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Sci-fi, Horror and The Three Step Program

Racial Identity, Racial Hierarchy and Hybridity in The Shadow Over Innsmouth and I Am Legend

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Abstract
This essay is a study regarding the use of H.P. Lovecraft’s *Shadow over Innsmouth*, Richard Matheson’s *I am Legend* and Joel M. Sipress’s three step program when working along the theme of race in the classroom. The study supports the argument that it is possible to successfully incorporate these two Sci-fi/Horror novels in a pedagogical context when working with race. To further strengthen this argument I am going to look closer at three terms, which will serve as the essay’s theoretical focus points, and investigate how they can be used to explain the content of the works and their understanding of race. These three terms are racial identity, racial hierarchies and hybridity.

I am going to discuss the possibilities regarding how and why one could practically apply the two novels when working with Joel M. Sipress’s three-step strategy in the classroom. The reason behind my decision to focus my essay on this is because I want to explore the possibility for meaningly using these less-mainstream genres in a pedagogical context.
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Introduction

As a future teacher I am a strong advocate of making the school environment and the means of education appealing to students’ interests. If teachers can succeed in bringing elements into school that the students can relate to as well as find joy in, I believe that we have come a long way in making their education more effective.

In this essay, I am going to discuss the potential that the two horror novels *The Shadow over Innsmouth* by H.P. Lovecraft and *I Am Legend* by Richard Matheson have when it comes to working with racial themes in school. These works both touch upon the subjects and themes of fear of the unknown, racial identity, and racial hybridity as well as the idea of changing the order of the world’s racial hierarchy. The purpose of this essay is to show that it is possible to apply this type of fiction in the classroom when teaching racial themes. Not only can the themes and subjects of these fictional works be tied to aspects of race that we are confronted with in our non-fictional lives, but also because this type of fictional literature may appeal to many students in schools today. Part of the purpose of this essay is to explore the themes within the two chosen works that can be applied to race pedagogy to help students question the attitudes and assumptions they may have about race.

The two novels I have worked with might not be the most obvious or conventional choices when working with racial themes in the classroom. One reason being that both authors are Caucasian males as well as one of them actually being openly racist. One might think that choosing novels written by minority authors, for example, would be more appropriate. Despite this I believe that through delicate and creative teaching the pedagogical potential that lies within these novels will be revealed. For example, these two specific novels will be able to serve as historical documents, helping the students to gain knowledge about the time period in which they were written. They can also be used with the purpose of teaching students about sympathy and tolerance towards racial minorities. Although, using two Caucasian authors, one having, to say the least, unsympathetic views towards other races, will of course require carefully directed pedagogy with a clear purpose. Furthermore, the non-conventional nature of this material might also be what makes it a productive resource in the classroom, encouraging students to use critical as well as creative thinking.

Personally, I have been fascinated by the horror genre all my life and I believe it is worthwhile to see past the pure entertainment that they can offer, and also see the pedagogical possibilities that lie in novels such as *Shadow over Innsmouth* and *I am Legend*. Since they also belong to sub-cultural genres what they can offer will also differentiate from more mainstream works. The content of these novels is quite dark and in many ways suited for a mature audience. The pedagogical aim of this essay is thereby primarily focused towards students at a gymnasia level.
**Theory**

Racial Identity, Racial Hierarchy and Hybridity will be the three main theoretical focus points of this essay. From a pedagogical point of view, I am also going to look closer at a three-step strategy constructed and used by Joel M. Sipress. Sipress constructed this strategy to help his students approach the subject of race in a more open minded manner. This strategy will serve as a framework for how to practically apply the two chosen novels when teaching race in the classroom. The two novels were chosen as a tool with the intention of creating a debate regarding racial issues in the classroom.

**The Three-step Strategy**

In his quest to help his students reach a new racial paradigm in which racial identity is seen as a social and cultural construction rather than a biological fact, teacher Joel M. Sipress (1997) came up with a three step strategy that he applied to teaching in his classroom. He discusses the importance of raising awareness and the relevance of pushing assumptions about racial awareness to another level.

The discussion of race in our classrooms reflects attitudes and assumptions that are deeply rooted in the broader American culture. Students and professors alike carry with them a lifetime of experience that teaches us to see racial categories as self-evident and fixed. Before we can see race as a cultural construction, we must first undergo a paradigm shift, both in ourselves and our students (Sipress, 176).

According to Sipress, it is when one challenges minds beyond these attitudes and assumptions that the above mentioned paradigm shift can be facilitated. He says that teachers must provide tools and guide students through the process of constructing new understandings of the deeply-rooted thoughts and opinions about race that exist in our society (176).

The first step in the three-step strategy is to introduce doubt. Sipress points to a concrete example that touches on the subject of things not being as simple and straightforward as they initially seem: Susie Phipps, a Louisiana woman, filed in 1982 a lawsuit to be declared legally white. The woman appeared to be white but during the inquiry it was found out that her great-great-great grandmother was an African slave, and Susie Phipps was therefore ruled to be legally black (176-178). Sipress states that working with cases like Susie Phipps’s in the classroom can help raise students’ awareness about the fact that racial identity is not always as simple and clear as it seems.

The second step of the strategy is to demonstrate the historical fluidity of racial categories. Sipress states that analyzing and examining how race has been categorized and classified in the past will provide more insight and enlightenment to the students. The functional purpose of this second step is to aid the students in reaching the realization that “racial identity is neither given nor self-evident” (180), but that it in fact is the constructed result of a social and cultural process. As an example, Sipress mentions colonial history and the Catawba Indian tribe that resided in South Carolina. This tribe did not think in terms of black and white when it came to race, and assumed that Africans and Europeans were all part of the one and same alien culture. Sipress explains how the gradual integration of the Catawba tribe into a racist society resulted in them being influenced by it and subsequently developing a racist worldview of their own (180).

The third and final step of the three-step strategy is to analyze the factors that shape racial identity. According to Sipress, the new racial paradigm that he seeks to reach is not supposed to lead to the debunking of the concept of race. Instead he wants it to function as means to better understand the fact that “the evolution of racial identity can be subjected to
the same type of rational analysis as any other historical phenomenon” (180). When it comes to this final step, Sipress recommends having the students work with a variety of different case studies, models and theories regarding race. The subject of race is highly relevant and can clearly be applied within the Swedish school system as well since the past decades have seen increasing immigration to Sweden, particularly from non-white populations. There is value in trying to gain a broader perspective and understanding of race even when it isn’t a question of one’s immediate surroundings, since it does involve empathy, seeing through the eyes of the other and being able to see beyond one’s immediate context.

**Racial Identity**

Racial and cultural identity can sometimes be difficult to define. Simone Drichel (2008) discusses how racial and cultural identity is a rather problematic concept; she writes about the complexity regarding defining colonized people´s identities in terms of their cultures, since it usually refers to a culture of the past (593). Drichel states that this results in the colonized people being robbed of their authentic contemporary cultural identity. Within this chapter I am using racial identity within an African-American context as exemplary.

Robert Sellers et al. (1998) describe two approaches to African American racial identity: one mainstream approach and one underground approach. The former implies that living in a racist environment will have negative consequences on the psyche of African Americans. It will force them to either devalue aspects of themselves that remind them of the stigma of being an African American, or devalue the broader society for its prejudice against them (20). The latter approach implies that the African Americans´ conceptions of themselves is not necessarily damaged by racial oppression, but rather that this racial oppression played a significant role in the development of African Americans´ self-image. Thereby Sellers et al. imply that the stigma of being devalued by the larger society ultimately led to African Americans being unable to forge a healthy, strong self-image.

Sipress (1997) talks about the importance of getting students to understand that racial identity can be analyzed in the same way as other various historical phenomena. According to Sipress racial identity is not random and arbitrary, but in fact something that can be subjected to rational analysis (180).

Beverly Daniel Tatum (1992) taught an undergraduate course on the psychology of racism. She used five central assumptions and guidelines when talking and teaching about racism. The first assumption is that racism is a pervasive aspect of U.S. socialization and that it is impossible not to be exposed to some aspect of racism when living in U.S. society. The second assumption is that prejudice and racism need to be distinguished from each other. To distinguish them, though, is not to say that one is more acceptable than the other. The third assumption is that the system of advantage, in the context of U.S. society, clearly operates to benefit whites as a group. The fourth assumption is that we cannot be held accountable for the prejudice and racism inherent in our environments when we were children. Thereby, we cannot be blamed for learning what we were taught, intentionally or unintentionally. Yet as adults, we have the responsibility to seek out more accurate information and adjust our behavior accordingly. The fifth assumption tells us that change, individual as well as institutional, is possible (3-4).

According to Tatum a problem may or may not occur when attention in the classroom is focused upon the subject of race. Her own experience showed that it is very hard to discuss the subject of race without touching upon racism.
Racial Hierarchy
W.E.B. Du Bois (2001) defines the word race as “a vast family of human beings, generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and impulses” (85).

The term racial hierarchy suggests that there is an internal ranking among the existing races in the world in which some are located at the top and some at the bottom. This is a cultural phenomenon and not biological. Some of it is also place specific.

Throughout modern Western history there have been many examples of the white race being regarded as existing at the top and being the norm by which all other races are defined. Owing to the fact that white Europeans or Americans are often at the top of this hierarchy, they often are unable to discuss racial oppression from the perspective of firsthand experience. According to Darden (2009), white people will likely not feel marginalized by their race, and can often be afraid to say something that might be interpreted as ignorant or offensive: “What am I supposed to be talking about? What should I even be saying, that’s not going to be totally impolite?” (3) states Christine Sleeter, a professor emerita of education at California State University.

In other words, it is hard or even impossible for white individuals to discuss race properly since they lack the personal experience that is necessary in the subject. But if this is true, does that mean that, in order to discuss race, one is required to have suffered some type of racism? Of course not, but it does mean that some learning, especially from people who have experienced it, is necessary.

A crucial part of breaking new ground regarding the introduction of doubt amongst people is getting them to challenge and question the prejudices and norms that we can see in our society today. If one were to introduce and explore the issue of racial hierarchies in a pedagogical context, one would need to take a closer look at these racial norms in order to explore and question the true nature of them. According to Homi K. Bhabha in Olson and Worsham (1991), cultural difference is a constructed discourse that exists when aspects of power and authority are challenged. Bhabha states that cultural difference is not a natural consequence of there being different cultures around the world, but instead he means that it is “a much more problematic and sophisticated reproduction of a ritual, a habit, a trait, a characteristic” (371-372).

Racial prejudice can be a contributing factor in the social creations of racial hierarchies. In Modood and Werbner (1997), Hans-Rudolf Wicker talks about the prejudices around different cultures and how these prejudices result in turning culture into a “product of political collectivities” (34) - collectivities that use integration and marginalization to strengthen the collective that they belong to. According to Wicker, this establishes a direct link between racism and culture.

Hybridity and the fluidity of racial categories
Avtar Brah and Annie Coombes (2000) discuss the origin of hybridity as a term, and talk about how it was initially used as a biological term, to describe what would happen when crossing two plants or species. They discuss further how hybridity as a term has evolved into a key concept within cultural criticism and post-colonial theory. Brah and Coombes also talk about the varied responses regarding the interpretations of hybridity. At some points, the term has been viewed upon “in an uncritical celebration of the traces of cultural syncretism which assumes a symbiotic relationship without paying adequate attention to economic, political and social inequalities” (1). The authors discuss further how hybridity, at another level, indicates as a threat of contamination to those individuals who “espouse an essentialist notion of pure and authentic origins” (1).
In Bennet (1998), Homi Bhabha describes the “Bakhtinian hybrid” (33) as something not only possessing two voices and two accents, but also two languages and two consciousnesses. He describes how the different points of views on the world of these consciousnesses can have the ability to collide and create a struggle (33-34). Parallels can be drawn to Werbner and Modood(1997), where Alberto Melucci talks about the “multiple self” and states that our self contains a number of different components and that one, at times, can have problems with identifying with only one of them (63-64).

Nikos Papastergiadis also talks about the history of hybridity and how it primarily served as a “metaphor for the negative consequences of racial encounters” (Modood and Werbner, 258). Papastergiadis further discusses the different positive features of hybridity and mentions Bhabha’s idea of “the third space” – a space where different elements encounter and transform each other. Werbner (1997) mentions how hybridity is a term that is often substituted with ambivalence (16), thus suggesting that we are dealing with a term that revolves around issues of the co-existence of two opposite sides or attitudes. Another quote from Homi Bhabha regarding hybridity can be found in Olson and Worsham (1998), and here he defines the term as “a form of social and psychic recognition; it is an awareness of the graffings, transitions and translations through which we define our present and articulate an ethics equal to the way we live now” (Olson and Worsham, 373). The concept of Hybridity is for someone like Homi Bhabha a more positive thing than it might be for someone like H.P. Lovecraft. And since the latter is coming from a biological perspective, the two most certainly have two fundamentally different understandings regarding this concept. I will be focusing on Lovecraft’s understanding of Hybridity rather than Bhabha’s.

When it comes to the issue of racial fluidity, Sipress (1997) recommends looking to history for examples. Sipress claims that showing students how racial categories have changed throughout history and how the definition of whiteness has varied could be an eye-opening experience for them. As an example, Sipress mentions how the immigrant groups from southern and eastern Europe were not accepted as whites during the big wave of immigration that reached between 1880 and1920 (178-179). Comparing this fact with our modern day where these groups are accepted as whites, one can clearly see how fluid and changeable the racial categories are and have been throughout history. The Shadow over Innsmouth was published in 1936, and it portrays a marine race that is half human and half unknown origin. This marine race of half-bloods is the victim of prejudice and no outsiders want to have anything to do with them. Clear parallels can be drawn between this race and immigrants in different parts of the world, and the fact that the novella was published around the same time as these waves of immigration took place only makes it more interesting to look into. Especially since the marine race in H.P. Lovecraft’s novel can be interpreted as a symbolic reference to the immigrants from Europe. Also seeing how Lovecraft viewed all non-white immigrants as threatening, this would also be a characteristic the reader would apply to the marine race in the story.

The Stories
The Shadow over Innsmouth
In The Shadow over Innsmouth, a (presumably) Caucasian and nameless male, who is traveling home, takes a detour through the isolated, run-down and gloomy harbor town of Innsmouth. The town citizens are half human and half unknown creature race, and are alienated and feared by outsiders due to their strange behavior and physical appearance. The main character in the story serves as the novel’s protagonist and the story itself is told from his point of view, in his own words. This first-person perspective is very effective as the reader gets to witness the progression and personal evolution of the protagonist. By
conversing with the town drunk he learns information regarding the background of the town and its citizens. He finds out that the unknown race originates from the sea and years of mixture between the Innsmouth citizens and this race has resulted in the half breeds that are currently residing in the town. The ending of the novel reveals the main character finding out that he is in fact a relative to citizens of Innsmouth and that he actually is a member of this race.

I Am Legend
The novel centers around Robert Neville, a Caucasian male who presumably is the last human survivor of a large scale virus that turns the infected in to vampires. The story is told from a third person point of view, but still, the reader never gets more information about what is going on than the main character Neville. The narration follows Neville and his thoughts on a very personal and intimate level and when reading, one almost gets the feeling of being inside the head of Neville, thus making him the focalizer of the story.

Neville lives his life in solitude, going his through daily routines of killing vampires and studying them in order to understand them and their origin. Neville meets Ruth, whom he believes is another human survivor. She is in fact infected and has been sent as an infiltrator by the vampire race to find out more about Neville. As the story unravels, Neville in the end realizes, and accepts, that the human race is in fact on the verge of extinction, if not already extinct, and that the new race of vampires has taken the throne of the racial hierarchy within the novel.

Analysis

Racial Identity in The Shadow over Innsmouth and I am Legend
The Shadow over Innsmouth is narrated in first person, from the protagonist’s point of view. The story is told as a memory, which means that the protagonist is re-telling what he has gone through in the way that he himself remembers it. This means that in the opening of the novel, all the events of the story have already happened and the protagonist has already made his journey and gone through the personal progression that he then shares with the reader as he retells the events surrounding his visit of the town of Innsmouth. One of the most interesting factors of The Shadow over Innsmouth is that, as a reader, one gets the impression that the racial identity of the protagonist is rather predictable and one dimensional. There are no indications of his racial identity being complex or multidimensional until the very end of the novel. As the story progresses, and the reader learns learns that his racial identity is of a more complex nature, the reader, as well as the protagonist, find out that he has more things in common with the inhabitants of Innsmouth than one first would think. After leaving the town of Innsmouth and its citizens after a night of terror and fear, the protagonist starts to research his family tree only to find out that he is related to the marine race of Innsmouth. This serves as the mid-way climax of the novella and ultimately leads the reader to the end and the resolution where the main character, now several years after the Innsmouth visit, goes through a psychological as well as physical transformation and evolution. The protagonist dreams pleasant and alluring dreams of the marine race at the bottom of the sea and these dreams provide information that indicates that the marine race has existed “since before man ever walked the earth”. When looking in the mirror it shows that the protagonist is starting to aquire “the Innsmouth look”, and he also mentions how he suffers from “the slow ravages of
disease”. The ending and resolution of the story, where the protagonist evolves and ultimately accepts his fate as a member of the marine race, is from the author’s point of view a bleak ending filled with terror. Especially since H.P. Lovecraft was a man filled with racial prejudice and racist tendencies. His views on race were biological and he saw other races as biologically threatening. Part of the terror of the story’s ending therefore lies in the protagonist eventually finding out he is part of the marine race, and biology wins out.

Stupendous and unheard-of splendours await me below, and I shall seek them soon...I shall plan my cousin’s escape from that Canton madhouse, and together we shall go to marvelshadowed Innsmouth. We shall swim out to that brooding reef in the sea and dive down through black abysses Cyclopean and many-columned Y’ha-nthlei, and in that lair of the Deep Ones we shall dwell amidst wonder and glory forever (Lovecraft, 1936).

The main character has found his true racial identity and the race that in the opening course of the novel awoke feelings of disgust and horror now appeals to his true, newly awoken nature.

The town of Innsmouth and its citizens can be interpreted as representatives of darkness and all things alien from the start of the novel, and from a racial point of view, they could be portrayed as the white man’s fear of the unknown, embodied in other races. The inhabitants of Innsmouth are half human, half unknown creature marine race, hiding in the shadows and the dark corners of the town. The author’s description of the physical appearance of this race can easily be interpreted as derogatory racial slur:

Some of ’em have queer narrow heads with flat noses and bulgy, stary eyes that never seem to shut, and their skin ain’t quite right. Rough and scabby, and the sides of their necks are all shrivelled or creased up. Get bald, too, very young. The older fellows look the worst—fact is, I don’t believe I’ve ever seen a very old chap of that kind (Lovecraft, 1936).

This description is similar to the description of how Edward A. Ross saw people from southern and eastern Europe that immigrated to the United States between 1880 and 1920:

For many native-born Americans, the racial distinctions between themselves and the new immigrants were clear and obvious. Edward A. Ross, a prominent professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin, for example, spoke of the ‘narrow and sloping’ foreheads of the new immigrants and of their ‘shortness and smallness of crania.’.../The moral superiority of ‘the races of northern Europe’ over the ‘Mediterranean peoples’ was, to Ross, ‘as certain as any social fact.’ (Sipress, 179).

Parallels can here be drawn to Lovecraft and his own strong Eugenicist beliefs. The following text is taken from a letter written by Lovecraft while living in New York. The letter is written to one of his friends and clearly reflects the loathe Lovecraft felt towards the immigrants in the city:

The organic things – Italo-semitico-mongoloid – inhabiting that awful cesspool could not by any stretch of the imagination be called human. They were monstrous and nebulous adumbrations of the pithecanthropoid and amoebal; vaguely moulded from some stinking vicious slime of earth’s corruption, and slithering and oozing in and on the filthy streets or in and out of windows and doorways in a fashion suggestive of nothing but infesting worms or deep sea unnamabilities. They/.../seemed to ooze, seep and trickle through the gaping cracks of the horrible houses. (Houllebecq, 106-107)

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1 I have been using an online edition of the novella without pagination.
This quote brings to mind none other than the marine, fishlike race inhabiting the town of Innsmouth. Thus showing that the disgust and fear of the unknown was not only something that Lovecraft dealt with within his fiction, but also in his everyday life. The language used to describe the immigrants in New York, as well as the marine race in The Shadow over Innsmouth, is similar because of how dehumanizing it is. Houllbecq states that Lovecraft’s racism did not reach these extreme heights prior to his staying in New York. Before this Lovecraft’s thinking merely focused on what was accepted within his own social class. Being an Anglo-Saxon Protestant he firmly believed that he belonged at the top of the social order and that people of other origin belonged beneath him. Moving to the big city, though, seemed to affect and evolve Lovecraft’s racism, making it more similar to the type of racism depicted in his literary work.

Lovecraft did his best to “raise his Saxon stock to an unassailable position of superiority” (Lovett-Graff, 177). While doing so, he also exaggerated the image of other, inferior races, making them terrifying and threatening. In lights of these facts there lies a challenge when using Lovecraft’s work with the purpose of showing students how race is culturally rather than biologically constructed. To do so, one will have to approach the Lovecraft material from a different angle, creating sympathy for the racial others, rather than terror and fear. Nutall (2015) describes this as a scenario where “the attentional construal of the fictional world is dramatically shifted” (35). This is something that can also be applied when working with the content of I am Legend in the classroom.

Drichel (2008) brings up another aspect in regards to racial identity. She writes about how different races identities can be defined in terms of their own respective cultures (593), and this raised the question about the marine race in Innsmouth regarding whether or not there are any indications of their own individual and unique culture within the novel. A good example of this would be the jewelry worn by certain members of the marine race. The protagonist sees members of the marine race wear this jewelry, including tiaras, on the frightful night of his Innsmouth visit. He describes seeing two figures in robes, whereas one of them was wearing a “peaked diadem which glistened in the moonlight” (Lovecraft, 1936). Later, towards the end of the novel, his uncle shows him the same type of jewelry in a box belonging to his mysterious great-grandmother:

They were, he said, of very grotesque and almost repulsive design, and had never to his knowledge been publicly worn.../As my uncle began slowly and grudgingly to unwrap the things he urged me not to be shocked by the strangeness and hideousness of the designs. Artists and archaeologists who had seen them pronounced the workmanship superlatively and exotically exquisite, though no one seemed able to define their exact material or assign them to any specific art tradition. There were two armlets, a tiara, and a kind of pectoral; the latter having in high relief certain figures of almost unbearable extravagance (Lovecraft, 1936).

This jewelry being a part of the marine race’s culture and identity is apparent when looking at these quotes. With the uncle describing the jewelry as strange, hideous, grotesque, and repulsive further indicates that they are something that the humans can not relate to and does not understand.

As seen in earlier quotes above, a lot of H.P. Lovecraft’s personal views on other people were based on nothing more than racial prejudice based on mere physical appearance. The differences between the racial identities in The Shadow over Innsmouth can although be described as biological facts rather than something constructed socially or culturally. Parallels can be drawn to Sipress (1997), who discusses the relevance of pushing assumptions about racial identity to a new paradigm, especially in school. He talks about the vitality of raising
awareness regarding seeing racial identity as social and cultural constructions and not something based on biological facts (176). So, from a pedagogical point of view, why should one use work from an author (H.P. Lovecraft) who based his assumptions on race as a biological fact and also had rather unsympathetic views towards members of the non- caucasion community? Well, doing this can help students push their minds beyond general assumptions, which of course is something that one, as a teacher would want to do. H.P. Lovecraft may not be the most obvious choice if the purpose is to show how race is culturally rather than biologically constructed. But using this type of unconventional methods or tools, as well as directing it in a way to make sure that the students don't just reaffirm the author’s terrifying angle, one could help students develop a sense of sympathy for the minority, or the racial other, even in the most unlikely of circumstances. One might see that creating sympathy for the marine race would turn Lovecraft’s racist project on its head.

_I am Legend_ provides a number of interesting viewpoints on racial identity. The ending of the novel is the most striking and most powerful when it comes to one visualizing Robert Neville as a victim because of his race. He represents the remainder of the human race - a race that has now become a minority facing persecution, discrimination and ultimately, extinction:

They were doing what they had to do, albeit with unnecessary violence and seeming relish. He had killed their people and they had to capture him and save themselves. He would not fight. He’d throw himself upon the justice of their new society. When they called to him he would go out and surrender; it was his decision/…/And suddenly, he knew. They weren’t going to take him to their courts, to their justice. They were going to exterminate him. (Matheson, 150-151).

Robert Neville represents a race that no longer fits in to the new, rising society. He realizes that he has been stripped of his basic human rights, bringing to mind the people colonized by Europeans, who were robbed of their authentic cultural identities (Drichel, 593). Drichel explains how culture this way becomes associated with non-Europeans since “Europeans do not have an ethnic or cultural identity because they are…representatives of a universal human nature” (Drichel, 593). In regards to this, Drichel indicates that culture labels colonized people as an individual category – a category that restricts them from being a part of an assumed universal human nature. Carter approaches the subject from a similar point of view and states that people of color know that their racial identity is a direct result of them being classified according to their race while white people “seem to be unaware of race as a group and personal characteristic” (Fine et al, 198). Ultimately, Robert Neville also shares the same fate as the colonized people (as well many other ethnic groups in our society throughout history) in being part of a race that in the novel becomes labeled as an individual category – a category that restricts him from being a part of the assumed universal human nature that Drichel mentions. In the novel, this assumed human nature ultimately becomes something that only members of the new vampire race can relate to, since they have now become the majority and the norm, thus visualizing a scenario where the racial hierarchy gets destroyed and re-created – the creation of a new racial paradigm:

They all stood looking up at him with their white faces. He stared back. And Suddenly he thought, I’m the abnormal one now. Normalacy was a majority concept, the standard of many and not the standard of just one man/…/To them he was some terrible scourge they had never seen, a scourge even worse than the disease they had come to live with (Matheson 159).
This quote really characterizes the shift that has occurred in the novel in regards to how Robert Neville looks at his own racial identity. He goes from being human, the race that according to many theorists, does not regard or classify itself as even being a race, to suddenly being the minority, now categorized and classified according to the race he belongs to (Fine et al, 198).

**Racial Hierarchies in The Shadow over Innsmouth and I Am Legend**

Initially, within the stories, the protagonists are a representative of the human race as well as characters that the reader can relate to. If you were to adjust the perspective, like myself in the process of writing this essay, and analyze this novel from a racial point of view, these men can also be seen as the stories representative of the white race. They represent the Caucasian majority; the race that, according to Jaques (2003), is located at the very top of the global hierarchy of race. Returning to the fact that one never finds out what ethnicity the protagonist really is a part of in *The Shadow over Innsmouth*, and that one might presume that he is of Caucasian heritage, brings us back to Sipress (1997) and his discussion of the deep-rooted assumptions and preconceptions that people have when it comes to race (176). As far as I am aware there is no evidence of *I Am Legend* and its content being a racial allegory, but it still holds strong value as a tool when teaching racial themes in the classroom.

The hierarchy of race in *The Shadow over Innsmouth* is presented through the eyes of the protagonist. It is rather clear that the protagonist being Caucasian holds no value whatsoever once he enters the town of Innsmouth. From the moment that he enters the town’s borders, he immediately becomes a minority. He is alone, and the unknown surrounds him. Therefore one can say that *The Shadow over Innsmouth* challenges the idea of the white race being on top of the racial hierarchy by putting the novel’s protagonist in a place where he is seen as a racial minority. This though, as mentioned before, is part of the fundamental terror of the story. The protagonist lives in a reality where race is a biological fact that cannot be denied. This is something that contradicts the idea of race being a social or cultural construction. Although this contradiction, and the fact that *The Shadow over Innsmouth* plays with the idea of race being biologically constructed, could be a good starting point for active discussions in the classrooms. Parallels can also be drawn to Jaques (2003), who mentions the global hierarchy of race and discusses the subject of whites being the only race that does not suffer from any kind of systematic racism anywhere in the world. Even if the protagonist of the novella does not fall victim of any specific systematic racism, he still shares the feelings of loneliness and isolation that people who belong to different types of minorities within our society might feel.

When looking at Lovecraft’s description of this town and its inhabitants, one can see similarities between these and real life ghettos or slums. As a reader, one can speculate on the aspect of the town folk of Innsmouth potentially being pushed out of the white man’s society, forced to live in isolation and quarantine. The racial themes and issues in the novel are at times literal, making it easier to interpret the story from a racial point of view. When the protagonist, in an early stage of the novel, encounters the ticket station agent who provides him with the bus ticket to Innsmouth, one, as a reader, gets the first of many inferences of prejudice and racist tendencies aimed towards the town folk of Innsmouth:
But the real thing behind the way folks feel is simply race prejudice—and I don’t say I’m blaming those that hold it. I hate those Innsmouth folks myself, and I wouldn’t care to go to their town. I s’pose you know—though I can see you’re a Westerner by your talk—what a lot our New England ships used to have to do with queer ports in Africa, Asia, the South Seas, and everywhere else, and what queer kinds of people they sometimes brought back with ‘em. You’ve probably heard about the Salem man that came home with a Chinese wife, and maybe you know there’s still a bunch of Fiji Islanders somewhere around Cape Cod (Lovecraft, 1936).

This quote clearly shows how racial prejudice rules the outsiders’ view of the citizens of Innsmouth. The people of Innsmouth are looked down upon and clearly regarded as lesser worthy beings in the novel’s racial hierarchy. It is evident that people outside Innsmouth base their judgments of the town folk on prejudice and assumptions. One, as a reader, can draw parallels to our own global hierarchy of race and the racial prejudices that occur in our society. The problem, though, is that within the story, the ticket agent is right - the inhabitants of Innsmouth are sinister and terrifying. Even still, these clear themes of race prejudice make the novel very much appropriate to use in the classroom when teaching race. One could, for example, introduce Mark Fisher (2016) and his thoughts on Lovecraft and the concept of the “weird”. Fisher defines the word as something involving a sensation of wrongness. “A weird entity or object so strange that it makes us feel that it should not exist, or at least it should not exist here. Yet if the entity or object is here, then the categories which we have up until now used to make sense of the world cannot be valid” (Fischer, 15). Once again, what needs to be dealt with when using Lovecraft’s work in the classroom is how one can turn the horror and the disorientation into a more sympathetic discussion? Instead of associating the racial minorities in both The Shadow over Innsmouth and I am Legend with fear and terror, one has to get the students to sympathize with them, getting them to understand how the marine race and the vampire race think and what it might feel like to be part of a minority. Louise Nuttall (2015) has done research regarding the investigation of fictional minds and claims that “Forms of access to the inner life of a character have long been regarded in narratology as a significant device for the facilitation of empathy” (25) and further explains how these “inside views can build sympathy even for the most vicious character” (26).

In I am Legend, Richard Matheson presents a total change in the racial hierarchy, the rise and birth of a new racial paradigm (Sipress, 1997). Although, within the novel this is treated as something largely frightening. Matheson introduces to the reader a world where the white man’s time on the top of the hierarchy has come to an end:

And the dark men dragged his lifeless body from the house. Into the night. Into the world that was theirs and no longer his (Matheson, 152).

Another example from the novel in which Richard Matheson plays with the idea of creating a new paradigm in a world where the white race is no longer the one at the top of the racial hierarchy is the following:

Robert Neville, ‘she said, ´the last of the old race.’ His face tightened. ‘Last?’ he muttered, feeling the heavy sinking of utter loneliness in him. As far as we know,’ she said casually. You’re quite unique, you know. When you’re gone, there won’t be anyone else like you within our particular society.’ He looked toward the window. ‘Those are…people…outside,’ he said. She nodded. ‘They’re waiting.’ ‘For my death?’ ‘For your execution,’ she said (Matheson, 157).
I believe that this novel could be applied in a pedagogical context when teaching race, mainly because of its themes of racial conflicts and changes in the racial hierarchy. The most interesting thing, in my opinion, would be to imagine Robert Neville as the last survivor of the white race and the vampire race being one of the many different ethnic groups that exist in our real society. This provides a lot of new perspectives on racial hierarchies and could potentially aid the introduction of doubt in the classroom (Sipress, 176-178). There are, for example, a lot of possibilities to focus on how it might feel to be in a minority, even when you are not used to it. When looking at Robert Neville as the last white man instead of the last human, one can analyze how this provides as an invitation to alternative perspectives within the subject of racial themes. Parallels can then, for example, be drawn between the novel and Jacques (2003) as Richard Matheson plays with the idea of a total change in the global hierarchy of race – the hierarchy that, according to Jaques, the white race exists at the top of. Matheson turns the human/white race into the minority and places it at the very bottom of the racial hierarchy. He shows us a world where the white man suffers from constant systematic “racism” from a new superior race, thus turning Jaque´s discussion completely around, making the white race the victim and not the beneficiary. Looking at the novel and it´s themes from a racial point of view would also make it contradict Darden (2009) and her discussion of white people not having the required experience of oppression based on race to be able to make judgements about it. Similar to The Shadow over Innsmouth, the protagonist of I am Legend can also be used as an example of how it feels to not be at the top of the racial hierarchy, but rather a member of the minority. This angle could be applied in the classroom with the purpose of creating a sympathetic and empathetic discussion.

This novel, especially the powerful ending, serves as a potential platform for discussing ideas as it challenges a lot of the aforementioned theory regarding racial identity and racial hierarchy mentioned in this essay. It fits perfectly to use as a counterpart or mirror against what, for example, Jaques, Drichel (593) and Du Bois (84-91) have to say regarding a racial hierarchy where the white race is located at the top. Therefore I absolutely feel that I Am Legend and its themes would be very useful in a pedagogical context concerning race.

A specific part in I Am Legend that clearly functions as a mirror of our own society and history of how races and minorities have been discriminated and robbed of their basic human rights (Drichel, 593) is the part where Robert Neville reasons with himself and reaches the conclusion that the vampire race is a victim of prejudice:

Why, then, this unkind prejudice, this thoughtless bias? Why cannot the vampire live where he chooses? Why must he seek out hiding places where none can find him out? Why do you wish him destroyed? Ah, see, you have turned the poor guileless innocent into a haunted animal. He has no means of support, no measures for proper education, he has not the voting franchise. No wonder he is compelled to seek out a predatory nocturnal existence (Matheson, 21).

With this quote as a starting point one could easily set up for a discussion in the classroom regarding otherness and minorities in our society today. According to Nuttall the vampire, as a mythical, fictional creature “violates our intuitive expectations of biological agents, and blurs the taxonomic line between human and animal” (30). She further states that “Matheson’s science fictional adaptation of this myth disrupts such culturally acquired knowledge. While Stoker’s Dracula/is cunning and passionate, Matheson’s vampires are more ambiguously minded, as Neville’s own attempts at mind attribution suggest” (30). This example of providing the vampires with relatable attributes could be a starting point in the classroom when the ambition is to have the students associate the vampire race with
sympathetic characteristics rather than terror. Parallels can be drawn to Nuttall who states the following about *I am Legend*’s twist ending: “The final chapters reveal that far from being the mindless entities suggested by their focalised construal, the vampires are thinking, feeling beings with complex motivations, fear and beliefs” (34).

**Hybridity in The Shadow over Innsmouth and I Am Legend**

When it comes to the protagonist in *The Shadow over Innsmouth* in relation to the subject of hybridity, there is a lot to analyze. I draw parallels to a chapter in Modood and Werbner (1997), written by Alberto Melucci. Melucci talks about the “multiple self” and states that our self contains a number of different components. He discusses the uncertainty that a lot of people feel when faced with having to choose which one of these different components to identify with (63-64). This phenomenon can be linked with the definition of hybridity in the sense that it implies that individuals consist of multiple struggling forces. These forces become evident when it comes to the protagonist of *The Shadow over Innsmouth*:

For more than two years I fought off these reflections with partial success. My father secured me a place in an insurance office, and I buried myself in routine as deeply as possible. In the winter of 1930-31, however, the dreams began. They were very sparse and insidious at first, but increased in frequency and vividness as the weeks went by. Great watery spaces opened out before me, and I seemed to wander through titanic sunken porticos and labyrinths of weedy Cyclopean walls with grotesque fishes as my companions. Then the other shapes began to appear, filling me with nameless horror the moment I awoke. But during the dreams they did not horrify me at all—I was one with them; wearing their unhuman trappings, treading their aqueous ways, and praying monstrously at their evil sea-bottom temples.

By the end of the novel the reader understands that his racial identity is not as predictable and one dimensional as first suspected, but that he is related to the citizens of Innsmouth. One realizes that his exposure to the town somehow woke a natural force within him—a force that now began to struggle and compete with his human side, thus revealing a hybridity within him:

Some frightful influence, I felt, was seeking gradually to drag me out of the sane world of wholesome life into unnamable abysses of blackness and alienage; and the process told heavily on me. My health and appearance grew steadily worse, till finally I was forced to give up my position and adopt the static, secluded life of an invalid. Some odd nervous affliction had me in its grip, and I found myself at times almost unable to shut my eyes. (Lovecraft, 1936)

The fact that the character had problems with closing his eyes reminds one of the descriptions of the Innsmouth citizens and how they had “bulgy, stary eyes that never seem to shut” (Matheson, 1936). This functions as a clear indicator that the main character of the novel is changing and that the hybridity within him is rising. And the use of words such as “dragged” and “forced” functions as a further indicator that there are different forces struggling within the character and that he finds it problematic to choose which side to relate to (Bennett, 33-34) and (Modood and Werbner, 63-64). Words like “blackness” and “alienage” give the themes of the novel a more racial tone, mostly because they are words that easily can be associated with issues regarding race. This evolution, or change, of the story’s protagonist...
culminates in the end with his total and utter surrender and acceptance of the fact that he is actually as much part of the unknown, marine race as he is human:

The tense extremes of horror are lessening, and I feel queerly drawn toward the unknown sea-deeps instead of fearing them. I hear and do strange things in sleep, and awake with a kind of exaltation instead of terror. I do not believe I need to wait for the full change as most have waited. If I did, my father would probably shut me up in a sanitarium as my poor little cousin is shut up. Stupendous and unheard-of splendours await me below, and I shall seek them soon. Æ-R’lyeh! Cthulhu fhtagn! Æ! Æ! No, I shall not shoot myself—I cannot be made to shoot myself!
I shall plan my cousin’s escape from that Canton madhouse, and together we shall go to marvel-shadowed Innsmouth. We shall swim out to that brooding reef in the sea and dive down through black abysses to Cyclopean and many-columned Y’ha-nthlei, and in that lair of the Deep Ones we shall dwell amidst wonder and glory for ever (Lovecraft, 1936).

When reading this, one gets the feeling that there has been a sudden change in how the author portrays the unknown. The protagonist’s hybridity and the struggling forces within him are now portrayed and presented from a rather optimistic point of view. The marine creature race, the unknown, which was earlier in the novel viewed upon with fear and terror, is now seen upon with eyes of wonder, excitement and an alluring desire to be a part of. Parallels can be drawn to Modood and Werbner (1997), where Nikos Papastergiadis discusses how there are both negative as well as positive features of hybridity. He also mentions Bhabha and his idea of hybridity as something that emerges when one opens a third space; a space “within which other elements encounter and transform each other” (Modood and Werbner, 1997, 258). When looking at this theory in relation to the transformation and evolution that the novel’s protagonist goes through, the town of Innsmouth can be seen as a symbol of this third space; the place that ultimately provides these “other elements” and makes it possible for our protagonist to transform into something that he is predestined for, helping him to find his natural racial identity. Thus meaning that race, within the novel, is a biological category that can’t be escaped. This serves as a contrast to seeing race as something that is culturally constructed by man. And knowing that the marine race of Innsmouth most likely represent the author’s real-life views about biological categories of race, one could use the novella in the classroom as a living historical document, showcasing it as an example of the attitudes, mindsets and different types of racial prejudice that existed during this time.

The sense of hybridity in I Am Legend might not be as apparent as in The Shadow Over Innsmouth, but there are still traces and tendencies of it to be seen. One example is when Robert Neville contemplates walking out of his barricaded house to the vampires, letting himself become one of them. There are clear similarities and parallels to be drawn between the different struggling consciousnesses and components within a person, mentioned in both Modood and Werbner (1997) and Bennet (1998), and the conflicting emotions that live inside of Robert Neville:

Outside, Ben Cortman called for him to come out. Be right out, Benny, he thought. Soon as I get my tuxedo on. He shuddered and gritted his teeth together. Be right out. Well, why not? Why not go out? It was a sure way to be free of them (Matheson, 18).

An interesting aspect of analyzing and discussing I Am Legend from a racial point of view could be to look closer at the choice of words made by the author at some points within the novel. In the beginning of the novel, Robert Neville refers to the vampire race as
“Something black and of the night” (17), and at the end of the novel, when it is clear that Robert Neville has now become the minority, he actually refers to himself in a similar way:

He knew he did not belong to them; he knew that, like the vampires, he was anathema and black terror to be destroyed (Matheson, 160).

One can only speculate in why the Matheson decided to use words such as “blackness” and “black terror”, but it could without a doubt be used as a platform for interesting and productive discussions. When it comes to the subject of hybridity in regards to the latter quote above, it is interesting to see that Robert Neville seems to realize and accept the similarities that exist between him and the vampires. He goes from hating the vampires and wanting to kill every last one of them to actually relating to them on a deep level when it comes to the sense of being an alienated victim, destined to be loathed and shunned. This shows how Neville in a way accepts the hybridity within him, realizing that he himself is equal to what he has hated all along. But the difference lies in the fact that Robert Neville does not consider the races being equal in a positive or philanthropic sense, but instead sees them as equally “anathema and black terror” (160), insinuating that as races, they are both damned and cursed, thus providing a rather bleak and pessimistic ending to the novel. Worth mentioning is that this pessimistic perspective contrasts for example Homi Bhabha and his more positive view on hybridity.

In the Classroom

In this chapter I am going to discuss how one could practically apply The Shadow over Innsmouth and I Am Legend in the classroom using the three-step strategy that Joel M. Sipress has created.

Step one: Introduce Doubt

The first thing that one could have the students do in regards to I Am Legend and The Shadow over Innsmouth is have them think about whether they can relate the texts to the world outside of the text (Lundahl, 362). They could work in groups with this task, picking out specific parts from the two novels that can be applied to our real-life society.

When it comes to the racial prejudices presented in The Shadow over Innsmouth and I Am Legend, parallels can be drawn to both Sipress (1997) and Jaques (2003). The former mentions the importance of introducing doubt to students in school in order for them to start thinking for themselves. This could work as a first step to getting them to acknowledge the importance of evaluating and criticizing information, instead of potentially believing everything that is presented to them.

When applying a novel such as I Am Legend to teaching race in school, one can raise a lot of important and interesting questions regarding the natural/naturalized hierarchy of race. One of the most interesting aspects of using I Am Legend in school is to potentially try to get the students to think critically while reading it. An important part of this would be to have them read between the lines when it comes to the portrayal of the races in the novel (Lundahl, 361). One could for example instruct the students to not imagine the vampire race in the novel as a vampire race, but instead to imagine it as an existing human race. This could lead into interesting class- or group discussions regarding questions such as how this would change a reader’s perception of the novel or how it would affect the reader’s perception of the main character?
Both *The Shadow over Innsmouth* and *I Am Legend* can be used to start a debate in class (Lundahl, 361). One could divide the class into groups that get individual arguments or statements handed to them – arguments that they need to find support to from the contents of the novels. The groups are then to take part in a debate in which they are required to present the material from the novels that support their statements. Examples of potential pre-constructed statements are; The vampire race in *I am Legend* are victims of prejudice and discrimination, or, The white race in *The Shadow over Innsmouth* and *I Am Legend* is presented as being at the top of the racial hierarchy within the novel.

**Step two: Demonstrate the Historical Fluidity of Racial Categories**

One interesting aspect of working with *The Shadow over Innsmouth* in the classroom could be to investigate and analyze the fact that the novel was written during a period when a lot of people with different ethnic backgrounds immigrated to the United States. One could start a discussion regarding the fact that some of the Europeans that immigrated during this time, such as Italians and Poles, were not regarded as white. This could potentially raise further questions regarding the marine race in the novel and the author himself (Lundahl, 362); Did he create the marine race with the intentions of having them represent the real life immigrants, or was the story of Innsmouth only a science fiction story with no links to real life? Knowing what we know about the author, one could say the marine race certainly represent the author’s real-life views about biological categories of race. One could also have class- or group discussions regarding who the intended audience of the novels is and why the students think the novels were written in the first place, what their purpose might be? One could hand out articles regarding immigration in America in the late 1800s and early 1900s and have the students link parts or specific words from these articles to parts within the novel itself. When working with how the views of different races throughout our history has evolved and changed, one could have the students write an article or an essay (Lundahl, 361) in which they choose one of the races from either of the two novels to focus on. The title of the essay could be *100 Years Later* and the main objective could be for the students to think about how the chosen race from the novel is portrayed and then imagine how it would look 100 years later. Is the race still prejudiced against?, is it still a minority, has the race gained in status and has it been accepted by other races within society? The written text could be shaped as a news article, a journal entry, a conversation between two individuals or in another way that the student chooses. One could also have the students write from the perspective of the Innsmouth people or the vampires as a way to try to understand their motivations and how they might feel. Associating these fictional races with humans attributes would make them relatable for the students and an important first step if the goal is to teach sympathy or empathy.

Another way of working with the novels could be to combine them with other novels or short stories (Lundahl, 361). One short story that could be fitting to use is “Desiree´s Baby”, which focuses on racial categories and their fluidity and also on how race affects people on an individual level. The students could analyze the main characters of both “Desiree´s Baby” and the two novels and look into how these characters are affected when it comes to race and race prejudice. They students could also be asked to discuss the fact that both “Desiree´s Baby” and the two novels were written between 1890 and 1954; does this fact affect the racial prejudices and individual opinions regarding race within the novel? How might the contents of the novels and short stories differ if they were written today?
Step three: Analyze the Factors that Shape Racial Identity

When it comes to this third step, a teacher can work with the different racial identities portrayed in *The Shadow over Innsmouth* and *I Am Legend* and subject them to the rational analysis that Sipress mentions in the article. For example, one could compare the racial identity of the isolated and quarantined marine race of Innsmouth and the vampire race within *I Am Legend* with the racial identity of non-fictional and non-Caucasian races (Indians, African Americans, Asians) that have existed throughout history (Lundahl, 362). The students can be asked to find similarities and differences between the fictional and the non-fictional races in regards to how they are victimized, prejudiced against and/or discriminated and then present these in a larger class discussion. Acknowledging the fact that H.P. Lovecraft was openly prejudice and racist also makes it possible to work with the content of his novella in different ways. His vision of the narrator changing from human into a member of the fish race is one that’s filled with terror. But what if we were actually to take the narrator’s change as a positive thing? For example the students could write from the perspective of the Innsmouth marine race, thus turning the author’s vision completely around and creating possibilities for the students to relate to the marine race in a more sympathetic way. Parallels can be drawn to Nuttall who claims that “research in social psychology shows that our attribution of mind is highly variable and somewhat subjective. To some extent, mind is in the eye of the perceiver” (26). She further claims that “mind attribution is not a binary situation, but a continuum with varying degrees of richness and complexity” (26). Although, something that needs to be taken into consideration when arranging this type of writing exercise for the students is that specific, directed questions are needed to make sure that the students don't just reaffirm the marine race’s terrifying otherness. One would also need to account for not having an all-white classroom and how minority students might actually feel if they are equated with the monsters. One positive aspect of having an “other” that cannot be identifable with any race is that no particular students would feel alienated on that account and also that students wouldn’t find themselves writing from the perspective of reaffirming racial stereotypes.

Personally, I would have the students analyze the novels’ two main characters in relation to racial identity. Both protagonists in the novels are initially portrayed as representatives of familiarity and serve as something for the reader to relate to, whether one chooses to see them as representatives of the human race or the white race. But as the two novels progress, the main characters also develop and evolve, both physically and mentally. In regards to race and racial identity, I believe that this evolution of the two main characters could be interesting for the students to write an essay about; how do the students interpret the two main characters? What ethnicity do they see them belonging to initially? What does their individual progress and evolution within the story say about their racial identity in the end? What would happen to the potential interpretation of the novels from a racial point of view if one were to imagine Robert Neville and the main character from *The Shadow over Innsmouth* as members of the black or Asian community, for example?
Conclusion

My reason for choosing *The Shadow over Innsmouth* and *I am Legend* to work with has partially to do with the great impact they had on me personally when reading them for the first time, and partially because of how their content later made me reflect on issues such as race and fear of the unknown in the Swedish society. I came to think that using this type of literature in the classroom might be an effective strategy in getting children to reflect on these important questions without having to be too direct. These works might not be the most obvious tools to use when teaching racial themes in the classroom, especially since both are written by Caucasian authors, one of whom were openly prejudice against non-whites and also a racist. Despite these facts, if directing the material in the proper way, there are possibilities of helping the students stepping into the minds of certain characters or character groups, thus developing a sense of sympathy for those labelled “Other”. And in the case of Lovecraft, creating an environment in which the students sympathize with the monstrous others can undercut the novella’s own racist project.

Using these “unrealistic” novels in the classroom would help create a distance between the pupils and the themes. Using literature with fantasy aspects can also help create a distance from everyday reality, which helps all students in the classroom approach these sensitive subjects and themes as equals. This also makes it easier for them to open up and take part in discussions. Opening up directly about heavy subjects such as race in the classroom could simply be too uncomfortable for some students. Using this type of literature could provide as an easier way in to the subject. It could also serve as a first step into getting the students to step out of their individual comfort zones. It can often be easier to take an active part in discussions about a novel than it is to talk about the things you see outside your home and the things you live in the middle of every single day. My own experiences as a teacher in the Swedish school system also clearly shows that there is a need for working with these types of questions in the classrooms. I have worked with newly arrived children from other parts of the world coming to Sweden trying hard to adjust and fit in to a society filled with prejudice and preconceived notions. These preconceived notions are something that you as a teacher continuously need to work with in order to increase the overall acceptance and open mindedness.

Neither *The Shadow over Innsmouth* nor *I Am Legend* officially claim to be fictional works that are meant to be interpreted as statements on the issue of race, and neither of them might be the obvious or customary choice when it comes to teaching race in school. Nonetheless, looking at the contents and themes of the two novels in relation to theory and research made, one can see that they touch upon aspects such as racial discrimination, prejudice, racial identity, racial hierarchy and hybridity which are all aspects that can be effectively applied in the classroom.

The aim of this essay has been to discuss the potential that *The Shadow over Innsmouth* and *I Am Legend* have when it comes to working with racial themes in school. The purpose of this essay has also been to show that it is possible to apply this type of fiction in the classroom when teaching race. I believe that the content within the essay shows that the application of these novels in the classroom is very possible, not only because the themes and subjects of this fiction can be tied to aspects of race that we are confronted with in our non-fictional lives, but also because this is the type of fictional literature may can appeal to a lot of the students in schools today.

Part of the purpose of this essay has been to explore the themes within the two chosen novels that can be applied to race pedagogy to push the students’ minds beyond existing attitudes and assumptions about race. The final conclusion is that the content of this
study indeed supports the argument that it is possible to successfully incorporate science fiction and horror novels in a pedagogical context when working with race.
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