Doing Gramsci's Cultural Education: Antiracism and Gendered Sexuality in the NABWMT

Peter Chua
San Jose State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/sociology_pub

Part of the Gender and Sexuality Commons, and the Race and Ethnicity Commons

Recommended Citation

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications, Sociology by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.
Doing Gramsci's Cultural Education:  
Antiracism and Gendered Sexuality in the NABWMT

Peter Chua  
Department of Sociology  
San José State University  
pchua@sjsu.edu

ABSTRACT

I examine the ways the National Association of Black and White Men Together (NABWMT), a U.S. gay male organization, and its multi-ethnic membership developed and conducted antiracism workshops in the 1980s and safer sex workshops (targeting gay men with White, Black, Chicano/Latino, Asian, and Two-Spirited/indigenous identities) in the 1990s to conduct cultural and counterhegemonic forms of education.

I draw upon the works of Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall, bell hooks, Chela Sandoval, and Paul Gilroy on culture, education, and social exclusion. Gramsci and Hall suggest that cultural education is a necessary component for any anti-capitalist struggle. However, hooks, Sandoval, and Gilroy point to the liberal tendency in such cultural work. In particular, hooks, indicates the expressive salience of gay-ethnic masculinity in developing this liberal tendency.

Using qualitative analysis of archival data, I find that these workshops did serve as a vehicle for organizing selected communities around certain progressive politics. However in the long term, the workshops were not as successful to go beyond the liberal
tendency of improving interpersonal relationships regarding racial-ethnicity and gendered sexual identities.

Consequently, this paper seeks to augment “multiple intersection” theorizing (such as by Audre Lorde and Cherríe Moraga) to “include” not only gay men of color, or to compare them in relations to standpoint theories by lesbian-of-color, but to highlight also the constitutive aspect of their gay-ethnic masculinity and gendered sexualities as part of a longer history of antiracist movements and emancipatory politics. In closing, I explore the emancipatory possibilities and contradictions of cultural education and NABWMT activities to address issues of gay-of-color sexual identities and antiracist socialist-feminist struggle.