

How Racist Are You?

In Jane Elliot's recent experiment her aim was to show white people who typically had blue eyes how it felt to be victimised and manipulated. Jane Elliot uses interesting methods to work her results such as; Editing techniques, the setting of where the experiment took place and the language in general.

For the background setting and scenery, Jane Elliot uses posters on the wall with bold statements such as "GO HOME BLUEYS". Many posters alike this one, can have a very daunting, unwanted effect. Another aspect of the experiment involved in the scenery is the waiting area. The brown eyed were left in a large room with plenty of comfortable seats where as the blue eyed were left to wait for 2 hours in a small room consisting of only 4 chairs with roughly 15 of them there. In my opinion things like this would give Jane Elliot the manipulation results she wanted from doing something like this.

The editing of the video footage did a great job of highlighting the impacts and comparisons especially. The cameras did a great job of capturing the expressions on peoples faces from both the blue and brown eyed groups. What the editing did well was to highlight the comparisons. For example during the video, when a bold statement has just been said by somebody, the faces of the blue eyed and brown eyed can be compared quickly between one another for the maximum effect of the situation.

From the moment the volunteers walked into the experiment, Jane Elliot had started manipulating them. After minutes of meeting them, she already started to single out the blue eyed, scrutinising their physical appearance. This gave off a cold effect straight away and started to manipulate the blue eyed. On the other hand, the brown eyed were given a warm welcome. Right in front of the blue eyed. All of these little things, Jane Elliot had clearly planned out making a subtle introduction to next couple of hours.

In comparison to Jane Elliot's original pseudo-experiment in 1968. In which she used children aged eight. Although the experiment was a lot less uncontrolled compared to her most recent experiment. The output was roughly the same. After manipulating the blue eyed by taking away and demoting them such as shortening break times and leaving class last, she managed to turn them on each other. Blue eyed against brown eyed despite them possibly being friends the day before.

However in her most recent experiment, Jane's Elliot's simple manipulation techniques had the blue eyed on the edge. What I personally found interesting was the way some of the blue eyed reacted to some of the

statements said by the brown eyed. I remember one of the brown eyed black men said he felt afraid to pick up his daughter from school because he is a black and she is the only black in her school. He is concerned about what other people and parents perceive of him and his daughter because he is black. But the main thing that really stood out, from what the blue eyed said in response to statements such as the previous one, was that they were also affected like that by being born as a blue eyed white being. The impression being given off was that the white people were protecting the system in a way.

What I found incredible was at the end of the experiment, when people were given an opportunity to talk to the camera without being interrupted. Their views of what they thought the brown eyed people suffered with were very corrupted compared to reality and how severely they are treated in our culture.

To conclude, Jane Elliot, made some strong statements in her experiment and I'm sure it had a positive effect on many of the white people a little less lenient to racism. The video was well constructed and edited cleverly to maximise the effects of the key moments.