

## Think Tank #1 ideas posted around the room

### Instructor Responses

“I am constantly excited by how my students find ways in which diversity is already an integral part of their writing, identity, education, and sense of direction.”

“Students assume that the multiple instances of power have little if anything to do with them—especially if they are not directly identified with the group.”

“Coming to grips with the issues arising out of diversity can be challenging. Some students have been brought up in very sheltered environments where they’re never had to confront or even experience racial discrimination. Some haven’t come into conflict with people from other economic backgrounds. ”

“There’s humor, too—and some light bulb moments. We viewed the film, “New World Borders” and the majority of students were in favor of tougher enforcement at the borders. I kept trying to return the discussion to ‘who is to blame for the immigration?’ (which is the question the film returns to over and over). I also asked a question—If these undocumented aliens were ‘breaking the law,’ could I help them—say drive out into the hills in my mini-van and give them food and water. I wouldn’t drive them into San Diego—just feed them. Almost unanimously the class said that would be wrong. I asked if these undocumented aliens made it across the border without my help, would they hire them as nannies, and/or gardeners, housekeepers. And they thought that would be okay. And finally, they began to see a disconnect. And after a little laughter, we took another look at what is not simply a black/white issue. For the first time, they (most students) were willing to ‘see’ what the film was saying about who is responsible...to be continued.”

“I wonder at the avoidance of conflict in the classroom—particularly by teachers uncomfortable with either silence or the voice of student confusion, anger, reaction.”

“I’m most excited about the possibilities for change, the possibilities for revolution, and the promises...in whatever forms.”

“I’m concerned that next semester the HillTV incidents will seem like a distant memory, and the campus will have forgotten.”

“I’ve been thinking about Minnie Bruce’s comment about class being a harder discussion on campus.”

“Who can be identified as a victim? What kinds of criteria are involved?”

“How can we confront diversity directly without further entrenching students in their attitudes of resistance? Why does the immediacy of a problem such as HillTV not serve as a catalyst for change—at least to the extent we might hope?”

“The new learning outcomes ask us to balance and confront the personal and political. It asks me to take very seriously notion of ‘truth.’ The difficulty is in getting students to actually care about diversity—to develop a critical consciousness in an un-superficial way. I think/fear my students aren’t thinking about these issues. How can I/we get them to consider diversity—race, gender, class, sexuality—in a way that lasts?”

“The new 105 curriculum challenges me everyday to find meaning in the messy, unruly, complex swirl that arises as my students and I explore issues of difference. And, those issues demand analysis and claim-making from students—the absence of ‘ideas’ is much more evident now.”

#### HillTV

##### Institutional Response

Division of Newhouse and elsewhere in university

Free speech

Use of university resources: Who decides?

##### Community Response

Post-Standard summaries/updates/letters to editors

How university issues are viewed by community (What’s the investment? What’s at stake?)

##### Alumni Response

Mostly against Cantor decision

“These are kind of considerations new curriculum puts pressure on. Challenges students to think about complexities of these kind of issues—the various audiences, tensions, and asks them to place themselves (even temporarily) somewhere.”

“Response-able. I worry that we, students and teachers, live lives of quiet detachment, focused on getting through the day, watching a little TV, gossiping about who Jennifer’s date, and raging vaguely about the way things are. So...how do we answer the world, find a place, be a person who acts, find something larger than ourselves? Why does it matter? How do we become response-able?”

## Student Responses

“We have discussed stereotypes in depth in WRT 195, and how our backgrounds shape our views of other people. We bring our ‘baggage’ to social situations.”

“HillTV—in bad taste, but still may be protected by 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment. Stereotypes were personified by HillTV. Could have used more tact. My friend works for HillTV, and she was telling me about how the station did not get a hearing.”

“HillTV seems to me to have turned into a discussion of black v. white—but so many other groups were affected, i.e. women, Indians, sorority girls, etc. Let’s make this discussion against stereotyping, not solely racism. WRT 195 has encompassed many discussions on diversity and opened the eyes of many students to the negative outcome of stereotyping. It is important to incorporate these discussions into a writing class to raise people’s awareness about their own beliefs and unknown stereotypes they may have. It’s refreshing to learn about these things and be able to discuss them. Usually classes are dry, not incorporating current affairs. It should be mandatory. HillTV has raised awareness about the stereotypes that exist here on the SU campus. Let’s take this out of it, and not focus primarily on the negative. Now let’s take action, educate people why the actions of HillTV are inappropriate instead of punishing them.”

“HillTV. Disbandment: Was it too much? 30 year tradition in one of the best communication schools in America. Famous alumni used it. Could result in decreased applicants to Newhouse. Resource for many students not associated with ‘Over the Hill.’”