

Study Questions on Basic Concepts: Social Constuction, Discrimination, and Privledge

___ + "The Social Construction of Differences" RCG, pp. 7-12

- What is social construction?

- What do we mean when we say that race and gender are socially constructed? Aren't these categories "natural" and biological? Why do feminist question the absolutenes of these distinctions?

- What is the difference between sex and gender?

- What's the problem with stressing differences between people?

- How are class differences also socially constructed? How are perceived differences in class similar to differences in gender and race?

- What is social Darwinism?

STUS Commission on Civil Rights, "The Problem: Discrimination" RCG 135-46

- Is discimination just an accident, a result of people being careless or not paying attention, or "natural" aversion to people who are differnt in some way?

- What are the difference between prejudice, individual discrimination, orgainizational discrimination, and structural discrimination?

- What are some possible ways to stop or curtail discrimination?

& * McIntosh, "White Privledge" RCG, 165-70

- How does McIntosh's article illustrate Miller's ideas about domination and subordination and Chafe's circles of control?

- As McIntosh's article makes clear, we all live complicated lives: in some contexts we are privileged; in others we are subordinate. What kinds of privilege do you accept unconsciously? In what areas are you subordinate?

- How do MacIntosh's meditations on racial privledge apply to gender and class?

- Did all/any of these articles surprise you? Make you think differently about things?