

NEW PERSPECTIVES:

A Facilitator's Guide for Discussion © 1996

The K K K Boutique Ain't Just Rednecks

~ a docu/fantasy about racism ~

THE PREMISE: the dynamics of racism are not widely understood, but they can be understood and behavior modified

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Overview of the Film

This film has been made with five basic assumptions. They are that most Americans are like-minded people with varying views about race. That every American has some racism sometimes, and that our racial "allies" and "enemies" shift with the occasion and the circumstance. We strongly believe that the complexities of racism can be rationally understood, and if that is true, then new approaches can be found to ameliorate racism.

All of this is of little value unless one can examine and admit to one's own racism. This is for most people, a difficult and fearful process; nonetheless, we can find ways of softening our fears and guilt by talking about them with others, which can create a social and racial bonding against our common illness.

This film is designed to recognize racism's many manifestations. It does this by examining stereotypical reactions to group racism, and the dynamics of group "remedies." The film asks the question: who benefits from our racism?

While we believe that anyone who is tired and afraid of racism should take part in watching and discussing this film, the process would be especially useful to those in leadership positions. These include Sensitivity Workshop Leaders and Therapists; Public Education and College Administrators and Faculty; Government Officials; Law Enforcement and Social Workers; Parents and Religious Leaders; Business and Labor Leaders.

The film has many light and comic moments. Don't be afraid to enjoy them. Laughter can be healthy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE KKK BOUTIQUE AINT JUST REDNECKS.

THE FIRST SUNFLOWER SCENE states that racism may destroy us all.

1. For Blacks, does it make any difference that the Black person is female?
2. Does it bother you that a she is being touched by a white male?
3. Reverse the roles—Black male, white female. Would it make a difference?

ORIENTATION: This film views racism as a sickness.

1. Does racial hatred deliver what it promises to deliver?
2. Is racism ever justified if the person himself/herself has suffered from racism?
3. Are some groups' suffering more noble than others?
4. Why do people deny that have racism?
5. Did you believe them? Do they believe it themselves?
6. Is there a virus called BMS (Black Male Syndrome)? What is it?

BOUTIQUE: Conveys racist images in the products we use.

1. Indian Images: Butter, oil, sports, automobiles. What are the implications of these images?

2. What do the Chinese images suggest: Egg foo yong, laundry, Charlie Chan, the Dragon Lady, Kung Fu?
3. Do Black product images (Uncle Ben, etc.) have different implications for you than Asian images?
4. Can you supply commercial images for Jews, poor whites, Hindus, Arabs, etc.?
5. The Fashion Show: The Nazi swastika versus the Sanskrit or Native American history of the swastika.
6. Does the Black material disturb you?
7. What do poor whites use to protest, other than burning crosses and Klan robes?
8. What does "Ain't Just Rednecks" mean?

PICK-A-BABY is about cross-racial adoption.

1. Should whites adopt children of color?
2. Should people of color adopt white children?

SUNFLOWERS II: Racial attitudes of Black families toward racial intermarriage.

1. Would a white family's racism to a Black mate be any different?
2. Are Jim and Camille laughing at their relatives?

WALL OF THE GREATS is about white impersonation of Blacks and Others.

1. Discuss white portrayal of Blacks. Why do they need to do it?
2. Can great art be racist? **Othello?** **Stephen Foster?** **Edouard Manet?**
3. Why do white singers sing like Black people? Elvis Presley, etc.

MASTERPIECE THEATRE is a satire on minstrelsy and its lingering images.

1. Do you know what a "coon" is?
2. Does this scene make you laugh? Are you embarrassed?
3. Is "being a white man" an enviable status?

ASIAN FANTASY—BUTTERFLY is about impersonations of Asians.

1. Do you know the history of **Madame Butterfly**, the opera by Puccini?
2. What do you think of the image of a Black woman playing an Asian?
3. Would it be the same if a white person were in the role?
4. How would you say that Asians seem to feel about one another?

TALKING HEADS is about revealing racial "dirty laundry."

1. Where do negative images of Africans come from?
2. When do Black people hate their hair, lip, color?
3. Do non-Blacks hate Blacks for the same reasons?
4. Does self-hatred maintain racism?

THE BROWNETTES is about racism within the group.

1. What are the connections between racism and class?
2. Why do you think some "Blacks" have a preference for mixed race?
3. Should Blacks discuss their racial "dirty laundry" in public?
4. Do other minorities have the intra-group prejudices?

RICO & JIM. MAY I TOUCH HER HERE? is about women as male property.

1. Do men see women as their racial property?
2. Can male sexism override racism?
3. Do men resent other ethnics touching "their" women?
4. Do women see males as their racial property?

5. Are women as concerned about the size of male genitals as men are?

PETER MEASUREMENTS is about power over other males.

1. Do white males have "fear" of exposing their genitals near Black males?
2. If you are a Black man does peter measurement make you feel more powerful? Or enslaved?
3. Do Asians have the same attitudes?
4. Where and how did these attitudes originate?

MEA CULPA is about confession of one's own racism.

1. Why are we reluctant to confess our racism?
2. At what age do we recognize our own racism?
3. What brings about the recognition?
4. Can our own racism be justified? Does that make it more acceptable?
5. Are parents the major source of children's racism?
6. Do you know about the massacre of one million Armenians by the Turks?
7. Did any of the confessions surprise you? Amuse you? Disgust you?

DR. GEORGE JACKSON is about how racism eats up one's energy.

1. Do negative emotions effect immune systems

RACIAL SLURS is about the power of words.

1. Are racial slurs part of your vocabulary?
2. Are these slurs powerful against the victim?
3. How do they affect the perpetrator?
4. Are words as powerful as sticks and stones?

SUNFLOWERS III is about racism within the family.

1. If Jim's father was a racist; how can Camille love him?
2. Camille says that her parents were like Jim's. Do you believe her statement?
3. Luke says he has made love to a Black woman, therefore he's not a racist. True?

THE AMERICAN DREAM is about how immigrants become American racists.

1. What is the American dream ?
2. Is it exclusively a "white" dream?
3. How do you feel about a Black woman portraying that dream?
4. Why do the immigrants have the ugly makeup on their faces?
5. How does "divide and conquer" work here?
6. Which groups get blamed by immigrants for their misfortunes?

7. Do you want to be a capitalist at the top of the box?
8. Does it make you a racist if you believe that a "tight-eyed Jap" will buy your city?
9. That Jews control the media?
10. The Mexicans are having too many children under capitalism?

THE RIOT is about who gets blamed for violence in civil disobedience

1. Who is designated to be blamed?
2. Is the riot a "safety valve" for the capitalism?
3. When you hear of a "riot" who is shown on television?

DRESSING MAMMY shows that the stereotype does not originate with Blacks.

1. Who is Mammy? Who made her and why?
2. Where do we see Mammy images today?
Are they comforting?
3. Why is a Black female a comforting figure?

THE TICK TOCK ROOM reveals how the Black female was placed in opposition to the male.

1. What do you know of the history of lynching?
2. What is the historic role of the white female in this story? Black female?

3. What role does Damon play when he says "You wanta get a white woman?"
4. Is the Black male a raider of white men's property? Is an Asian male as threatening?

JACK AND JIM is about racism and access to women.

1. Do white and Black males have equal access to women.
2. Are white women less racist than men?
3. Are white women and Black men allies against white male domination?
4. Who knows more about racism, Jack or Jim?

VAULT OF MEMORY is about bequeathing racism to our children.

1. Why do we pass our racism on to our children?
2. Can the story of racist victimization be taught without hatred?
3. What color is God?
4. What does Camille mean "It was just a dummy after all?"

THE STUMP ROOM is about how racism takes over personalities.

1. Why do people think that racists jokes are funny, and when do you tell them?
2. Are you offended by use of "nigger". When is it not offensive?

3. What are the class implications of the skinhead?
4. Why does he feel powerless?
5. Why does the hate mailman have a swastika, a cross, and a pentacle on his face?
6. Does it matter that the actor is Black?
7. Describe the historical role of the white female in slavery? Does she still play it?
8. Do you believe KKK TV Reporter is an accurate portrayal? Do you think the white media intentionally shows Blacks as criminals?
9. Why is FairyLou without arms?
10. What do you think of "others" moving into your neighborhood? What advantages might you receive? Disadvantages?
11. What happens when whites move in, as in Harlem?
12. What does Dorothy mean when she says to Stan, "You keep me Black"?
13. Camille's statement: Do you agree that there's a need to be able to talk about one's own racism under "safe" conditions?
14. Jim's statement: How can he have prejudice against African Americans and still marry one.
15. He says he has learned from African Americans and New York Jews. Do you believe him?

Sunflowers IV: The Final Scene.

1. What are the implications of Camille's line about the airplane, "We ought to boycott them?"
2. Is the Hate Mailman's final statement meant to threaten us? Scare us?
3. Do you believe that racism may destroy us all?

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Screenings

New York Public Theatre, New York City
Independent Feature Market, New York City
Philadelphia Film Festival
San Francisco Cinematheque
Black American Film Festival, College of Santa Fe,
TCB Film Festival, Walker Arts Institute, Minneapolis
Eleventh Annual Hoyt Fuller Film Festival, Atlanta
UCLA Black Studies, Los Angeles
California Institute of the Arts
"Family Pictures" Dartmouth College
Ivar Theatre, Hollywood
American Studies Conference, Pittsburgh.
Black Diaspora Film Festival, Durham N.C.