



**OVERBURDEN CURRICULUM: PRIVILEGE**  
ONE-DAY WORKSHOP

Point Made  
FILMS



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

# PRIVILEGE WORKSHOP | 1 Day



Made in collaboration with Point Made Films.

## I. Filmmaker & Film Introduction – 10 minutes

- a. Introduce film – Why I made this film
- b. Point Made Films intro
- c. Ground Rules for Difficult Dialogue
- d. One Word Exercise Part 1 – Hillbilly

i. I have a request of you before we play the film: I want you to think about the word “hillbilly.” Let that settle in for a moment. Acknowledge the ideas, perceptions and visuals running through your mind right now.

ii. Okay, got it? We’ll have a brief discussion after the film, and of course we’ll dive in deeper tomorrow during our workshop.

## II .Play the Film – 65 minutes

## III. Large-Group Discussion – 30 minutes

- a. One Word Exercise Part 2

- i. Call out the one word you thought about when I said the word hillbilly
- b. Connect back to characters in the film
  - i. Show images of Lorelei, Betty and Rory (in Keynote)
  - ii. Give me one word when you hear Lorelei, Betty
  - iii. If whiteboard in room, write down words they say for both.
  - iv. How are Betty and Lorelei different from Rory?
  - v. These words are different than “hillbilly”?
- c. When we know people as individuals, as human beings, then we can disconnect them from the stereotypes of a region, of a place, of a race, of a socio-economic status. They become real, they become like us.
- d. Our question for you to think about over our break: How can we take this idea and apply to our lives, to our communities, and maybe more importantly to communities of people we don't know?
- e. Add'l comments, questions
- f. Facilitator notes:
  - i. We are talking about privilege - what they don't have and what they do have. How can those of us with more privilege reach out and be more inclusive?
  - ii. If questioned about the reason we'd host a workshop on white people: Throw it back to the room... I have my thoughts but anyone else want to share some thoughts on that? Let the room work it out. This discussion is just part of the equation, and it doesn't have to take away from other critical conversations about race and privilege.

#### **IV. A Place of Privilege – 120 minutes**

- a. Introduce Exercise: A Place of Privilege
  - i. Notes on how Exercise works:
    1. Before workshop begins, plan where the sorted groups will group. Organize groups by scores: 0-15, 20-35, 40-55. Participants write scores on their cards as they move forward.
    2. Participants should move forward if their reply is yes to the following questions.
    3. Participants write in their answer for each answer on card provided.
    4. The farther ahead you are/higher your score, the “thinner your bubble.” The farther back you are/the lower your score the, the more insulated you might be from mainstream American culture.
    5. At the end of the question/walk period, those farther back might have less knowledge of middle class Americans and those in the front might have more familiarity with middle and lower class Americans.
- b. A Place of Privilege Exercise (Project slides)
  - i. Did you grow up in a family in which the chief breadwinner was not in a managerial position, nor in a professional career (such as an attorney, physician, dentist, architect, engineer, scientist or college professor)?
  - ii. Have you ever held a job that caused some part of your body to hurt at the end of the day?
    1. The question applies to any part of the body that hurts because of physical labor using the large muscles. Headaches don't count, neither does carpal tunnel syndrome, nor does a sore rear end from sitting all day in front of a computer screen. Sore feet from having to stand up for long periods of time, however, do count. If you choose a workout or a stand-up desk, that does not count.
  - iii. Have you ever walked on a factory floor?
  - iv. Do you have a close friend who was an evangelical Christian?
    1. The distinguishing characteristics of evangelical Christians are belief in the historical accu

racy of both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, including especially the divinity and resurrection of Christ, and belief in the necessity of personal conversion — being “born again” — as a condition for salvation.

- v. Do you live - or have you ever lived for at least a year - in an American neighborhood in which the majority of your 50 nearest neighbors did not have college degrees?
  - 1. Answer “no” if you are thinking of a gentrifying neighborhood in which you were one of the gentrifiers.
- vi. During the last year, have you purchased domestic mass-market beer to stock your own fridge?
- vii. Have you ever attended a meeting of a Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club or union local?
  - 1. It is not enough just to have belonged to a union. You have to have actually attended a meeting in order to answer “yes.”
- viii. Have you ever participated in a parade not involving global warming, a war protest or gay rights?
- ix. Since leaving school, have you ever worn a uniform?
  - 1. Wearing a uniform in a dramatic production or on Halloween does not count.
- x. In the last 15 years, have you hitchhiked or ridden on a long-distance bus (e.g., Greyhound) for a trip of 50 miles or more?
- xi. BONUS QUESTION: Do you know what military ranks are denoted by these five insignia? (Show images and reveal answers in next slide.)

- c. Everyone tally your answers - then everyone sort into three different groups: 0-15,20-35, 40-55.
- d. Hold up signs so people can sort into their groups.
- e. Explain why we are sorting into groups - to reveal from where our answers are formed. This is the context from where their answers and comments are coming.
- f. What we try to do is try and allow the last comments to be from the group elder - just trying to show some deference to experience. So if you have someone here who like the role of elder, then you can choose.
- g. Small-Group Discussion Set-up – 2 min
- h. Select X number of people from each group to gather into groups of people from varying bubbles.
- i. Small-Group Discussion Prompts – 2 min each
  - i. (Possibly choose opening question based off of the discussion the night before.)
  - ii. In the film Bill Price says: “If the coal companies are so good for us, why are we so poor?” What do you think the answer is to that question?
  - iii. How do you think Betty would respond to Bill’s question?
  - iv. What were your initial impressions of Betty when the film began?
  - v. How did those perceptions change by the end? Why do you think they changed?
  - vi. With whom do you relate to the most in the film and why?
  - vii. As both Betty and Lorelei explain in the film, access to jobs is a major issue. As Lorelei says, “We live in a mono economy.” How might that idea affect how folks in Appalachia think politically?

viii. VIDEO: Play clip of George Lakoff interview – Identity “If something comes in and doesn’t fit your “higher truth” and you happen to know it’s a lie it doesn’t matter because the higher truth that defines your very identity is more important.”

1. Do you know people in your life, in your family, in your community that fit this description? If so, how do you communicate with them?



ix. SLIDE: Show slide of Two Americas from The New York Times.

1. The Big Question: There are two Americas; what can we do about it?

2. But how do we do that? What are the tools we need to lessen the gap? What do you all think?

x. VIDEO: Play clip of George Lakoff interview – Care – (2 min): Encountering grandfather. Don’t fight. Your grandfather loves you. Ask question: What is he most proud of that he’s done for other people without any consideration for himself? Only talk about those things. And keep talking to him about what it means to him. That activates care and nurturing in his brain.

1. Now, what can we do with that idea? How can activating care and nurturance lead to change?

## V. Large-Group Discussion – 30 minutes

- You watched the movie earlier, you did this exercise, you discussed these ideas, so how are you feeling right now?
- Are there any points made in the film or in the Small-group discussion that you want to discuss?
- What more can middle class/upper white people do to change that course?

## VI. Conclusion and Resources – 15 minutes

- Final question: What can we do intellectually, morally, emotionally, spiritually to lessen the gap?
- Resources and more information

*“One of the things cognitive science teaches us is that when people define their very identity by a worldview, or a narrative, or a mode of thought, they are unlikely to change—for the simple reason that it is physically part of their brain, and so many other aspects of their brain structure would also have to change; that change is highly unlikely.”*

– George Lakoff, Cognitive Scientist