

Div Lit Week 2: Orientation and some framing concepts:
Social Construction and Intersectionality

Discussion 2: Exploring constructions of “African”

1. Objectives of class:

- Explore the idea of social construction
- Explore the construction of “African”
- Explore the intersectionality of “African” and race
- Develop an understanding that there are “things at stake” (i.e. relationships of power) in these constructions

2. Material:

- **Mbeki, T. (1998). I am an African: The Time has come. Tafelberg: Cape Town (p. 31-36)**
- **Image of white person (Gwyneth Paltrow & Sarah Jessica Parker work well) from Iman’s “I am African” Campaign.** Access at http://keepachildalive.org/i_am_african/i_am_african.html

3. Method:

Ask students to discuss the following questions (it is useful to create handouts with the questions for them):

- How is “African” being constructed in each of these instances?
- How does “African” intersect with race in each case?
- What are the similarities?
- What are the differences?
- What’s at stake in each of these constructions?