

**Politics and Government**  
**William Walter Bostock, Ph.D.**  
**Senior Lecturer**  
**University of Tasmania**  
**Australia**

**About the Instructor**

William W. Bostock- Senior Lecturer  
Bachelor of Economics – Monash University  
Master of Philosophy – University of Reading  
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Research Interest

Language Policy and Planning  
Ethnic and Race Politics  
Comparative Politics: Western Europe, Africa and Indiana Ocean  
Mental Health and Politics  
Electronic Archiving

Editorial Board Memberships

The Craft, Evolving the Art and Science of Electronic Scholarly Publication  
<http://www.icaap.org/TheCraft/>  
Social Science Paper Publisher (Editorial Advisor) <http://www.sspp.net>

Recent Grants

Pew Charitable Trusts (Samford University, USA)  
"A Problem-Based Learning Perspective in Race and Ethnic Politics, 2002.

<http://www.utas.edu.au/government/WWB.html>

**Part I. Introductory Information**

**A. Institutional**

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Name of University:                  | University of Tasmania       |
| 2. Total Enrollment:                    | 12,820 (2001)                |
| 3. Is the University public or private? | Public                       |
| 4. Carnegie Classification              | Doctoral/Research University |

**B. Individual**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Your School                                 | Government  |
| 2. Your Division                               | Arts  |
| 3. Your Faculty Rank                           | Senior Lecturer   |
| 4. Highest Degree Earned                       | Ph.D.   |
| 5. Number of Years Teaching                    | 31  |
| 6. Awards Received for Excellence in Teaching: | Dean's Commendation for Outstanding Doctorial Thesis 2002 (Adam B. Grover) Primary Supervisor |

**C. Course**

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Course Name (e.g. "Molecular Biology)            | Race and Ethnic Politics |
| 2. Course Abbreviation & Number<br>(e.g. BIOL 3399) | HSA201/HSA301            |
| 3. Number of Semester/Quarter Credit Hours          | 48                       |

4. Catalog Description	Introduces the politics of ethnicity and race. After a study of some relevant concepts, paradigms and theories, the unit will examine a range of situations of ethnic and race politics drawn from such countries as Sri Lanka, Canada, Belgium, South Africa, and some supra-national movements.
5. Number of Students Typically Taught in this course	60
6. In What Year do Students Typically enroll in this course	Seniors
7. This course is best described as	Elective course for majors

#### D. Problem-Based Learning

1. What percentage of this course uses PBL	25%
2. How long have you been teaching the course using PBL	One Semester
3. Is the course designated as PBL in any official way (e.g. school catalog)	Not as yet

I would like to thank Eric J. Fournier of Samford University for his invaluable advice during all stages of the project and two reviewers appointed by the Center for Problem-Based Learning, Samford University, for their constructive comments at the external review stage.

## Part II: Course Design

### A. Rationale

As teaching and research are closely related (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999), I want to ask a research question about my teaching. Does Problem-based learning (PBL) have a valid application within the teaching of my course Race and Ethnic Politics? PBL has been defined as: the integration of specific courses and classroom contexts for enhancing students' critical-thinking skills and for developing both a collective and independent ownership of knowledge. (Eck & Mathews, 2000, p. 12).

My course focuses on a particular problem; How to peacefully, creatively and constructively incorporate communities of differing race and/or ethnicity within one state? Within the six year period of its existence, the course has sought to answer this question. The present experiment will be to assess whether the use of PBL has given students a heightened sense of aware of the nature of the problem.

At a more specific level, the course has shown how identities that clash can be brought to complement each other. The means by which this is achieved is developing within each student a sense of insight into identities, that is, the 'other' as well as the 'I' (Searle-White, 2001). Another objective I have is to assess whether there is a well-established link between the teaching that I do and the learning that the students achieve (Cerbin, 1994, p. 2). Do students gain the knowledge and appreciation of the factual content of the course?

My final objective is my desire to publish a portfolio of the course on-line, because as Hatch (2000) noted ". . . too often what teachers learn in the relative privacy of their classrooms and in isolation from peers is simply lost to history" (p. 9). Feedback from other teachers and from learners, potentially world-wide, within the framework provided by the Samford Center for Problem-Based Learning, would be an invaluable input into the further development of the course and hopefully other courses.

### Reflective Essay on Course Content

The course *Race and Ethnic Politics* began in its current form in 1997 when I was required to combine two previous units. This was my contribution to the rationalization of courses affecting all schools

throughout the University of Tasmania, a public University located in a State where population growth is very low, and in some years, negative.

My personal motivation came through a long history of contact between my family and people of other languages, cultures and races. I was fortunate to be able to relate my personal background to my academic work and my Ph.D. was on the subject of immigrant and Aboriginal participation in Australian Society. As such, my research has focused on trying to understand why in some countries people of diverse backgrounds can happily co-exist, while in others there is conflict, civil war and genocide.

By its' very nature, the subject and diversity of the students means that the problem(s) I design must deal with a controversial issue. I have sought to develop special strategies and problems from my research into teaching controversial public issues (CPI) (Bierlein, 1993), from discussions with colleagues, and by trial and error.

The course's theoretical content was ambitious in the initial stages and relied heavily on texts from political science, sociology, anthropology and psychology. In time, due to the students' very wide range of disciplinary backgrounds and general foundational knowledge, the theoretical work had to be reduced to the an introduction to the concepts of race, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, region and identity. With these topics, students utilized the classic texts such as Benedict (1983), Leiris (1975), and Berreman (1972). From there, the course moves to an introduction to the sociology of knowledge and social constructions such as race, ethnicity, caste, class and modes of domination, using such basic sociology texts as Waters and Crook (1993).

The course content could easily have included almost any country in the world, but through experience I have found it best to exclude any country where students might have a personal background. My rationale for this is two-fold. First, those students have an advantage in terms of knowledge and experience over students who do not and secondly, students may resent receiving lectures on topics of their own personal backgrounds particularly where there are unresolved issues. Students from countries or areas with unresolved issues may well be drawn into conflict with other students in subsequent discussions, even if the lectures were to be considered fair and objective. Therefore, I do not include formally a study of Aboriginal Australia, Israel, Palestine, or the Balkan area.

My course countries of choice include Mauritius, South Africa, Sri-Lanka, Canada and Belgium. Can this strategy of avoidance be justified? I would answer this by noting that the major issues are always dealt with, and never avoided, but are not put deliberately on the agenda for discussion. It is necessary to follow Perry's "Journey" through "positions" in intellectual (and moral) development (Rapaport, 2001). If, during a tutorial, discussion gets switched to say, Israel's policy to Palestine, I will allow it to continue until emotions become involved, which can happen. I sincerely try to notice if any student(s) are visibly offended or silently internalizing their anguish. Upon noticing an actual or potential situation occurring, I inquire of the student(s) to better give me an indication of their state of thinking and feeling.

The course moves from country case studies to supranational bodies such as the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, and de Taalunie, which are extensions of culture and ethnicity beyond national borders, but exist generally through the medium of a common language. With regard to the Commonwealth, the language is English and the institutions British-influenced, (though all member states' official languages are recognized), la Francophonie where it is a French language bound culture, while with de Taalunie, Dutch is the binding link between states and dependencies. For reference materials, there is an abundance of potential texts, such as Trifunovska and de Varennes (2001), and electronic materials from both official sites such as such as The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (2003).

The course also considers policy outcomes, ranging the full gamut: from positive interactions to genocide. The latter is a potentially very painful subject in view of the personal backgrounds of students whose forebears may have belonged to targeted groups. For this reason, the discussion takes as its case

studies peoples unlikely to be represented in the class, such as the Armenians and the Roma. Students are often motivated to further research this aspect of the course, and readily available themselves of the large holding on war crimes donated to the University of Tasmania Library by the Mr. Justice Mervyn Everett estate. Significantly valuable among the recommended texts on genocide is Fein (1993).

The concluding section deals with practical measures to manage conflict, and brings together all of the mechanisms of conflict already analyzed in the course, such as fear, unresolved grief issues, past atrocities, arbitration negotiation, and neutral third parties. In the last workshop, a simulated ethnic conflict was held, as a test of PBL joint problem-solving methodology. The latter was newly introduced this year, since my recent reading of the literature of PBL, although I have some familiarity with the literature of educational simulation (Saunders & Cox, 1997).

### **Reflective Essay as to the Instructional Practice.**

All courses in the University of Tasmania are subject to a stringent process of approval by Faculty Committees and must be within institutional parameters, as provided for all state universities in Australia by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training. For *Race and Ethnic Politics* these include: 26 hours of lectures including workshop, 6 hours of tutorial, one essay of 2000-2500 word length, one tutorial paper of 750 to 1000 words, and one 2 hour examination. Within the formal constraints, there is still some scope for innovation subject to the ongoing approval from the Head of the School who will informally monitor the conduct of the course and review the results of the Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Survey. The latter is conducted at the end of the course, and before the final examination.

Formal lecture is the basic teaching and learning component of the course. This remains the case due to external constraints and my own commitment to the value of lecture. Although the formal lecture has been criticized by Burns as "overused method in post-secondary education" (Burns, 1995, p. 274), and when poorly prepared and presented, can be ineffective or worse, Burns does concede that "a well prepared lecture given by an authority to an audience of interested people can be a valuable experience . . ." (Burns, 1995, p. 274). Still, I was drawn to the idea that learning occurs best when related to *doing*, rather than the repetition of factual knowledge (Leigh, 2002, p. 1).

More specifically, the philosophy is *constructivist*, as recommended by McQualter (1992), who based his methodology on Kelly's two volumes titled *The Psychology of Personal* (1955). McQualter defines personal construct theory (PCT) in the following way:

Essentially, PCT sees a person as actively constructing their view of reality. It assumes that there are alternative ways of seeing reality, that people construct their view of reality in a way analogous to that of scientific inquiry and that they do so by using contrasts (dichotomies). (McQualter, 1992, p.194). This is particularly appropriate in *Race and Ethnic Politics* where identities, which are constructs, are the motivating factor, in contrast with, for example, constitutional law, where the construct is legal rather than psychological.

Within the general constructivist orientation, it is necessary to accept one of three approaches to theorizing. They have been identified as *positivist*, seeking laws of cause and effect, *interpretive*, uncovering choices, and *critical*, analyzing the constraints on human action (De Lisle, 2002, p. 2). As the laws determining behavior in race and ethnic politics are still unclear, it is more realistic to accept that theorizing in this field will be interpretive and critical, rather than positivist.

When analyzing human interaction, only the *interpretive* and critical approaches can be used to uncover the cultural meanings attached to a situation by its participants. The method is then to try to gain insight into identity. "...the essential, continuous say, the internal subjective concept of oneself..." (Reber, 1995 p. 355), which is a challenge for teacher and student from the interpretivist approach.

The imaginative leap required to grasp an identity is the central challenge of this course. Here I have found Perry's "Journey" of students through nine "positions" with respect to intellectual and moral development very helpful (Rapaport, 2001). Of the nine positions, one could single out four classes of stage: *dualistic thinking*, in terms of right and wrong knowledge, *early multiplicity*, an elementary form of realization that there are no right and wrong answers, *late multiplicity*, where students start to value thinking for themselves and appreciate that some problems are unsolvable, and *contextual relativism*, where proposed solutions must be supported by reasons and reviewed in a context, and the teacher is seen as a consultant rather than a dispenser of "truth" (Rapaport, 2001).

The technique I have adopted in furtherance of the facilitation of this process is to: never ask students to identify their own personal ethnic background, or to allow another student to ask questions about it, encourage students to reserve judgment about groups or situations, seek statements from students about how a particular group might perceive a situation, avoid discussing my own personal background, so that I am not perceived as "coming from somewhere," and avoid committing myself on a particular issue of ethnic or race politics *within the classroom setting*. If I were to be asked my personal position on a sensitive issue, I would reply that I would be happy to give my own personal view, as just that, and away from the classroom setting.

The instructional design includes not only the interpretive and critical theories, but is combined with a case study method. Where behavior cannot be controlled or manipulated, as in contemporary events, the case study method is appropriate (Merriam, 1988). In observing the case study, it will require the development of a stage of multiplicity as it involves human perceptions and values. As Merriam puts it: Because the primary instrument in qualitative case study research is human, all observations and analyses are filtered through one's worldview, one's values, one's perspectives. (Merriam, 1988, p. 39).

The imaginative leap to gain insight into another identity requires some insight into one's own identity. Merriam calls this conceptual leap a "...discovery of new meaning...", or a heuristic approach (Merriam, 1988, p.13). It seems doubtful that such insight could be taught: one can only provide a safe learning environment where there is no insecurity, fear of ridicule or worst of all judgment to be made silently for use at a later date.

#### **D. PBL Context and Application**

Problem-based learning has a long pedigree from the Ancient Greeks, through Dewey, to medical and health schools from the 1970s to the present day, and has been defined as "an instructional method that challenges students to 'learn to learn,' working cooperatively in groups to seek solutions to real world problems" (Duch, 2000, p.1). PBL has been first contrasted with *Traditional Instruction*, where students prepare for a class by reading from a syllabus, and secondly with *The Case Method of Instruction*, where the instructor has formulated for prior distribution a list of question topics. (Bridges, 1992, p. 4-5). A checklist of defining characteristics of PBL instructional strategy has been proposed by Bridges (1992, p. 5-6), and *Race and Ethnic Politics* can be measured for fit: *The starting point for learning is a problem, that is, a stimulus for which a student lacks a ready response*. *Race and Ethnic Politics* poses a problem: why order/conflict? I would note; this is a perennial problem of political science, as exemplified by selecting the title of "Order and Conflict" for the XVIIth World Congress of the International Political Service Association in 1997, though of course, political science must deal with many other types of problems as well.

*The problem is one that students are apt to face as future professionals*. Students in Political Science will face problems of order and conflict in many different future professional contexts, including the diplomatic, NGO, overseas business and law. The course also has accreditation as part of a major in Police Studies.

*The knowledge that students are expected to acquire during their professional training is organized around problems rather than disciplines.* *Race and Ethnic Politics* is a problem-based branch of Political Science in contrast with, for example, Political Thought or Political Psychology in which the discipline itself is the focus of teaching and learning. In the case of the latter sub-disciplines there would be an expectation of familiarity with a canon of literature, whereas in the former, expectation would be of knowledge and use of skills.

*Students individually and collectively assume a major responsibility for their own instruction and learning.* *Race and Ethnic Politics* would meet this criterion subject to the constraints imposed by the Faculty of Arts of the University of Tasmania. There is for example a requirement that students attend two-thirds of all classes, unless expressly given permission not to, though in practice, this rule is not strictly enforced, particularly now that the University is moving towards flexible delivery of courses.

*Most learning occurs within the context of small groups rather than lectures.* In regard to this criterion, *Race and Ethnic Politics* does not fit, as it retains the Traditional Instruction mode for its required sequence of 26 lecture/workshops. (The workshops would allow for some small group learning but until now they have been used for whole group discussion of video presentations). On the basis of the above criteria, *Race and Ethnic Politics* would qualify for partial and limited PBL application.

Two distinct approaches to PBL have been identified: *Problem-Stimulated Learning*, where the problem and problem-solving materials have been structured, and *Student-Centered Learning*, where the instructor plays a much less prominent, but resource role (Bridges, 1992, p. 6-8). With regard to *Race and Ethnic Politics*, where students are only in their second or third year of university, I believe the former model is more appropriate. At a higher level, such as Master of Public Administration, where I also have an involvement, the approach would be much more student-centered, though there is a continuum between the two approaches.

Each of the six tutorial classes, of between 16 and 20 participants (a number which is far from ideal), is a problem-stimulated exercise. In the allocated time of 50 minutes, students will listen to two or three 10 minute presentations covering such topics as perception of race and ethnicity – favorable or unfavorable? Why stratification? Why is there civil war in Sri Lanka? Why does genocide occur? Why do societies construct order on the basis of race or ethnicity?

The particular focus of the PBL approach in this course is the simulated Ethnic Conflict exercise which is held in the last workshop period of the course. The concept of *simulation* as an educational technique has a very long history. Ancient China had a war game called *Wei-Hei* (encirclement). Ancient India initiated the game for which chess was derived in the Middle Ages, while the Prussians had war games at their *Kriegsakademie*. A simulation is distinguished from a game in that a game has predetermined rules and winners and losers, while in a simulation, goals may not be explicit or even known (Seidner, 1978). Simulations are often role plays, and in psychotherapy this is an important technique in which the individual acts out certain roles or incidents in the presence of a therapist and often other persons who may also be members of a therapy group. The procedure is based on the assumption that the role play allows the person to express troublesome emotions and inner conflicts in the protected environment of a therapeutic stage (Reber, 1995, p. 614).

Simulations can have a valuable use in education and have been in law schools (Moots Court), business schools and schools of diplomacy. Simulation in ethnic conflict resolution is used in the Program on Negotiation (PON) at the Harvard Law School (Program on Negotiation, 2002), in the War and Peace in Africa course at the University of California, Los Angeles (Sklar, 2002), and in war schools such as Shirokiy Lan where Ukrainian, Polish and UK peacekeeping troops participated in 1997 (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 1997), to name just several examples. A very useful academic study of training in ethnic conflict resolution using a simulation technique is that of Searle-White (2001).

### **The PBL Ethnic Conflict Simulation Exercise**

The PBL approach I have introduced in *Race and Ethnic Politics* had two aspects: a problem focus for the presentation and discussion in each tutorial, and a simulated ethnic conflict exercise which students had been told some weeks before to prepare for by examining some real world situations of ethnic conflict. The design of the exercises was distilled from a number of sources, including the literature on simulation, notably Saunders and Cox (1997), but what would have been the most useful text (Searle-White, 2001) only came to attention after the exercise had been completed. The simulated conflict exercise was held 0900 to 0955, May 15, 2002, in Room 208 of the Arts Building of the University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay Campus. Twenty-eight students participated. After a brief introduction, the opportunity to leave without prejudice was made, but no-one decided to leave the room. The students were requested to form two simulated ethnic groups called 'Homelanders' and 'Intruders', and one neutral group of negotiators called 'Norwegians,' (after the negotiators in the Sri Lanka conflict). The groups were given about 15 minutes to see if they could find a leader and prepare some assertions for use in the forthcoming confrontation.

The Norwegians were also requested to find a leader and to prepare negotiating strategies. The three groups re-entered the classroom and the ethnic conflict began. After a little initial resistance, some accusations and insults began to flow. The concerned rights (to possess homeland, to enter and reoccupy), cultural stereotypes (lazy, greedy, unworthy), and insults about religion, food, and moral behavior. Then followed threats: to desecrate holy places, to drive the intruders out, and to take complete control. Though death threats and threats of physical violence are often part of ethnic conflict, the simulation did not reach this point. However, participants were able to observe directly and very realistically how quickly conflict generated and escalated to a situation out of control and how an identity quickly emerged on each side. As part of the confrontation, group membership tended to be enforced. I was advised later that leaders had been appointed, without election or argument, in all three groups. At around 15 minutes into the conflict, I asked the negotiators to become involved. They suggested a number of strategies and attempted to persuade the conflicting parties to come to the negotiating table but without noticeable success. The results of a survey which was administered and processed by Ms Joanne Bull, Administrative Assistant, School of Government, are presented as in Part II A below.

### **Part II: Student Understanding**

#### **Evidence of students achieving the learning objectives**

##### Problem-Based Learning Ethnic Conflict Simulation Exercise

The information collected will be used to help make a decision about using the program in the future. All the information collected will remain completely anonymous. The survey should only take a few minutes to complete. Use the back of the sheet if you wish to write any additional comment you may care to make. Please circle the best answers.

##### Part I: The Conflict

Do you think that fear is a causal factor in ethnic conflict?

1...27...Yes (96.5%) 2...1...No (3.5%) 3...0...Not Sure (0%)

Do you think a sense of past affront is a causal factor in ethnic conflict?

1...26...Yes (93%) 2...1...No (3.5%) 3...1...Not Sure (3.5%)

Do you think one ethnic group's culture can ever be proven to be intrinsically superior to another?

1...1...Yes (3.5%) 2...23...No (82%) 3...4...Not Sure (14.5%)

##### Part II: Resolution Strategies

Do you think ethnic conflict can ever be resolved without external intervention?

1...11...Yes (39%) 2...10...No (10%) 3...7...Not Sure (7%)

Do you think ethnic conflict can ever be resolved without independent arbitration of past affronts?

1...6...Yes (22%) 2...18...No (64%) 3...4...Not Sure (14%)

Do you think ethnic conflict can ever be resolved without some externally imposed 'rules of engagement'?  
1...8...Yes (28.5%) 2...12...No (43%) 3...8...Not Sure (28.5%)

Do you think ethnic conflict can ever be resolved without some externally imposed 'equality of sacrifice' at the negotiating table?

1...7...Yes (25%) 2...13...No (46.5%) 3...8...Not Sure (28.5%)

Do you think widespread international media coverage of a conflict impedes resolution attempts?

1...12...Yes (43%) 2...9...No (32%) 3...7...Not Sure (25%)

Part III: Overall Assessment

Has the simulation exercise given you any new insight into your own identity?

1...14...Yes (50%) 2...6...No (21.5%) 3...8...Not Sure (28.5%)

What is your opinion of the value of this problem-based learning simulation exercise?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Valuable	Slightly Valuable	Somewhat Valuable	Valuable	Very Valuable
0 (0%)	3 (11%)	6 (21%)	16 (57%)	3 (11%)

### ***Thank you for your cooperation.***

Note: this survey was collected and processed by Joanne Bull, Administrative Assistant, School of Government, University of Tasmania.

The findings from the survey on the outcome of the PBL Simulated Ethnic Conflict Exercise was 100% of the participants felt the simulation was a valuable exercise, ranging from 'slightly valuable' (11%), through 'somewhat valuable' (21%), 'valuable' (57%), to 'very valuable' (11%). In conversations later, many students advised me that they had come to realize the complexity of the problem of ethnic conflict, and that identity constructs, even if simulated, can unleash powerful emotions. They also endorsed most of the proposed resolution strategies, and found they needed a multi-pronged approach to the problem.

This is consistent with the literature of PBL. For example, the Learning Tree of San Diego State University and California State University have noted that "complex problems offer many advantages over simple problems. First, complexity insures that there is no 'one right answer'" (Learning Tree, 1996, p. 2).

The survey and subsequent discussion became the major PBL related assessment of the course, and of the PBL Ethnic Conflict Simulation. Another PBL related assessment occurred with the 5% of the total course grade's tutorial performance assessment. Additional grading criteria included a major written assignment, an essay of 2000-2500 word length, which accounted for 40% of the total grade and a 2 hour final examination (50%).

Another tool used to evaluate the course was the official Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning (SETL) survey which looks at the actual course unit and the lecturer. This instrument is administered under strict conditions by Student Administration, and is a well respected instrument developed by the University of Queensland. SETL results for *Race and Ethnic Politics* in 2002 are included in Appendix A. Although there is a possibility of including questions relating to PBL, the SETL survey forms were prepared before I was aware that I would be working with Samford University PBL. Appendix B contains the course outline for HAS 201/301 *Race and Ethnic Politics*.

### **Reflection on the evidence of student learning**

The above indicators; gives me confidence that my course is meeting its overall objectives. As to meeting the PBL outcomes and objectives according to the Samford criteria (Samford University, 2000, p. 1), my course does involve problem-solving and self-directed learning skills, and requires students to locate and use appropriate resources, promotes critical thinking, builds upon previous knowledge,

encourages self-motivation, provides opportunities for students to work in teams, and enhance their communication skills.

As it is acceptable in a PBL reflection to make a personal confession (Cerbin, 1994, p. 5), I will confess that I could possibly do more to encourage more independent PBL and group PBL learning activity. On the spectrum between teaching/learning (Cerbin, 1994, p. 2), I could shift the course away from the teaching end a little more towards the learning end, even though this would be more time consuming. Still, the PBL survey, in conjunction with essays, tutorial performance and examination papers, convinced me that the students have gained knowledge of the challenge of peacefully, creatively and constructively incorporating communities of differing race and/or ethnicity into one state. The key to this problem is in gaining insight into other identities. This is best achieved when one gains and secures insight into one's own identity, and the course has taken students some way towards achieving this objective.

#### **Part IV: Reflective Summary of the Course**

*Race and Ethnic Politics* (HSA 201/301) at the University of Tasmania introduces students to the politics of race and ethnicity, through concepts and theories such as sociology of knowledge and identity, to some case studies, concluding with general conclusions and practical observations about conflict resolution strategies. Through a study of the literature of teaching controversial issues, and an awareness of Perry's stages of intellectual and ethical development, the course must navigate a path through the minefield of insecurities about identity. It does this in three ways: first, by selecting case studies well removed from the probable personal background of the students, second, by recommending that students, in their selection of essay and tutorial presentation topics, take cases other than from their own personal background, and third, through the use of a PBL-inspired simulated ethnic conflict between fictitious groups.

The three survey instruments (two official SETL surveys and one PBL survey) indicate a measure of success in achieving the desired outcomes, and therefore, PBL does have a valid application in the teaching of the course *Race and Ethnic Politics*.

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### **Appendix A: Results of Student Teaching and Learning Evaluations**

<http://www.utas.edu.au/government/bostock/teachpage1.jpg>

<http://www.utas.edu.au/government/bostock/teachpage2.jpg>

### **Appendix B: Course Outline HAS 201/301 Race and Ethnic Politics**

(<http://www.utas.edu.au/government/bostock/bostock.html>).

#### Appendix C: Selected Section of Student Essays

Part of Student Essay: Sample A. *"Discuss the relationship between power and stratification with particular reference to formalised systems such as slavery"*.

"Systems of collective social rank," claims Berreman, "whether ascribed or acquired, are systems for retaining privilege among the powerful and power among the privileged, reserving and maintaining vulnerability, oppression, and want for those upon whom it can be imposed with minimal risk while retaining their services and their deference<sup>1</sup>". Power is the differential ability of people to command the obedience of others, to influence them, or to secure a high proportion of the resources of their society<sup>2</sup>. Wherever people have lived together, one of their primary concerns has been the relative distribution of resources. Power and privilege have always been accorded to some people in every group<sup>3</sup>, whether because of sheer physical strength, control over resources, command of weapons, social prestige, or dominance of an administrative or bureaucratic hierarchy. It may be reflected in prestige, the ability to influence others, psychological dominance, or overt commands. This differentiation in power is the fundamental basis of social stratification.

Part of Student Essay: Sample B. *"Discuss the relationship between power and stratification with particular reference to formalized systems such as slavery"*.

Slavery has been demonstrated to be a flexible and enduring social institution, enmeshing an estimated 27 million victims in spite of a comprehensive legal framework of prohibition. Traditions of chattel slavery, debt bondage and exploitative child labor have been adapted to contemporary conditions, and trafficking networks controlled by organized crime thrive in an increasingly global society. Domestic and international legal sanctions have been shown to be ineffective controls over the social realities of slavery. Legal constraints are undermined at every level of social organization, by the social power of masters over slaves, cultural traditions of stratification facilitating exploitation of those with low status, structural

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<sup>1</sup> Gerald D. Berreman, "Race, Caste and Other Invidious Distinctions in Social Stratification, *Race* XIII, 4 (April 1972), p.400

<sup>2</sup> William McCord, Arline McCord, *Power and Equity: An Introduction to Social Stratification* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), p.viii

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xv

economic incentives, and the lack of reliable enforcement of international law. Laws on paper cannot stop any social practice without effective complementary mechanisms of social control. Slavery is no exception, and will continue until social change allows legal prohibition to be reinforced rather than undermined by social organization.