perceived common physical characteristics are held to be inherent"(Cornell and Hartmann, 1998:24). By defining ourselves through achieved status and behavior, the citizens of L.A experienced many hardships within the 1800s and experience poorer cities such as Chinatown which had to be rebuilt multiple times and thus did not have the same opportunity to flourish as other cities. Take for example this quotation from Iyer’s “Where Worlds Collide”, “I awaits them. t is a commonplace nowadays to say that cities look more and more like airports, crosscultural spaces that are a gathering of tribes and races and variegated tongues; and it has always been true that airports are in many ways like miniature cities, whole, self-sufficient communities, with their own chapels and museums and gymnasiums” (Iyer 51). Here Iyer states that by being a multicultural area, LAX has the most interesting experience as it is a congregation of different races, cultures, and ethnicities in which they would all share the same experience and further develop an understanding. Since they all occupied the same space and had similar goals, they could reach an understanding and be friendly to one another and be treated respectfully by all. This is a direct contrast to 1800s L.A in which they all occupied the same space and had similar goals, but still were segregated due to socioeconomic status and ability to move upwards. What was the difference that spurred this change? Primarily, applying constructivism helped spur this change as they chose to rethink space and identity and argue that they should emerge from social, political, and economic disparities and perceive themselves all as one people and benefit equally from any sort of new developments or advancements. This also relevant to Robin DeLugan & Steve Roussos’ “Community Research in the San Joaquin Valley” as the same argument can be placed with the inhabitants of the central valley/ Merced. They are in an area which has the most successful agricultural industry in the nation but do not receive any benefits through it and live in arguably poorer conditions than most Americans. This is a similar condition to those inhabitants in the development of the L.A area.

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Weekly Responses are graded according to the following rubric (on a scale of 0 to 5):

“5” Response: Specifies the focus of lecture/readings. Engages thoughtfully and accurately with the particulars of the lecture/readings. Fills the page with insightful observations that demonstrate inventive, connective processing of ideas.

“3” Response: Sketches the focus of lecture/readings. Engages lecture/readings, although may do so incompletely or partially. Fills much of the page with useful observations suggestive of emergent ideas.

“1” Response: Vaguely addresses the focus of the lecture/readings. Includes insufficient or inaccurate particulars of the lecture/readings. Fills little of the page, exhibiting thoughts that suggest incomplete processing of ideas.

“0” Response: no submission