

Ethnic studies as perfectly stated by Professor Wendy Cheng is a movement and way of thinking. (What is Ethnic Studies, Cheng). Ethnic Studies are different and more complex than simply adding new faces to old explanations. The difference stands, in the historical context of those of ethnic descent. People of color dating way back before the 1960s, saw themselves as third-world people, compared to those not of color, even going to the length of considering themselves “¾ human”(Cheng). Ethnic Studies creates an environment that works to close the gap between the facts and how the facts make people feel, proving the apparent similarities between all people. The now disproven statement by Charles Mills “Whiteness makes you human” is just another example of what people of color had to endure being told on an average day. The arrogant expression made by Mills generalizes the way that many whites felt about their power, solely based on their skin color. A definitive moment for the Ethnic Studies movement was the student-led strikes at San Francisco State and UC Berkeley, creating a motion for Ethnic Studies, from 1968-1969. The five-month strike ignited when Sanfransico state fired professor George Murry leading students into what turned out to be the largest student-led strike in history(Cheng).

The debate about Race being real and not real, are both true in their sense. Race being real proves itself because people come in different shades despite any control. Lori Pierce’s piece “The Continuing Significance of Race”, opened the doors for the debate about race actually existing. She describes the story of Henry Louis, the head of Harvard’s Afro-American Studies program, being called a “Nigger” despite the work put into establishing his career (Pierce, 221). The word “Nigger” was used to degrade black men and women during and even after slavery. The story continues with the example of professor Louis, being roped into some sort of cultural

association when deciding to move to Maine. Being told “We don’t do that”, made his desire to move to the woods, looked at as not “the black thing” to do (Pierce 222). Race not being real is another accurate way to look at things, considering we're in the twentieth century now, race just like many other things (sexuality, gender) do not hold as much weight as it would have in the seventeenth, and eighteenth century. Intersectionality is just one example of the victimization ladder that we in this country, willingly climb. Businesses and companies that implement intersectionality to some, have the right outlook on inclusivity, but to others, it has the opposite effect creating “the new caste system” (Coaston). Looking to include those of color, companies will specifically look for those with ethnic backgrounds to make their businesses inclusive, but to the dismay of the average white male, they may now be overlooked and put aside.

Intersectionality correlates to the realness of race because without intersectionality, for things to be equal on all estates, there would be no ladder or caste system. As perfect as it sounds, racial discrimination systematically, is limiting on both ends of the spectrum. People of color have been segregated so much to the point where outwardly included them, causing negative feelings for those of whiteness making them, in return, feel discriminated against.

The relevance of Ethics Studies focusing on race and ethnicity when learning about the United States history is understanding the facts of the past and creating a more socially and ethically aware society. Race to many is a sensitive topic that makes gatherings and social situations awkward, simply because many people are not educated on race or the different ethnic groups. Attempting to move away from the term “race” because of its vague reference, Spikard and Burrough’s case, removed the terminology altogether, showcasing the differences amongst all ethnicities (Pierce 223). Studies about Ethnicity need to be focused on based on the vast difference in cultures around the world. Amid the controversy that discussing race in school has

caused, the history of the U.S. needs to be taught if it wants to be. Students should have the option to learn their history at their own pace.