

WHAT'S RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

TRANSCRIPT

NARRATION: In the 1960s, the University of California at Berkeley was a center of student activism and historic struggles for equality and civil rights.

Today, that legacy still shapes Berkeley's reputation as a symbol of tolerance and diversity. Yet Black and Latino students make up only a tiny percentage of Berkeley's 23,000 undergraduates.

ASHLEY: Racism really crops up in our low numbers. There's 94 Black freshmen this year. People don't care about our low numbers.

DAVE: A lot of the privileged students assume that everybody is "hey Joe," everybody is just like me, in terms of not particularly having a great deal of stress or worry. There's so few opportunities for them to get outside of their segregated environments and dialogue, get to know, make a bond, connect.

LINDA: Yeah, on campus, I just feel like there's so much tension, and so much negative, kind of like, "Oh believe me or I'm not gonna accept you" kind of thing that it's kind of turned me off.

To help bridge the divide, David Stark and Jerlena Griffin-Desta have created an undergraduate class that brings students from diverse backgrounds together.

They will talk about how race and class impact their lives.

DAVID: I work with really poor ghetto kids. The reason I went to college was 'cause college kids came to my town and like, you know, mentored me and I feel like what I'm doing now, you know, is exactly what got me here.

PETER: Growing up in like kind of a white, affluent neighborhood, suburbia, we would just talk about racism and slavery, but everybody in the room - there wouldn't be like a Black person in the room and we'd be like, "I wonder what, like, they would say if they were in the room right now?"

As they probe and challenge one another's attitudes and beliefs, they will confront their own assumptions and misconceptions about race.

WALE: The biggest challenge for me is understanding that it is possible for people not to believe there's racism, you know, to never have been exposed to it, to never have spoke about race.

PAIGE: There's nothing like hearing from any of the students saying, you know? I don't, I have - their experience - how different it is, I guess, than mine, in life.

Their journey together helps us get beyond the rhetoric of race in America.

FILM TITLE: WHAT'S RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

"the way we talk about race"

JERLENA: (fade in) What do you guys think? Is it relevant to talk about race today? And-- That's one question. The other question is, how to talk about it? Are you guys feeling that the way we talk about it is effective, is it useful?

WALE: I think we talk about racism a lot at this university. We even teach classes on it, but yet like enrollment drops and uh, you know, we're still underrepresented. University should more so---instead of talking about racism and diversity---maybe make the campus diverse with the incoming freshmen classes, you know, so that, you know, we can get a whole new wave in, and then we can discuss it.

DAVID: It's very crucial to talk about race especially at a time when race is so normalized. It's okay to have, um, you know, Black and brown people, you know, packed in prisons, but it's not okay to have them packed in higher education. We have to start bringing it up as much as possible, not only within our circles of peers but also challenging like, you know, the structure that's keeping it in its place.

PAIGE: I could see myself four years ago saying it's not an issue just because I didn't know. But I think that that's a major reason why you have such a high percentage of people saying that race isn't an issue because it's been so normalized.

MARK: I grew up and race was like never an issue for me, but then again, I was like, middle-class white. I never thought it to be a problem. You know, I wouldn't choose to not to be friends with someone, or I never like, you know, said, "Oh, like this person's Black or this person's Asian." Or if we said it, it wasn't important.

ULILI: For me, it's an issue in how race is talked about, 'cause I'm tired of being victimized and being like, "Oh yeah, the Black people don't have as much privilege as the white people, so we need to talk about that." Like I don't think that's how race should be talked about anymore, because it's above and beyond that. We don't get past the part where, you know, anger starts to come out and truth starts to come out and change starts to happen. So I feel like we need to redefine what we want our end result to be.

JERLENA: Dave and I, the goal, the larger goal is after you leave this class, what are you going to do? And we hope to kind of infuse those kinds of discussions in every aspect of the categories that we're gonna be talking about. Five-minute break and um we'll come back and tell you what to do.

DAVE: One of you get a blindfold, one of the two, and put it on.

NARRATOR: As a trust-building exercise, the students put on blindfolds and take turns leading each other through the hallways.

MALE: Okay, that's good. Turn to the right.

MALE: How you feel?

FEMALE: Uh, scared, but it's okay.

FEMALE: One, two, three, four.

MALE: All right.

FEMALE: All right, you're good.

"I'm more Black than ever"

ASHLEY: Okay, people can just go around and talk about how many Black students you saw in your classrooms.

MARK: I have a Materials Science Engineering class, there's zero out of about 40 students. My Quantum Mechanics class, there's zero out of about, mmm, 25 or 30 students.

KAYLA: I have two Poli-Sci classes. One only has like 14 people and there are no Black people in that class. And then my other one has like 100 and there's one.

JACKIE: For my Environmental Design class, I think there's like four out of say, 150, maybe 200 people. Then my Native American Studies Philosophy, there's like one out of say, 25 people?

ULILI: I have a history of South African Apartheid class. There's two people in the class, I'm one of the two people out of like 25. And then I have History of Africa, which is in the History Department, and there's two and I'm one of the two people.

ULILI: I wish I wouldn't have to always stand up and be like the Black person. I wish I could just be me. And that's what makes me mad when I came to Cal, 'cause to me I felt like it would be an environment where I could just be me, and it seems like I'm more Black than ever -- if that ever -- if that makes sense.

CHAD: ...all the people from my high school who came here, out of all the people, I'm the only Black person. We had a majority Black high school...

ASHLEY: I heard someone say only the best and brightest get in here, so if you're not the best and the brightest, you're not going to get in. Well, that's not necessarily true. And pretty much what I perceive from that is saying, "Oh, you'd think Black people aren't smart enough to get here."

ULILI: ...really uncomfortable, so I...

WALE: I don't want to bear the burden, you know, of Blacks everywhere. But as a young Black male, future leader, at a prestigious university, I have no option, you know? It's my responsibility. It robs me of my college experience, you know? You often find Black students having to join eight different organizations and trying to be saviors for our community on-campus and off-campus and always feeling underrepresented, um, kinda like, it's just hard, it's just -- It's not, it's not, it's not--there's not the support groups, study groups, you know. It's not that experience for us. We kinda have to almost do it on our own.

"a lot of us are getting pushed"

ABE: Did you see that description on the screen, man? Somebody just robbed a car, man. I think they fit that description, man. Do you think---

MAYRA: Yeah, like, it was something like a white male?

DAVID: Well, even if they didn't rob a car, there's been those people who look just like them that's been robbing cars the whole month.

ABE: Yeah. I think we should pull them over.

MAYRA: What are you doing here?

ABE: Why are you guys driving here?

DAVID: Why is your car red, hmmm? Why's it bright?

LINDA: Because that's my favorite color.

DAVID: Why is your hair long? You in a gang? Why are you in this neighborhood?

MARK: We're going to a nice restaurant.

DAVID: What restaurant? How much money do you have in your pockets?

MARK: Uh, I don't know, probably not much. Maybe like---

DAVID: That's the wrong answer. Get on your stomach!

ABE: Don't move.

LINDA: Why am I being, why am I being pulled over?

MAYRA: Don't speak unless you're being spoken to. Thanks.

MARK: Just, just wait for the lawyer.

DAVID: Sit in the car, please.

MAYRA: I already told him that your kind don't get lawyers, so just chill.

DAVE: How 'bout a hand?

WALE: You know something funny? They don't have to give you that call for your lawyer right away. Like you can sit in the cell for four or five, six hours.

MARK: I've been to jail. I've like, you know, I've been to court and shit like that, but I mean, I would just - I mean like in that situation, I would just be like, I'm not gonna say anything.

MAYRA: What about the people who were watching?

MARK: All I wanted to do was rebel. I didn't wanna be targeted. Basically, I felt like I was kinda being called out.

ASHLEY: My dad still gets pulled over by the police all the time, still gets harassed, daily. We live there. We know

MARK: I think it's unfair in that it's maybe a generalization of whites, Caucasians, and not like, you know, who I might be, that uh, you know--Like I've got Latino friends and I've hung out at their houses and you know, my family--Like, I've lived in poverty and things like that, you know? There's a lot that they don't know.

PETER: I mean, with something like racial profiling, I know people are inherently racist. And like, but, I don't know, what do you do about that, like-- It's, I don't know, at least for me, um, it's hard just to really know what's going on.

WALE: When a cop sees me, he sees like, he sees a threat to his life. He might have kids or something, and automatically I'm a threat to his life, and I can kill him, and he's gonna pull first, shoot first, ask questions last, you know, so...

DAVE: Are you saying you are threatening or they perceive you as threatening?

WALE: They perceive me as threatening. Well, I am threatening to them, I guess.

DAVE: Right.

WALE: You know, like, they perceive me as being threatening, so, 'cause we do fit the description, I mean, you know what I'm saying, like "one Black man, you've seen one, you've seen 'em all." We all try and dress the same, you know? If they got a nice car---

MAYRA: Our experience is racialized whether we wanna accept that in society or not. And we're not seen as individuals, we're seen as a group. Like if a white person does something, it's an individual problem. And if a Black person does that, it's a race problem.

MAYRA: I've had five guns pointed at me. And it's like, "Whoa!" You know? And I'm a girl, you know? Like I know that males experience this a lot more than I did. And I just have never been so terrified in my life. Like, to know that if I do something-- Like I hadn't done nothing wrong. Me and my boyfriend fit a profile, you know what I mean? And to know that-- I don't even know! Like, if something goes wrong like, I can get shot! I just felt so little! You know, like I felt like a little, little person.

DAVID: My, like, humanity is very much taken away from me when I'm put on my knees by an older white man in front of my mom, in front of my best friend's mom at school, in front of my principal, in front of my teachers. To be arrested in front of all those people and the way that, you know, I would get arrested, like, that makes me wanna be like, "Well, if I have a gun one day," you know what I'm saying, "I'm gonna shoot yo' ass." You know what I'm saying? For real. You know what I'm saying?

ULILI: I totally feel like that.

DAVID: Exactly, like, you know what I'm saying? It's pushing me, you know what I'm saying? It's going to push me only so far. And I feel like, a lot of us, you know what I'm saying, are getting pushed, you know what I'm saying, so um---

PETER: David's from like East Palo Alto and that's like 15 minutes from where I live, Los Altos, you know? It's just the other side of town, basically. And we just had completely different experiences. Um, that just made me think a lot.

"lucky to be. . ."

MARK: Rip off a small piece of paper, doesn't have to be a full sheet, and write a question down - this is like, you know, some of you have done this before - write a question down that you've always wanted to ask a white person.

PAIGE (off camera): Anything at all.

MARK: We're gonna go around the room and you're gonna ask your question directly to one of us, one of the white students in the class.

DAVID: Do you feel like you are proud of being white behind the scenes, but you can't show that in front of us?

MARK: Am I like proud to be white, like---? I mean I think that I'm like lucky to be, lucky maybe to be in the position that I am. I don't think that I hold back and I'm like, you know, I don't want to be out here and be like, "Yes, I'm white! It sucks for you all!" or something like that, you know? Like I'm not coming out like that and I'm not thinking that either. So I'm not like holding that back.

MARK: I try to be totally honest in the class. But, I mean, you can't be like, brutally honest. I wouldn't want to completely offend someone in the class. If I was going to make a statement where I thought I was going to be brutally honest, I would phrase it very carefully and I would definitely, you know, say something beforehand, like, preface it with something about, you know, like, "I'm being totally honest."

VANESSA: You said earlier that, if you were given a chance to be of any race, what would you be?

PAIGE: I'm not gonna say I wouldn't be white. I wouldn't give that up. I've been blessed and I don't - I don't think--- I don't know, I mean, I think that's a really good question and a tough question. But I think selfishly, like as a person, like to be completely honest, I'd probably be white.

WALE: The white students in the class, when they like say they're from a suburban, like affluent community, mom and dad, you know, it's kinda like, damn, how could you have not succeeded, you know, and how will you not succeed?

CHRIS: I'm not trying to glorify victimhood and being a, being like...

WALE: It's just crazy hearing that privilege and how it's the norm, you know? Every day you don't have to justify your race, who you are. That kind of blows me away and shows me that, damn, like, we really are different.

KAYLA: Honestly I mean, I haven't dated anyone...

DAVID: I think race is a touchy subject because it's not simple, and it's not something you can answer with a yes or no question. The further deep you go, the more you realize different ways that you're contributing to, like, a lot of the ideology that's being built around you.

INTERLUDE

"I can be sure my race will not work against me"

JERLENA: In the context of this exercise...

NARRATOR: The students fill out a questionnaire about what they can take for granted in their daily lives based on race. They rate each question a five if it's true for them, a three if it's sometimes true, and a zero if it's not. The higher their total score, the less they are impacted by race.

JERLENA: That's not what it says. What it actually says is when I'm told about our national heritage or about our civilization, I am shown that my people made it what it is.

F: Oh! That's a positive thing.

JERLENA: So I would say that's more of a pos--, like made it a good thing.

CHAD: ...'cause we scored lower? But obviously like the Europeans, you guys scored real high.

FEMALE STUDENT: Who scored the lowest?

CHAD: I mean, all right, what does that mean to you guys? I mean, like in comparison to everybody else, I mean.

CHRIS: I think it means that we live in - like our culture is the mainstream culture.

PAIGE: That our lives are a lot easier as far as society is concerned.

ASHLEY: Um, and I got a 36, which is a little higher than all the African American students. Being a light-skinned woman, um, being Black but being light skinned, I do get a lot more benefits.

JERLENA: David, you put a five. Tell us about that five. Cause I - tell us about the five.

DAVID: I probably have a good example for each one, where I have, um, you know, felt weird or not felt too comfortable in that situation. Like, for example, like I was approached um when I was in the computer lab on

a computer and I was asked to leave because they told me this was only for students, just 'cause I had a beanie on and I had my hoodie on, they thought I had just walked in and started using the computer. To get into my friend's um dorm building, I had to sign in four times. I had to show the lady my ID twice. She had to write my name in for me because she could not read my writing supposedly. She basically wanted to make sure absolutely that I was a student and I, it felt very bad.

CHRIS: When I came to your dorm, I didn't have my ID and sign in.

DAVID: You could just walk by?

CHRIS: Yeah, you remember when you came to the door and you picked me up?

DAVID: They wouldn't let my girlfriend in yesterday. She had to wait outside. She's Mexican.

MAYRA: I had a lot of zeroes. And then, um, the one that said, "I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help my race will not work against me" I'm like, "whoa" - I put a zero too, because I've never had medical insurance. And it has to do with my parents not having the jobs that give it, you know what I mean, and then I have to go through all this Healthy Family stuff and all the public medical insurance. I mean, my parents are janitors because they can't speak English because they are brown. And janitors don't get medical insurance. I remember hating not being able to go to the dentist, you know what I mean, and not being able to do stuff like that.

DAVID: My older brother broke my arm when we got, uh when he tackled me, and as a youngster, man, I remember I walked around like this for two weeks, three weeks. I had to do it on my own. I just wore a little bandanna, because I'm saying, my mom didn't have any money to take me to the hospital.

MARK: I come to class, like lots of times I'm just dumbfounded. I just don't know what to say. I can't like find the words to express what I want to say or I don't even know what I want to, I've got so many emotions going through me that I can't put anything together.

CHAD: Everybody would have looked at me funny...

PETER: Just hearing people's experiences. On some level, racism - like I remember David brought it up in class - how racism doesn't necessarily have to be intentional. You can affect people in certain groups negatively just even if you don't intend it.

MARK: When we left class yesterday, Paige, Kayla and I, the three like, white students - we turned and walked up the hill and it didn't seem-- and no one else was walking in that direction. So it's kind of segregated, like, we're in this, we're kind of in this bubble up on the hill, a lot of white students, the Greek system. I notice the segregation of the Greek system. I notice that that's predominantly white.

"to be an American"

ABE: It's hard like, trying to find what you identify with and what you are inside. One time I remember, I told my parents-- I was like, "Oh, I'm Chicano." And they're like, "What, you're Chicano?" It's like, "No you're not. You're Mexican, dude. I'm Mexican. Your mom's Mexican. We were born in Mexico. You're a Mexican. Just because you're born here doesn't mean you're not Mexican." And I was like, "Oh, damn. What the hell am I, now? Am I Mexican, Chicano, American? It's like, oh!"

JERLENA: It's just interesting that I think a lot of people feel like they have to identify one way or the other versus being comfortable in this idea of multiple identities. Now there's a part of us, because we were born

here, not our parents, that is, truly makes us American. I think that what that is might be different for every person.

DAVID: I don't think being born here makes anybody American. Why do I live in the ghetto, if I'm an American? You know what I'm saying? Aren't we supposed to share the resources that this country has?

MARK: Share the resources of what we have? What do you mean?

DAVID: Uh, a lot of people say America is diverse, but I think diversity is when we all get a piece of the pie. And I don't think we got a piece of the pie yet. Um, so like I mean, I feel like...

DAVID: I'm somebody who's not just a person of color, but I'm very poor. So to me, those things are very tied together and I think you can't separate them.

CHAD: What people, I feel like minorities consider being American as is being white. And I mean, that's not to be racist or anything, that's just what people identify it as...

DAVID: There's no day in my life that I want to deal with race. . .

LINDA: ...the system doesn't have to be the way it is...

DAVID: . . .but I am somebody who has to deal with race. People that I come from and the people that I represent are people that have to deal with race. Um, and that's the reality of our hardships, you know?

LINDA: I don't know. It's just so divisive, I guess, when you look at race as an issue between different communities and what they have to face.

MAYRA: We're seen as illegal aliens, like "Go home where you came from, go back. Stop talking Spanish, go home," you know what I mean? And for a lot of us it's like, "Whoa!"

LINDA: Obviously we know that there's problems, but there's no like, mutual understanding about what we can do.

MARK: All right, what I want to say is today, we focused strictly on the bad aspects of being like a Latino in America, but we didn't talk about any of like the good aspects of their culture or anything like that. Because, I don't know, I'm kind of a little disappointed that, because there's a lot of, it's a very rich culture, there's a lot of very good things, and all we did was say "This is bad," I mean...

MAYRA: What's important to us as young brown people is justice. That is what's important to us. Justice is important to us.

CHAD: You can't express everything that's good about you because you're covering up what's bad, you know? It's bad stuff going on...

MAYRA: I think celebrating cultures and social justice is a very different thing. Yeah, I can tell you what I eat, and you know, what my family's like, but I don't think that really helps social justice. Yeah, Latina is being beautiful. I would never be anything else. But I also know that it's very hard and that this is my reality. And that the class isn't about me telling you what I eat. The class is about me telling you how my life is.

DAVID: I think that it's very hard for uh - especially people who have power in this world - to realize they have power. Because if they realize they have that power, you also have to realize how that power was accumulated. And if you realize how it was accumulated, then you have to have accountability. And I think

that a lot of people are scared by that, because it means um, they have to change the way that they live, though they wholeheartedly believe they're living in a humane way.

INTERLUDE - EXTERIOR SCENES WITH MUSIC

DAVE: If we're doing anything true and just and right with the class, we're just replicating reality. We're just giving what's really there-what exists in society-a chance to be heard and experienced in a way that it normally isn't.

JERLENA: I think we're probably at the point where tensions are getting um, you know, a little more heightened and people are starting to take a little more risk. And um, people are starting to listen more, to debate more, and um I think, you know, we're at the point where maybe a couple of more sessions and it'll probably get even more intense. And I think that that's to be expected.

"part of the problem, part of the solution"

PAIGE: You guys can discuss amongst yourselves and yell up to us all of the stereotypes you associate with white people.

MARK: Stereotypes of white people, just like anything that you have, like---

CALLED OUT: Rich. No rhythm. Redneck. Socially unaware. In Denial. Drunk. Flip flops. Pearl earrings. Nalgene water bottles. Bleeding heart liberals. Conservative. Scared. Uptight. Hate poor people. Hippies. Gap. Not part of the solution, not part of the problem. Greek. Healthy.

MARK: I own one sweater from the Gap that was a gift from a girl that I dated who worked at the Gap. Yeah, I'm in a fraternity, but I wouldn't consider myself like a hard-core, like, frat guy. I mean, there, you know, there's like some truth to 'em and that's how stereotypes are. Some aren't necessarily correct.

PAIGE: I think the saddest thing I heard was um "not part of the solution." Or I forget, you said it. And I really wouldn't be here right now if I didn't want to be part of the solution. So that hurt me the most probably.

JACKIE: Well, I don't know. The generic things that I hear all the time is people saying, "Well, this is not my fault, I didn't create the system, you know?" An they'll talk, they'll even say, you know, allude to a few things like, "I wasn't, my grandpa wasn't, you know, a slave driver, da da da da da, you know?" But I mean, it's acknowledging your privilege and also understanding that sometimes you will participate in that.

CHAD: We're happy you're making this one small step. But it's just like, after this class is over, it's just going to be the same thing. It's just like you said, it might be an assumption, but it's just like, if you do one thing, that doesn't take you out of it.

PAIGE: I know that every other day or every other---when we leave this classroom, I'm not as threatened as any of you. But the fact of the matter is that I am threatened in here, and that's why I think it's good that I see that and that I am trying, but. . .

PAIGE: I think it's very difficult to not be defensive whether or not you want to associate with the stereotype of being white or the stigma of being white. It's very difficult to not take it personally when people are talking about "White folks" and how like-- generalizing.

PAIGE: It has been incredibly, incredibly enlightening and I'm sure like, for all of us in different ways.

MAYRA: I don't know. I don't know how much I've been enlightened in here. You know what I mean, like, like, I don't think---

PAIGE (off screen): It seems like the point of the class is to enlighten the white people.

DAVID: I think that, like, as a person of color, like, I'm already oppressed in many ways and why should I put myself in even a more degraded position to educate people who are, like she said, part of the problem? My role is to educate my own people and um educate them against the injustices that happen, you know, institutionally against them. And I would much rather go into, you know, where I come from and talk to them about, you know, defeating injustice uh than going into your community trying to make you accept it.

LINDA: I feel kind of like really upset with that 'cause it's so like hopeless, so narrow-minded, I think. And you're like saying it's the white man - like, they're the one oppressing society. We're all being very naïve, very ignorant. And we're all part of the problem. No matter what, no matter what race, we're all perpetuating this racism everyday.

MAYRA: Yeah, you can argue that everybody is part of the problem. But the problem is racism and racism is embedded in power. And it is obvious who has power and who doesn't. I think it's naïve to say, "Yeah, we're all part of the problem and you know, we're all part of the solution." Because it's just - it's denying the power dynamics behind racism.

LINDA: Well, I'm not ignoring the fact that there's not this power structure already ingrained in America, but I just think that, instead of playing like "Oh, I'm just getting hurt," and I don't wanna like, you know-- like the person who's been oppressed and everything, you can empower yourself, you can educate yourself. We're in college; we're all being enlightened. Every single day we're encountering something new.

ASHLEY: I think that it's unfair for someone that is in a position of power to tell me that's in a position not of power that I should, that I need to get over it, that I need to say, "Oh, we all have an equal part in the solution and the problem." I'm holding on to college by like the skin of my teeth. I can't, I don't have enough money to be here. I don't. So to say that we're all equal in this college struggle, we're not.

CHAD: As far as I feel about this class, literally, if I was to leave this class I'm gonna have to learn, I mean, at least at this school, from Asian and white people because you have to deal with them everyday. We're subject to learn. Me, by being a minority and coming to this school, I'm subject to learn, unless I just don't want to have any friends here and be by myself. And how everything's set up right now, it's not really set up for everybody to succeed, and circumstances do keep you down.

MAYRA: It's very confusing, because I don't know how to say like that my role is not to educate you. My role is to let you see this, but not to tell you what to do about it, or to sit there and explain to you why this is happening. I think that's their role as an individual and as, you know, being part of the solution and accepting your white privilege and using it in a productive way.

ASHLEY: At least from what you were saying---

PAIGE: What we represent and what they've experienced in their lives like, they're not going to break down and trust us until like they truly can trust us. And I think that that's kind of key.

CHAD: People say, Asian people think about Black people like, they're lazy. That's why they can't come up.

DAVID: Something that might be misunderstood is this perception that me or other people in class in particular are angry and walk away laughing that like we made the white folks scared and all this. I personally

walk away feeling kind of sad sometimes. Sometimes I walk away pretty like, pretty angry just 'cause I don't know how to deal with a lot of the stuff that's being said. Um, and I feel as though we're always looked to --- to have all these answers. And when that happens, I end up feeling very very empty because I don't have all these answers. I'm trying to figure things out just as much as other folks are.

"just like me"

MARK: Something that got to me, it was a comment that we never talked about or anything. It was a comment um that David made to me after class---that the white man is the enemy. Do you think that thinking that the white man is the enemy is, I mean, is that how you always feel?

DAVID: As a generalization, you know, I feel comfortable saying that like the white man has changed this world and not in the most positive way for people of color - in specific, you know, my people. Um, do I think the white man is the enemy? No, I think that white power is the enemy and it's a lot of times, you know, carried through by white men. Um so like, you know, keeping all that in mind, when I see like a rich white person or a white person that really symbolizes all this, it really brings up a lot of feelings in me, you know?

JERLENA TO MARK: Do you hear, "I am the enemy," or do you understand when he says "white man," "white power." I just want to get your reaction to that.

MARK: Well, I mean, if teaching someone who, teaching someone that um if you say like, "Okay, white man is the enemy." Then like someone, I feel that someone would look at me and say, "Okay, he's white, that's the enemy." I'm a white man, right? So that's how I take it.

JERLENA: So you do personalize it?

MARK: Yeah. But then, I mean, he clarified that he's talking about white power, not like white man, so that's different.

DAVID: My role is somebody who's just a peer to these people, um, it's not to like yell at them and blame them for trying to live. I feel like I cross that line sometimes and sometimes I end up making enemies, which is not something I want to do, um, so that's something I'm always conscious of: How do I approach this situation without making this person feel like, awkward, and how do I slowly get into like, you know, what the realities of what they've just said?

PETER: I think that with David, I get the impression that he used to think that white people were like scared, or like white people knew they had that power. And I think he carried some misconceptions about white people too, and then, I think with him and Mark talking, I think that helps to clarify those things for David and other people in the class.

DAVE: Particularly a cross-class background, you guys obviously know when you come in here that there's a racial mix, but one of the things that Jerlena and I have talked about is that we always try to make this class at least 50% working-class, um, because that's where the dynamism comes if you've got a real class diversity between, in the class.

JERLENA: And it's so difficult.

DAVE: It's so difficult.

JERLENA: Because they're not coming to Berkeley, they're not here.

DAVE: They're in the community colleges and then a little in the state colleges, but because of how the system is segregated.

VANESSA: I talked to some of them about---

DAVE: Hearing low-income students talk about how much they have to work to stay in school and manage everything else that a regular college student at Berkeley is under the stress of: a full academic load; and extracurricular activities; and leadership things; and community service. And the fact that you not only have to work all the time and try to manage your academics, but that you have no back-up. If things fall apart, it's you. It's like the Third World and the rich living next to each other but not knowing.

JERLENA: So talk about that artificial environment. I mean, if you look around the room, how many people actually grew up where their neighborhood looked like this. Thus, we can understand why it's difficult having these conversations. We don't even know how to do it. It's not part of our natural environment.

INTERLUDE: STUDENTS LEAVING

"if you identify, pull yourself free"

DAVE: So what I'm gonna do is read off a series of 15 to 17 questions. If you identify with it, just step forward, okay? If you don't identify with it, just stay where you are. And we'll do it in silence just so you can kind of see what you feel as you do it. If you identify, pull yourself free, step forward, hold hands with the people here and turn around and look at the people that aren't there, okay?

DAVE: It was assumed - I can't read my own writing - it was assumed you would go to college from a young age. If that's so, come forward and the rest stay. Hold hands, see two different groups. There you go.

DAVE: Your parents do not have a foreign accent.

DAVE: You are not followed when you enter a store.

DAVE: You have never gone homeless or hungry for a day or more out of necessity.

DAVE: You took regular family vacations and had a maid or a gardener.

JERLENA: Those are two different things.

DAVE: That's why I want to add all of them. You took regular family vacations and had a maid or a gardener. And had a maid or a gardener.

DAVE: Last one, you will graduate from one of the world's elite universities.

DAVE: Okay, let's, let's sit on the floor and shake it up a bit and talk about it.

MAYRA: The one that stood out to me was the like maid one? Because my mom cleans houses and my dad cleans offices, so it's like, damn, my parents are probably cleaning your house. Not literally, but it's true. And um, yeah, it sucks.

VANESSA: I don't know, whenever there's a division to me, I felt like I was being judged like in some way, so it made me feel really uncomfortable. Especially when you have to face each other.

ULILI: I was in the back a lot. I think like a lot of it like, you know, you can change and you have power over, and you're like, "Oh, I hope that doesn't happen to my kids." But there's some things that you can't, 'cause you're

gonna be Black like whatever, so your kids are gonna be some form of black too, like no matter who you marry, so you can't change that.

JERLENA: Certainly I think the last question about unifying us, because of the Berkeley education and connection is a nice way to end the exercise, but I also want to say that when we leave the room, we still have the divisions. When you graduate and you work in your communities. . .

DAVE: Part of what you do as the facilitator is that you want some of that personalization. . .

KAYLA: What am I gonna do with this privilege that I have and this education and everything that I have learned in this class and what is the next step. . .

DAVE: . . .but if you totally personalize it, uh, you're missing the point. It's a much broader situation that will just go on without some active efforts to change it; to change hiring patterns, to change housing patterns, to change laws, to change peoples' hearts and minds certainly, but in larger um, in larger groups.

"a paradigm shift"

PAIGE: I don't know if you guys saw in the newspaper last week, but it had like the figures of who the freshman, the breakdown of the freshman class and what race they were, and---

PAIGE: The most shocking thing to me in this class was the disparity in enrollment. We've talked a lot about the small numbers, but it was good for me to see the figure of how many white students there are in comparison.

LINDA: When I was thinking about the issue of affirmative action, like, what do I have to lose from it? And that's like the problem, you know? It's like kind of this emotional attachment to this issue

PAIGE: It's very easy to say you're for it when you're in-- at Berkeley and you've been accepted, but at what line-like have you asked yourself that question "Would I really be for it as a senior in high school knowing all of this?"

LINDA: I thought affirmative action was oppressing me because it was kind of displacing me, because of someone else's race. Opinions change. I guess I am for affirmative action---not the fact that it's displacing people, but giving people that are disadvantaged opportunity.

LINDA: In ways, we're becoming ignorant about the world around us and this issue of racism and we're kind of feeding into this institutional racism because we're so self-centered.

PAIGE: I think it's more a matter of the selfishness, like assuming that my like, my application really means something and I'm not just a number?

JERLENA: When you have 30-something, 38,000 applications and they're admitting 7,500 students, 4.0s and SAT scores---people are getting rejected. I mean, Black folks, Latinos, brown people, white folks. Thousands of people get rejected.

DAVE: And you could get rid of the 200 Black people here and you'd still have 9,800 rejections. When I was going to school, there wasn't this, "I'm gonna fail. I have to get into Berkeley," or, "I'm being left out." All that fear gets turned on 200 Black kids instead of, "Wow, why are we all so scared?"

DAVID: I think that like we're caught in a struggle, I think everybody in this room. And I think the struggle is much larger than what people want to bring it down to a lotta times. I see you like, when you guys ask

questions like and when you guys like talk, I can see like, you know, you guys are going through the same things we are.

PETER: Well, I just remember speaking with you, David, and you talked about what people did in the Sixties with protesting and I remember just something that pops outta my head. Like you said, "Yeah, people went out there and they put their asses on the line." And I thought about that and now today I'm remembering what you said, "am I ready to put my ass on the line?" I don't know how to answer that, you know?

JERLENE: To be involved in any kind of justice, that means deconstructing what has been working for centuries for people and offering a different, a shift in the paradigm in terms of what's possible. But the point is that in this class, there's a sense of the sensitivity to what the issues are and what each of us bring, so that you can make choices, informed choices. And to me, that's what consciousness-raising is about.

DAVE: You really don't know until the very end of the class how much has gotten through to people and how much they're interacting with each other outside and how much their hearts are being changed.

INTERLUDE: STUDENTS / TEACHERS CHATTING

"how to go beyond this class"

DAVE: So what we want to do is uh have each person have a chance to have their, their say. What's something that will always stay with you about the class?

MARK: Everything from this class is gonna stick with me. I just like have a lot of unresolved issues right now. You know, I'm like, I think about this crap all the time, and it's pretty---

CLASS: (Laughter)

MARK: It's like pretty annoying now. It's like everywhere I go, I'm always thinking about it and like talking to people about it, and it's freaking annoying.

MARK: I was asked questions in this class that I had never even considered before, and I still haven't formed definite answers to those questions, but I have a better idea of where I stand, just because I've actually had to think about them.

PAIGE: I think I always understood that I would be like seen in a certain way walking in here and be the enemy to a lot of people, but I don't think I really understood those emotions. I think I saw it more as like, "Oh, great. I'm the white girl, like, I'm gonna be hated for being racist," and, you know? But I think I didn't really understand the depth of what went on behind that. And I think that that's been like so important for me, and at this point it's more like I'm trying to figure out in my head how to go beyond this class.

DAVID: I came into this class feeling like I wasn't gonna learn too much, but actually I've learned a lot, um, because it's telling me that I'm really confused myself. I'm thinking about my identity and what it means for me to have a conflict with somebody else's identity and I think that on Tuesday, on Monday. . .

DAVID: I think this class has made me think a lot more about myself in regards to just who I am in a much bigger circle of people, especially in a much bigger, diverse circle of people. Um, and it's been a, it's been a struggle kinda like coming closer to feeling like I'm a lot more confused than I thought I was.

PETER: Just, I don't know, it's kind of like at the end of The Matrix, like Neo sees everything differently a little bit. It's kinda like that. I mean, you've always seen these things, but you never really looked at them a certain way, so I guess from like. . .

PETER: A lot of assumptions that I've carried in with me have been challenged. I think in the long term it's shaken up my worldview, my perception of the world and how things work. And I don't think I've come to a conclusion with those, that process. But yeah, it's definitely something I'm gonna have to figure out.

DAVE: What you got here is really unique and valuable. Please um, you know, keep contact with the people you've connected with over time.

INTERLUDE: STUDENTS HUGGING / SAYING GOODBYE