

American Study Abroad

White Students
Developing a
National Identity

American Study Abroad

- * In the 2011-12 academic year, only 283,332 U. S. students studied abroad for academic credit.

PERCENT OF U.S. STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

| Race/Ethnicity | U.S. Postsecondary Enrollment 2011-2012 | U.S. Students Abroad 2011-2012 |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| African American or Black | 14.6% | 5.3% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 6.1% | 7.7% |
| Caucasian | 59.0% | 76.4% |
| Hispanic/Latino American | 13.8% | 7.6% |
| Multiracial | 2.1% | 2.5% |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 0.9% | 0.5% |
| Nonresident Alien | 3.5% | Not Available |

“I’m
American.
I have no
culture.”

Nationalism & American Identity

- * Nationalism creates the idea of national conformity.
- * Antonio Gramsci's Cultural Hegemony
 - * Values of the privileged groups become the common sense values for all.
- * Anderson's Imagined Communities
 - * Invented images of communion and cultural harmony
 - * Example: students experiencing culture by being ethnic for a day (i.e. St. Patrick's Day)

9/11, the Wars & Their Impacts on Study Abroad

- * 9/11 brought on a sense of nationalism
- * Sense of patriotism/obligation to be patriotic
- * Image of America not the same as abroad
- * Students became more defensive towards their American values and beliefs

Practical Application

- * Critical Whiteness Pedagogy (Yeung, Spanierman, & Landrum-Brown, 2013)
 - * Intergroup dialogue
- * Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (2013)
 - * Study abroad helps students:
 - * Develop intercultural sensitivity
 - * Reduce ethnocentric American beliefs

Recommendations

- * Pre-trip programming for study abroad to give students the tools and opportunity to investigate their national identity before leaving the states which include:
 - * Discussion of systems of privilege and oppression
 - * Discussions of cultural heritage

Questions

- * What does White mean?
- * What do you think is an effective way for students to confront White privilege before studying abroad?
- * How will pre-trip programming for students of color differ from pre-trip programming for White students?

References

- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Bennett, M. J. (2013). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model for intercultural sensitivity. In M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Dolby, N. (2004). Encountering an American self: Study abroad and national identity. *Comparative Education Review*, 48, 150-173.
- Dolby, N. (2007). Reflections of nation: American undergraduates and education abroad. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11, 141-156. doi: 10.1177/1028315306291944
- Gallagher, C. A. (2003). Color-blind privilege: The social and political functions of erasing the color line in post race America. *Race, Gender & Class*, 10, 22-37.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks*. New York: International Publishers Co.
- Li, Q., & Brewer, M. B. (2004). What does it mean to be an American? Patriotism, nationalism, and American identity after 9/11. *Political Psychology*, 25, 727-739. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2004.00395.x
- Towns, E. (2011, September 8). The 9/11 generation: How 9/11 shaped the millennial generation. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from <http://www.americanprogress.org>
- Yeung, J. G., Spanierman, L. B., & Landrum-Brown, J. (2013). "Being White in a multicultural society": Critical Whiteness pedagogy in a dialogue course. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 6, 17-32. doi: 10/1037/a0031632