Keeping a Straight Poker Face: Managing Race & Politics Abroad

The Forum on Education Abroad Conference 2016
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Goals & Objectives

• Explore how contemporary U.S. domestic issues may influence students’ experiences abroad with their peers, host community, and family/friends at home.
• Review one campus’ experience with leading diverse students on international programs.
• Explore one student’s experience with managing race and politics during study abroad.
• Discuss the audience’s experience with related topics and issues.
Theoretical Framework

And what’s with the title?
Identity development tied to and intersects with learning and cognitive development in college students.
- Experiences and encounters with others
- Situating self with the environment
- Reciprocal relationship between environment and the student

- Racial and ethnic identity
  - Educational psychology (e.g., Phinney)
  - Double consciousness (Du Bois)

- Student engagement with social issues
  - Conscientization (Freire)
Layered Experiences of Study Abroad

- Local cultural context
- Peer interactions
- Family and friends at home
Institutional Case Study

Ohio State University, Robert Bennett, III
Afro-Brazilian Culture and History

Higher Education in Brazil
Afro-Brazilian Culture and History

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Higher Education in Brazil
Explore Issues Regarding Socioeconomic Status
“They are so poor, but so happy.”
“When in Brazil...
...do as the Brazilians do.”
Sports: A Universal Language
Sports: A Universal Language
Sports: A Universal Language
Speedos and Thongs Can Change Worldview: Body Politics
Student Experience

Lindsey Burgess, Spelman College
Large Group Discussion

- Audience experience
- Questions
How do we manage inclusion efforts in the era of political and racial tension in the U.S.?

How do we address the concerns of some students who may wonder why they should go abroad amidst so many domestic issues?

What are some approaches to pre-departure and on-site orientation/materials that support healthy, adaptive in-country strategies.
Thank you!