

Dear Mike,

You do a good job of tackling many complex issues head-on in this paper. You have made a lot of important points, and have done a good job of showing that the issues of race, class, and inequality are considerably more complex than many people recognize.

As for your introduction, I think your paper would profit by expanding your thesis to better represent the breadth of issues your paper tackles. These need not be excessively bare or targeted; you can retain your argument that social class is important in understanding inequality while also alluding to your other arguments; namely, that race is different than ethnicity, that social inequality cannot be traced simply to differences in race, and that inequality is due to complex issues like self-perpetuating behaviors amongst lower classes, and that even geography plays a role in social inequality. See my comments in your paper on how to expand your thesis to make it more representative of your argument.

Proposed Outline:

This paper was not well organized. It is clear you did not write an outline before writing this paper. You should get in the habit of writing an outline for every paper to ensure you properly structure your argument.

- I. Introduction – State thesis (your paragraph 1)**
- II. Define ethnicity vs. race (your paragraph 2)**
- III. State Marx’s opinion of race to give hint of your cultural argument (your paragraph 12)**
- IV. Equate Race and Caste (your paragraphs 4 and 5)**
- V. Argue that studies show no genetic basis for race but demonstrate clear inequality among races (your paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 11)**
- VI. Argue that discrimination is not the only reason behind inequality using Brazil example (your paragraphs 13, 14, 15)**
- VII. Give the cultural argument for how race could lead to such inequality and such a big achievement gap (your paragraphs 8, 9, 10) – Need to add to this as well.**
- VIII. Conclusion**

The reasoning behind this suggested order is spelled out in the paper, but basically it would be to your advantage to group like ideas together, and to argue that: 1) race and ethnicity are different 2) simple “race-based” explanations for inequality are flawed, and 3) the explanation for inequality is best traced to factor such as self-perpetuating behavior

in lower classes, geographical determinants, etc. This structure for your paper would make the best use of the evidence you have accumulated, and would allow you to present your argument in the most logical fashion.

As for the paragraph and sentence level execution of your paper, you will notice a number of instances in which I suggest that you draw your logic out a little more clearly. You have a lot of good information, but presenting it is not enough; make sure that the reader knows exactly what you are arguing through each detail you present.

Overall, your paper shows deep reflection on the complex interplay of class, ethnicity, and social inequality. I feel you are well on the way to developing a highly convincing argument.

I wish you the best of luck with your assignment.

Sincerely,

WritingLabEdge Tutor

Tutor comments in Red. Tutor grammatical changes are underlined or crossed out.

Question: What is the difference between ethnicity and race, and is class analysis still important for understanding social inequality globally? Provide examples about how gender, class and race inequalities reinforce each other and contradict each other.

There are many factors ~~that~~which go into determining the path a person's life ~~may~~can take; the most significant of ~~these~~these ~~is~~being the social class into which he or she is born. [You might want to hedge your bets; your paper only partially addresses the "social class" explanation of inequality, so you might want to instead say that social class is among other factors — including self-perpetuating behaviors and geography — which *contribute* to social inequality.] Every ~~civilized~~ [avoid loaded words like "civilized;" maybe use "modern" or "complex" instead] society has a class society. Each of these societies has based its ~~civilization~~, its culture, its technology, on the oppression of the majority by a minority [Isn't it usually the opposite, i.e. the oppression of a minority by a majority?]. Class is vitally important in understanding social inequalities suffered globally by the races which ~~comprise~~structures our world [good], but also it extends more specifically into the different ethnicities which ~~comprise~~create a race [This latter phrase is unclear. I would suggest adapting it into a new sentence about the difference between race and ethnicity].

[This is the basis of a solid introduction. I suggest, however, cutting down on the information on class (and especially its importance in all "civilized" societies), and instead adding a couple sentences to cover the rest of your argument. You should add a sentence about how race is not the same thing as ethnicity, and one about how race is not an adequate explanation for social inequality.]

There are many races which make up our world, ~~however~~ and these races are broken up ~~by~~ into many nationalistic ethnicities. While many people confuse race and ethnicity as one in the same, an ethnic group can be a group of people sharing a common religion, ~~or~~ national heritage, or even a common cultural tradition. Race is not determined by belief or the decision ~~choice~~ to belong to a group, but rather we are all born into our race [Don't use the pronoun "we" here. Instead, say something like, "but rather race is something into which everyone is born."] A race is a "local geographic or global human population distinguished as a more or less distinct group by genetically transmitted physical characteristics." (dictionary.com)

[You should state the difference between ethnicity and race in the second paragraph. You might define ethnicity as a group of people sharing common heritage, religious beliefs, and cultural traditions whereas race is a group of people containing certain genetic attributes (like skin color).]

When evaluating races and the differences between them, the norm is to study the different races and how they are broken up into the social classes of a society. In the United States for instances, studies have been done that show ...

[This will be a valuable paragraph or group of paragraphs (see outline) if you can find good studies in which researchers try to break up social classes according to race. Try to also locate holes in this scheme — show how there are exceptions such as individuals of one race who don't fit into the pattern described by the researchers. You should conclude that race is nothing more than a social construct used by society to bolster one group at another group's expense. You should see race as a social construct and your studies should show this as well.]

The concept of "race" may be usefully compared to the concept of "caste." [Try using a more powerful introductory sentence here. Your "caste vs. race" argument is powerful in showing that cultures create social hierarchies based on imagined or cultural difference among people, so write an introductory sentence to reflect this.] Caste includes ancestry and actual social stratification, and also includes ideas about real or imagined body type differences and socially significant cultural differences. Both race and caste are, fundamentally, modes of constructing social hierarchies ~~y~~ on relations of birth [good]. The key difference is that race essentially involves the idea of groups originating in different territories, whereas members of different castes may be conceived as originating from the same territory.

The Indian caste system has been in use for several years [be more precise; castes have existed for thousands of years], and is still valued today, ~~for several years~~. The system helps to keep people peaceful amongst each other, and maintains a sense of order. There are five different levels of the system: Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra, and Harijans. In each of these categories are the actual "castes" or jatis within which people are born, marry, and die. Indians are comfortable with this system [be careful of making claims like this without supporting evidence. In this case, this reads as a very insensitive comment. Many of the lower caste are no more comfortable with "caste" than is a

minority who is passed over for a promotion solely because of race.] in that they never move up or down in class ~~or move down~~. They will always in be in same class. This system has worked well for Indian people [again, be careful of these claims; it may have only worked well for the upper caste. This is equivalent to saying racism worked out well for Americans.] and still plays a major part in modern India.

[These paragraphs are good. You are equating “race” and “caste.” By so doing, you are saying that “race” has no genetic basis, i.e., different races do not differ in intelligence any more than members of different Indian castes differ in intelligence. Any proposed difference is created, and if it later seems to be true, it is because it is self-fulfilling prophecy.]

It is not clear how some races succeed in having more upward mobility in the United States than others. [This introductory sentence doesn't capture the true strength of your paragraph. You show in this paragraph that some excessively simple studies claim that race is the main factor behind different test performance. You should state this in your first sentence.] The achievement gap between whites and non-Asian minorities has been acknowledged for years, and most educators have blamed it on differences in economic or social status. But the report [which report? give the name], analyzing four decades of data, suggests the problem is far more complex: “Blacks whose parents are upper-middle class with college degrees score significantly lower than do whites with the same background.” (Hoover part 2) And the same pattern holds true at all socioeconomic levels. Affluent blacks, in fact, tend to score just below the level of the least well-off whites. Blacks and Hispanics make up a large percentage of lowest-performing students, and a small percentage of those achieving at the highest levels. In short, few of these non-Asian minorities are getting the grades and scores needed to get into top colleges.

[Remember, your goal in mentioning this achievement gap is merely to show the inequality and not to argue that a lack of intelligence causes the inequality. You are arguing something else is causing the inequality and that these test merely reflect this inequality.]

Japanese and Mexican immigrants began arriving in California [when? give a date] and worked in similar occupations as agricultural laborers. Yet a study from a school district in which their children attended the same schools and sat side-by-side in the same classrooms, found IQ differences as great as those between blacks and whites attending schools on opposite sides of town. International studies have found “different groups of illiterate people, with no educational differences because they had no education, with mental test differences larger than those between blacks and whites in the United States.” (Hoover part 2) Yet this isn't a matter of genetics. During the First World War, black soldiers from Ohio, Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania scored higher on mental tests than did white soldiers from Georgia, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Mississippi.

[You're onto something good here. Draw out the logic a little more by showing that different studies say different —and contradictory — things about race, and that it is therefore necessary to look deeper into the causes of social inequality.]

It is ~~at~~ the common misconception that poverty [link this to your earlier argument by saying something like “poverty, and therefore social inequality,”] is the fault of individuals, as we can see ~~in~~ by the passing of various new laws and acts [cite one or two of these acts if you can]. Instead, ~~it is~~ the imperfection of our social structure ~~that is~~ to blame. These flaws [which flaws? you haven't cited any, so say something like, “the flaws explained below”] ~~allow to~~ prolong the existence of poverty. This unending cycle [which unending cycle? again, introduce this idea better since you haven't described cycles yet] is a stark contrast to the American ideal that everyone has the opportunity to succeed in our society.

[You need to strongly conclude that racial inequality is not based in genetics but in culture. Reiterate your equating race and caste. You need to debunk the genetic argument to move into your cultural argument.]

Poor people in today's society display characteristics and values [Avoid claiming that the poor have different “values” than other people. The strength of your argument is that the poor experience social pressures — such as generally weaker family structures — which sometimes bind them into perpetual poverty. Make sure your discussion emphasizes this “systemic” explanation, and not the “individual responsibility” explanation which you have already discounted.] that are different from ~~the~~ non-poor in the same society. "These characteristics are: the absence of childhood as a specially prolonged and protected stage in the life-cycle, early initiation into sex, free unions or consensual marriages, a relatively high incidents of abandonment of wives and children, a tend toward female or mother-centered families, a strong predisposition toward authoritarianism, lack of privacy, verbal emphasis upon family solidarity which is only rarely achieved because of sibling rivalry, and competition for limited goods and maternal affection." (Lewis, 1965) These characteristics of the poor make it difficult for them to escape from poverty [explain how — this is important]. Thus, ~~poverty~~ ~~the poor~~ ~~people~~ live on due to the passing of these characteristics from generation to generation.

[You need two or three more paragraphs on how this works. You are claiming there is some sort of cultural cycle of despair. Blacks might not have the same goals of becoming successful in American society or they may have this goal but consider it impossible. You need to be clear the mechanism which causes all of these low test scores. This paragraph is the meat of your paper. As such, you need at least 3 paragraphs of information on how cultural keeps blacks down.]

The most obvious and inescapable finding from these years of research is that huge disparities in income and wealth have been the rule, not the exception, in countries around the world and over centuries of human history. Real income consists of outputs and these outputs have been radically different because the inputs have been radically different from peoples [and classes] with different cultures.

Geography alone creates profound differences among peoples. It is not simply that such natural wealth as oil and gold are very unequally distributed around the world. More fundamentally, people themselves are different because of different levels of access to other peoples and cultures. Isolated peoples have always lagged behind those with greater access to a wider world, whether isolation has been the result of mountains, jungles, widely scattered islands, or other geographic barriers.

[Make sure you present this for what it is; another compelling argument against “race-based” explanations of poverty.]

While we see social inequality alive and well right here in the US, similar situations have occurred in other countries throughout the past century. “Anthony Marx has described race as “made” or created by the dominant classes in multiracial societies in order to de-emphasize class divisions among group members sharing similar phenotypical characteristics. Thus, the specific needs of nation-state consolidation dictated elite constructions of racial categories and, more important, the meanings attached to individuals grouped together according to skin color and other physical traits. Another study concluded that the mobilization of racial and cultural symbols in a specific context provides race its special meaning; otherwise, the concept has no significance. Race is regarded as a social construct whose meanings depends upon a specific historical moment, social context, and society. Therefore, the concept of race is flexible and subject to change, adaptation, and reformulation over time, shaped by particular social environments.” (Global Multiculturalism)

[Give some analysis of this quote. Show how it proves, in the context of your discussion of “caste vs. race,” that the salient feature of social hierarchies is the existence of categories separating one people from another, and not the specific criteria upon which such categories are founded.]

Discrimination is also one of the many factors operating against equality. But even if all human beings behaved like saints toward one another [too colloquial], the other factors would still make equality of income and wealth virtually impossible to achieve.

Blacks in the United States have faced more hostility and discrimination than blacks in Latin America. As just one example, 161 blacks were lynched in one year in the United States, but racial lynching was unknown south of the Rio Grande. People may debate whether race relations in Brazil, for example, have ever been quite as good as they are sometimes represented to be, but there is little or no debate that they have been better than those in the United States.

If discrimination were as all-purpose an explanation of economic differences as is often supposed, we might reasonably expect blacks in Brazil to have come closer to economic parity with whites there than blacks in the United States have come to achieving parity with white Americans. In fact, however, Brazil has larger black-white disparities in income than does the United States. As inconsistent as this may be with

discrimination as a dominant explanatory factor, it is perfectly consistent with cultural explanations.

[These three paragraphs give do a good job of showing that discrimination is not at the root of social inequality. I suggest placing all three immediately after your discussion of “race vs. ethnicity” — paragraphs 2,3,5,4,12 — since the idea of discrimination is linked to the idea of race].

[It would be useful add a new conclusion to your paper which draws together the main points you made. The conclusion can be brief, and should emphasize your main findings: that race is different from ethnicity; that “race-based” explanations for inequality (including discrimination) are too simplistic; and that more complex factors such as class, self-perpetuating behaviors in certain classes, and geography are better explanations for inequality.]