SOC 202: RACIAL AND ETHNIC RELATIONS



Vivian Varela
Mendocino College

LibreTexts™

Long Beach City College, Cerritos College, & Saddleback College

Race and Ethnic Relations in the U.S.: An Intersectional Approach

Janét Hund et al.

This text is disseminated via the Open Education Resource (OER) LibreTexts Project (https://LibreTexts.org) and like the thousands of other texts available within this powerful platform, it is freely available for reading, printing, and "consuming."

The LibreTexts mission is to bring together students, faculty, and scholars in a collaborative effort to provide an accessible, and comprehensive platform that empowers our community to develop, curate, adapt, and adopt openly licensed resources and technologies; through these efforts we can reduce the financial burden born from traditional educational resource costs, ensuring education is more accessible for students and communities worldwide.

Most, but not all, pages in the library have licenses that may allow individuals to make changes, save, and print this book. Carefully consult the applicable license(s) before pursuing such effects. Instructors can adopt existing LibreTexts texts or Remix them to quickly build course-specific resources to meet the needs of their students. Unlike traditional textbooks, LibreTexts' web based origins allow powerful integration of advanced features and new technologies to support learning.



LibreTexts is the adaptable, user-friendly non-profit open education resource platform that educators trust for creating, customizing, and sharing accessible, interactive textbooks, adaptive homework, and ancillary materials. We collaborate with individuals and organizations to champion open education initiatives, support institutional publishing programs, drive curriculum development projects, and more.

The LibreTexts libraries are Powered by NICE CXone Expert and was supported by the Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Project, the California Education Learning Lab, the UC Davis Office of the Provost, the UC Davis Library, the California State University Affordable Learning Solutions Program, and Merlot. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1246120, 1525057, and 1413739.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation nor the US Department of Education.

Have questions or comments? For information about adoptions or adaptions contact info@LibreTexts.org or visit our main website at https://LibreTexts.org.

This text was compiled on 04/16/2026



An Open Educational Resource Supported by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Open Educational Resources Initiative

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI) was funded by the California legislature in trailer bill language during the summer of 2018. The OERI's mission is to reduce the cost of educational resources for students by expanding the availability and adoption of high quality Open Educational Resources (OER). The OERI facilitates and coordinates the curation and development of OER texts, ancillaries, and support systems. In addition, the OERI supports local OER implementation efforts through the provision of professional development, technical support, and technical resources.

The information in this resource is intended solely for use by the user who accepts full responsibility for its use. Although the author(s) and ASCCC OERI have made every effort to ensure that the information in this resource is accurate, openly licensed, and accessible at press time, the author(s) and ASCCC OERI do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

Please bring all such errors and changes to the attention of Academic Senate of California Community Colleges OER Initiative via e-mail (oeri@asccc.org).

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges
One Capitol Mall, Suite 230
Sacramento, CA 95814

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ProgramPage

About the Book and the Authors/Contributors

Licensing

1: Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations

- 1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
- 1.2: Defining Race
- 1.3: Ethnicity and Religion
- 1.4: Multiracial Americans
- 1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
- 1.6: Social Change and Resistance

2: Sociological Theories and Patterns of Intergroup Relations

- 2.1: What is a Theory?
- 2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives
- 2.3: Patterns of Intergroup Relations

3: Immigration and Migration

- 3.1: History and Background
- 3.2: Intergroup Relations
- 3.3: Intersectionality
- 3.4: Social Institutions
- 3.5: Social Change and Resistance

4: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism

- 4.1: Socialization and Culture
- 4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
- 4.3: Discrimination
- 4.4: Racism
- 4.5: Social Change and Resistance

5: Native Americans

- 5.1: History and Demographics
- 5.2: Intergroup Relations
- 5.3: Intersectionality
- 5.4: Social Institutions
- 5.5: Social Change and Resistance

6: Euro Americans and Whiteness

- 6.1: History and Demographics
- 6.2: Intergroup Relations
- 6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility

- 6.4: Intersectionality
- 6.5: Social Institutions
- 6.6: Social Change and Resistance

7: African-Americans

- 7.1: History and Demographics
- 7.2: Intergroup Relations
- 7.3: Intersectionality
- 7.4: Social Institutions
- 7.5: Social Change and Resistance

8: Latinx

- 8.1: History and Demographics
- 8.2: Intergroup Relations
- 8.3: Intersectionality
- 8.4: Social Institutions
- 8.5: Social Change and Resistance

9: Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders

- 9.1: History and Demographics
- 9.2: Intergroup Relations
- 9.3: Intersectionality
- 9.4: Social Institutions
- 9.5: Social Change and Resistance

10: Middle Eastern Americans

- 10.1: History and Demographics
- 10.2: Intergroup Relations
- 10.3: Intersectionality
- 10.4: Social Institutions
- 10.5: Social Change and Resistance

11: Contemporary Social Movements

- 11.1: Defining Social Movements
- 11.2: Immigrant Rights
- 11.3: Black Lives Matter
- 11.4: Indigenous Sovereignty and Environmental Justice
- 11.5: White Nationalism
- 11.6: Solidarity and Intersectionality

12: Policies and Future of Race-Ethnic Relations

- 12.1: Introduction
- 12.2: Affirmative Action
- 12.3: Reparations
- 12.4: Immigration
- 12.5: The Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States

13: Ancillary Materials

- 13.1: Powerpoint Presentations
- 13.2: Test Bank

Index

Glossary

Glossary

Detailed Licensing

About the Book and the Authors/Contributors

About the Book

This open text was compiled by seven diverse, community college sociology faculty from Long Beach City College, Cerritos College, and Rancho Santiago College. With an eye on social justice and intersectionality, the text provides a sociological analysis of the history, demographics, and contemporary experiences of the following race-ethnic groups: African Americans, Asian American Pacific Islanders, Euro Americans, Latinx, Native Americans, Middle Eastern Americans. This text is suitable for a sociology course on race and ethnic relations or a social justice studies introductory course.

About the Authors/Contributors

Erika Gutierrez, Author/Contributor

Erika is a tenured sociology/ethnic studies professor at Santiago Canyon College, and she occasionally teaches part time at Long Beach City College.

Dr. Janét Hund, Author/Contributor



Dr. Janét Hund is a tenured full-time professor in Sociology at Long Beach City College; she currently serves at the Social Sciences Department Chair. She began her full-time tenure at Long Beach City College in 1997. Janét recently earned her EdD in Community College Leadership from National American University. She earned her M.A. in Sociology at Arizona State University and her B.A. in Sociology/Minority Studies at Wichita State University. After incorporating OER texts for years in her Introduction to Sociology and Modern Social Problems courses, she desired to adopt OER material for her Race & Ethnic Relations in the U.S. course. She is appreciative of a former student trustee who called her attention to the OER movement nearly a decade ago. She is committed to her personal and professional growth to better serve our diverse student body. Her children, Jonas and Jakobi Oware, created images, charts and tables found throughout this book.

Shaheen Johnson, Author/Contributor



Shaheen Johnson is a tenure-track full-time professor in Sociology at Long Beach City College. She received her M.A. and B.A. in Sociology from California State University, Dominguez Hills. She is passionate when it comes to serving low-income, first-generation college students. Through her personal experience as a low-income, first-generation college student, she is able to empathize with students and relate to many of their struggles. By offering OER material in her courses, it's one barrier that she is happy to remove in an effort to ease the financial burden many students carry.

Carlos Ramos, Author/Contributor



Carlos Ramos is a tenured full-time professor of Sociology at Long Beach City College who began teaching sociology at the college level in 2001. Carlos earned a B.A. in Sociology/Psychology from the University of Southern California (USC) and an M.A. in Sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He recently completed the OER transition of his Introduction to Sociology and Modern Social Problems courses, and they are now zero-cost textbook courses, without having to sacrifice academic rigor. He recently worked closely with Long Beach City College colleagues to create a zero-cost textbook and course materials for the course, Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States, and plans to create and adopt OER materials the course, Sociology of Latinos, in Summer 2021.

Lisette Rodriguez, Author/Contributor



Currently a tenure-track full-time Sociology faculty member at Long Beach City College, Lisette Rodriguez received her M.A. in Sociology from California State University Northridge and a B.A. in Sociology with a minor in Latin American Studies from the University of California Santa Barbara. She has 17 years of experience working with college students both inside and outside of the classroom. In addition to her work as a sociology faculty, she has also developed and managed student access, equity, diversity, service learning and international education programs. Lisette is an avid world traveler and has coordinated study abroad and international service learning programs for students in seven countries throughout Latin America and Europe. Through her work, she hopes to empower and motivate students to be passionate about sociology and inspired to impact, question and change the world around them.

Joy Tsuhako, Author/Contributor



Joy Tsuhako is a tenure-track faculty member in the Department of Sociology at Cerritos College, which was the first school she attended before transferring to Cal State Long Beach to earn a Bachelor's in Sociology with an emphasis on global issues and social change. She completed her Master's at Cal State Fullerton and wrote a thesis titled, "Lived Experiences of Young, Urban, Fundamentalist Latinas: Understandings and Negotiations of Cultural and Faith-Based Values." She teaches Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, Race and Ethnic Relations in the U.S., and Cultural Diversity in addition to advising the Sociology and Environmental clubs at Cerritos College.

David Goto, Contributor



David Goto is the tenured full-time Pacific Coast Campus and Reference Librarian at Long Beach City College. He earned his Associates Degree from Fullerton College, B.A. in American History and M.A. in American and European History from CSU Fullerton. His M.L.I.S. was earned at San Jose State University with an emphasis in academic and special libraries. Before working as an adjunct librarian at Long Beach City College, he was an adjunct at Fullerton College, Cypress College, Chapman University, and Orange Coast College. His first attempt at OER was a series of guides he created at Cypress College and Fullerton College in 2006-2007. The first OER guide he created at LBCC was in 2015. With a passionate interest in our students and faculty, he is available at the LBCC Library reference desk on most days of the week.

- **About the Book and the Authors/Contributors** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

Licensing

*A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in **Back Matter/Detailed Licensing**.*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

1: Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations

1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination

1.2: Defining Race

1.3: Ethnicity and Religion

1.4: Multiracial Americans

1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality

1.6: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 1: Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination

"I can't breathe." George Floyd repeated this phrase at least 20 times while held on the ground in police custody on May 25, 2020 (Singh, 2020). During the 9 1/2 minutes in which Officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee on Floyd's neck depriving him of his breath, Floyd repeatedly called out "Mama," though his mother was already deceased. Following Floyd's lynching, multiracial Black Lives Matter mass protests erupted immediately in Minneapolis, Los Angeles, New York, Portland, and countless cities and towns throughout the U.S. and the world. Protesters pushed for justice and reforms to challenge systemic racism in policing, including defunding and disbanding police departments. In many cases, though not all, police unleashed riot gear and tear gas on the mostly non-violent protesters. In response to the mass protests and in a rare case of police accountability of excessive use of force, Chauvin and three other Minneapolis police officers were fired and charged with Floyd's murder.



Figure **1.1.1**: This artistic image of George Floyd, with flowers and protest signs, is a tribute to Floyd's life - and death on May 25, 2020, as well as the protests that spread worldwide. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Chad Davis via Flickr)

The Problem of the Color Line

“The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line,” W.E.B DuBois (1868-1963) wrote in The Souls of Black Folk in 1903. A civil rights activist and the first African American to earn a PhD in Sociology from Harvard, DuBois wrote about the socioeconomic and sociopolitical circumstances of African Americans following the Civil War and post-Reconstruction, amidst Jim Crow America. Answering his own question about how it feels to be a problem, DuBois wrote:

> After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, — a world which yields him no self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this **double-consciousness**, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One feels his two-ness, — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife, — this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa; he does not wish to bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he believes—foolishly, perhaps, but fervently—that Negro blood has yet a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without losing the opportunity of self-development.

DuBois edited *The Crisis* during the Harlem Renaissance, and he was an early member of the Niagara Movement, an organization dedicated to socio-political reform for African Americans which later became the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). DuBois was the first African American president of the American Sociological Society. As a young man, he believed in the promise of the United States as a country where all people could be equal and free.

It appears that the problem of the 21st century is still the problem of race. Yet, as intersectional scholar Kimberle Crenshaw explains, our frames should include an analysis of both gender and race to better understand the complexity of the human condition.

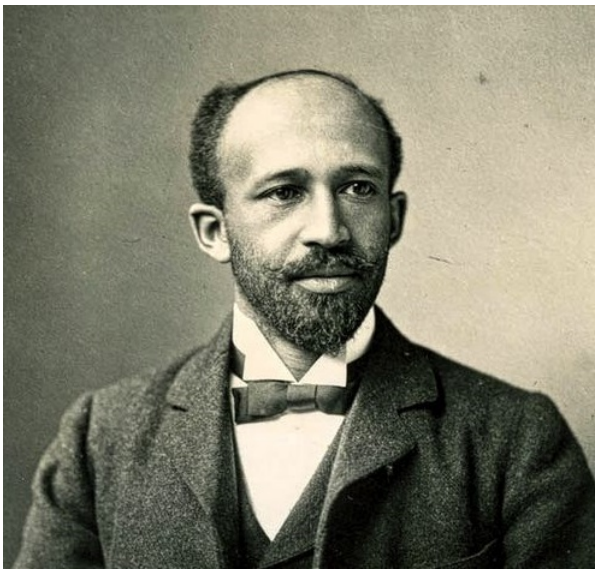


Figure **1.1.2**: Portrait of W.E.B. Du Bois taken around 1907. (CC PDM 1.0; Unknown via Wikipedia)

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the systematic study of society and social interaction. In order to carry out their studies, sociologists identify cultural patterns and social forces and determine how they affect individuals and groups. One way sociology achieves a more complete understanding of social reality is through its focus on the importance of the social forces affecting our behavior, attitudes, and life chances. This focus involves an emphasis on social structure, the social patterns through which a society is organized. Sociology provides a lens for understanding the human condition and the structural forces that influence our behavior and attitudes.

Yet, we are often not aware of the impact of these societal forces. Consider that most Americans probably agree that we enjoy a great amount of freedom. And yet perhaps we have less freedom than we think. Although we have the right to choose how to believe and act, many of our choices are affected by our society, culture, and social institutions in ways we do not even realize. Perhaps we are not as distinctively individualistic as we might like to think. The struggle over state shut-downs, social distancing and mandatory masks in public, threw this debate over freedom into the spotlight during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, take the right to vote. The secret ballot is one of the most cherished principles of American democracy. We vote in secret so that our choice of a candidate is made freely and without fear of punishment. That is all true, but it is also possible to predict the candidate for whom any one individual will vote if enough is known about the individual. Again, our choice (in this case, our choice of a candidate) is affected by many aspects of our social backgrounds and, in this sense, is not made as freely as we might think.



Figure **1.1.3**: Rainbow colors at the white House celebrating marriage equality, following the 2015 Supreme Court Decision, Obergefell v. Hodges, legalizing gay marriage. (CC BY-SA 2.0; osseous via Flickr)

To illustrate this point, consider the 2008 presidential election between Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain. Suppose a room is filled with 100 randomly selected voters from that election. Nothing is known about them except that they were between 18 and 24 years of age when they voted. Because CNN exit poll data found that Obama won 66% of the vote from people in this age group, a prediction that each of these 100 individuals voted for Obama would be correct about 66 times and incorrect

only 34 times. Someone betting $1 on each prediction would come out $32 ahead ($66 – $34 = $32), even though the only thing known about the people in the room is their age.

Now let's suppose we have a room filled with 100 randomly selected white men from Wyoming who voted in 2008. We know only three things about them: their race, gender, and state of residence. Because exit poll data found that 67% of white men in Wyoming voted for McCain, a prediction can be made with fairly good accuracy that these 100 men tended to have voted for McCain. Someone betting $1 that each man in the room voted for McCain would be right about 67 times and wrong only 33 times and would come out $34 ahead ($67 – $33 = $34). Even though young people in the United States and white men from Wyoming had every right and freedom under our democracy to vote for whomever they wanted in 2008, they still tended to vote for a particular candidate because of the influence of their age (in the case of the young people) or of their gender, race, and state of residence (white men from Wyoming).



Figure 1.1.4: "Vote Here Vote Aquí" sign in multiple languages. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; myJon via Flickr)

Consider the lead-up to the 2020 Presidential campaign. Former President Donald Trump stoked racial strife and polarization during his presidency and through this campaign cycle. With his positive references to white power during the Charlottesville protests and his infamous tweets chastising protesters as thugs, blaming COVID-19 on China, or refusing to demand that the far-right Proud Boys "stand down," he catered to his base who hold more polar views from the rest of the nation, including more staunch opposition to immigration. With unwavering support, nearly 80% of white Evangelical voters checked the box for Trump (Gjelten, 2020). As the votes of the 2020 election have been tallied, Joe Biden and running mate Kamala Harris, the first-ever woman of color on a major political party ticket, won the popular vote by more than 7 million votes (Sullivan & Agiesta, 2020). Though there were unique niches, and overall increasing numbers, of voters of color supporting Trump, such as Cuban and Venezuelan Americans in Florida, the overwhelming majority of people of color cast a vote for the Biden-Harris ticket, including Latinx and Native American populations in Arizona who helped turn the state blue. A majority of men voted for Trump while the majority of women voted for Biden. Although Trump made gains with all groups of women from 2016 to 2020 elections, a consistently high majority of Black women cast their vote for the Biden-Harris ticket. By contrast, the overwhelming majority of the white electorate cast a vote for Trump, though a smaller percentage of white men voted for Trump as compared to 2016. Similar to four years earlier, race and gender (and religion) proved to be influential factors in voter tendency in 2020.



Figure 1.1.5: Candid pictures of the following: President Joe Biden, Vice-President Kamala Harris, and former President Donald Trump. (CC BY-NC-SA; left, middle, right; Creative Commons)

Yes, Americans have freedom, but our freedom to think and act is constrained at least to some degree by our social structures - by society's standards and expectations and by the many aspects of our social backgrounds. This is true for the kinds of important

beliefs and behaviors just discussed, and it is also true for less important examples. What color of mask did you wear during COVID-19? Was it a designer mask? Did it have a message? What social forces impacted your choice of mask?

The social structure plays an integral role in the **social location** (i.e., place or position) people occupy in society. Your social location is a result of cultural values and norms from the time-period and place in which you live. Culture affects personal and social development including the way people will think or behave. Cultural characteristics pertaining to age, gender, race, education, income, religion, sexuality, disability and other social factors influence the location people occupy at any given time.

Furthermore, social location influences how people perceive and understand the world in which we live. People have a difficult time being objective in all contexts, because of their social location within cultural controls and standards derived from values and norms. Objective conditions exist without bias because they are measurable and quantifiable (Carl, 2013). Subjective concerns rely on judgments rather than external facts. Personal feelings and opinions from a person's social location drive subjective concerns. The **sociological imagination** is a tool to help people step outside subjective or personal biography, and look at objective facts and the historical background of a situation, issue, society, or person (Carl, 2013).

Thinking Sociologically

The time period we live (history) and our personal life experiences (biography) influence our perspectives and understanding about others and the world. Our history and biography guide our perceptions of reality reinforcing our personal bias and subjectivity. Relying on subjective viewpoints and perspectives leads to diffusion of misinformation and fake news that can be detrimental to our physical and socio-cultural environment and negatively impact our interactions with others. We must seek out facts and develop knowledge to enhance our objective eye. By using valid, reliable, proven facts, data, and information, we establish credibility and make better decisions for the world and ourselves.

1. Consider a socio-cultural issue you are passionate about and want to change or improve.
2. What is your position on the issue? What ideological or value-laden reasons or beliefs support your position? What facts or empirical data support your position?
3. What portion of your viewpoint or perspective on the issue relies on personal values, opinions, or beliefs in comparison to facts?
4. Why is it important to identity and use empirical data or facts in our lives rather than relying on ideological reasoning and false or fake information

According to C. Wright Mills (1959), the sociological imagination requires individuals to "think themselves away" from examining personal and social influences on people's life choices and outcomes. Large-scale or macrosociological influences help create an understanding about the effect of the social structure and history on people's lives. Whereas, small-scale or microsociological influences focus on interpreting personal viewpoints from an individual's biography. Using only a microsociological perspective leads to an unclear understanding of the world from biased perceptions and assumptions about people, social groups, and society (Carl 2013).

In The Sociological Imagination (1959), Mills presented his classic distinction between personal troubles and public issues. **Personal troubles** refer to a problem affecting individuals that the affected individual, as well as other members of society, typically blame on the individual's own failings. Examples include such different problems as police brutality, immigration, mass incarceration, hate crimes, sexual harassment, and unemployment. **Public issues**, whose source lies in the social structure and culture of a society, refer to a social problem affecting many individuals. Thus problems in society help account for problems that individuals experience personally. Mills, feeling that many problems ordinarily considered private troubles are best understood as public issues, coined the term sociological imagination to refer to the ability to appreciate the structural basis for individual problems.

To illustrate Mills's viewpoint, let's use our sociological imagination to understand some important contemporary social problems. We will start with unemployment, which Mills himself discussed. If only a few people were unemployed, Mills wrote, we could reasonably explain their unemployment by saying they were lazy, lacked good work habits, and so forth. If so, their unemployment would be their own personal trouble. But when millions of people are out of work, unemployment is best understood as a public issue because, as Mills (1959) explained, "the very structure of opportunities has collapsed. Both the correct statement of the problem and the range of possible solutions require us to consider the economic and political institutions of the society, and not

merely the personal situation and character of a scatter of individuals." The unemployment rate rose dramatically during the severe economic downturn that began in 2008, yet had reduced to its lowest level before the COVID-19 pandemic. Once COVID-19 hit, millions of people in the U.S. lost their jobs through no fault of their own. While some individuals are undoubtedly unemployed because they are lazy or lack good work habits, a more structural explanation focusing on lack of opportunity and forced shut-downs is needed to explain why so many people were out of work as this book went to press. Though experienced as a personal trouble, unemployment can better be understood through analysis as a public issue. According to a Pew Research Center study, unemployment rates among African Americans have exceeded the unemployment rates of Euro Americans over the past six decades (Desilver, 2013). Current unemployment trends are no different.



Figure **1.1.6**: Protest against police brutality in Uptown, banners reading 'Stop Police Brutality' and 'Education Not Incarceration'. (CC BY 2.0; Fibonacci Blue via Flickr)

Next, we can consider the police brutality against African Americans and the Latinx Community. Emmett Till. Amadou Dialou. Aiyana Stanley-Jones. Trayvon Martin. Michael Brown. Eric Garner. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. Andres Guardado. Sean Monterrossa. Each of these senseless killings (and countless more) have presented immense personal troubles for family and friends of these victims. However, the long historical timeline illustrates these combined murders tell a story about lynching, of structural racism and unequal policing and injustice against African Americans and the Latinx Community. Created by African American women, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, the Black Lives Matter movement has called out the structural roots of this state sponsored violence.



Figure **1.1.7**: Black Lives Matter artistic tribute to Breonna Taylor with inscription, "Say Her Name." (CC BY-NC-SA; Flickr)

Finally, the global COVID-19 pandemic has presented the world with severe uncertainty. Personal troubles range from families devastated by the passing of a loved one, essential medical workers caring for COVID-19 patients on the frontline, and a shut-down of our public space that has confined many to their homes. Yet, an analysis of the unprepared public health system to manage this crises, lack of national political leadership, lack of access to (quality) health care in communities of color, combined with the high risk that poor communities face, illustrates the public issues surrounding the pandemic; economic and health care systems serve to only exacerbate the social inequalities that pre-dated COVID-19. Additionally, the rise of hate crimes against Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities during COVID-19 further illustrates the how sociological imagination can be employed to consider the personal impact of these hate crimes as well as the public, structural roots of this racism.

Sociological Perspective

A key basis of the **sociological perspective** is the concept that the individual and society are inseparable. It is impossible to study one without the other. Incorporating a sociological perspective reminds us that we are always participating in something larger than ourselves. Using our sociological imagination, we can begin to see our micro, personal troubles in the context of macro, public issues. Perhaps then, we can better understand the complexity of our social life as well as the social change and resistance that may serve to improve the human condition.

Key Takeaways

- DuBois considered that the problem of the 20th century was the problem of the color line; sociologists consider that the problems of the 21st century continue to revolve around race.
- Sociology provides a lens for understanding the human condition and the structural forces and structures that influence our behavior, attitudes, social interaction, and society at large.
- Using the tools of the sociological imagination and the sociological perspective help people to understand we are always participating in something larger than ourselves.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) contributed to Sociological Perspective
- A Career in Sociology (Kennedy) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Cable News Network. (2008). *CNN Exit Poll.*
- Carl, J.D. (2013). *Think Social Problems*. 2nd ed. Uppers Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Desilver, D. (2013, August 21). Black unemployment rate is consistently twice that of whites. *Pew Research Center*.
- DuBois, W.E.B. (1903).*The Souls of Black Folk.* New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Galston, W. (2020, June 3). New polling: Eroding support from white working-class women threatens Trump's reelection. *The Brookings Institution.*
- Gjelten, T. (2020, November 8). 2020 faith vote reflects 2016 patterns. *National Public Radio.*
- Mills, C.W. (1959). *The Sociological Imagination.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Singh, M. (2020, July 9). George Floyd told officers 'I can't breathe' more than 20 times, transcripts show.*The Guardian*.
- Sullivan, K. & Agiesta, J. (2020, December 4). Biden's popular vote margin over Trump tops 7 million. *CNN.*

This page titled 1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

1.2: Defining Race

Questioning the Biological Definition of Race

From a biological perspective, **race** refers to a category of people who share certain inherited physical characteristics, such as skin color, facial features, and stature. Most people think of race in biological terms, and for more than 300 years, or ever since white Europeans began colonizing populations of color elsewhere in the world, race has indeed served as the “premier source of human identity” (A. Smedley, 1998, p. 690).

Phenotype and Genotype

Phenotype refers to the composite observable traits and behaviors of an individual or group. **Genotype** refers to a person’s genetic makeup.

Phenotype is thus the physical manifestation of genotype. The most noticeable phenotype difference is skin tone: some groups of people have very dark skin, while others have very light skin or brown skin. Other differences also exist. Some people have very curly hair, while others have very straight hair. Some individuals have thin lips, while others have thick lips. Some people tend to be relatively tall, while others tend to be relatively short. Some have oval eyes, while others have round eyes. In the past, theorists have posited categories of race based on various geographic regions, ethnicities, skin colors, and more. Their labels for racial groups have connoted regions (Mongolia and the Caucus Mountains, for instance) or skin tones (Black, white, yellow, and red, for example).

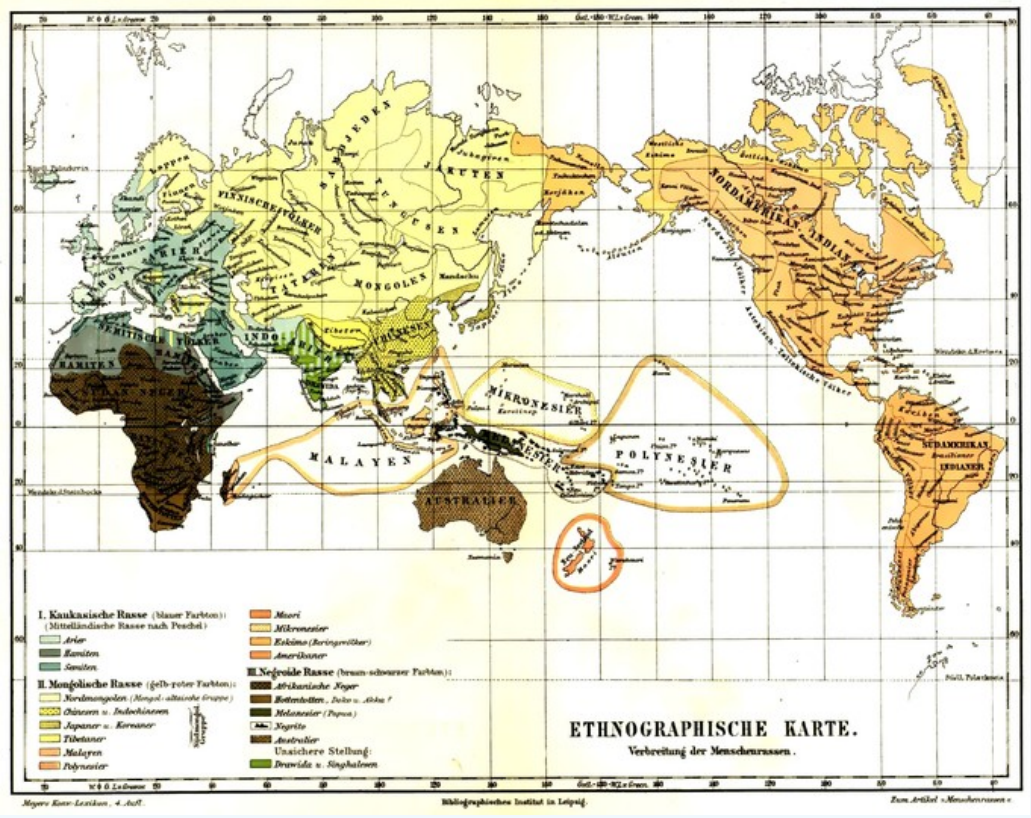


Figure 1.2.1: Meyers's ethnographic map, late 19th-Century. (CC PDM 1.0; Wikimedia)

An example of an early modern attempt at racial categorization, this map depicts the three great races, according to Meyers Konversationslexikon, a major encyclopedia in the German language in the late 1800s. The subtypes of the "Mongoloid" race are shown in yellow and orange tones, those of the "Europid/Caucasoid" race in light and medium grayish green-cyan tones, and those of the "Negroid" race in brown tones. Dravidians and Sinhalese are in olive green, and their classification is

described as uncertain. The Mongoloid race sees the widest geographic distribution, including all of the Americas, North Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the entire inhabited Arctic.

This section licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

It is certainly easy to see that people in the United States and around the world differ physically in some obvious ways. Race has been used as a classification system to categorize humans in a variety of ways. Using such physical differences as their criteria, scientists at one point identified as many as nine races: African, American Indian or Native American, Asian, Australian Aborigine, European (more commonly called “white”), Indian, Melanesian, Micronesian, and Polynesian (A. Smedley, 1998).

Although people certainly do differ in the many physical features that led to the development of such racial categories, anthropologists, sociologists, and many biologists question the value of these categories and thus the value of the biological concept of race (A. Smedley, 2007). For one thing, we often see more physical differences within a race than between races. For example, some people we call “white” (or European), such as those with Scandinavian backgrounds, have very light skins, while others, such as those from some Eastern European or Middle Eastern backgrounds, have much darker skins. In fact, some “whites” have darker skin than some “Blacks,” or African Americans. Some whites have very straight hair, while others have very curly hair; some have blonde hair and blue eyes, while others have dark hair and brown eyes. Because of interracial reproduction going back to the days of slavery, African Americans also differ in the darkness of their skin and in other physical characteristics. In fact it is estimated that about 80% of African Americans have some white (i.e., European) ancestry; 50% of Mexican Americans have European or Native American ancestry; and 20% of whites have African or Native American ancestry. If clear racial differences ever existed hundreds or thousands of years ago (and many scientists doubt such differences ever existed), in today’s world these differences have become increasingly blurred.

Another reason to question the biological concept of race is that an individual or a group of individuals is often “assigned” to a race based on arbitrary or even illogical grounds. A century ago, for example, Irish, Italians, and Eastern European Jews who left their homelands for a better life in the United States were not regarded as white once they reached the United States but rather as a different, inferior (if unnamed) race (Painter, 2010). The belief in their inferiority helped justify the harsh treatment they suffered in their new country. Today, of course, we call people from all three backgrounds white or European. Many individuals under the umbrella labels of Latinx or **MENA** (Middle East and North Africa) may also be classified as white, but that does not mean they see themselves as white. Many in these groups do not feel represented in discussions of race. As quoted by Jad Elharake, a former University of Michigan student, "A MENA category would represent a diverse set of dismissed identities with specific needs," yet the 2020 Census failed to include such a category (Alshammari, 2020).



Figure 1.2.2: "Jesus is Middle Eastern" billboard. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Dean.Chahim via Flickr)

In this context, consider someone in the United States who has a white parent and a Black parent. What race is this person? American society usually calls this person Black or African American, and the person may adopt the same identity (as does Barack Obama, who had a white mother and African father). But where is the logic for doing so? This person, including President Obama, is as much white as Black in terms of parental ancestry. Or consider someone with one white parent and another parent that is the

child of one Black parent and white parent. This person thus has three white grandparents and one Black grandparent. Even though this person's ancestry is thus 75% white and 25% Black, this person is likely to be considered Black in the United States and may well adopt this racial identity. This practice reflects the traditional "**one-drop rule**" in the United States that defines someone as Black if the person has at least one drop of "Black blood," and that was used in the antebellum South to keep the enslaved African population as large as possible (Wright, 1993). Yet in many Latin American nations, this person would be considered white. In Brazil, the term Black is reserved for someone with no European (white) ancestry at all. If we followed this practice in the United States, about 80% of the people we call "Black" would now be called "white." With such arbitrary designations, race is more of a social category than a biological one.



Figure 1.2.3: Former President Barack Obama had an African father and a white mother. Obama identifies himself as African American. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Steve Jurvetson via Flickr)

A third reason to question the biological concept of race comes from the field of biology itself and more specifically from the study of genetics and human evolution. Starting with genetics, people from different races are more than 99.9% the same in their DNA (Begley, 2008). To turn that around, less than 0.1% of all the DNA in our bodies accounts for the physical differences among people that we associate with racial differences. In terms of DNA or genotype, then, people with different racial backgrounds are much more similar than dissimilar. In a December, 2003, Scientific American article, Bamshad and Olson, two geneticists working on mapping the human genome, concluded that "race" does not exist genetically.

According to evolutionary theory, the human race began thousands and thousands of years ago in sub-Saharan Africa. As people migrated around the world over the millennia, natural selection took over. It favored dark skin for people living in hot, sunny climates (i.e., near the equator), because the heavy amounts of melanin that produce dark skin protect against severe sunburn, cancer, and other problems. By the same token, natural selection favored light skin for people who migrated farther from the equator to cooler, less sunny climates, because dark skin there would have interfered with the production of vitamin D (Stone & Lurquin, 2007). Evidence shows physical differences in human appearance including skin color are a result of human migration patterns and adaptations to the environment (Jablonski, 2012). Evolutionary evidence thus reinforces the common humanity of people who differ in the rather superficial ways associated with their appearances: we are one human species, homo sapiens sapiens, composed of people who happen to look different. Nonetheless, people use physical characteristics to identify, relate, and interact with one another.

Thinking Sociologically

Global Census: What race would you be somewhere else?

Visit Global Census: What race would you be somewhere else? to help you understand how race is classified differently depending on the country, and some countries measure ethnicity (discussed next in Chapter 1.3) rather than race in their Census.

What racial group do others identify you as? What racial group do you identify yourself? Is there a difference in how you identify yourself versus how others identify you?

> Do you think it is important for a country to measure race (or ethnicity) of its population? Why or why not?

Race as a Social Construct

The reasons for doubting the biological basis for racial categories suggest that race is more of a social category than a biological one. Another way to say this is that race is a **social construction**, a concept that has no objective reality but rather is what people decide it is (Berger & Luckmann, 1963). In this view race has no real existence other than what and how people think of it; what matters is the social meaning attached to race.



Figure **1.2.4**: Rachel Dolezal speaking at Spokane rally May 2015. Born to white parents, Dolezal has identified and passed as a Black woman without possessing any verifiable African ancestry. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Aaron Robert Kathman via Wikimedia)

Although race is a social construction, it is also true that things perceived as real are real in their consequences. Because people do perceive race as something real, it has real consequences. Even though so little of DNA accounts for the physical differences we associate with racial differences, that low amount leads us not only to classify people into different races but to treat them differently—and, more to the point, unequally—based on their classification. Yet modern evidence shows there is little, if any, scientific basis for the racial classification that is the source of so much inequality.

Social science organizations including the American Association of Anthropologists, the American Sociological Association, and the American Psychological Association have all taken an official position rejecting the biological explanations of race. Over time, the typology of race that developed during early **racialized science** has fallen into disuse, and the social construction of race is a more sociological way of understanding racial categories. In Race as Biology is Fiction, Racism as a Social Problem is Real, Smedley & Smedley (2005) wrote that "racialized science, with its emphasis on identifying immutable differences between racial groups, can be expected only to maintain and reinforce existing racial inequality, in that its adherents indirectly argue that no degree of government intervention or social change will alter the skills and abilities of different racial groups." Research in this school of thought suggests that race is not biologically identifiable and that previous racial categories were arbitrarily assigned, based on pseudo science, and used to justify racist practices (Omi & Winant, 1994; Graves, 2003). From the 17th through the 19th centuries, the merging of folk beliefs about and scientific explanations of group differences produced what social anthropologist Audrey Smedley has called an "**ideology of race**" which, often in the name of (racialized) science, serves to justify the racial hierarchy and racial hegemony. "Race is a means of creating and enforcing social order, a lens through which differential opportunity and inequality are structured" (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Further, they argue that the most important "criterion of status" remains to be the distinction between white and Black.

According to historian Milton Meltzer, the rise of the transatlantic slave trade created an incentive to categorize human groups in order to justify the subordination of Africans as slaves. As Europeans began to sort themselves and others into groups based on

physical appearance, they attributed to individual members of these groups certain behaviors and capacities that were supposedly deeply ingrained. These supposed physical, intellectual, behavioral, and moral differences soon became part of common folk belief.

During the time of slavery in the U.S. South, the skin tone of enslaved peoples lightened over the years as babies were born from the union, often in the form of rape of enslaved individuals, by slave owners and other whites. As it became difficult to tell who was “Black” and who was not, many court battles over people’s racial identity occurred. People who were accused of having Black ancestry would go to court to “prove” they were white in order to avoid enslavement or other problems (Staples, 1998). Litigation over race continued long past the days of slavery. In a relatively recent example, Susie Guillory Phipps sued the Louisiana Bureau of Vital Records in the early 1980s to change her “official” race to white. Phipps was descended from a slave owner and a slave; thereafter, her other ancestors were white. Despite this fact, she was called “Black” on her birth certificate because of a state law, echoing the “**one-drop rule**,” that designated people as Black if their ancestry was at least 1/32 Black (meaning one of their great-great-great grandparents was Black). Phipps had always thought of herself as white and was surprised after seeing a copy of her birth certificate to discover she was officially Black because she had one African ancestor about 150 years earlier. She lost her case, and the U.S. Supreme Court later refused to review it (Omi & Winant, 1994).

Relatedly, the tradition of hostility between the English and the Irish was a powerful influence on early European thinking of the Irish as an inferior “race.” The atrocities committed against the Irish by the English veterans of the war in Ireland in the early 1600s would be repeated against American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) (Takaki, 2008). Both AI/AN and Mexican Americans lost their land, and often their lives, due in part to Manifest Destiny, the Mexican American War, and whites' belief in their god-given (superiority and) right to inhabit (and steal) lands in which people were already living. As will be discussed further in Chapter 6.1, Irish Americans were treated similar to African Americans during the 1800s; it was not until they "became white" that the stigma of their Irish ancestry would be erased and they would gain access to property, power and privilege, similar to other whites.

Following World War II, alongside empirical and conceptual problems with “race,” evolutionary and social scientists were acutely aware of how beliefs about race had been used to justify discrimination, apartheid, slavery, and genocide. This questioning gained momentum in the 1960s during the U.S. civil rights movement and the emergence of numerous anti-colonial movements worldwide. The social construction of race has developed within various legal, economic, and sociopolitical contexts, and may be the effect, rather than the cause of major race-related issues. Race has real, material effects in housing discrimination, in the legal process, in policing practices, in education, in workplace discrimination, and many other domains of society characterized by institutionalized practices of preference and systemic oppression. As a result, racial groups possessing relatively little power often find themselves excluded or oppressed. Law enforcement officers often utilize race to profile suspects, a term commonly referred to as **racial profiling**. This use of racial categories is frequently criticized for perpetuating an outmoded understanding of human biological variation, and promoting stereotypes.

Racial Formation

Sociologists Omi and Winant’s theories of **racial formation** describes race development as a socio-historical process involving political struggle and that “race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies" (Omi & Winant, 1994).

This section licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Socioeconomic factors, in combination with early but enduring views of race, have led to considerable suffering within disadvantaged racial groups. Racial discrimination often coincides with racist mindsets, whereby the individuals and ideologies of one group come to perceive the members of outgroups as both racially defined and morally inferior. Such practices illuminate how far-removed modern understanding of race is from biological qualities. In modern society, some people who consider themselves “white” actually have more melanin (a pigment that determines skin color) in their skin than other people who identify as ”Black.” Consider the case of the actress Rashida Jones. She is the daughter of a Black man (Quincy Jones) and a white woman, and her best-known roles include Ann Perkins on *Parks and Recreation*, Karen Filippelli on *The Office*, and Zooey Rice in *I Love You Man*, none of whom are Black characters. In some countries, such as Brazil, class is more important than skin color in determining racial categorization. People with high levels of melanin may consider themselves "white" if they enjoy a middle-class lifestyle. On the other hand, someone with low levels of melanin might be assigned the identity of "Black" if he or she has little education or money.

The social construction of race is also reflected in the changing labels for racial categories; these labels change with the times. It's worth noting that race, in this sense, is also a system of labeling that provides a source of identity; specific labels fall in and out of favor during different social eras. For example, the category "negroid," popular in the nineteenth century, evolved into the term "negro" by the 1960s, which shifted to Black as a result of the Black Power and Black Nationalist movements declaring "Black is Beautiful," and in contemporary times "African American" may also be used. This term was intended to celebrate the multiple identities that a Black person might hold, but this word choice is not without its problems: it lumps together a large variety of ethnic groups under an umbrella term while excluding others who could accurately be described by the label but who do not meet the spirit of the term. For example, actress Charlize Theron is a blonde-haired, blue-eyed "African American." She was born in South Africa and later became a U.S. citizen. Is her identity that of an "African American" as most of us understand the term? Further, many Black Americans do not have knowledge of African cultural roots and thus may reject the label of African American. In Chapter 1.4, more discussion is provided on the changing U.S. Census categories for race.



Figure 1.2.5: Businesses located in Little Saigon (Orange County, California) advertise cosmetic surgeries geared towards "beautifying" Vietnamese American women. (Janét Hund)

Aside from labels, a society's conceptualization of beauty is also intertwined with race, racism, and colorism, as light skin phenotype is often correlated with beauty within the dominant society and social institution of mass media. According to the research of Eugenia Kaw, Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) women's decision to undergo cosmetic surgery is an attempt to escape persisting racial prejudice that correlates their stereotyped genetic physical features ("small, slanty" eyes and a "flat" nose) with negative behavioral characteristics, such as passivity, dullness, and a lack of sociability. When AAPI women elect for cosmetic surgery, it is more often double eyelid, sculpted nose or breast enlargement. The women in Kaw's study indicated that they chose their surgeries to improve their social status, and to gain "symbolic capital," thus prestige. "(The medical establishment and U.S. culture) are able to motivate women to view their feelings of inadequacy as individually motivated, as opposed to socially induced, phenomena, thereby effectively convincing them to participate in the production and reproduction of the larger structural inequalities that continue to oppress them" (Kaw, 1993).

Racialization

Sociologists also use the term **racialization** which refers to the processes by which a group of people is defined by their "race." Processes of racialization begin by attributing racial meaning to people's identity and, in particular, as they relate to our institutional systems, such as housing, employment, mass media, and education. In societies in which white people have economic, political, and social power, processes of racialization have emerged from the concept of a racial hierarchy in these social systems. The visible effects of racialization are the resulting racial inequalities such as police brutality, substandard housing, and under-funded education. To be racialized is to be oppressed and imposed upon by the dominant group.

The exploitation, control and exclusion associated with racialization leads to people being singled out for unique treatment on the basis of real or imagined physical characteristics. Hence, racialized peoples are assigned racial categories leading to stigmatization and marginalization. While a stigma is a mark of disgrace, to be marginal is to be denied full access to social, political, economic, and cultural power and social institutions.

Various racialized caricatures can be found in mass media such as Black Face or Yellow Face characters prevalent in the last century. African American men have been portrayed as criminal or violent, while African American women have been portrayed as

sassy or aggressive. The Latinx population has been racialized by their sex appeal, Latinas as spicy and Latinos as the Latin Lover. Racialization of the Latinx population is further discussed in Chapter 8.5. Conversely, Asian American men are regarded on the big screen as having no sex appeal, while Asian American women have been portrayed as sex slaves. Consistent images of American Indians/Alaska Natives equate with the portrayal as "savages" or lacking human qualities.

Minority Group & Dominant Group

Whereas racialization is an active process engaged in by society, the use of minority and dominant groups is more passive labeling. Sociologist Louis Wirth (1945) defined a **minority group** as “any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society resulting in differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.” Minority group status can be based on social categories such as age, gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, religious beliefs, disability or socioeconomic class status. Minority groups are not necessarily numerical minorities (Griffiths, Keirns, Strayer, Cody-Rydzewsk, Scaramuzzo, Sadler, Vyain, Byer & Jones, 2015). For example, a large group of people may be a people of color because they lack social power. In fact, the South African system of apartheid (a system of de jure discrimination) was a major indicator that a people of color is socially and not numerically defined, as 90% of the population of South Africa is Black but until the very early 1990s they were the people of color and the 10% of the population who are white were the dominant group. The physical and cultural traits of people of colors “are held in low esteem by the dominant or majority group which treats them unfairly” (Henslin, 2011, p. 217).

According to Charles Wagley and Marvin Harris (1958), a people of color is distinguished by five characteristics: (1) unequal treatment and less power over their lives, (2) distinguishing physical or cultural traits like skin color or language, (3) involuntary membership in the group, (4) awareness of subordination, and (5) high rate of in-group marriage. In addition to communities of color, additional examples of people of colors might include the LBGTQ+ group, religious practitioners whose faith is not widely practiced where they live, and people with disabilities.

The **dominant group** has greater power, prestige, property (wealth), and status in society and receives greater, automatic privileges. As a result, the dominant group uses its position to discriminate against those that are different. Historically known as WASP (white Anglo Saxon Protestant), the dominant group in the United States is represented by white, middle-class, Protestant people of northern European descent (Doane, 2016). A dominant group is positively privileged (Weber,1978), unstigmatized (Rosenblum & Travis, 2011) and generally favored by the institutions of society, (Marger, 1996) particularly the social, economic, political, and educational systems.

Minority groups can garner power by expanding political boundaries or through expanded migration, though both of these efforts do not occur with ease and require societal support from both communities of color and dominant group members. The loss of power among dominant groups threatens not only their authority over other groups, but also the privileges and way of life established by the dominant group. In Chapter 6.3, white privilege and challenges to white supremacy are discussed.

As there is some controversy with using the concept of people of color, due to the often inferior and pejorative connotation with this label, efforts are made throughout this book to use the concepts, **people of color** or **communities of color**. The use of these concepts seeks to call attention to the commonalities of experience that Black or African Americans, American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN), Latinx, and Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI) share - though as ensuing chapters will also show, the groups have their own distinct history and contemporary experiences.



Figure 1.2.6: "'We are not a minority!!" mural with tribute to Che Guevara, originally painted in 1978 as part of the Chicano Park Struggle in San Diego, California. (CC BY 2.0; rizobreaker via Flickr)

Conclusion

David K. Shipler (1997) felt compelled to observe that there is "no more intractable, pervasive issue than race" and that when it comes to race, we are "a country of strangers." Sociologists and other social scientists have warned that the conditions of people of color have actually been worsening (Massey, 2007; Wilson, 2009). Despite the historic election of Barack Obama in 2008 as the first president of color, race remains an "intractable, pervasive issue." As the old French saying goes, plus ça change, plus la meme chose (the more things change, the more they stay the same). Indeed, it would be accurate to catapult back to Du Bois and thus paraphrase him, that "the problem of the 21st century is the problem of the color line." Evidence of this continuing problem appears in much of the remainder of this chapter and text.

Debates continue in and among academic disciplines as to how race should be understood. Most social scientists and biologists believe race is a social construct, meaning it does not have a basis in the natural world but is simply an artificial distinction created by humans. As a result of this understanding, some researchers have turned from conceptualizing and analyzing human variation by race to doing so in terms of populations, dismissing racial classifications altogether. In the face of the increasing rejection of race as a valid classification scheme, many social scientists have replaced the word race with the word "ethnicity" to refer to self-identifying groups based on shared religion, nationality, or culture.

Key Takeaways

- Race has a biological component (e.g. phenotype and genotype) resulting in classification systems of different racial groups, depending on the time period and geographical location.
- Sociologists question the consideration of race as a biological categorization due to the social construction of race and the fact that human beings have far more biological similarities than differences.
- Racial ideology, racial formation, racialization, and racialized science are concepts that help to understand that race is important in this society due to its social meaning which is marked by struggle, division, and hierarchy.
- Various labels (e.g. minority group, dominant group, marginalized group, people of color, and communities of color) are used to identify racial groups.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-SA other than Phenotype & Genotype and Racial Formation which are CC BY-SA.

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0) (Contributed to Phenotype & Genotype and Racial Formation)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- A Career in Sociology (Kennedy) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Alshammari, Y. (2020, April 1). Why is there no MENA category on the 2020 US census? *Aljazeera.*
- Bamshad, M. & Olson, S. (2003). Does race exist? *Scientific American. 289(*6), 78-85.
- Begley, S. (2008, February 29). Race and DNA. *Newsweek*.
- Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. (1963). *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Doane, A.W. (2016). Dominant group ethnic identity in the United States: The role of 'hidden' ethnicity in intergroup relations. *The Sociological Quarterly*. *38*(3), 375-397.
- Griffiths, H., Keirns, N., Strayer, E., Cody-Rydzewsk, S., Scaramuzzo, G., Sadler, T., Vyain, S., Byer, J. & Jones, F. (2015). *Introduction to Sociology.* 2nd ed. Houston, TX: OpenStax College.
- Henslin, J. M. (2011). *Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach.* 11th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Jablonski, N. (2012). *Living Color: The Biological and Social Meaning of Skin Color*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kaw, E. (1993). Medicalization of racial features: Asian American women and cosmetic surgery. University of California.
- Kottak, C.P. & Kozaitis, K.A. (2012). *On Being Different: Diversity and Multiculturalism in the North American Mainstream.* 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill College.
- Marger, M. (1996). *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives.* 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Massey, D. (2007). *Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- *Meyers Konversationslexikon.* 4th edition. (1885-92).
- Omi, M. and Winant, H. (1994). *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s.* 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Painter, N.I. (2010). *The History of white People*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- Rosenblum, K. & Travis, T. (2011). *The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex and Gender, Social Class, Sexual Orientation, and Disability.* 6th edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Shipler, D.K. (1997). *A Country of Strangers: Blacks and whites in America*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Smedley, A. & Smedley, B. (2005). Race as biology is fiction, racism as a social problem is real. *The American Psychologist, 60*(1), 16-26.
- Smedley, A. (1998). "Race" and the construction of human identity. *American Anthropologist, 100*, 690–702.
- Smedley, A. (2007). *Race in North America: Evolution of a worldview*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press..
- Staples, B. (1998, November 13). The shifting meanings of "Black" and "white." *The New York Times.*
- Stone, L. & Lurquin, P.F. (2007). *Genes, Culture, and Human Evolution: A Synthesis*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Takaki, R. (2008). *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America.* New York, NY: Back Bay Books/Little Brown & Company.
- Wagley, C. & Harris. (1958). *Minorities in the New World.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Weber, M. (1978) [1968]. *Economy and Society*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Wilson, W.J. (2009, May/June). More than just race: Being Black and poor in the inner city. *Poverty and Race Research Action Council.*
- Wirth, L. (1945). The problem of people of colors. *In The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, (R. Linton Ed.), New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Wright, L. (1993, July 12). One drop of blood. *The New Yorker*, pp. 46–54.

This page titled 1.2: Defining Race is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **1.2: Defining Race** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

1.3: Ethnicity and Religion

Ethnicity

Because of the meaning attached to race, many social scientists prefer the term ethnicity in speaking of people of color and others with distinctive cultural heritages. In this context, **ethnicity** refers to the shared social, cultural, and historical experiences, stemming from common national, ancestral, or regional backgrounds, that make subgroups of a population different from one another. Similarly, an **ethnic group** is a subgroup of a population with a set of shared social, cultural, and historical experiences; with relatively distinctive beliefs, values, and behaviors; and with some sense of identity of belonging to the subgroup. So conceived, the terms ethnicity and ethnic group avoid the biological connotations of the terms race and racial group and the biological differences these terms imply. At the same time, the importance we attach to ethnicity illustrates that it, too, is in many ways a social construction, and our ethnic membership thus has important consequences for how we are treated.



Figure **1.3.1**: "Native American Son," young boy Pow Wow dancer in full regalia. (CC BY 2.0; Bob.Rosenberg via Flickr)

People who identify with an ethnic group share common cultural characteristics (e.g., nationality, history, language, religion, etc.). Ethnic groups select rituals, customs, ceremonies, and other traditions to help preserve shared heritage (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Lifestyle requirements and other identity characteristics such as geography and region influence how we adapt our ethnic behaviors to fit the context or setting in which we live. Culture is also key in determining how human bodies grow and develop such as food preferences and diet, and cultural traditions promote certain activities and abilities including physical well-being and sport (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Someone of Mexican descent living in Southern California who is a college professor will project different ethnic behaviors than someone of the same ethnic culture who is a housekeeper in Las Vegas, Nevada. Differences in profession, social class, gender, and region will influence each person’s lifestyle, physical composition, and health though both may identify and affiliate themselves as Mexican.

Not all people see themselves as belonging to an ethnic group or view ethnic heritage as important to their identity. People who do not identify with an ethnic identity either have no distinct cultural background because their ancestors come from a variety of cultural groups and offspring have not maintained a specific culture, instead have a blended culture, or they lack awareness about their ethnic heritage (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). It may be difficult for some people to feel a sense of solidarity or association with any specific ethnic group because they do not know where their cultural practices originated and how their cultural behaviors adapted over time. In some instances, individuals may practice **symbolic ethnicity,** emphasis on ethnic food and ethnically associated political issues rather than deeper ties to one's heritage (Gans, 1979), such as an Irish American celebrating St. Patrick's Day as the only measure of their Irish ethnicity. What is your ethnicity? Is your ethnic heritage very important, somewhat important, or not important in defining who you are? Why?

Race & Ethnicity

Like race, the term ethnicity is difficult to describe and its meaning has changed over time. And like race, individuals may be identified or self-identify with ethnicities in complex, even contradictory, ways. For example, ethnic groups such as Irish, Italian, Russian, Jewish, and Serbian might all be groups whose members are predominantly included in the racial category "white." Conversely, the ethnic group British includes citizens from a multiplicity of racial backgrounds: Black, white, Asian, and more, plus a variety of racial combinations. These examples illustrate the complexity and overlap of these identifying terms. Ethnicity, like race, continues to be an identification method that individuals and institutions use today—whether through the census, affirmative action initiatives, non-discrimination laws, or simply in personal day-to-day relations.

This section licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0)



Figure **1.3.2**: Altar at Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Los Angeles, during Dia de los Muertos celebration, November 2019. (Sofia Beas)

Mexican Americans comprise an ethnic group, and their ethnicity may be measured by any of the following: Spanish language, holidays such as Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead), food such as tamales, adoration of the Virgin de Guadalupe, and values such as **familism**, higher emphasis placed on the family unit in terms of support and obligation,(in contrast to dominant culture's individualism). Mexican Americans comprise the largest ethnic group under the racial-ethnic umbrella group of Latinx Americans; Latinx in itself though is not an ethnic group as there is great diversity of different ethnic groups under this umbrella such as: Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Guatemalans, Salvadorans, Argentineans, etc. all of which may have distinct history, language, religion, and values. As discussed in the next section of this chapter, Latinx would also not be considered a distinct racial group, according to the U.S. Census.

Native American or American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) is also an umbrella racial-ethnic group rather than a distinct ethnic group. There are more than 500 distinct AI/AN nations or ethnicities with Navajo/Dine, Cherokee, and Lakota/Dakota/Nakota Sioux being three of the largest. Each of these nations retains some aspects of their cultural heritage. For example, in Arizona, the Hopi Nation is located "inside" of the Dine reservation (which extends into Utah and New Mexico), but the Hopi and Dine nations have distinct cultural patterns, including language, religion, food, and housing.

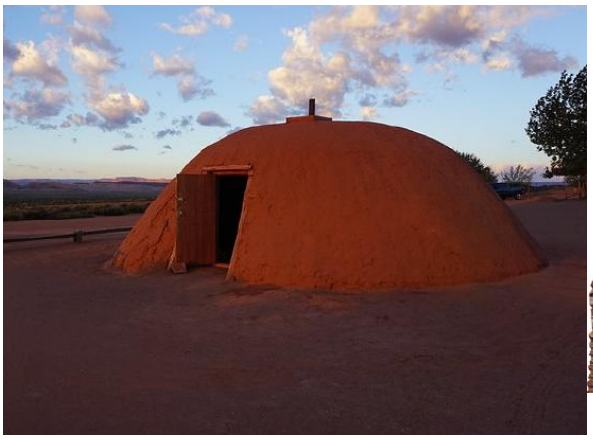



Figure 1.3.3: (left) Traditional Navajo hogan in Monument Valley, Arizona. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Jim Crossly via Flickr) Figure 1.3.4: (right) Traditional Hopi house is on the south rim of the Grand Canyon. (CC BY-NC 2.0; dev2r via Flickr)

Another umbrella group is Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) with a large number of ethnic groups under this category including Chinese, Japanese, Cambodian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, etc. Following the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, the U.S. has experienced increasing immigration from a variety of Asian countries, and it is common for AAPI groups to maintain many aspects of their culture, not the least of which is language. As shown in Table 1.3.5, of the top 10 languages spoken in the U.S., several emanate from Asia or the Pacific Islands: Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean.

Table 1.3.5: Detailed Languages Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over: 2009-2013 (Chart created by Jakobi Oware from Census.gov)

Language	Population	Percentage
English	231,122,908	79.29%
Spanish	37,458,470	12,85%
Chinese	1,867,485	0.64%
Tagalog	1,613,346	0.55%
Vietnamese	1,399,936	0.48%
French	1,253,560	0.43%
Korean	1,117,343	0.38%
German	1,063,275	0.36%
Arabic	924,374	0.32%
Russian	879,434	0.30%

Not all Black or African Americans identify with specific cultural traits of their African or Caribbean ancestors. Nonetheless, signifiers of Black ethnicity may include the following: food such as collard greens, language such as Creole, Southern Baptist religion, annual family reunions, and the musical genre of jazz. Certainly, recent African or Caribbean immigrants from Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Jamaica, and Haiti often maintain aspects of their ethnicity, including language and food, in contemporary U.S.

The sense of identity many people gain from belonging to an ethnic group is important for reasons both good and bad. As one of the most important functions of groups is the identity they give us, ethnic identities can thus give individuals a sense of belonging and a recognition of the importance of their cultural backgrounds. The term ethnic pride captures the sense of self-worth that many people derive from their ethnic backgrounds. More generally, if group membership is important for many ways in which members of the group are socialized, ethnicity certainly plays an important role in the socialization of millions of people in the United States and elsewhere in the world today.

A downside of ethnicity and ethnic group membership is the conflict they create among people of different ethnic groups. History and current practice indicate that it is easy to become prejudiced against people with different ethnicities from our own, particularly if those ethnic groups are not "white." Around the world today, ethnic conflict continues to rear its ugly head. The 1990s and 2000s were filled with “ethnic cleansing” and pitched battles among ethnic groups in Eastern Europe, Africa, and elsewhere. Our ethnic heritages shape us in many ways and fill many of us with pride, but they also are the source of much conflict, prejudice, and even hatred, as the story about George Floyd's lynching that began this chapter so sadly reminds us. Do you also recall that the day President Donald Trump declared his candidacy for President was also the day he castigated the Mexican nationality with derogatory labels, thus justifying his appeal for a border wall?

Ethnic Enclaves

Ethnic enclaves are neighborhoods with high concentrations of one particular ethnic group, usually resulting from immigration patterns. Ethnic enclaves tend to share these characteristics: 1) live in close proximity; 2) support the traditional values customs and ways of life of that ethnic group; 3) maintain social services such as employment networks, political clubs, civic organizations and houses of worship; 4) establish retail stores where traditional foods clothing household goods and utensils are sold; 5) develop and sustain native language newspapers and sometimes radio and TV stations; 6) provide employment and social and sometimes financial support for new immigrants; 7) permit new immigrants to adapt to a new country without experiencing serious levels of culture shock and homesickness. In general, ethnic enclaves provide a safe haven with a variety of social supports for new immigrants that serve to ease their transition into a new and different culture.



Figure 1.3.6: Busy Chinatown ethnic enclave with many people walking on sidewalk. Various store signs (in English and Chinese). (CC BY 2.0; koles via Flickr)

These enclaves offer economic opportunities to immigrants and mechanisms for maintenance of immigrant cultures, but also the potential exploitation of immigrant labor, often based on gender. The enclaves of Asian and Latinx immigrants emerging since the 1960s, compliments of the 1965 immigration policy, compare to earlier enclaves of Jewish and Italian immigrants at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. In recent decades, enclaves can potentially serve as agents for social mobility of immigrant populations. Enclaves may also hinder assimilation into mainstream U.S. culture. A preponderance of ethnic enclaves are found in urban and suburban parts of the country such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Miami, Washington, D.C., and New York. These enclaves can be characterized by a host of benefits and challenges.

Sociologists Alejandro Portes and Robert Manning have studied ethnic enclaves and have argued that for an ethnic enclave to survive, it requires early immigrants to arrive with business skills and funds or access to funds. Ethnic enclaves survive over more than two generations only when there is a constant migration stream from the country of origin that lasts over more than two generations. Ethnic enclaves, once they have served their purpose of socializing new immigrants into American culture, tend to disappear as later generations follow the traditional assimilation pattern and move further and further out into the wider society.

Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism

People have a tendency to judge and evaluate each other on a daily basis. Assessing other people and our surroundings is necessary for interpreting and interacting in the social world. Problems arise when we judge others using our own cultural standards. Sociologists call the practice of judging or evaluating others through our own cultural lens, **ethnocentrism.** This practice is a cultural universal. People everywhere think their culture is true, moral, proper, and right (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). By its very definition, ethnocentrism creates division and conflict between social groups whereby mediating differences is challenging when everyone believes they are culturally superior and their culture should be the standard for living.

The ethnocentrism of Europeans, and then later Euro-Americans, led to an ideology, based primarily on the low-technology hunter-gatherer lifestyle and animistic religion of the Native Americans, that the Native Americans were inferior, "savages," and sub-human. As discussed further in Chapter 5.1, this ideology eventually led to “the only good Indian is a dead Indian” philosophy which began with such events as the Trail of Tears in the 1830's and culminated in the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890. The “butchering” at Wounded Knee as Black Elk describes it (Neihardt, 1932) marked the last battle between Native Americans and the military forces of the United States. However, there were still skirmishes between farmers and ranchers and Native Americans as late as the 1920's. In fact, the term “Redskin” comes from a bounty set aside by the United States government for any Indian found outside a reservation without papers. The policy was for Indians “dead or alive” and the bloody, red, skins of the Indians brought as much bounty as a body. An extension of this ethnocentrism is found in another ideology popularized by the educator William Henry Pratt, "kill the Indian, save the man." Operationalized in the treatment of Native American children during the boarding school era, any cultural aspect of one's Native American nation (e.g., language, food, dress, religion, hairstyle, etc.) was replaced with Euro American ways (i.e. English language, Christianity, etc.). Children were punished for attempting to practice the culture and language of their ancestors.



Figure **1.3.7**: Textbook co-author practicing cultural relativism in Battambang, Cambodia where a woman shared the local way to clean teeth: chewing betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco. (Janét Hund)

In contrast, **cultural relativism** is understanding a culture on its own terms. From a culturally relativist lens, judging a culture by the standards of another is objectionable. It seems reasonable to evaluate a person’s values, beliefs, and practices from their own cultural standards rather than to judge against the criteria of another (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Learning to receive cultural differences from a place of empathy and understanding serves as a foundation for living together despite variances. Like many aspects of human civilization, culture is not absolute but relative suggesting values, beliefs, and practices are only standards of living as long as people accept and live by them (Boas, 1887). Developing knowledge about cultures and cultural groups different from our own allows us to view and consider others from their cultural lens.

Sometimes people act on ethnocentric thinking and feel justified disregarding cultural relativism. Overcoming negative attitudes about people who are culturally different from us is challenging when we believe our culture and thinking are justified. Consider the issue of language. Countless anecdotal stories from various parts of the U.S. reveal that people speaking a language other than English have been shouted at to "speak English here!" Consider an even more controversial issue such as female circumcision or

female genital mutilation. From a culturally relativist lens, female circumcision is a rite of passage in some cultures and confers a sense of identity and participation in one's community, as described in a biographical account, Aman, by a Somali woman. However, this Somali woman would view a Westerner referring to this cultural practice as female genital mutilation as ethnocentric. This example reveals how challenging it can be to consider different cultural practices that may be in conflict with one's own values. Still, the tool of cultural relativism is an important one that students of sociology can consider when developing a deeper understanding of ethnicity.

Religion

Religion is malleable and adaptive for it changes and adapts within cultural and social contexts. Human groups have diverse beliefs and different functions of their faith and religion. Historically, religion has driven both social union and division (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). When religious groups unite, they can be a strong mobilizing force; however, when they divide, they can work to destroy each other. Religion may be formal or informal (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Someone who is a member of an organized religious group may attend religious services. Whereas, someone participating in informal religion may or may not be a member of an organized religious group, yet may experience a communal spirit, solidarity, and togetherness with others through shared experiences. Religion is a vehicle for guiding values, beliefs, norms, and practices. It can be an important measure of an ethnic group.

Seeking religious freedom, Puritans migrated to the U.S. to practice their religious devotion, an act which was persecuted or denied in their homeland. Yet, American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN), such as the Lakota who practiced the Ghost Dance in 1890, have not always experienced religious freedom in the U.S. In its early centuries, the U.S. was a Christian nation. Sometimes, as in the boarding school experience which was generally forced upon AI/AN children, Christianity replaced traditional AI/AN beliefs. Increasingly so, the U.S. has become less Christian, though Christianity is still the dominant religious group. According to the Pew Research Center (2019), the percentage of individuals in the U.S. who identify as Christian is 65% which represents a significant decline from 2009 in which 75% identified as Christian. Additionally, immigration from Asia and Latin America particularly, has impacted Christian and non-Christian faiths. A brief introduction to some of the diversity of religious denominations follows.

Hinduism

The oldest religion in the world, Hinduism originated in the Indus River Valley about 4,500 years ago in what is now modern-day northwest India and Pakistan. It arose contemporaneously with ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures. With roughly one billion followers, Hinduism is the third-largest of the world’s religions. Hindus believe in a divine power that can manifest as different entities. Three main incarnations—Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva—are sometimes compared to the manifestations of the divine in the Christian Trinity. Multiple sacred texts, collectively called the *Vedas*, contain hymns and rituals from ancient India and are mostly written in Sanskrit. Hindus generally believe in a set of principles called **dharma** (reflected in the above figure), which refer to one’s duty in the world that corresponds with “right” actions. Hindus also believe in **karma**, the notion that spiritual ramifications of one’s actions are balanced cyclically in this life or a future life (reincarnation). As illustrated in Figure 1.3.8 below, in the the prayer to Saraswati, goddess of knowledge for wisdom, in Indian philosophy there is a distinction between Jnana (knowledge) which is sterile and pointless unless transformed to Bhakti, where the knowledge gained is applied to everyday life, how we relate to people with love and care, how we perceive the world around us and protect its life-giving resources, how we solve day to day problems for oneself and others through the application of knowledge to work for solution.



Figure **1.3.8**: Prayer to Saraswati, goddess of knowledge for wisdom. (Dr. Ramchandran Sethuraman)

Buddhism

Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Gautama around 500 B.C.E. Siddhartha was said to have given up a comfortable, upper-class life to follow one of poverty and spiritual devotion. At the age of thirty-five, he famously meditated under a sacred fig tree and vowed not to rise before he achieved enlightenment (*bodhi*). After this experience, he became known as Buddha, or "enlightened one." Followers were drawn to Buddha's teachings and the practice of meditation, and he later established a monastic order. Buddha's teachings encourage Buddhists to lead a moral life by accepting the four Noble Truths: 1) life is suffering, 2) suffering arises from attachment to desires, 3) suffering ceases when attachment to desires ceases, and 4) freedom from suffering is possible by following the "middle way." The concept of the "middle way" is central to Buddhist thinking, which encourages people to live in the present and to practice acceptance of others (Smith, 1991). Buddhism also tends to de-emphasize the role of a godhead, instead stressing the importance of personal responsibility (Craig, 2002).



Figure **1.3.9**: Buddhist Temple in Richmond, California. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; su-lin via Flickr)

Judaism

Judaism is the religion, philosophy, and way of life of the Jewish people. Jews with European heritage are called Ashkenazi Jews, while Jews from the Middle East are called Sephardic Jews, or Mizrachim. American Jews, also known as Jewish Americans, are American citizens of the Jewish faith or Jewish ethnicity. The Jewish community in the United States is composed predominantly of Ashkenazi Jews who emigrated from Central and Eastern Europe, and their U.S.-born descendants. Individuals from all Jewish ethnic divisions are also represented, including Sephardi Jews, Mizrahi Jews, and a number of converts. The American Jewish community manifests a wide range of Jewish cultural traditions, as well as encompassing the full spectrum of Jewish religious

observance. In fact, many Jewish people identify as secular rather than as religious. American Jews are more likely to be atheist or agnostic than most Americans, especially so compared with Protestants or Catholics. A more detailed discussion of the diversity of Jewish Americans is provided in Chapter 10.



Figure **1.3.10**: Hannakuh, Jewish festival of lights, meal on table. (CC-BY 4.0; Ksenia Chernaya via Pexels)

Islam

The followers of Islam, whose U.S. population is projected to double in the next twenty years, are called Muslims (Heimlich, 2011). As Chapter 10.1 explains, American Muslims come from various backgrounds, and are one of the most racially diverse religious groups in the United States according to a 2009 Gallup poll. Immigrant communities of Arab and South Asian descent make up the majority of American Muslims. Native-born American Muslims are mainly African-Americans who make up about a quarter of the total Muslim population, and many of them associate with the **Nation of Islam**. Many of these have converted to Islam during the last seventy years. Conversion to Islam in prison and in large urban areas has also contributed to its growth over the years.

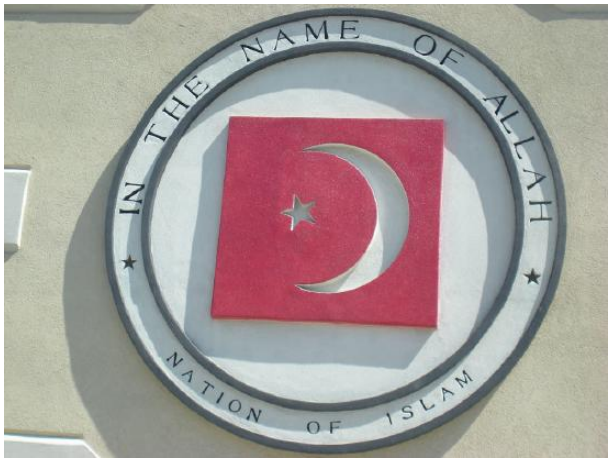


Figure **1.3.11**: Nation of Islam crescent moon and star emblem in Indianapolis, Indiana. Inscription reads: In the name of Allah, Nation of Islam. (CC BY 2.0; sarahstierch via Wikimedia/Flickr)

Christianity

Today the largest religion in the world, Christianity began 2,000 years ago in Palestine, with Jesus of Nazareth, a charismatic leader who taught his followers about *caritas* (charity) or treating others as you would like to be treated yourself.

The sacred text for Christians is the Bible. While Jews, Christians, and Muslims share many of same historical religious stories, their beliefs diverge. In their shared sacred stories, it is suggested that the son of God—a messiah—will return to save God's followers. While Christians believe that he already appeared in the person of Jesus Christ, Jews and Muslims disagree. While they recognize Christ as an important historical figure, their traditions don't believe Jesus to be the son of God, and their faiths see the prophecy of the messiah's arrival as not yet fulfilled.

There are at least 24 denominations of Christianity in the U.S., with Catholicism being the largest. The remaining groups fall under the label of Protestant.

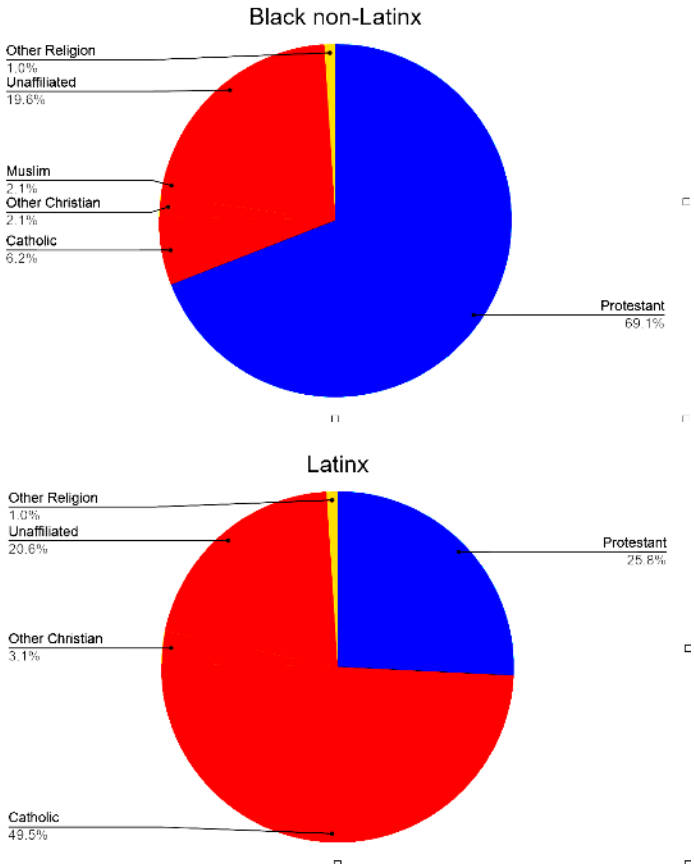
Table **1.3.12**: Christian Denominations in the United States. (U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012)

Denomination Name	Inclusive Membership
Roman Catholic Church	68,503,456
Southern Baptist Convention	16,106,088
United Methodist Church	7,774,931
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	6,058,907
Church of God in Christ	5,499,875
National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.	5,000,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	4,542,868
National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.	3,500,000
Assemblies of God	2,914,669
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	2,770,730
African Methodist Episcopal Church	2,500,000
National Missionary Baptist Convention of America	2,500,000
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS)	2,312,111
Episcopal Church	2,006,343
Churches of Christ	1,639,495
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America	1,500,000
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.	1,500,000
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	1,400,000
American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A	1,310,505
Jehovah's Witnesses	1,162,686
United Church of Christ	1,080,199
Church of God (Cleveland, TN)	1,076,254
Christian Churches and churches of Christ	1,071,616
Seventh-Day Adventist Church	1,43,606
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.	1,010,000



Figure **1.3.13**: A Mexican Church. (CC BY 2.0; Tri Nguyen | P h o t o g r a p h y via Flickr)

The patterns of religious identity among major racial and ethnic groups vary significantly. According to Jones (2017) and as shown in Figure 1.3.14, nearly 70% of white Americans identify as Christian, and 3/4 of African Americans identify as Christian. More than 1/4 of white Americans are Evangelical Protestant, with 1/5 identifying as Protestant (non-Evangelical), and less than 1/5 are Catholic. Over the past few decades, the Catholic religious denomination has become less white and more Latinx. A greater percentage of African Americans identify as Protestant (nearly 70%) with only 6% identifying as Catholic. Latinx are also predominantly Christian, with almost half identifying as Catholic and only 1/4 identifying as Protestant. Amongst Asian Americans Pacific Islanders (AAPI), more than 1/3 identify as Christian and more than 1/4 are not affiliated with a religious denomination. As AAPI reflect the most religious diversity of all the groups featured in the above figure, more than 1/10 of AAPI identify as Hindu and a lesser amount identify as Buddhist or Muslim, approximately 6% in each respective group.



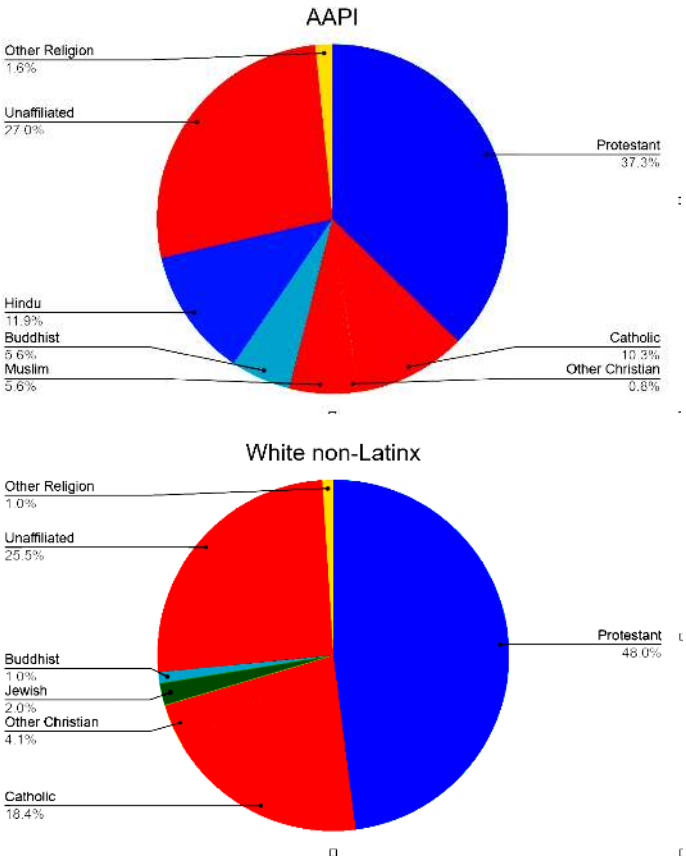


Figure **1.3.14**: Religious affiliation by ethnic groups in the United States. (Charts created by Jonas Oware with data from the PRRI)

Thinking Sociologically

Is there an ethnic enclave near you? Have you ever visited there? What are the identifying characteristics of this ethnic enclave, such as food, language, religion, music, holidays?

Alternatively, have you ever visited a religious house of worship (e.g. temple, mosque, synagogue, church) outside of your own religion, if you have one? If you have visited a different house of worship, how did you feel during your visit? If you have never visited a different house of worship, would you consider doing so? Why or why not?

Cultural Intelligence and Cultural Competency

In a culturally diverse society, it is becoming increasingly important to be able to interact effectively with others. Our ability to communicate and interact with each other plays an integral role in the successful development of our relationships for personal and social prosperity. Building **cultural intelligence** requires active awareness of self, others, and context (Bucher, 2008). Self-awareness requires an understanding of our cultural identity including intrinsic or extrinsic bias we have about others and social categories of people. Cultural background greatly influences perception and understanding, and how we identify ourselves reflects on how we communicate and get along with others. It is easier to adjust and change our interactions if we are able to recognize our own uniqueness, broaden our percepts, and respect others (Bucher, 2008). We must be aware of our cultural identity including any multiple or changing identities we take on in different contexts as well as those we keep hidden or hide to avoid marginalization or recognition.



Figure **1.3.15**: Man Looking in Front of Mirror (CC BY 4.0; Min An via Pexels)

According to the National Education Association, **cultural competence** is having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference in addition to having the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. Three concepts that characterize cultural competence are self-awareness, education, and interaction (Young Adult Library Services Association - YALSA). Self-awareness involves recognizing the significance of culture in one's own life and in the lives of others. Education relates to an individual's ability to fully integrate members of diverse groups into services, work, and institutions in such a way that the lives of the individuals being served and those of the people delivering service are enhanced. Interaction concerns understanding and respecting cultural backgrounds other than one's own through engaging with individuals from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic strata.

Active awareness of others requires us to use new cultural lenses. We must learn to recognize and appreciate commonalities in our culture not just differences. This practice develops understanding of each other's divergent needs, values, behaviors, interactions, and approach to teamwork (Bucher, 2008). Understanding others involves evaluating assumptions and cultural truths. Our cultural lenses filter perceptions of others and condition us to view the world and others in one way blinding us from what we have to offer or complement each other (Bucher, 2008). Active awareness of others broadens one's sociological imagination to see the world and others through a different lens and understand diverse perspectives. Becoming more culturally intelligent and culturally competent can ultimately help us to interact and work together more effectively and compassionately.

Key Takeaways

- Ethnicity and ethnic groups are characterized by common culture, language, religion, food, holidays, traditions, history, ancestry, nationality; race and ethnicity should be understand as distinct though possibly related concepts.
- Ethnic enclaves are neighborhoods with high concentrations of one particular ethnic group, usually resulting from immigration patterns.
- People may employ any of the following when responding to other ethnic backgrounds: cultural relativism, ethnocentrism, cultural competence.
- Religion (e.g. Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity) may overlap with race and/or ethnicity.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-SA other than Race & Ethnicity which is CC BY-SA.

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0) (Contributed to Race & Ethnicity)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- A Career in Sociology (Kennedy) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Barnes, V.L. (1994). *Aman: The Story of a Somali Girl.* New York, NY: Vintage B.
- Boas, F. (1887). Museums of ethnology and their classification. *Science*, Vol 9, *p*. 589.
- Bucher, R.D. (2008). *Building Cultural Intelligence (CQ): 9 Megaskills.* London, UK: Pearson.
- Department of Commerce. (2012). *Statistical Abstract of the United States.* U.S. Census Bureau.
- Craig, Mary, transl. 2002. *The Pocket Dalai Lama*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- Gans, H. (1979, January). Symbolic ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America. *Ethnic and Racial Studies.*
- Heimlich, R. (2011, March 2). America's Muslim population 2030. *Pew Research Center.*

- Jones, R.P. & Cox, D. (2017). America’s changing religious identity. *PRRI.*
- Kottak, C.P. & Kozaitis, K. A. (2012). *On Being Different: Diversity and Multiculturalism in the North American Mainstream.* 4th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- *National Education Association.* (2020). National Education Association.
- Neihardt, J. G. (1932). *Black Elk Speaks.* New York, NY: William Morrow & Company.
- Nowrasteh, A. (2019). Ethnic enclaves as economic petri dishes. *USA Today,* Vol. 148, no. 2894, 11, pp. 37-39.
- Pew Research Center. (2019, October 17). *In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace: An Update on America's Changing Religious Landscape.*
- Portes, A. & Manning, R. (1986). The immigrant enclave: Theory and empirical examples. In *Competitive Ethnic Relations*, ed. Suzan Olzak & Joane Nagel. Cambridge MA: Academic Books.
- Smith, Huston. 1991 [1958]. *The World’s Religions*. San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins.
- *Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA).* American Library Association.

This page titled 1.3: Ethnicity and Religion is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **1.3: Ethnicity and Religion** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

1.4: Multiracial Americans

While sociologists do not favor a biological definition of race, a discussion of people with "more than one race" reflects a reference to the "biological" aspect of race. In reality, we have a complex history of identifying and categorizing individuals who are **multiracial**, more than one race - which reflects the role of the social construction of race.

We have already mentioned the example of President Obama, who as the product of an African father and white mother, identifies as a Black man. As another example, the famous (and now notorious) golfer Tiger Woods was typically called an African American by the news media when he burst onto the golfing scene in the late 1990s, but in fact his ancestry is one-half Asian (divided evenly between Chinese and Thai), one-quarter white, one-eighth Native American, and only one-eighth African American (Leland & Beals, 1997). Woods has jokingly used the term, Cablinasian, as his race-ethnic grouping - a creative way to reference his diverse background.

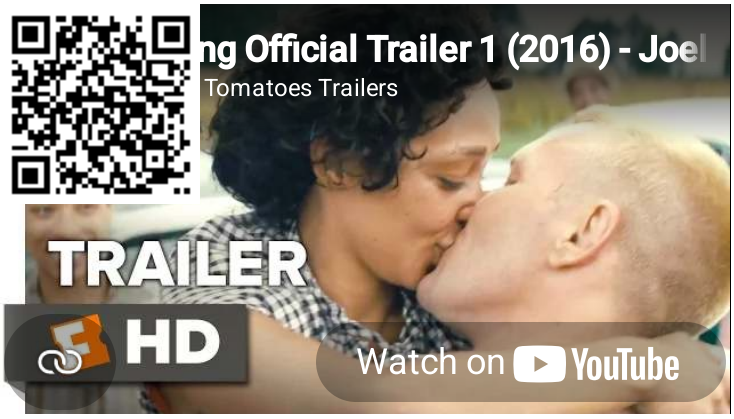
Prior to the twentieth century, interracial marriage (referred to as **miscegenation**) was extremely rare, and in many places, illegal.

Anti-Miscegenation Laws

These anti-miscegenation laws were first passed in the 1600s to prevent freed Black slaves from marrying whites. Later versions added persons of Asian origin or ancestry to the list of groups forbidden to marry Whites. While early examples of such anti-miscegenation laws singled out those of "Mongoloid" origin specifically, they were later amended to include Filipinos (who claimed that they were of "Malay" origin) and Asian Indians (who characterized themselves as "Aryan" in origin).

This section is licensed CC BY-NC-ND. Attribution: Asian Nation (Le) (CC BY-NC-ND)

Discussed further in Chapter 2.3, **amalgamation,** often used as a synonym for miscegenation, is the process by which a marginalized group and a dominant group combine to form a new group. In the United States, anti-miscegenation laws flourished in the South during the Jim Crow era. Part of the root of white supremacy has revolved around the fear of miscegenation, highlighted in the film Birth of a Nation (1915), which glorified the Ku Klux Klan as a savior of white women from "Black" men who were portrayed in Blackface. Decades later reflecting changing times, Sydney Poitier and Katharine Houghton, portrayed an interracial couple in Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967).



Video 1.4.1: Richard and Mildred Loving, an interracial couple, are sentenced to prison in Virginia in 1958 for getting married. The film "Loving" chronicled their experiences with discrimination. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Fandango Movieclips Trailers via YouTube)

As the above trailer conveys, in that same year, Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court decision struck the last anti-miscegenation law from the books, declaring such laws unconstitutional. Prior to this, the 1945 War Brides Act allowed American GIs to marry and then bring their wives over from Japan, China, the Philippines, and Korea. The 1965 Immigration Act (discussed further in Chapter

3.4 and Chapter 9.4) inadvertently enhanced intermarriages across races. Increasingly during the modern era, the removal of miscegenation laws and a trend toward equal rights and legal protection against racism have steadily reduced the social stigma attached to **racial exogamy** (exogamy refers to marriage outside a person's core social unit). In the later part of the twentieth century and in the twenty-first century, attitudes and behaviors have changed. Recently, some drew parallels between Loving v. Virginia and the Obergefell vs. Hodges (2015) decision which legalized gay marriage in the entire U.S.

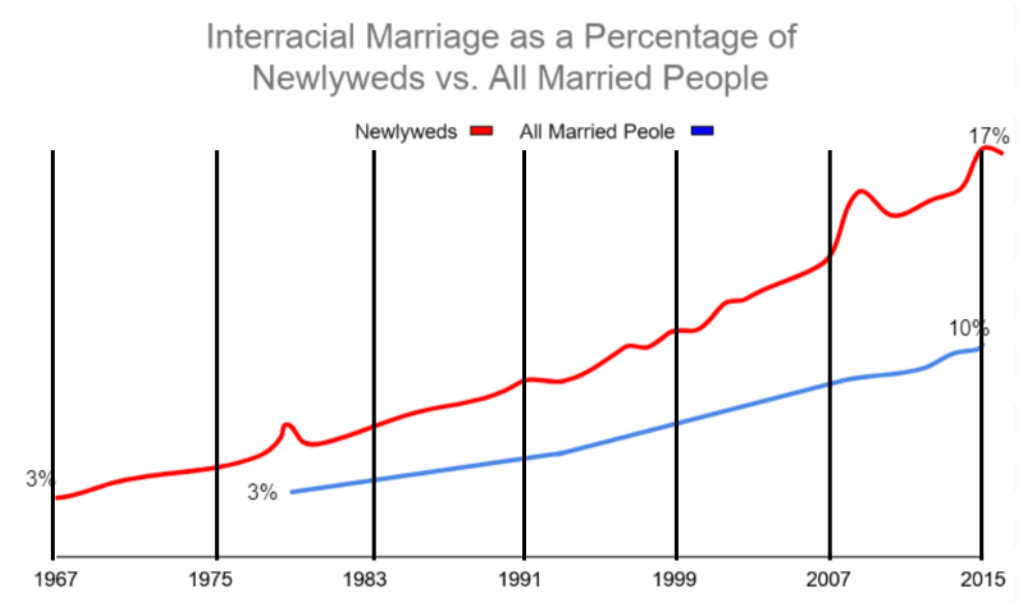


Figure **1.4.2**: Interracial Marriage as a Percentage of Newlyweds vs. All Married People. In 1967, interracial marriages represented 3% of all newlyweds. Interracial marriages have experienced a steady increase since that time. In 2015, interracial marriages represented 17% of all newlyweds and 10% of all married people. (Chart created by Jonas Oware from data courtesy of the Pew Research Center)

As shown in Figure 1.4.2, both the overall intermarriage rates and the newlywed intermarriage rates are on the increase. The share of married couples with spouses of different races increased nearly fourfold from 1980 (1.6%) to 2013 (6.3%) (U.S. Census). Honolulu, Hawaii is the city with the highest percentage of interracial marriages in the U.S. As shown in Table 1.4.3 below the most common intermarriage is between Latinx and white, with a slightly higher percentage of these marriages with Latino husband-white wife. This is followed by Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) and white, the latter of which overwhelming consist of a white husband and AAPI wife.

Table **1.4.3**: Trends of Intermarriage Couples. (Chart created by Jonas Oware from data courtesy of the Pew Research Center)

	Husband-Wife	Wife-Husband	Total
White-Latinx	22%	20%	42%
White-Multiracial	11%	4%	15%
White-Black	7%	5%	12%
Latinx-Black	1%	4%	5%
White-AI/AN	2%	1%	3%
Latinx-AAPI	2%	1%	3%
Latinx-Multiracial	1%	2%	3%

Thinking Sociologically

A range of groundbreaking films have portrayed interracial relationships. Often, these movies used the trials and tribulations of racially and ethnically mixed lovers as a platform to challenge racial constructs, racism, ethnocentrism and heterosexism (Little, 2020). These films include: Island in the Sun, Westside Story, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?, La Bamba, Jungle Fever, Mississippi Masala, The Joy Luck Club, The Watermelon Woman, Fools Rush In, Loving, Liberty Heights, and Something New. Watch one or more of these films and use a sociological perspective and your sociological imagination to consider prevailing social forces impacting and impacted by these films.

More than One Race

During the peculiar institution of slavery when the white sexual subordination of enslaved African women did result in children of mixed race, these children were usually considered Black, and therefore, property. This reflected the one drop rule discussed earlier in Chapter 1.2. There was no concept of multiple racial identities with the possible exception of the **Creole**. Creole society developed in the port city of New Orleans, where a mixed-race culture grew from French and African inhabitants. Unlike in other parts of the country, “Creoles of color” had greater social, economic, and educational opportunities than most African Americans.

The categories for race on the Census have changed over time. **Mulatto** was a racial category on the Census from 1850-1920 (except 1900), characterizing someone of any perceptible trace of African blood. In 2000, the U.S. Census added the option for individuals to identify themselves as "more than one race." Prior to this Census, people could only choose one race.

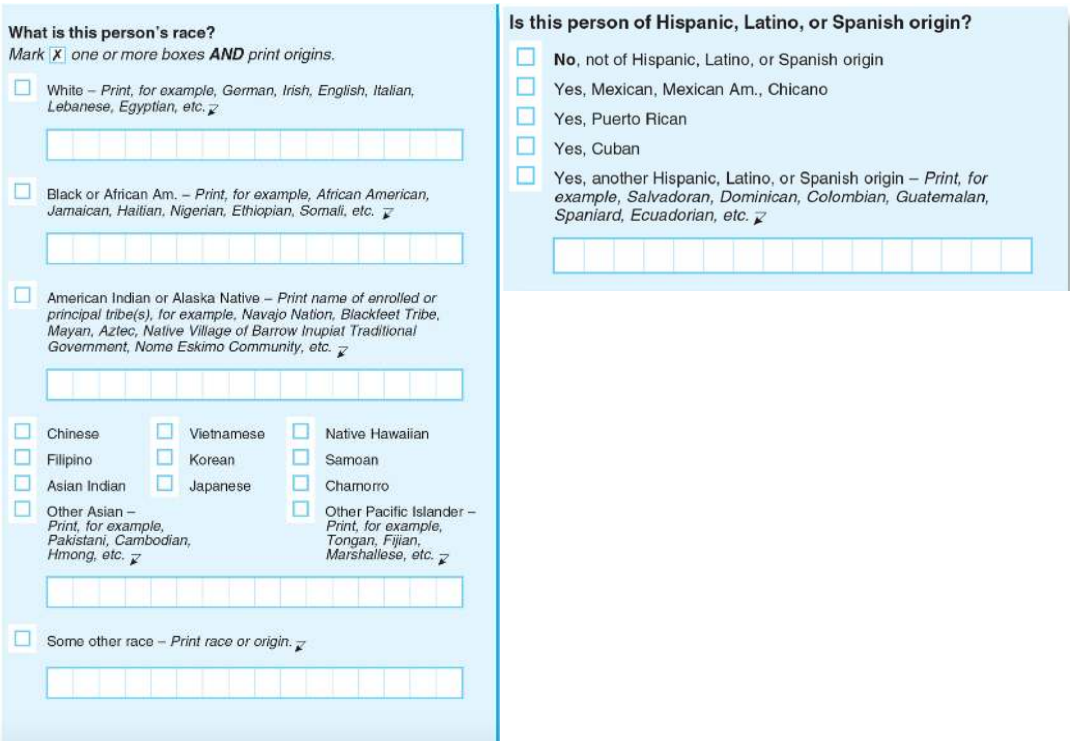


Figure **1.4.4**: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau Questionnaire. (CC PDM 1.0; United States Census)

The above Figure 1.4.4 conveys that the U.S. Census currently measures race-ethnicity in two separate questions. The first question determines if the person is Latinx while the second question is determining "race," as defined by the Census - though these categories would undoubtedly appear different if sociologists created these Census categories. The racial categories on the Census do not reflect a category for Latinx, though many do write in Mexican American or Central American, yet the majority of Latinx responded as white, per the 2010 census results. For a brief time in 1930, Mexican was a racial category on the Census. In 1921, the country of Mexico abandoned its category for race on the Census, recognizing the amalgamated ancestry of Mexicans, mestizo/mestiza. The category of **mestizo/mestiza** refers to individuals with a mixture of Indigenous and Spanish descent, hence the origin of Mexican people. In fact, Latinx may identify as white, Black, Native American, Asian, or other racial group.

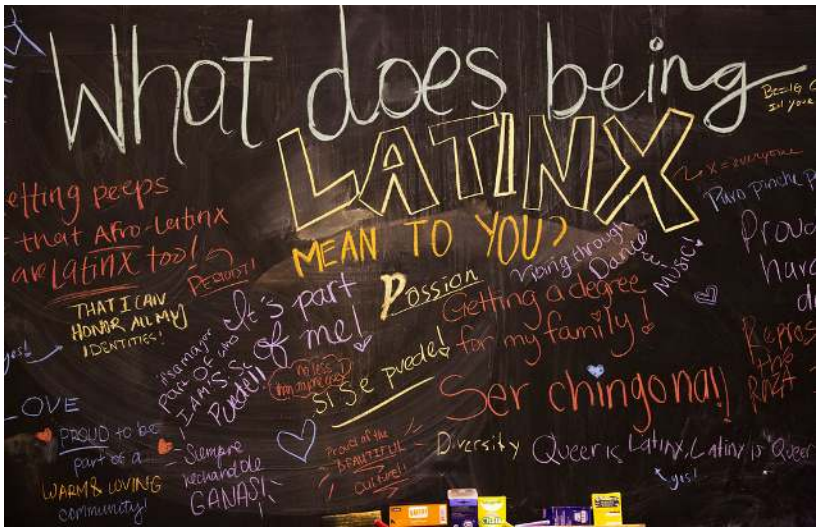


Figure 1.4.5: Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month Celebration 2019. Hand-written words on sign answering question: What does being Latinx mean to you? (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; CSUF Photos via Flickr)

As explained further in Chapter 9.1, Hapa is a Hawaiian word for individuals who have mixed ethnicity. Hapa can be used to describe individuals who are mixed with Asian descent. Hapa haole is a word that characterizes individuals who are mixed with white/European.

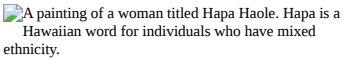

A painting of a woman titled Hapa Haole. Hapa is a Hawaiian word for individuals who have mixed ethnicity.

Figure 1.4.6: "Hapa Haole," portrait of a mixed Hawawaiian woman. (CC PDM 1.0; Grace Hudson via Wikimedia)

A growing number of people chose multiple races to describe themselves on the 2010 Census. Of those, 89% identify as having two racial backgrounds, classified as bi-racial. In 2010, 2.9% of people who completed the U.S. Census identified as more than one race. As shown in Figure 1.4.7, the largest groups in descending order were white-Black, white-Asian, white-American Indian, white-Black and white-some other race. Including the option of checking more than one race has most impacted the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population. This group increased by more than 160% between 1990 and 2010, with the biggest growth attributed to individuals who marked AI/AN and one other race. Though increasing in recent decades, the first notable cohort of multiracial Asian Americans offspring resulted from marriages after the 1945 War Brides Act. Decades later, approximately 25,000 Amerasians, offspring of U.S. GIs and Vietnamese women, were allowed to immigrate to the U.S. following the Vietnamese Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1988; the Amerasian population had faced challenging discrimination and hostility in Vietnam following the U.S. war in Vietnam that ended in the fall of Saigon and "reunification" of Vietnam in 1975.

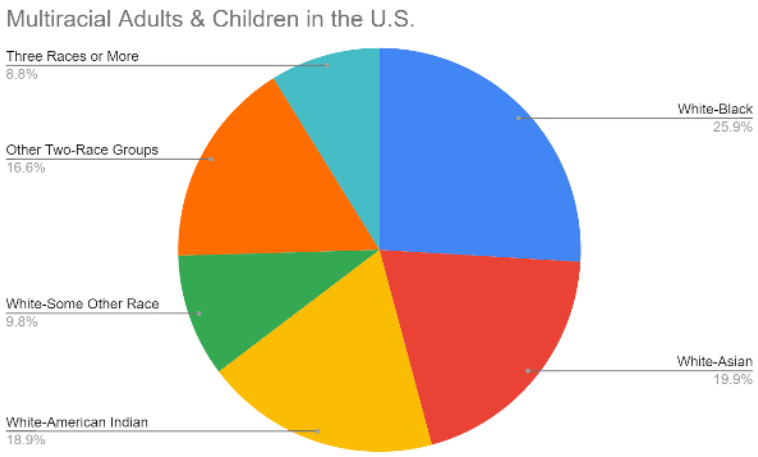


Figure 1.4.7: Multiracial Adults and Children in the United States. (Chart created by Jonas Oware from data courtesy of the Pew Research Center)

Multiracial: Category or Identity

Taking into account how adults describe their own race as well as the racial backgrounds of their parents and grandparents, which the Census does not do, the Pew Research estimates that 6.9% of the U.S. population could be considered **multiracial**, defined as more than one race. People categorized into this group will no doubt continue to grow as multiracial babies are on the increase and comprised 10% of all U.S. babies in 2013 (Parker, Menasce Horowitz, Morin & Lopez, 2015).



Figure **1.4.8**: Multiracial brothers at the beach. Brothers of Ghanaian and German American background enjoy a day at the beach with brothers of Argentinean and white background. (Janét Hund)

Yet, the majority (61%) of multiracial individuals do not actually identify with the category of multiracial (Parker et al., 2015). Many identify with only one of their parent's racial background, while others identify with the family and community in which they were raised. Still others may change how they identify over the course of their lives. Similarly, multiracial individuals believe others perceive them as only one race, the one that is most "obvious."

Further, only about a third (34%) of all multiracial Americans think they have a lot in common with other adults who are the same racial mix that they are, while only half as many (17%) think they share a lot with multiracial Americans whose racial background is different from their own (Parker et al., 2015).

For many whose racial descent is comprised of more than one race, DuBois' concept of double consciousness or "two-ness" may ring true. Additionally, the concept of **marginality**, the status of being between two groups or cultures, can describe the experiences of multiracial people who may be pushed to pick one race or another or may not fit in comfortably with either racial group. As society is full of racial socialization, labels and messaging about racial groups, multiracial individuals must navigate through this racial landscape and develop their racial identity which may or may not connect to their multiracial descent. Most multiracial people indicate they are more open (than non-multiracial individuals) to other cultures, so perhaps their backgrounds lends them to cultural competency, as discussed at the end of the the last section, 1.3.

Key Takeaways

- A complex history characterizes the experiences of amalgamation, (anti-)miscegenation, and multiracial individuals.
- Interracial marriages are increasing, with the largest group being Latinx-white marriages.
- An increasing percentage of individuals in the U.S. are multiracial, yet multiracial people do not identify that way.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-SA other than Anti-Miscegenation Laws which is CC BY-NC-ND.

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Asian Nation (Le) (CC BY-NC-ND) (Contributed to Anti-Miscegenation Laws)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Griffith, D. W., Dixon, T., & Triangle Film Corporation. (1915). *Birth of a Nation* [Film]. Los Angeles, CA: Triangle Film Corp..
- Kramer, S., Tracy, S., Poitier, S., Hepburn, K., Houghton, K., Rose, W., Leavitt, S. Columbia TriStar Home Video (Firm). (1998). *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. Culver City, CA: Columbia TriStar Home Video.
- Leland, J., & Beals, G. (1997, May 5). In living colors: Tiger Woods is the exception that rules. *Newsweek*, 58–60.
- Little, N.K. (2020, January 14). A List of Groundbreaking Interracial Romance Films. *Live About Dot Com.* Retrieved from https://www.liveabout.com/groundbrea...-films-2834739
- Livingston, G. & Brown, A. (May 18, 2017.) Intermarriage in the U.S. 50 years after Loving V. Virginia. *Pew Research Center.*
- Parker, K., Menasce Horowitz, J., Morin, R. & Lopez, M. (June 11, 2015). Multiracial in America. *Pew Research Center.*
- U.S. Census. (2012, September). The two or more races population: 2010. *2010 Census Briefs.*

This page titled 1.4: Multiracial Americans is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **1.4: Multiracial Americans** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality

Social Stratification

In general, all societies are stratified along one or more lines comprised of race/ethnicity, sex/gender, age, religion, disability, and/or social class or **socioeconomic status (SES)**, which is a measured by similar levels of income, education, and occupation. **Social stratification** is the unequal ways in which the resources of society are distributed. Sociologist Craig Oettinger defines stratification as who gets what and how much they get over time. According to Abercrombie and Urry (1983), social differences become social stratification when people are ranked hierarchically along some dimension of inequality whether this be income, wealth, power, prestige, age, ethnicity or some other characteristic. Sociologists use the term social stratification to describe the system of social standing.



Figure 1.5.1 and 1.5.2: (left) Two individuals on escalator inside building. In the upper echelons of the working world, people with the most power reach the top. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Alex Proimos via Flickr). (right) The people who live in these houses most likely share similar a similar social class, with similar levels of income and education. (CC BY 2.0; Orin Zebest via Flickr).

In the United States, people like to believe everyone has an equal chance at success. An emphasis on self-effort perpetuates the belief that people control their own social standing. However, sociologists recognize that social stratification is a society-wide system that makes inequalities apparent. While there are always inequalities between individuals, sociologists are interested in larger social patterns. Stratification is not about individual inequalities, but about systematic inequalities based on group membership, social classes, and the like. No individual, rich or poor, can be blamed for social inequalities. The structure of society affects a person's social standing. Although individuals may support or fight inequalities, social stratification is created and supported by society as a whole.

One key determinant of social standing is the social standing of our parents. Parents tend to pass their social position on to their children. People inherit not only social standing but also the cultural norms that accompany a certain lifestyle. They share these with a network of friends and family members. Social standing becomes a comfort zone, a familiar lifestyle, and an identity. This is one of the reasons first-generation college students do not, as a whole, tend to fare as well as students whose parents graduated from college.

Recent Economic Changes and U.S. Stratification

The most significant threat to the relatively high standard of living we are accustomed to in the United States is the decline of the middle class. The size, income, and wealth of the middle class have all been declining since the 1970s. This is occurring at a time when corporate profits have increased more than 141 percent, and CEO pay has risen by more than 298 percent (Popken, 2007).

As a result of the Great Recession that rocked our nation’s economy in the last decade, many families and individuals found themselves struggling like never before. The nation fell into a period of prolonged and exceptionally high unemployment. While no one was completely insulated from the recession, perhaps those in the working classes felt the impact most profoundly. Before the recession, many were living paycheck to paycheck or even had been living comfortably. As the recession hit, they were often among the first to lose their jobs. Unable to find replacement employment, they faced more than loss of income. Their homes were foreclosed, their cars were repossessed, and their ability to afford healthcare was taken away. This put many in the position of

deciding whether to put food on the table or fill a needed prescription. While some recovered from the Great Recession, others have struggled to improve their socioeconomic status.



Figure **1.5.3**: "COVID-19 Sequoyah." This statue of Sequoyah, originator of the Cherokee language, is show wearing a mask during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Gerry Dincher via Flickr)

The COVID-19 pandemic roiled across the U.S. in 2020, with working class and poor Americans most at-risk for contracting this virus and most at-risk for facing financial challenges associated with COVID-19. In a study conducted by Finch and Finch (2020) on the cases of and deaths from COVID-19 during the first ten weeks of the pandemic in the U.S., counties with higher poverty rates experienced more cases and deaths than more affluent counties. The results of this study also suggest that essential workers (e.g., public sanitation, grocery stores, and delivery services) tend to occupied by lower-paid employees who may not have equal access to testing for the virus. These workers may also be less able to quarantine away from their families, as compared to health care workers. Additionally, low-income, under-resourced communities tend to suffer more from diabetes, heart disease, and pulmonary disease, pre-existing conditions which put these individuals at higher risk for COVID-19. Communities of color, particularly Latinx, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander, and African American, have experienced disproportionate cases and deaths from COVID-19. The following socioeconomic factors explain the disproportionate impact: discrimination; healthcare access and utilization; occupation; educational, income and wealth gaps; and housing (Center for Disease Control, 2020). In addition to being at greater risk for COVID-19 infection, as Figure **1.5.4** indicates, 52% of lower income individuals in the U.S. are experiencing an economic fall-out from COVID-19 while only 32% upper income individuals are experiencing this fall-out (Parker, Horowitz & Brown, 2020).

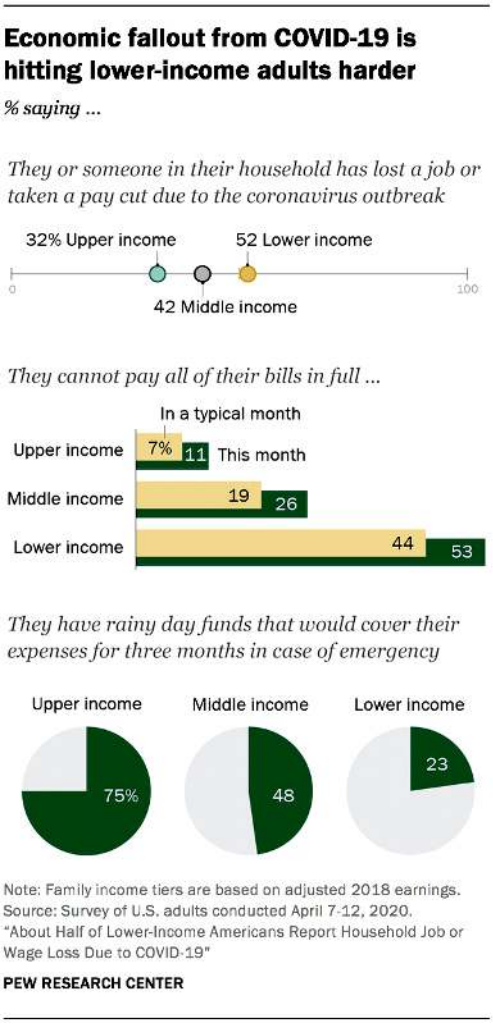


Figure **1.5.4**: Economic fallout from COVID-19. (Used with permission; About half of lower-income Americans report household job or wage loss due to covid-19, Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2020))

Social Class Stratification

A **class system** is based on both social factors and individual achievement; it affords the opportunity for mobility or movement. A **social class** consists of a set of people who share similar status with regard to factors like wealth, income, education, and occupation. Yet, a social class stratification system or ranking creates inequality in society and determines one's social position in terms of these factors. A **caste system** is based on an ascribed status such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, or disability, and is characterized by a lack of mobility. Unlike caste systems, class systems are open. In a class system, occupation is not fixed at birth.

A person's class status or SES influences their personal and social identity. Marx and Engels (1967) suggested there is a social class division between the capitalists who control the means of production and the workers. Weber previously ranked individuals on their wealth, power, and prestige (Weber [1968] 1978). The calculation of **wealth** comprises one's assets minus their debts; for sociologists, wealth is often equated with (ownership of) property. For sociologists such as Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro, authors of Black Wealth, White Wealth, wealth matters more than income because great wealth is likely to be inherited or ascribed whereas income is earned in a day, week, month or year. **Power** is the ability to influence others directly or indirectly while **prestige** is the esteem or respect associated with social status (Carl, 2013). In 1985, Erik Wright interjected that people can occupy contradictory class positions throughout their lifetime. Dennis Gilbert and Joseph Kahl (1992) developed a six-tier model portraying the U.S. class structure including underclass, working-poor, working, lower middle, upper middle, and capitalists. The social class model depicts the distribution of property, prestige, and power among society based on income, education, and occupation.

Though family and other societal models help guide a person toward a career, personal choice also plays a role. In theory, people are free to gain a different level of education or employment than their parents. They can also socialize with and marry members of other classes, which allows people to move from one class to another. These **exogamous marriages** represent unions of spouses from different social categories. Marriage in these circumstances is based on values such as love and compatibility rather than on social standing or economics. Though social conformities still exist that encourage people to choose partners within their own social class, people are not as pressured to choose marriage partners based solely on those elements. Marriage to a partner from the same social background is an **endogamous** union.

While the U.S. is often viewed as a class system, it also has remnants of a racial caste system associated with history and legacy of slavery, forced removal of Native Americans, and polices and practices associated with colonialism and Manifest Destiny. Many systemic efforts to deny African Americans, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans the right to vote, equal education, and ownership of land characterize our history of racial caste. Contemporary racial inequalities characterized by voter suppression, unequal educational outcomes, wealth, and income echo this history.

Each class lifestyle requires a certain level of wealth in order to acquire the material necessities and comforts of life (Henslin, 2011). The correlation between the standard of living and quality of life or **life chances** (e.g., opportunities and barriers) influence one's ability to afford food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, other basic needs, and luxury items. A person's standards of living including income, employment, class, and housing affects their identity.



Figure **1.5.5**: Man Praying on Sidewalk with Food in Front of Him. (CC BY 4.0; Sergio Omassi via Pexels)

Social class serves as a marker or indication of resources. These markers are noticeable in the behaviors, customs, and norms of each stratified group (Carl, 2013). People living in impoverished communities have different cultural norms and practices compared to those with middle incomes or families of wealth. For example, the urban poor often sleep on cardboard boxes on the ground or on sidewalks and feed themselves by begging, scavenging, and raiding garbage (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Middle income and wealthy families tend to sleep in housing structures and nourish themselves with food from supermarkets or restaurants.

Language and fashion also vary among these classes because of educational attainment, employment, and income. People will use language like "white trash" or "welfare mom" or "thug" to marginalize people in working classes and use distinguished labels to identify the upper class such as "noble" and "elite." Sometimes people engage in conspicuous consumption or purchase and use certain products (e.g., buy a luxury car or jewelry) to make a social statement about their status (Henslin, 2011). Nonetheless, the experience of poor people is very different in comparison to others in the upper and middle classes, and the lives of people within each social class may vary based on their position within other social categories including age, disability, sexuality, gender, race-ethnicity, region, and religion.

Thinking Sociologically

Could you survive in poverty, middle class, or wealth? In her book A Framework for Understanding Poverty (2005), Dr. Ruby K Payne presents lists of survival skills needed by different societal classes. Test your skills by answering the following questions:

Could you survive in . . . (mark all that apply)

1. ____ find the best rummage sales.
2. ____ locate grocery stores' garbage bins that have thrown away food.

3. ____ bail someone out of jail. ____ get a gun, even if I have a police record.
4. ____ keep my clothes from being stolen at the laundromat.
5. ____ sniff out problems in a used car.
6. ____ live without a checking account.
7. ____ manage without electricity and a phone.
8. ____ entertain friends with just my personality and stories.
9. ____ get by when I don't have money to pay the bills.
10. ____ move in half a day.
11. ____ get and use food stamps.
12. ____ find free medical clinics.
13. ____ get around without a car.
14. ____ use a knife as scissors.

Middle Class know how to....

1. ____ get my children into Little League, piano lessons, and soccer.
2. ____ set a table properly.
3. ____ find stores that sell the clothing brands my family wears.
4. ____ use a credit card, checking and /or savings account.
5. ____ evaluate insurance: life, disability, 20/80 medical, homeowners, and personal-property.
6. ____ talk to my children about going to college.
7. ____ get the best interest rate on my car loan.
8. ____ help my children with homework and don't hesitate to make a call if I need more information.

Wealth, check if you....

1. ____ can read a menu in French, English and another language.
2. ____ have favorite restaurants in different countries around the world.
3. ____ know how to hire a professional decorator to help decorate your home during the holidays.
4. ____ can name your preferred financial advisor, lawyer, designer, hairdresser, or domestic-employment service.
5. ____ have at least two homes that are staffed and maintained.
6. ____ know how to ensure confidentiality and loyalty with domestic staff.
7. ____ use two or three "screens" that keep people whom you don't wish to see away from you
8. ____ fly in your own plane, the company plane, or the Concorde.
9. ____ know how to enroll your children in the preferred private schools.
10. ____ are on the boards of at least two charities.
11. ____ know the hidden rules of the Junior League.
12. ____ know how to read a corporate balance sheet and analyze your own financial statements.
13. ____ support or buy the work of a particular artist.

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, a Georgetown University sociology professor, explains the "race vs. class" conversation, in which the racial divide of the middle and working-class works against people's self-interests and benefits the wealthy and powerful. In 2012, he stated,

What we have to tell our white brothers who are working class, blue-collar cats, is that "you are in the same boat as most African Americans and most Latino people. You suffer from the economy equally. If you allow elite politicians to manipulate you into believing that your real enemy is a Black guy who works along side you in a factory where you are both inhaling toxic chemicals that will lead both of you to die early. As opposed to this elite figure in the American political echelon or corporate structure that is living off of your anxiety about this Black guy, you are going down in defeat."

Dyson challenges working class whites to recognize their common social class experiences with most people of color, hypothesizing that when white people begin to understand how they have been manipulated by white elites to focus on race rather than class, a multi-racial working class solidarity may unfold.



Figure 1.5.6: Michael Eric Dyson attending a candlelight vigil on the 44th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination, at the King memorial in Washington D.C. (CC BY 2.0; Jean Song/MEDILL via Wikimedia)

Racial Stratification

Probably the best way to begin to understand racial and ethnic inequality in the United States is to read first-hand accounts by such great writers of color as Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, Piri Thomas, Richard Wright, and Malcolm X, all of whom wrote moving, autobiographical accounts of the bigotry and discrimination they faced while growing up. Sociologists and urban ethnographers have written their own accounts of the daily lives of people of color, and these, too, are well worth reading. One of the classics is Elliot Liebow's (1967)Tally's Corner, a study of Black men and their families in Washington, DC.



Figure 1.5.7: "Haskell Indian Nations University" sign in Lawrence, Kansas. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; miracc via Flickr)

Statistics also give a picture of racial and ethnic inequality in the United States. We can begin to get a picture of this inequality by examining racial and ethnic differences in such life chances as income, education, poverty, unemployment and home ownership, as provided in the Table 1.5.8. The data for Native Americans is not provided in here, but their numbers resembles Black and Latinx populations. For example, according to the Pew Research Center, in 2012, 17% of Native Americans earned a college degree while the poverty rate for Native Americans was 26%.

Table 1.5.8: Socioeconomic Indicators by Race-Ethnicity (2014-2015). (Chart created by Jonas Oware with data from the Pew Research Center)

Socioeconomic Indicators	Black	AAPI	White	Latinx
College Degree (% of 25 year+ adults)	23	53	36	15
High School Completion (% of 25 years adults)	88	89	93	67
Home Ownership (% of Householders Owning a Home)	43	57	72	45
Household Income	$43,000	$77,900	$71,300	$43,000
Poverty (% in poverty)	26	12	10	24
Unemployment Rate (%)	10.3	3.6	4.5	7.6

Additionally, a persistent racial wealth gap has characterized U.S. history. The median net worth for white households has far exceeded that of Black households through recessions and booms over the last three decades. Following the Great Recession, the median net worth for Black families declined more than for white families. In fact, the ratio of white family wealth to Black family wealth is higher today than at the start of the century, with white family wealth netting ten times more than Black family wealth (McIntosh, Moss, Nunn & Shambaugh, 2020). Figure 1.5.9 below provides a glimpse at the 2016 racial wealth gap.

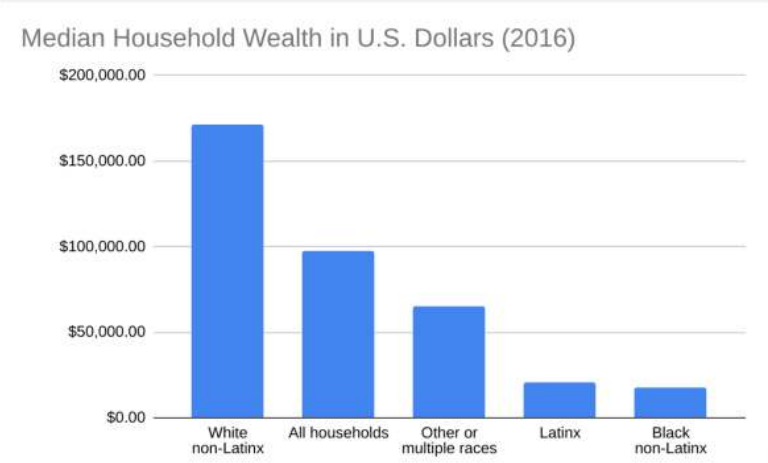


Figure 1.5.9: Median Household Wealth in U.S. Dollars (2016). While all households averaged just under $100,000 in wealth, white non-Latinx household held more than $160,000 in wealth with Latinx and Black households averaging well under $20,000. Other or multiple races households averaged approximately $60,000 in wealth. (Chart created by Jonas Oware with data from Statista)

The data is clear: U.S. racial and ethnic groups differ dramatically in their life chances. Compared to whites, for example, Blacks, Latinx, and Native Americans have much lower family incomes and much higher rates of poverty; they are also much less likely to have college degrees. In addition, Blacks and Native Americans have much higher infant mortality rates than whites: Black infants, for example, are more than twice as likely as white infants to die. Still, these comparisons obscure some differences within some of the groups just mentioned. Among Latinos, for example, Cuban Americans have fared better than Latinos overall, and Puerto Ricans worse. Similarly, among Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI), people with Chinese and Japanese backgrounds have fared better than those from Cambodia, Korea, and Vietnam.

Gender Stratification

Each of us is born with physical characteristics that represent and socially assign our sex and gender. **Sex** refers to our biological differences, and **gender** the cultural traits assigned to females and males (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). While our physical make-up distinguishes our sex, society and our social interaction implicates the **gender socialization** process we will experience throughout

our life. **Gender identity** is an individual's self-concept and their association with femininity, masculinity and perhaps questioning of these social categories. Children learn gender roles and acts of sexism in society through socialization (Griffiths, Keirns, Strayer, Cody-Rydzewsk, Scaramuzzo, Sadler, Vyain, Byer & Jones, 2015). Children become aware of gender roles between the ages of two and three and by four to five years old; they are fulfilling gender roles based on their sex (Griffiths et al., 2015). Nonetheless, gender-based characteristics do not always match one's self or cultural identity as people grow and develop.

1. Why do people need and use gender labels?
2. Why do people create gender roles or expectations?
3. Do gender labels and roles influence limitations on individuals or the social world? Explain.

Gender stratification focuses on the unequal access females have to socially valued resources, power, prestige, and personal freedom as compared to men based on differing positions within the socio-cultural hierarchy (Light, Keller, & Calhoun, 1997). Traditionally, society treats women as second-class citizens in society. The design of dominant gender ideologies and inequality maintains the prevailing social structure, presenting male privilege as part of the natural order (Parenti, 2006). Theorists suggest society is a male dominated patriarchy where men think of themselves as inherently superior to women resulting in unequal distribution of rewards between men and women (Henslin, 2011).



Video **1.5.10**: Race - The Power of an Illusion: How the Racial Wealth Gap Was Created. (Close-captioning and other settings appear at the bottom of the screen.) (Fair Use; California Newsreel via Vimeo: https://vimeo.com/133506632)

Media portrays women and men in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed views of gender (Wood, 1994). Media affects the perception of social norms including gender. People think and act according to stereotypes associated with one's gender broadcast by media (Goodall, 2016). Media stereotypes reinforce **gender inequality** of girls and women. According to Wood (1994), the underrepresentation of women in media implies that men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant or invisible. Stereotypes of men in media display them as independent, driven, skillful, and heroic lending them to higher-level positions and power in society.



Figure **1.5.11**: Gender equality, woman using laptop and man in background on laptop. (CC BY-NC-SA; Flickr)

According to Pew Research Trends (2020) on average, women make 85% of men's earnings, though this gap has narrowed over recent decades and varies widely based on the job/occupation, education level, race, and ethnicity. Women outnumber men amongst college graduates, yet male college graduates out-earn female college graduates. Inequality in career pathways, job placement, and promotion or advancement result in an income gap between genders affecting the buying power and economic vitality of women in comparison to men. Today's society is encouraging gender flexibility resulting from cultural shifts among women seeking college degrees, prioritizing career, and delaying marriage and childbirth.

Still, women continue to face challenges associated with inter-partner violence, including rape. Depictions in the media emphasize male dominant roles and normalize violence against women (Wood, 1994). Culture plays an integral role in establishing and maintaining male dominance in society ascribing men the power and privilege that reinforces subordination and oppression of women.

Your task is to find the ten words on the sex-role inventory trait list below that are most often culturally associated with each of the following labels and categories: femininity, masculinity, wealth, poverty, President, teacher, mother, father, minister, or athlete. Write down the label or category and ten terms to compare your lists with other students.

1. self-reliant	21. reliable	41. warm
2. yielding	22. analytical	42. solemn
3. helpful	23. sympathetic	43. willing to take a stand
4. defends own beliefs	24. jealous	44. tender
5. cheerful	25. leadership ability	45. friendly
6. moody	26. sensitive to other's needs	46. aggressive
7. independent	27. truthful	47. gullible
8. shy	28. willing to take risks	48. inefficient
9. conscientious	29. understanding	49. act as leader
10. athletic	30. secretive	50. childlike
11. affectionate	31. makes decisions easily	51. adaptable
12. theatrical	32. compassionate	52. individualistic
13. assertive	33. sincere	53. does not use harsh language
14. flatterable	34. self-sufficient	54. unsystematic
15. happy	35. eager to soothe hurt feelings	55. competitive
16. strong personality	36. conceited	56. loves children
17. loyal	37. dominant	57. tactful
18. unpredictable	38. soft-spoken	58. ambitious
19. forceful	39. likable	59. gentle
20. feminine	40. masculine	60. conventional

Compare your results with other students in the class and answer the following questions:

1. What are the trait similarities and commonalities between femininity, masculinity, wealth, poverty, President, teacher, mother, father, minister, and athlete?
2. How are masculinity and femininity used as measures of conditions and vocations?

Stratification and Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is a physical, emotional and perhaps spiritual expression of sexual desire or attraction. Culture sets the parameters for sexual norms and habits. Enculturation dictates and controls social acceptance of sexual expression and activity. Eroticism like all human activities and preferences, is learned and malleable (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Sexual orientation labels categorize personal views and representations of sexual desire and activities. Many people ascribe and conform to the sexual labels constructed and assigned by society. Because sexual desire or attraction is inborn, people within the socio-sexual dominant group (e.g., heterosexual) often believe their sexual preference is “normal.” However, heterosexual fit or type is not normal. History has documented diversity in sexual preference and behavior since the dawn of human existence (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012).

Individuals develop sexual understanding around middle childhood and adolescence (APA, 2008). There is no genetic, biological, developmental, social, or cultural evidence linked to homosexual behavior. The difference is in society’s discriminatory response to homosexuality likely derived from **heteronormativity** or the belief that heterosexuality is the default, preferred or normal mode of sexual orientation. Alfred Kinsley was the first to identify sexuality is a continuum rather than a dichotomy of gay or straight (Griffiths et al., 2015). His research showed people do not necessarily fall into the sexual categories, behaviors, and orientations constructed by society (e.g., heterosexual and homosexual). Eve Kosofky Sedgwick (1990) expanded on Kinsley’s research to find women are more likely to express homosocial relationships such as hugging, handholding, and physical closeness. Whereas, men often face negative sanctions for displaying homosocial behavior in the U.S. society, such social interaction is extremely normal in many parts of the world including sub-Saharan Africa.



Figure **1.5.12**: Emotional expression of sexual identity. Two men smiling, head to head, nose to nose. (CC BY-NC-SA; Pexels)

Society ascribes meaning to sexual activities (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Variance reflects the cultural norms and sociopolitical conditions of a time and place. Since the 1970s, organized efforts by LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual or Allied) activists have helped establish gay culture and civil rights (Herdt, 1992). For example, in 2020, the Supreme Court decision in Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia, protects gay, lesbian, and transgender from employment discrimination. **Gay culture** provides social acceptance for persons rejected, marginalized, and punished by others because of sexual orientation and expression. **Queer theorists** are reclaiming the derogatory label of "queer" to help in broadening the understanding of sexuality as flexible and fluid (Griffiths et al., 2015).

Stratification by Age and Disability

Our numeric ranking of age is associated with particular cultural traits. Even the social categories we assign to age express cultural characteristics of that age group or cohort. Age signifies one’s cultural identity and social status (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Many of the most common labels we use in society signify age categories and attributes. For example, the terms "newborns and infants" generally refer to children from birth to age four, whereas "school-age children" signifies youngsters old enough to attend primary school.

Generations have **collective identity** or shared experiences based on the time-period the group lived. Consider the popular culture of the 1980s to today. In the 1980s, people used a landline or fixed line phone rather than a cellular phone to communicate and

went to a movie theater to see a film rather than downloaded a video to a mobile device. Therefore, someone who spent their youth and most of their adulthood without or with limited technology may not deem it necessary to have or operate it in daily life. Whereas, someone born in the 1990s or later will only know life with technology and find it a necessary part of human existence. Those born in 2020 or after will only know life as experienced during COVID-19 or post-COVID-19 and will thus likely be more dependent on video games and social media for everyday social interaction.

Because there are diverse cultural expectations based on age, there can be conflict between age cohorts and generations. **Age stratification** theorists suggest that members of society are classified and have social status associated to their age (Riley, Johnson & Foner, 1972). Conflict often develops from age associated cultural differences influencing social and economic power of age groups. For example, the economic power of working adults conflicts with the political and voting power of the retired or elderly.

Age and generational conflicts are also highly influenced by government or state-sponsored milestones. In the United States, there are several age-related markers including the legal age of driving (16 years old), use of tobacco products (21 years old), consumption of alcohol (21 years old), and age of retirement (65-70 years old). Regardless of knowledge, skill, or condition, people must abide by formal rules with the expectations assigned to the each age group within the law. Because age serves as a basis of social control and reinforced by the state, different age groups have varying access to political and economic power and resources (Griffiths et al., 2015). For example, the United States is the only industrialized nation that does not respect the abilities of the elderly by assigning a marker of 65-70 years old as the indicator for someone to become a dependent of the state and an economically unproductive member of society.



Figure **1.5.13**: Woman in Black Dress Standing on Sidewalk, Wearing Black Mask During COVID-19 Pandemic. (CC BY-NC-SA; Pexels)

In addition to age, disability is another status that may confer stratification. The term disability does not mean inability and it is not a sickness (US National Library of Medicine, 2007.) There are many different types of disabilities and disabled persons in the United States as well as throughout the world. While no one definition can adequately describe all disabilities, the universally-accepted definition describes a **disability** as “any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity” (U.S. Department of Justice, ADA, 2007.) The term disability includes cognitive, developmental, intellectual, physical, and learning impairments. Some disabilities are congenital (present at birth), or the result of an accident or illness, or age-related.

"The social constructionist view perceives the problem of disability situated within the minds of non-disabled people individually as prejudice, and collectively as the manifestation of hostile social attitudes and practices based upon negative assumptions of impairment" (Barnes & Oliver, 1993, p. 14). This view perceives the inequalities associated with disability as the outcome of the institutionalized practices of contemporary society.

The **1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government programs and services. The ADA is a significant civil rights law designed to eliminate the obstacles of employment and guarantee education for

disabled individuals. The ADA offers protection to persons with a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more of their life activities, and requires employers to extend “reasonable accommodations” to these persons. Though the status of disability is no longer viewed simply as a medical problem, sociology has yet to fully consider disability in mainstream sociological discourse and analysis to parallel the stratification of social class, gender, race-ethnicity and sexuality (Barnes & Olive, 1993).

Intersectionality

While it is useful to consider how the study into each of the above (race, social class, gender, sexuality, disability, age) can provide a distinct understanding of our society and social stratification, there may be a better way to understand these categories and the structures they inhabit: use of an intersectional lens.

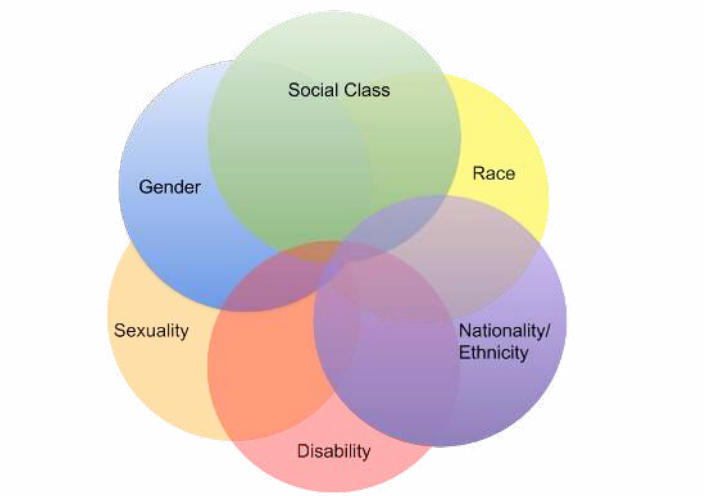


Figure **1.5.14**: Ven diagram of Intersectionalty. (Diagram created by Jakobi Oware)

Originally introduced by legal scholar, Kimberle Crenshaw, intersectionality was born of an analysis of the intersection of race and gender. Her analysis of legal cases involving discrimination experienced by African American women involved not only racism but also sexism, yet legal statutes and precedents provided no clear analysis of their intersection, but instead treat them as separate social categories. To understand the intersection of these social categories resulting in their ill treatment, both forms of oppression would need to considered jointly. Crenshaw advocates for social scientists to integrate race and gender into their "frames" to better capture the complexity of life experiences, particularly the experiences impacting African American women. Crenshaw used the example of police brutality and the countless African American male victims, with few recognizing the names of African American women brutalized by the police. The #SayHerName campaign was born of an intersectional frame revealing the importance of naming African American female victims of police brutality such as Breonna Taylor, Sandra Byrd, and Rekia Boyd.



Figure **1.5.15**: Black Woman in Discussion with her Colleagues. (CC BY-NC-SA; Pexels)

Black feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1990) further developed intersection theory, which suggests we cannot separate the effects of race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, and other attributes. ‘‘The events and conditions of social and

political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor . . . . Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves'' (Collins, 1992, p.2). We are all shaped by the forces of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, and ableism, though we are likely impacted very differently by these forces.

When we examine race and how it can bring us both advantages and disadvantages, it is important to acknowledge that the way we experience race is shaped, for example, by our gender, social class, sexual orientation, age, disability and other statuses which are structured into our social systems. Multiple layers of disadvantage intersect to create the way we experience race, evidenced in concepts such as **double jeopardy** or **triple jeopardy** when an individual has two or three potentially oppressive statuses, respectively. For example, if we want to understand prejudice, we must understand that the prejudice focused on a Euro American woman because of her gender is very different from the layered prejudice focused on a poor Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) woman, who is affected by stereotypes related to being poor, being a woman, and her race-ethnic status. In contrast, writer Alice Walker suggested these individuals instead may have double or triple insights into the human condition. Rosenblum and Travis (2011) have argued that what one notices in the world depends in large part on the statuses one occupies . . . thus we are likely to be fairly unaware of the statuses we occupy that privilege us . . . [and] provide advantage and are acutely aware of those . . . that yield negative judgments and unfair treatment.

Collins (1990) writes that not all African American women experience life, and hence life chances, the same. A middle class heterosexual, Christian African American woman has more privileges than a poor, lesbian African American transgender woman. In fact, Collins explains that there are no pure oppressors or pure victims. In the previous example, this more privileged African American woman may be oppressed based on her gender and race-ethnicity, but she may be oppressive based on her religion, social class, and sexuality.

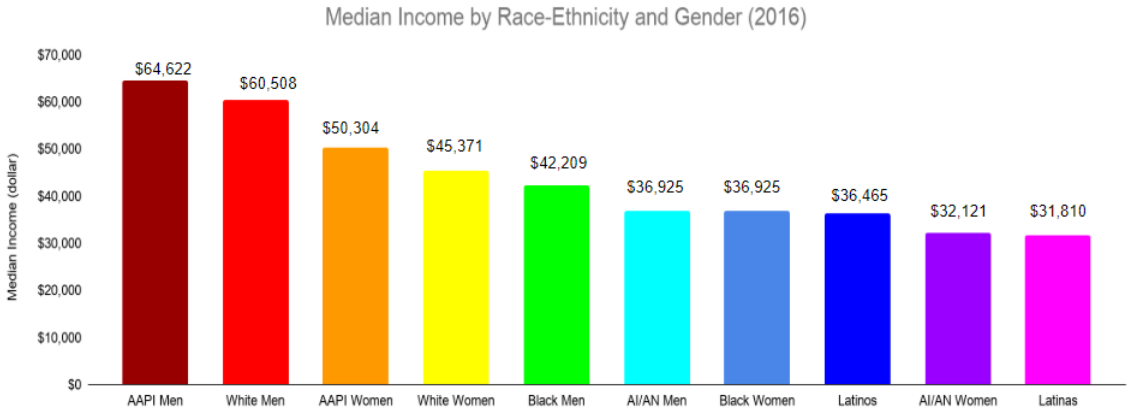


Figure **1.5.16**: Median Income by Race-Ethnicity and Gender (2016). AAPI Men Medium Income: $64,622; White Male Medium Income: $60,508; AAPI Women Medium Income: $50,304; White Women Medium Income: $45,371; Black Men Medium Income: $42,209; AI/AN Men and Black Women Medium Income $36,925; Latinos Medium Income $36,465; AI/AN Women Income: $32,121; and Latinas Medium Income: $31,810. (Chart created by Jonas Oware with data from the U.S. Census Bureau / U.S. Census Bureau)

A variety of public issues may be considered using an intersectional lens; thus, the chapters in this book provide a discussion of intersectionality as the authors of this textbook recognize the utility, complexity and path towards social change that intersectionality offers. For example, in Chapter 2.2, intersectionality is presented as a sociological theory, and intersectionality is covered in most chapters of this textbook. Figure 1.5.16 above illustrates the intersection of race-ethnicity, social class and gender with regards to the income gap. Just as Latinas on average have the lowest income in the above chart, during COVID-19, Latinas also faced disproportionate job loss and unemployment. What we don't see in this chart though is the impact of ethnic background, education, sexuality or other social categories that impact our social structures. Looking at the U.S. Congress, an intersectional analysis informs us that most of our Senators and representatives in the House are Euro American men. While the blue wave in 2018 ushered in more women, particularly more women of color such as Alexandria Ocasio Cortez (pictured below in Figure 1.5.17) and Sharice Davids, the first Native American lesbian Congresswoman, time will tell if Congress will alter significantly to reflect the changing U.S. demographics.



Figure **1.5.17**: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez elected to Congress during the 2018 Blue Wave. (CC BY-NC-SA; Flickr)

Thinking Sociologically

How does intersectionality enhance our understanding of race and ethnicity? What types of social problems may be better understood by using an intersectional lens?

Key Takeaways

- The study of social stratification, or the unequal distribution of resources provides another lens in how to better understand race and ethnic relations.
- Society is stratified by race, social class, gender, sexuality, disability and age.
- An intersectional lens informs us that we cannot separate the effects of race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability, as these can rather be understood in their complexity and thus their intersection.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- A Career in Sociology (Kennedy) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Abercrombie, N, & Urry, J. (1983). *Capital, Labour and the Middle Classes.* London,UK: George Allen & Unwin.
- American Psychological Association. (2008). *Answers to Your Questions: For a Better Understanding of Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality.* American Psychological Association.
- Barnes, C & Oliver, M. (1993). *Disability: A Sociological Phenomenon Ignored by Sociologists.* Disability Studies - Leeds.
- Carl, J.D. (2013). *Think Social Problems.* 2nd ed. Uppers Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- *Center for Disease Control.* (2020, July 24). Health equity considerations and racial and rthnic people of colors.
- Collins, P. (1990). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman.
- Doane, A.W. (2016). Dominant group ethnic identity in the united states: The role of 'hidden' ethnicity in intergroup relations. *The Sociological Quarterly,* 38(3):375-397.
- Domhoff, G.W. (2013). *Wealth, Income, and Power.*
- Finch, W.H. & Finch, M.E.H. (2020, June 15). Poverty and covid-19: Rates of incidence and deaths in the united states during the first 10 weeks of the pandemic. *Frontiers in Sociology.*
- Gilbert, D. (2010). *The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality.* Newbury Park, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Gilbert, D. & Kahl, J.A. (1992). *American Class Structure*. 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Company.

- Goodall, H. (2016). Media's influence on gender stereotypes. *Media Asia*, 39(3):160-163.
- Griffiths, H., Keirns, N., Strayer, E., Cody-Rydzewsk, S., Scaramuzzo, G., Sadler, T., Vyain, S, Byer, J. & Jones, F. (2015). *Introduction to Sociology*, 2nd ed. Houston, TX: OpenStax College.
- Henslin, J.M. (2011). *Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach*. 11th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Herdt, G. (1992). *Gay Culture in American: Essays from the Field*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Jablonski, N. (2012). *Living Color: The Biological and Social Meaning of Skin Color*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kochhar, R. (2020, January 30). Women make gains in the workplace amid a rising demand for skilled workers. *Pew Research Center.*
- Konradi, A. & Schmidt, M. (2004). *Reading Between the Lines: Toward an Understanding of Current Social Problems*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Kottak, C.P. & Kozaitis, K. (2012). *On Being Different: Diversity and Multiculturalism in the North American Mainstream*. 4th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Krogstad, J.M. (2014, June 13). One-in-four native Americans and Alaska natives are living in poverty. *Pew Research Center.*
- Liebow, E. (1967). *Tally's Corner*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.
- Light, D., Keller, S. & Calhoun, C. (1997). *Sociology.* 7th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Marx, K. & Engels, F. (1967). *Communist Manifesto*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
- McManus, J. (1995). A market-based model of news production. *Communication Theory*, 5:301–338.
- McIntosh, K, Moss, E., Nunn, R. & Shambaugh. (2020, February 27). Examining the Black-white wealth gap. *Brookings.*
- Oliver, M. & Shapiro, T. (2006). *Black Wealth, White Wealth.* 2nd ed. London, UK: Routledge.
- Parenti, M. (2006).*The Culture Struggle*. New York, NY: Seven Stories Press.
- Parker, K, Horowitz, J. & Brown, A. (2020). About half of lower-income Americans report household job or wage loss due to covid-19. *Pew Research Center.*
- Payne, R.K. (2005). *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. 4th ed. Highlands, TX: aha! Process Inc.
- Pew Research Center. (2016, June 27). On views of race and inequality, Blacks and whites are worlds apart. *Pew Research Center.*
- Popken, Ben. "CEO Pay Up 298%, Average Worker's? 4.3% (1995-2005)," 2007, *The Consumerist*.
- Riley, M., Johnson, M. & Foner, A. (1972). *Aging and Society. Volume III, A Sociology of Age Stratification*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Rosenblum, K. & Travis, T. (2011). *The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex and Gender, Social Class, Sexual Orientation, and Disability.* 6th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Sedgwick, E. (1990). *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (2007). ADA Home Page.
- U.S. National Library of Medicine. (2020). "Disabilties." *MedicinePlus.*
- US National Library of Medicine. (2007). *News from the National Library of Medicine - 2007.*
- Weber, M. (1978) [1968]. *Economy and Society*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Wood, J.T. (1994). Gendered media: The influence of media on views of gender. Pp. 231- 244 in *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture* by Julia T. Wood. Belmont,CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Wright, E.O. (1985). *Class*. London, UK: Verso.

This page titled 1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

1.6: Social Change and Resistance

Social change refers to the transformation of culture, behavior, social institutions, and social structure over time. Social change has impacted race and ethnic relations over the course of U.S. history, often in the form of pendulum swings or simultaneous, competing social changes.

Sources of Social Change

There are many sources of social change which include: modernization; population growth and composition; culture and technology; natural environment; social institutions; and social movements. These sources of social change impact the climate of race and ethnic relations in the United States.

Modernization and Urbanization

As societies become more modern, they become larger and more heterogeneous. Traditional ways of thinking decline, and individual freedom and autonomy increase. **Modernization** refers to the process of increased differentiation and specialization within a society, particularly around its industry and infrastructure. Modernization increases as populations move from rural to urban spaces leading to **urbanization**, the rise and growth of cities. Urban residents tend to be more tolerant than rural residents of nontraditional attitudes, behaviors, cultures, and lifestyles. Immigrants from more traditional societies who move into urban settings also experience this modernization and urbanization which in turn has a ripple effect on family dynamics and one's home country.

Population Growth and Composition

Three of the factors that determine population growth are fertility, mortality, and net migration. Over the next four decades, as fertility rates are projected to continue to fall and modest increases are projected for the overall level of net international migration, the U.S. population is projected to continue to grow. While the current U.S. population is more than 330 million, the population of the U.S. is projected to exceed 400 million before 2050, as shown in Figure 1.6.1. In 2019, millennials,

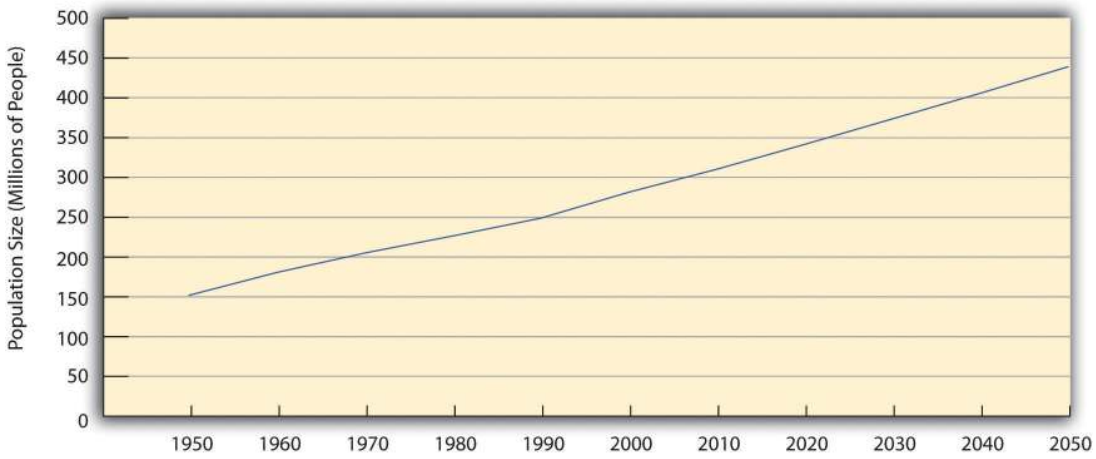


Figure **1.6.1**: Population projection. (CC PDM 1.0; via U.S. Census Bureau)

those ages 23 to 38, outnumbered Baby Boomers (ages 55 to 73), according to the U.S. Census. Millennials are more educated, more racially and ethnically diverse, slower to marry than previous generations were at the same age, and are putting off childbirth. The immigrant share of the U.S. population is nearing an all-time high percentage of the U.S. population, at 13.6% of the U.S. population in 2017. However, the numbers of undocumented immigrants have been decreasing over the past decade.

As the final chapter in this book, Chapter 12.4, further explains, the United States is projected to become more racially and ethnically diverse in the coming years, thus a majority people of color nation, or a **plurality nation**. As shown in Figure 1.6.2, among those under 18, the U.S. is already a majority people of color country.

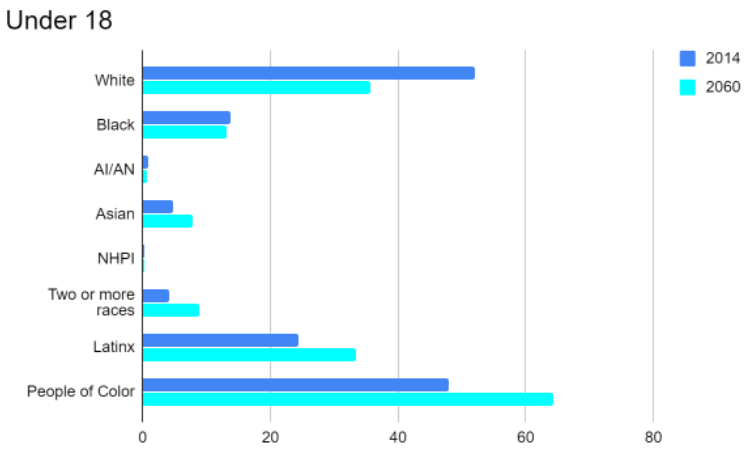


Figure **1.6.2**: Population Distribution by Race, Under 18. Whereas white children represent a slight majority of all children 2014, people of color are projected to represent a significant majority of all children by 2060. White and Latinx children are projected to comprise more than 30% each by 2060, and children of two or more races are projected to double in number by 2060. (Charts created by Jonas Oware with data from the U.S. Census Bureau)

Culture & Technology

Technology allows us to eliminate communication boundaries and interact with each other on a global scale. **Globalization** is typically associated with the creation of the world-spanning free market and global reach of capitalist systems resulting from technological advances (Back, Bennett, Edles, Gibson, Inglis, Jacobs & Woodward, 2012). However, globalization has the unintended consequences of connecting every person in the world to each other. In this era, everyone's life is connected to everyone else's life in obvious and hidden ways (Albrow, 1996). We are moving beyond local, state, and national identities to broader identities developing from our global interactions forming transnational communities.

With the world in flux from globalization and technological advances, people are developing **multiple identities** apparent in their local and global linkages. Cultural identity is becoming increasingly contextual in the postmodern world where people transform and adapt depending on time and place (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Approximately two-thirds of U.S. adults are online connecting with others, working, studying, or learning (Griswold, 2013). The increasing use of the Internet makes virtual worlds and cybersocial interactions powerful in constructing new social realities. Having a networked society allows anyone to be a cultural creator and develop an audience by sharing their thoughts, ideas, and work online. Amateurs are now cultural creators and have the ability to control dissemination of their creations (Griswold 2013). Such as the use of social media and mass protests in outrage against the police killing of George Floyd in 2020, the instant responses and connections to others beyond time and place immediately impact our lives, and we have the technology to react quickly with our thoughts and actions.

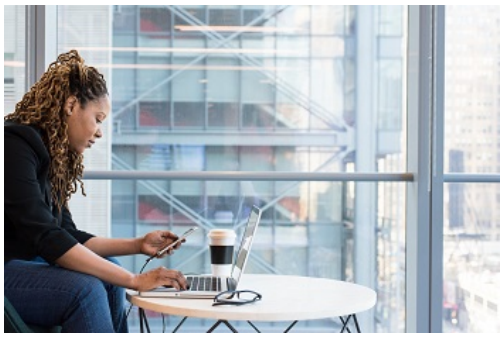


Figure **1.6.3**: Woman Wearing Black Long Sleeved Shirt Using Laptop. (CC BY 4.0; Christina Morillo via Pexels)

Technology can create positive change leading to advances in medical technology, agricultural technology, or educational technology impacting childbirth, respective impacting climate change, and children's learning. Drawbacks include the increasing gap between the technological haves and have-nots—sometimes called the **digital divide**—which occurs both locally and globally. Further, there are added security risks: the loss of privacy, the risk of total system failure, and the added vulnerability created by technological dependence. These threats impacted the 2016 U.S. election and are bound to further impact future elections.

Natural Environment

Environmental changes are one of the many sources of social change. Our worst environmental problems are the result of human activity. **Climate change** is the term now used to refer to long-term shifts in temperatures due to human activity and, in particular, the release of greenhouse gases into the environment. One effect of climate change is more extreme weather. We see the clearest evidence of this impact when a major hurricane, an earthquake, or another natural disaster strikes. In January 2010, for example, a devastating earthquake struck Haiti and killed more than 250,000 people, or about 2.5 percent of that nation's population. The effects of these natural disasters on the economy and society of Haiti will certainly also be felt for many years to come. Droughts, floods, hurricanes, and fires are some of the expected impacts of climate change in the next century. These natural disasters, as with the prevalence of **environmental racism**, environmental injustice that occurs within a racialized context both in practice and policy, will likely have a more dramatic impact on communities of color and poor populations, as we saw with the effects of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.



Figure **1.6.4**: "Cultures and Land at Risk." National Climate Assessment image of Indigenous man walking on ice. Climate change threatens life of 566 Indigenous Nations. (CC BY 2.0; NASA Goddard Photo and Video via Flickr)

Social Institutions

Each change in a single social institution leads to changes in all social institutions including family, education, politics, economics, religion, mass media, health care, and the criminal justice system.

For example, the industrialization of society meant that there was no longer a need for large families to produce enough manual labor to run a farm. Further, new job opportunities were in close proximity to urban centers where living space was at a premium. The result is that the average family size shrunk significantly, and men were separated from their families for longer time periods.

Our contemporary society reflects other changes in our social institutions. Defined by the increasing mass incarceration rates in the U.S. since the 1980s, the cradle-to-prison pipeline has most severely impacted African American families. As many urban jobs were outsourced to less industrialized countries in the 1980s, the rise of the illicit drug market provided economic "opportunities" for those left behind in these urban communities. Harsh drug laws sent many non-violent drug offenders behind bars for decades if not lifetimes. The lyrics of musical artists, such as Tupac, at the turn of the last century conveyed the struggles in urban communities surrounding drugs, poverty, and the police. Countless children were raised in single parent homes as Tupac's song *Dear Mama* depicts. (Though 1/4 of all families in the U.S. today are single-parent households, most African American children are currently raised by single parents.) Being raised in a low-income, single-parent family has a high potential to impact quality family time, sometimes resulting in lesser educational outcomes.

Connecting dysfunctional social institutions, Shirley Better presented the term **web of institutional racism,** further discussed in Chapter 6.5, to explain the interrelated impact of substandard housing, poor schooling opportunities, lack of job opportunities, and inadequate health care.

Social Movements

Voting Rights, A Social Movement

On March 7, 1965, African American leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, jr. and the late Congressman John Lewis, led a march of 600 people in an attempt to walk the 54 miles (87 km) from Selma to the state capital in Montgomery. Only six blocks into the march, however, state troopers and local law enforcement attacked the peaceful demonstrators with billy clubs, tear gas, rubber tubes wrapped in barbed wire, and bull whips. They drove the marchers back to Selma. The national broadcast showing footage of lawmen attacking unresisting marchers seeking the right to vote provoked a national response. Eight days after the first march, Lyndon Johnson delivered a televised address to garner support for the voting rights bill he had sent to Congress. In it he stated:

> *But even if we pass this bill, the battle will not be over. What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause too. Because it is not just Negroes, but really it is all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we shall overcome.*

Johnson signed the **Voting Rights Act of 1965** on August 6. The 1965 Act suspended poll taxes, literacy tests, and other subjective voter tests. It authorized federal supervision of voter registration in states and individual voting districts where such tests were being used. The act had an immediate and positive impact for African Americans. Within months of its passage, 250,000 new Black voters had been registered. Within four years, voter registration in the South had more than doubled. Further discussion of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is discussed in Chapter 7.4.

Understanding how to organize a social movement to pursue social change is one of the areas studied by sociologists. The insights gained from these studies can provide movement members the tools they need to succeed.

This section is licensed by CC BY-SA. Attribution: Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

A **social movement** may be defined as an organized effort by a large number of people to bring about or impede social change. Defined in this way, social movements might sound similar to special-interest groups, and they do have some things in common. But a major difference between social movements and special-interest groups lies in the nature of their actions. Special-interest groups normally work within the system via conventional political activities such as lobbying and election campaigning. In contrast, social movements often work outside the system by engaging in various kinds of protest, including demonstrations, picket lines, sit-ins, and sometimes outright violence. These rallies, demonstrations, sit-ins, and silent vigils are often difficult to ignore. With the aid of news media coverage, these events often throw much attention on the problem or grievance at the center of the protest and bring pressure to bear on the government agencies, corporations, dominant groups or people of color, or other targets of the protest.

There are many examples of profound changes brought about by social movements throughout U.S. history (Amenta, Caren, Chiarello & Sue, 2010; Meyer, 2007; Piven, 2006). The abolitionist movement called attention to the evils of slavery and increased public abhorrence for that “peculiar institution” of slavery. The women's suffrage movement eventually won women the right to vote with the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920, though this right was primarily experienced only by Euro American women. As discussed further in Chapter 7.5, the Civil Rights Movement resulted in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, policies which aimed to promote equality and non-discrimination. In recent years, the following social movements have surfaced, with particular attention to the topics of race, social class, and gender: immigration rights, Occupy Movement, No Dakota Access Pipeline defending Native American land and sovereignty, the #metoo movement against sexual harassment, the gay rights movement, poor people's campaign, white nationalism, and the Black Lives Matter movement.



Figure 1.6.5: "Protest against ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) by the Occupy movement and others." (CC BY 2.0; Fibonacci Blue via Flickr)

Social movements may have biographical consequences. Several studies find that people who take part in social movements during their formative years (teens and early 20s) are often transformed by their participation. Their political views change or are at least reinforced, and they are more likely to continue to be involved in political activity and to enter social change occupations. In this manner, writes one scholar, “people who have been involved in social movement activities, even at a lower level of commitment, carry the consequences of that involvement throughout their life” (Giugni, 2008, p. 1590).

Types of Social Movements

One way to consider social movements is to categorize social movements based on what they want to change and how much change they want (Aberle, 1966). (More discussion on types of social movements is provided in Chapter 11.1). **Reform movements** seek to change something specific about the social structure, including political, economic, or social systems. Historical examples include the abolitionist movement preceding the Civil War, the woman suffrage movement that followed the Civil War, the Southern civil rights movement, the gay rights movement, and the environmental movement. Contemporary examples of reform movements include the DREAMers movement for immigration reform and the Black Lives Matter movement. **Revolutionary movements** extend one large step further than a reform movement in seeking to overthrow the existing government and to bring about a new one and even a new way of life. These revolutionary or political movements seek to completely change every aspect of society. The United States, French, Mexican and other national revolutions fall under this category. **Reactionary movements** seek to prevent or undo change to the social structure. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and the Minutemen militia represent examples of reactionary movements. Both of these movements reflected white supremacy, while the KKK projected anti-Black, anti-Jewish and anti-immigrant attitudes, and the latter reflected **nativism**, the policy and practice of promoting the interests of "native" inhabitants against those of immigrants. In their attempt to return the institutions and values of the past by doing away with existing ones, conservative reactionary movements seek to uphold the values and institutions of society and generally resist attempts to alter them. In contemporary society, white nationalism represents a reactionary movement which grew as a result of the "birther movement," trying to sway public opinion that President Obama was not born in the U.S. and expanded during President's Trump era with the rise of hate groups and hate crimes against Asian American Pacific Islanders, immigrants, Mexicans, and African Americans. Such conservative reactionary movements may elicit polarizing attitudes and behaviors reflecting a different type of social movement.

Thinking Sociologically

Which source of social change has most positively or negatively impacted race and ethnic relations in history? And, which source of social change is most positively or negatively impacting race and ethnic relations today? Lastly, what social change do you predict will most positively or negatively impact race and ethnic relations through the mid 21st century?

Resistance

According to Jocelyn Hollander and Rachel Einwohner (2004), sociologists define resistance in terms of action and opposition. Action connects to active behavior in opposition to injustice perpetuated by dominant culture. As individuals, we have personal

agency, but we are limited in our ability to make the societal changes we may like to make. As social scientists Kenneth Kammeyer, George Ritzer and Norman Yetman (1996) explain, "there are massive social forces that make change difficult; these social forces include government, large and powerful organizations, and prevailing norms, values and attitudes." As individuals protesting against these official forces and social norms, we have minimal power. Yet, Kammeyer, Ritzer and Yetman (1996) remind us that if we combine forces with others who share our convictions, if we organize ourselves and our groups, and if we map out a course of actions, we may be able to bring about numerous and significant changes in the prevailing social order. Through participation in a social movement, we can break through the "social constraints that overwhelm us as individuals" (Kammeyer et al., 1996).



Figure **1.6.6**: Illustrated Poster of Woman Wearing a Mask, Signifies Resistance. (CC BY 4.0; Markus Spiske via Pexels)

Throughout U.S. history, many individuals, groups and social movements have strived to resist against dominant forces of oppression, colonialism, and blocked life chances. Tecumseh/Shooting Star/Panther Crossing the Sky (1768-1813), a leader of the Shawnee Nation known as "the Prophet," resisted against the Euro-American land conquest and military might. Tecumseh envisioned a pan-Indian, Red Nation united against Euro-American encroachment on the native land. In Tecumseh's words, "a single twig breaks easily, but the bundle of twigs is strong. Someday I will embrace our brother tribes and draw them into a bundle and together we will win our country back from the whites." While his pan-Indian movement was not successful in drawing together a multitude of American Indian nation leaders and the U.S. military might defeated this movement, this history reminds us of the foundation of resistance in this country.



Figure **1.6.7**: Conceptual prototype of a United States $20 featuring a portrait of Harriet Tubman, produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in 2016. (CC PDM 1.0)

Abolitionist Harriet Tubman (1820-1913) conducted numerous voyages to free hundreds of enslaved Africans from the southern U.S. to the north, including the U.S. and Canada. Working as a "conductor" in the Underground Railroad, Tubman and others resisted the dehumanization of the peculiar institution of slavery in pursuit of freedom. With their activist roots in the abolition movement, many early suffragists such as Angelina and Sarah Grimke as well as Sojourner Truth sought to gain the right to vote for all women, despite the fact that many suffragists were split on the issue of including the vote for African American women.

In the 1960s, resistance movements were led by Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, jr (1925-1968) with the mainstream civil rights movement as well as by Black Nationalist/Black Power movement with Malcolm X (1925-1965) in the forefront. Both of these movements challenged racial, inhumane treatment in the U.S., and both of these leaders extended their gaze to the global scene, recognizing U.S. militarism abroad and reflecting upon colonial attitudes in the southern hemisphere. While Malcolm X recognized the independence movements in Africa as resistance against European colonialism, Dr. King was particularly critical of the U.S. involvement in the "American War" in Vietnam. Still, competing white supremacist organizations, including police commissioners, politicians, and the Ku Klux Klan pushed back against these resistance movements. Back in the U.S., the Chicano Moratorium (1970) called attention to the lost lives of enlisted Chicanos and the disenfranchisement of Chicano communities in U.S. cities, particularly Los Angeles and San Diego and thus questioned the involvement of Chicanos in fighting a war abroad when they were not experiencing democracy at home. In the same time period, the American Indian Movement kicked off in Minneapolis in 1969 to stand against white control of schools, economic institutions and Native American religious practices.



Video **1.6.8**: Andra Day - "Rise Up" (Lyrics). (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; 7clouds via YouTube)

In the first few decades of the 21st century, many examples of collective efforts at challenging institutional power can be understood. Rise Up by Andra Day (click the video above) has been tied to the Black Lives Matter movement. The #metoomovement called attention to sexual harassment; one of the key victories of this resistance movement was the sentencing of media mogul, Harvey Weinstein, convicted of 2 counts of sexual harassment and rape. Pro-immigration rallies and marches in U.S. cities in 2006 expressed hope for undocumented peoples, with eyes on the prize of comprehensive immigration reform which has yet to be realized. Yet, DACA, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an executive order passed by President Obama in 2012 reflected one win for this movement - against a backdrop of anti-immigrant sentiment which fueled Trump's Presidential bid. In 2016, in Standing Rock, North Dakota, Lakota leaders such as Madonna Thunderhawk organized resistance against the capitalist venture, the Dakota Access Pipeline, uniting hundreds of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples against the corporate pipeline through sacred land, with the potential to pollute sacred water.



Figure **1.6.9**: "Defend DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) Protest." Individuals carry signs reading "Defend DACA" and "Stand with Dreamers." (CC BY 2.0; mollyktadams via Flickr)



Figure **1.6.10**: "Rally against the Dakota Access Pipeline." Individuals carry signs reading "Keep it in the ground: Break free of fossil fuels." (CC BY 2.0; Fibonacci Blue via Flickr)



Figure **1.6.11**: Young child holds sign, "Kids Against Racism." (CC BY 2.0; Tim Pierce via Flickr)

As stated in the opening of this chapter, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the mass protests that erupted following the police killing of George Floyd sparked a national and international movement against police brutality and systemic racism. Amidst the increase in hate crimes reported in Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities during the COVID-19 crisis, AAPI groups held protests against these acts of violence and hate speech such as "Chinese Virus" and "Kung Flu" and "go back home."

The U.S. has a rich history of resistance against oppression and white supremacy. How will the U.S. fare moving into the middle part of the 21st century?

In the words of George Takei (the famous voice from Star Trek and survivor of the Japanese Internment Campus during WWII) published in The Advocate (2016),

In today's political environment, we find ourselves again outsiders, forming a core of those opposed to the powers in Washington and in many of our state capitals… It is axiomatic that little worth fighting for has ever come without a fight… We truly have grown stronger together, and with each new assault upon our dignity and humanity, we will grow stronger still. So welcome to the resistance. It's where the next heroes of our movement will emerge. Be ready. Be vigilant. Be strong.

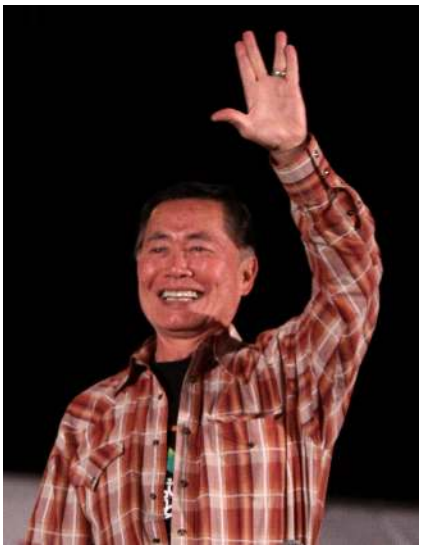


Figure 1.6.12: Actor and activist, George Takei, uses hand gesture which signifies resistance. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Gage Skidmore via Creative Commons)

Key Takeaways

- Sources of social change that may impact race and ethnic relations include: modernization and urbanization, population growth and composition, culture and technology, natural environment, social institutions and social movements.
- Resistance and resistance social movements throughout history illustrate how individuals and groups have responded against dominant forces of oppression, colonialism, and blocked life chances.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-SA other than Voting Rights, A Social Movement which is CC BY-SA.

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0) (Contributed to Voting Rights, A Social Movement)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Aberle, D. (1966). *The Peyote Religion among the Navaho*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Albrow, M. (1996). *The Global Age.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Amenta, E., Caren, N., Chiarello, E. & Sue, Y. (2010). The political consequences of social movements. *Annual Review of Sociology, 36*, 287–307.
- Back, L., Bennett, A., Edles, L.D., Gibson, M., Inglis, D., Jacobs, R. & Woodward, I. (2012). *Cultural Sociology.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Better, S. (2007). *Institutional Racism: A Primer on Theory and Strategies for Change. 2nd Ed.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Cilluffo, A. & Cohn, D. (2019, April 11). 6 demographic trends shaping the U.S. and the world in 2019. *Pew Research Center.*
- Colby, S.L. & Ortman, J.M. (2015). Projections of the size and composition of the u.s. population: 2014 to 2060. *U.S. Census.*
- Giugni, M. (2008). Political, biographical, and cultural consequences of social movements. *Sociology Compass, 2*, 1582–1600.

- Griswold, W. (2013). *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Hollander, J.A. & Einwohner, R. (2004). Conceptualizing resistance. *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 19, Issue 4.
- Kammeyer, K.C.W., Ritzer, G., Yetman, N.R. (1996). *Sociology: Experiencing Changing Societies, Economy Version Subsequent Edition.* Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Meyer, D.S. (2007). *The Politics of Protest: Social Movements in America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Piven, F.F. (2006). *Challenging Authority: How Ordinary People Change America*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Takei, G. (2016, December 21). George Takei: "Welcome to the resistance." *The Advocate.*

This page titled 1.6: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **1.6: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Sociological Theories and Patterns of Intergroup Relations

2.1: What is a Theory?

2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives

2.3: Patterns of Intergroup Relations

This page titled 2: Sociological Theories and Patterns of Intergroup Relations is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

2.1: What is a Theory?

Sociologists study social events, interactions, and patterns, and they develop a theory in an attempt to explain why things work as they do. In sociology, a **theory** is a way to explain different aspects of social interactions and social structures as well as to create a testable proposition, called a **hypothesis,** about society (Allan, 2006).

For example, although suicide is generally considered an individual phenomenon, Émile Durkheim was interested in studying the social factors that affect it. He studied social ties within a group, or **social solidarity**, and hypothesized that differences in suicide rates might be explained by religion-based differences. Durkheim gathered a large amount of data about Europeans who had ended their lives, and he did indeed find differences based on religion. Protestants were more likely to commit suicide than Catholics in Durkheim's society, and his work supports the utility of theory in sociological research.

Theories vary in scope depending on the scale of the issues that they are meant to explain. **Macro-level theories** relate to large-scale issues and large groups of people, while **micro-level theories** look at very specific relationships between individuals or small groups. **Grand theories** attempt to explain large-scale relationships and answer fundamental questions such as why societies form and why they change. Sociological theory is constantly evolving and should never be considered complete. Classic sociological theories are still considered important and current, but new sociological theories build upon the work of their predecessors and add to them (Calhoun, 2002).

In sociology, a few theories provide broad perspectives that help explain many different aspects of social life, and these are called paradigms. **Paradigms** are philosophical and theoretical frameworks used within a discipline to formulate theories, generalizations, and the experiments performed in support of them. Students are encouraged to shift their paradigms by considering a variety of perspectives and content covered in this textbook. To test your ability to shift paradigms, what do you see in this picture? When was the picture taken, and where?



Figure **2.1.1**: Swastika picture taken by Janét Hund. (Janét Hund via jhund@lbcc.edu)

If you guessed Nazi Germany during WWII, *you are incorrect!* Taken in 2001, this photo is of a residence in Taiwan; the swastika on the front door communicates it is a Buddhist household, welcoming visitors. Throughout Asia and Indigenous societies worldwide, the swastika symbolizes peace, happiness, love, and long life - not hatred, anti-semitism, racism, or violence which many associate with the swastika symbol, due to the atrocity of the Holocaust during German-occupied Europe from 1941-1945. Considering different paradigms is important to understand our vast human history and contemporary society.

Three paradigms have come to dominate sociological thinking, because they provide useful explanations: structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. These are discussed further in the next section as well as two more recent theoretical contributions: intersectionality and critical race theory.

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Allan, K. (2006). *Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory: Visualizing Social Worlds*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Calhoun, C. (2002). *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

This page titled 2.1: What is a Theory? is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **2.1: What is a Theory?** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives

We can examine issues of race and ethnicity through five different sociological perspectives: **functionalism**, **conflict theory**, **symbolic interactionism, intersection theory,** and **critical race theory**. As you read through these theories, ask yourself which one makes the most sense and why. Do we need more than one theory to explain racism, prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination?

Table **2.2.1**: Sociological Theories or Perspectives. Different sociological perspectives enable sociologists to view social issues through a variety of useful lenses.

Sociological Theories or Perspectives. Different sociological perspectives enable sociologists to view social issues through a variety of useful lenses.

Sociological Paradigm	Level of Analysis	Focus
Structural Functionalism	Macro or Mid	The way each part of society functions together to contribute to the whole. Practices and policies may lead to dysfunction.
Conflict Theory	Macro	The way inequalities contribute to social differences and perpetuates racial and ethnic disparities in power.
Symbolic Interactionism	Micro	One-to-one interactions and communications. The meaning attached to racial an ethnic labels and images.
Intersection Theory	Multi	The way multiple social categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, intersect to produce unique forms of discrimination and oppression.
Critical Race Theory	Multi	Centering race in the examination of social phenomena and inequality.

Functionalism

In the view of functionalism, racial and ethnic inequalities must have served an important function in order to exist as long as they have. This concept, of course, is problematic. How can racism and discrimination contribute positively to society? A functionalist might look at “functions” and “dysfunctions” caused by racial inequality. Nash (1964) focused his argument on the way racism is functional for the dominant group, for example, suggesting that racism morally justifies a racially unequal society. Consider the way slave owners justified slavery in the antebellum South, by suggesting Black people were fundamentally inferior to white and preferred slavery to freedom.

According to Robert Merton, the **manifest functions** of social institutions and their policies are intended to produce beneficial outcomes. The **latent functions** of social institutions and their policies are not deliberate or intended but still produce beneficial outcomes. For example, while it is not an intended outcome, schools in an urban community may lead to an increase in interracial friendships and relationships, which is a beneficial outcome for the larger community and society. According to Merton, a dysfunction would be considered a harmful latent outcome of an institutional policy or practice. For example, New York City's "Stop-and-Frisk" policy was intended to provide police officers with more latitude in questioning and apprehending potential criminals. However, the policy led to a disproportionate stopping and detention of Black and Latinx men and ultimately deemed as unconstitutional by the courts. In addition to unfair racial harassment, latent dysfunction would also include a growing distrust in the police and racial minorities feeling unsafe in their own neighborhoods.

Another way to apply the functionalist perspective to racism is to discuss the way racism can contribute positively to the functioning of society by strengthening bonds between in-groups members through the ostracism of out-group members. Consider how a community might increase solidarity by refusing to allow outsiders access. On the other hand, Rose (1951) suggested that dysfunctions associated with racism include the failure to take advantage of talent in the subjugated group, and that society must divert from other purposes the time and effort needed to maintain artificially constructed racial boundaries. Consider how much money, time, and effort went toward maintaining separate and unequal educational systems prior to the Civil Rights Movement.

Conflict Theory

Conflict theories are often applied to inequalities of gender, social class, education, race, and ethnicity. A conflict theory perspective of U.S. history would examine the numerous past and current struggles between the white ruling class and racial and ethnic minorities, noting specific conflicts that have arisen when the dominant group perceived a threat from the people of color. In the late nineteenth century, the rising power of Black Americans after the Civil War resulted in draconian Jim Crow laws that severely limited Black political and social power. For example, Vivien Thomas (1910–1985), the Black surgical technician who helped develop the groundbreaking surgical technique that saves the lives of "blue babies" was classified as a janitor for many years, and paid as such, despite the fact that he was conducting complicated surgical experiments. The years since the Civil War have showed a pattern of attempted disenfranchisement, with gerrymandering and voter suppression efforts aimed at predominantly minority neighborhoods.

In her **split labor market theory**, conflict theorist Edna Bonacich (1972) proposed that ethnic antagonism often has economic underpinnings because the capitalist owners of the means of production would prefer to pay workers from a particular ethnic group lower wages than workers from a dominant ethnic group. According to Bonacich, this will naturally lead to resentment and ethnic antagonism between these groups of workers. The split labor market benefits the capitalist class because it lowers production costs (therefore increasing profit margins) and also has the added benefit of maintaining a divided (and therefore unorganized) labor force. According to this framework, the split labor market would help to explain the ethnic antagonism that exists between white workers in the United States and undocumented workers from Latin America.

Symbolic Interactionism

For symbolic interactionists, race and ethnicity provide strong symbols as sources of identity. In fact, some interactionists propose that the symbols of race, not race itself, are what lead to racism. Famed interactionist Herbert Blumer (1958) suggested that racial prejudice is formed through interactions between members of the dominant group. Without these interactions, individuals in the dominant group would not hold racist views. These interactions contribute to an abstract picture of the subordinate group that allows the dominant group to support its view of the subordinate group, and thus maintains the status quo. An example of this might be an individual whose beliefs about a particular group are based on images conveyed in popular media, and those are unquestionably believed because the individual has never personally met a member of that group. Another way to apply the interactionist perspective is to look at how people define their race(s) and the race of others. As discussed in Chapter 1.2 with regards to the social construction of race, since some people who claim a white identity have a greater amount of skin pigmentation than some people who claim a Black identity, how did they come to define themselves as Black or white?

Thinking Sociologically

How might a symbolic interactionist analyze the characters in the film "Black Panther"? In what ways might the film and characters challenge racist and negative stereotypes? Do you think films like "Black Panther" have the potential to change society? Why or why not?

Culture of prejudice refers to the argument that prejudice is embedded in our culture. We grow up surrounded by images of stereotypes and casual expressions of racism and prejudice. Consider the casually racist imagery on grocery store shelves or the stereotypes that fill popular movies and advertisements. It is easy to see how someone living in the Northeastern United States, who may know no Mexican Americans personally, might gain a stereotyped impression from such sources as Speedy Gonzalez or Taco Bell's talking Chihuahua. Because we are all exposed to these images and thoughts, it is impossible to know to what extent they have influenced our thought processes.



Figure **2.2.2**: "T'Challa Black Panther Movie Poster 2017 NYC 4981" (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Brechtbug via Flickr)

Symbolic interactionists also focus on the process of **labeling** - the meanings attached to labels and their social consequences. The social construction of race is reflected in the way names for racial categories change with changing times. It's worth noting that race, in this sense, is also a system of labeling that provides a source of identity; specific labels fall in and out of favor during different social eras. A symbolic interactionist might say that this labeling has a direct correlation to those who are in power and those who are labeled. For instance, if a teacher labels their students as either "intelligent and motivated" or "slow and lazy" based on racial and ethnic stereotypes, this could impact interactions in the classroom and may also lead to an internalization of those stereotypes and lower academic performance (Rist, 1970; Steele, 2010). Indeed, as these examples show, labeling theory can significantly impact a student's schooling.

Intersection Theory



Figure **2.2.3**: Patricia Hill Collins speaking at the Festival Latinidades in 2014. (CC BY-SA 2.0; festival_latinidades via Flickr)

As discussed in Chapter 1.5, Black feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1990) developed intersection theory, which suggests we cannot separate the effects of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other attributes. When we examine race and how it can bring us both advantages and disadvantages, it is important to acknowledge that the way we experience race is shaped, for example, by our gender and class. Multiple layers of disadvantage intersect to create the way we experience race. For example, if we want to understand prejudice, we must understand that the prejudice focused on a white woman because of her gender is very different from the layered prejudice focused on a poor Asian woman, who is affected by stereotypes related to being poor, being a woman, and her ethnic status.

"Intersectionality is not just a form of inquiry and critical analysis but necessarily also a form of praxis that challenges inequalities and opens a collective space for both recognizing common threads across complex experiences of injustice and responding to them

politically" (Ferree, 2018). Using an intersectional lens to analyze social systems, it is useful to consider how capitalism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, and/or ableism intertwine to stratify society and impact life chances for individuals and groups. Collins & Bilge (2020) combine the critical inquiry into inequalities and stratification with critical praxis to advance social justice. Thus, intersectionality is not only a lens and theory but also a potential solution to social problems, reminding sociologists that the many status intersections of race, social class, gender, sexuality, age and/or disability should be considered when seeking remedies to social ills.

Check out this video of Kimberlé Crenshaw explaining the premise of intersectionality:



Video **2.2.4**: Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw Defines the Urgency of Intersectionality. (Close-captioning available on Ted.com.)

Critical Race Theory

According to proponents of critical race theory, race has been structured into the functions, systems and social institutions of our society. Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate (1995) laid the justification for considering a critical race theory of education. “Critical race theory in education, like its antecedent in legal scholarship, is a radical critique of both the status quo and the purported reforms” (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 62). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) provided a foundational understanding of critical race theory by considering the following six elements:

1. “racism is ordinary, not aberrational” (p. 7)
2. “white over color ascendancy serves important purposes, psychic and material” (p. 7)
3. the social construction of race
4. racialization
5. intersectionality
6. unique voices from people of color

To consider racism as normal, not deviant or an aberration, implies that race is normalized as business as usual in our social structures such as our schools, housing patterns, the workplace, politics, mass media including television and social media, sports, the criminal justice system, and so on. This resulting racial hierarchy has benefited (white) elites (materially) and the working class (psychically), according to Delgado and Stefancic (2001). For example, social justice policies (e.g. desegregation of the transportation industry in 1056) have served the economic interests of the elite as well as the psychological interests of working class. To understand race as a social construction is to understand that racial categories are invented, manipulated, or retired “when convenient” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 7). Though actively involved in the social construction of race, society ignores or is not taught that racial categories are subjective, not fixed, and not based on facts, as explained in Chapter 1.2.

When individuals are racialized, they are stereotyped, minimized, often in the form or caricatures. Within the institution of higher education, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) noted that racialization and marginalization result in African American students coming to the university as "intruders" (p. 60). Further, Robin DiAngelo (2018) revealed that 84% of our college professors are white (p. 31). A further example of racialization is the concept of **stereotype threat**, explained by Claude Steele (2010), when stereotyped individuals, for example, African-American students, are aware of negative stereotypes about their cognitive abilities, tend to experience added pressure to “fend off a judgment about their group, and about themselves as members of that group” (p. 54).

Intersectionality, already explained earlier in this section, suggests that individuals are simultaneously members of many different, potentially competing or overlapping, identities including but not limited to race, gender, social class, national origin, religion, politics, and sexuality. This tenet can help to understand how the experiences of Black women and Latinas, for example, may vary if they are upper class and lesbian versus if they are working class and heterosexual. “If we pay attention to the multiplicity of social life, perhaps our institutions and arrangements will better address the problems that plague us” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 56). Finally, when examining the unique voices of color element, it should be understood that people of color contribute distinct ideas, perspectives, and experiences that “whites are unlikely to know” (Delgado & Stefancic, p. 9). Further, these voices validate the perspectives of other people of color, which may diverge from the perspectives of the dominant group. For example, Ibram X. Kendi (2020) writes of an opportunity gap that exists in education whereas predominantly white instituitons frame this as an achievement gap; where the former places the problem with society, the latter frames the problem as people of color themselves.



Figure 2.2.5: "RACISM" (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Gregor Maclennan via Flickr)

Finally, critical race theorists pose a variety of social reforms. Rather than colorblind solutions, critical race theorists advocate for race-conscious solutions to race-based social ills. "The system applauds affording equality of opportunity but resists programs that assure equality of results" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, *p.* 23). For example, the institutional research performed by Janét Hund (2019) found when African American and Latinx community college students were taught by same race-ethnic faculty, their course completion rates were higher; this research suggests that hiring more African American and Latinx faculty would serve to improve the course completion rates for African American and Latinx colleges students.

Summary

Functionalist views of race study the role dominant and marginalized groups play to create a stable social structure. Conflict theorists examine power disparities and struggles between various racial and ethnic groups. Interactionists see race and ethnicity as important sources of individual identity and social symbolism. The concept of culture of prejudice recognizes that all people are subject to stereotypes that are ingrained in their culture. Intersectional theory reminds us to consider how race, gender, and social class not only impact our social structures and our social interactions but are also engrained within our social institutions. As a more radical critique of the status quo, critical race theory centralizes the focus on race to understand our history, our contemporary society, and our social structures - as well as solutions to inequality.

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)

- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Blumer, Herbert. (1958, Spring). Race prejudice as a sense of group position. *Pacific Sociological Review*, Vol. 1, No. 3-7.
- Collins, P. & Bilge, S. (2020). *Intersectionality (Key Concepts).* 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Polity Books.
- Delgado, S. & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical Race Theory*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- DiAngelo, R. (2018). W*hite fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Ferree, M.M. (2018). Intersectionality as theory and practice. *Contemporary Sociology* , 47(2), 127-132.
- Hund, J. (2020, Fall). Effect of same-race ethnic faculty on the course completion of students of color. *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*, Vol. 27, No. 2.
- Kendi, I. (2020). *How to Be an Anti-Racist.* New York, NY: Random House.
- Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, W. (1995, Fall). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, *97*(1), 47-68.
- Nash, M. (1964). Race and the ideology of race. *urrent Anthropology 3*(3): 285-288.
- Rist, R. (1970). Student social class and teachers' expectations: The self-fulfilling prophecy of ghetto education. *Harvard Educational Review*. Vol. 40, No. 3.
- Rose, A. (1958). *The Roots of Prejudice*. 5th Edition. Paris, France: UNESCO
- Steele, C.M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

This page titled 2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

2.3: Patterns of Intergroup Relations

Patterns of Intergroup Relations

A variety of patterns, or consequences, characterize race-ethnic intergroup contact, including disparities in power. Ethnic and racial groups come into contact through different social processes, such as migration (both voluntary and involuntary), conquest, and expansion of territory. At one extreme, a rejection of the minority (marginalized or subordinate) group may result in inhumane consequences such as genocide or expulsion. Race and ethnic intergroup consequences that are mildly less inhumane result in internal colonialism and segregation (de jure as well as de facto segregation). Separatism, a more favorable outcome arises, particularly for a marginalized group that may decide to distance itself from the dominant group through autonomy and self-determination. Moving towards a more tolerable intergroup outcome, fusion or amalgamation appears on the continuum, the result of interracial relationships and the presence of biracial and multiracial people. Next, assimilation appears as another favorable intergroup consequence; however, it can also be argued that assimilation serves to deny one's ethnic identity, which should also be understood as a troubling consequence. The most tolerant intergroup consequence of race-ethnic relations is pluralism or multiculturalism. Taken to its logical conclusion, in addition to the acceptance and embracing of cultural and ethnic diversity, this last stage would also include a more equal distribution of power in society which would eventually lead to a society without a dominant group.

Patterns of Intergroup Relations

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g.Trans Atlantic Slave Trade).
- **Expulsion/ Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. Native Americans reservations).
- **Internal Colonialism:** The dominant group exploits the marginalized group (e.g. farm workers).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Jim Crow Law).
- **Separatism:** The marginalized group desires physical separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Black Nationalists).
- **Fusion/ Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. intermarriage, biracial/ bicultural children).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. Asian immigrants changing names to sound more “American”).
- **Pluralism/ Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. bilingualism).

Genocide

Genocide, the deliberate annihilation of a targeted (usually subordinate) group, is the most toxic intergroup relationship. Historically, we can see that genocide has included both the intent to exterminate a group and the function of exterminating of a group, intentional or not.

Possibly the most well-known case of genocide is Hitler’s attempt to exterminate the Jewish people in the first part of the twentieth century. Also known as the Holocaust, the explicit goal of Hitler’s “Final Solution” was the eradication of European Jewry, as well as the destruction of other people of colors such as Catholics, people with disabilities, and homosexuals. With forced emigration, concentration camps, and mass executions in gas chambers, Hitler’s Nazi regime was responsible for the deaths of 12 million people, 6 million of whom were Jewish. Hitler’s intent was clear, and the high Jewish death toll certainly indicates that Hitler and his regime committed genocide. But how do we understand genocide that is not so overt and deliberate?

The treatment of aboriginal Australians is also an example of genocide committed against Indigenous people. Historical accounts suggest that between 1824 and 1908, white settlers killed more than 10,000 native aborigines in Tasmania and Australia (Tatz, 2006). Another example is the European colonization of North America. Some historians estimate that Native American populations dwindled from approximately 12 million people in the year 1500 to barely 237,000 by the year 1900 (Lewy, 2004). European settlers coerced American Indians off their own lands, often causing thousands of deaths in forced removals, such as

occurred in the Cherokee or Potawatomi Trail of Tears. Settlers also enslaved Native Americans and forced them to give up their religious and cultural practices. But the major cause of Native American death was neither slavery nor war nor forced removal: it was the introduction of European diseases and Indians' lack of immunity to them. Smallpox, diphtheria, and measles flourished among Indigenous American tribes who had no exposure to the diseases and no ability to fight them. Quite simply, these diseases decimated the tribes. How planned this genocide was remains a topic of contention. Some argue that the spread of disease was an unintended effect of conquest, while others believe it was intentional citing rumors of smallpox-infected blankets being distributed as "gifts" to tribes.

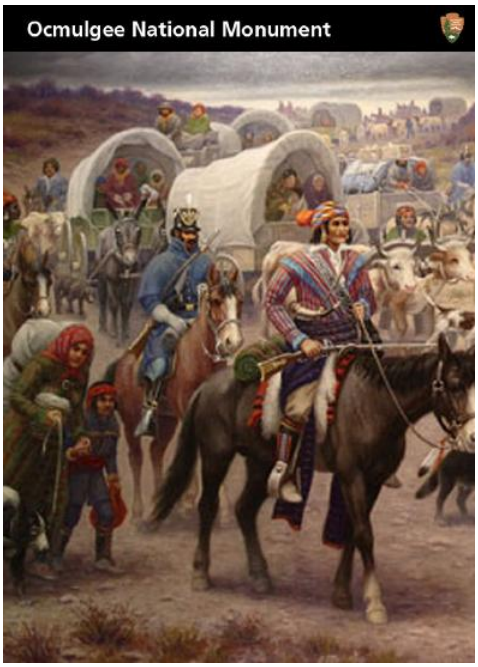


Figure 2.3.1: "Trail of Tears for the Creek People." (CC BY 2.0; TradingCardsNPS via Flickr)

Genocide is not a just a historical concept; it is practiced today. Recently, ethnic and geographic conflicts in the Darfur region of Sudan have led to hundreds of thousands of deaths. As part of an ongoing land conflict, the Sudanese government and their state-sponsored Janjaweed militia have led a campaign of killing, forced displacement, and systematic rape of Darfuri people. Although a treaty was signed in 2011, the peace is fragile.

Population Transfer or Expulsion

Expulsion refers to a subordinate group being forced, by a dominant group, to leave a certain area or country. As seen in the examples of the Trail of Tears and the Holocaust, expulsion can be a factor in genocide. However, it can also stand on its own as a destructive group interaction. Expulsion has often occurred historically with an ethnic or racial basis. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in 1942, after the Japanese government's attack on Pearl Harbor. The Order authorized the establishment of internment camps for anyone with as little as one-eighth Japanese ancestry (i.e., one great-grandparent who was Japanese). Over 120,000 legal Japanese residents and Japanese U.S. citizens, many of them children, were held in these camps for up to four years, despite the fact that there was never any evidence of collusion or espionage. (In fact, many Japanese Americans continued to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States by serving in the U.S. military during the War.) In the 1990s, the U.S. executive branch issued a formal apology for this expulsion; reparation efforts continue today.



Figure **2.3.2**: "Russell Lee: Japanese-American family waiting for relocation, Los Angeles, 1942." (CC BY 2.0: trialsanderrors via Flickr)

Similarly, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, there was an emergence of anti-Mexican sentiment as white Americans began to lose their employment and homes. As with other examples of xenophobia and nativism, the growing resentment led to changes in official immigration policies. According to Aguirre and Turne (2007), a repatriation movement was initiated and over half a million people of Mexican origin (including both migrants and U.S.-born) were repatriated to Mexico between 1929 and 1935.

Internal Colonialism

Internal colonialism refers to manner in which a superordinate (or majority) group exploits a subordinate (or minority) group for its economic advantage. Typically the superordinate group controls and manipulates important social institutions to suppress subordinate groups and deny them full access to societal benefits. The United States system of slavery is an extreme example of internal colonialism. Other examples include the South African system of apartheid and the abusive use of immigrant labor in the United States, such as the **Bracero Program**, which was a guest worker program that was in place from 1942-1964. The program, officially referred to as the Mexican Farm Labor Program, was initiated through an executive order in 1942 and was intended to bring in Mexican workers to fill in expected labor shortages in the agricultural sector. Although there were protections and limits written into the bi-lateral agreement, employers largely ignored the rules and Mexican laborers typically worked under harsh conditions, and many were not paid prevailing wages. (Gutierrez & Almaguer, 2016)

Internal colonialism is typically accompanied by segregation that is defined as the physical separation of two groups, particularly in residence, but also in workplace and social functions. Segregation allows the superordinate group to maintain social distance from the minority and yet economically exploit their labor as agricultural workers, cooks, janitors, nannies, factory workers, etc.



Figure **2.3.3**: Anti-Slavery Coin (1807) The obverse shows a kneeling slave with chained wrists and ankles underneath the legend: AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER. The reverse shows two hands grasped in a handshake. Around the rim the legend reads: MAY SLAVERY & OPPRESSION CEASE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. (CC BY-NC 2.0, "LEEDM.N.1970.34.1 obv" via Leeds Museums and Galleries)

Segregation: De Facto and De Jure

Segregation refers to the physical separation of two groups, particularly in residence, but also in workplace and social functions. It is important to distinguish between de jure segregation (segregation that is enforced by law) and de facto segregation (segregation that occurs without laws but because of other factors). A stark example of de jure segregation is the apartheid movement of South Africa, which existed from 1948 to 1994. Under apartheid, Black South Africans were stripped of their civil rights and forcibly relocated to areas that segregated them physically from their white compatriots. Only after decades of degradation, violent uprisings, and international advocacy was apartheid finally abolished.

De jure segregation occurred in the United States for many years after the Civil War. During this time, many former Confederate states passed Jim Crow laws that required segregated facilities for Blacks and whites. These laws were codified in 1896's landmark Supreme Court case Plessy v. Ferguson, which stated that "separate but equal" facilities were constitutional. For the next five decades, Blacks were subjected to legalized discrimination, forced to live, work, and go to school in separate—but unequal—facilities. It wasn't until 1954 and the Brown v. Board of Education case that the Supreme Court declared that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal," thus ending de jure segregation in the United States.



Figure **2.3.4**: In the "Jim Crow" South, it was legal to have "separate but equal" facilities for Blacks and whites. (CC PDM 1.0; Marion Post Wolcott via Wikimedia)

De facto segregation, however, cannot be abolished by any court mandate. Segregation is still alive and well in the United States, with different racial or ethnic groups often segregated by neighborhood, borough, or parish. Sociologists use segregation indices to measure racial segregation of different races in different areas. The indices employ a scale from zero to 100, where zero is the most integrated and 100 is the least. In the New York metropolitan area, for instance, the Black-white segregation index was seventy-nine for the years 2005–2009. This means that 79 percent of either Blacks or whites would have to move in order for each neighborhood to have the same racial balance as the whole metro region (Population Studies Center, 2010).



Figure 2.3.5: The research of sociologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark helped the Supreme Court decide to end "separate but equal" racial segregation in schools in the United States. (CC BY-4.0, Public Domain via OpenStax)

Assimilation

Assimilation describes the process by which a minority individual or group gives up its own identity by taking on the characteristics of the dominant culture. In the United States, which has a history of welcoming and absorbing immigrants from different lands, assimilation has been a function of immigration. Early sociologists from the Chicago School theorized that over time, ethnic groups would assimilate into the mainstream culture and institutions of the larger society. For example, Robert Park proposed a 3-stage process of assimilation. In the first **competitive** phase, there may be tension between the new ethnic group will and the larger, more established ethnic groups as they compete over resources, such as housing, jobs, and education. In the second **accommodation** phase, the ethnic groups move toward a more institutionalized, stable intergroup relationship, which could include forms of institutional discrimination such as segregation. In the final **assimilation** phase, there is the merging or fusion of two or more ethnic groups into a single, shared set of traditions, sentiments, memories and attitudes.

Milton Gordon contributed to this perspective by adding other types of assimilation. For instance, he argued that there are different types of assimilation, such as cultural, structural, and marital. **Cultural assimilation** occurs when the new ethnic group adopts the values, beliefs, practices, language, etc. of the dominant group. **Structural assimilation** occurs when members of the new ethnic group are incorporated and integrated into the primary groups of the dominant culture. For this reason, Gordon hypothesized that structural assimilation is more difficult to attain because it would require the dominant group to accept and absorb members of the new ethnic group into their most personal spaces and groups. Other types of assimilation would include **marital** (the extent of intermarriage across ethnic groups), **identification** (the extent to which members identify themselves with their ethnic group), and **civic** (the extent to which individuals are in agreement with civic values and participate in politics).



Figure 2.3.6: For many immigrants to the United States, the Statue of Liberty is a symbol of freedom and a new life. Unfortunately, they often encounter prejudice and discrimination. (CC PDM 1.0; Derek Jensen via Wikimedia)

Another critique of the assimilation model is the historical emphasis (in both theory and policy) on **Anglo-conformity**. This assimilation model promoted the subordination of ethnic and immigrant cultural values to Anglo-American values, practices, holidays, and the exclusive use of the English language. This model also influenced important legislation such as the Immigration National Origins Act of 1924 (also called the Johnson-Reed Act), which favored European immigration at the expense of non-European countries and specifically excluded Asian countries by denying them a quota. Additionally, the Anglo-conformity model was also integral to the establishment of government sponsored **boarding schools** for Native American children in the late 1800's (and some remained until the 1970s). The boarding schools were designed to immerse Native Americans into the Anglo-American culture by forcibly removing them from their families, forcing them to have European names, haircuts, and clothing, forbidding them to speak their Indigenous languages, and replacing their Indigenous names with more "acceptable" European names. To say the least, this was a traumatic experience for Native American youth and the boarding schools were plagued with abuse.

Most people in the United States have immigrant ancestors. In relatively recent history, between 1890 and 1920, the United States became home to around 24 million immigrants. In the decades since then, further waves of immigrants have come to these shores and have eventually been absorbed into U.S. culture, sometimes after facing extended periods of prejudice and discrimination. Assimilation may lead to the loss of the people of color's cultural identity as they become absorbed into the dominant culture, but assimilation has minimal to no impact on the majority group's cultural identity.

Assimilation is antithetical to the "salad bowl" created by **pluralism** (the idea that ethnic groups retain cultural and behavioral characteristics even as they assimilate); rather than maintaining their own cultural flavor, subordinate cultures give up their own traditions in order to conform to their new environment. Sociologists measure the degree to which immigrants have assimilated to a new culture with four benchmarks: socioeconomic status, spatial concentration, language assimilation, and intermarriage. When faced with racial and ethnic discrimination, it can be difficult for new immigrants to fully assimilate. Language assimilation, in particular, can be a formidable barrier, limiting employment and educational options and therefore constraining growth in socioeconomic status.

The path of assimilation and the integration of immigrants and children into American society may also depend on their point of entry into the stratified, unequal American society. Sociologists Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut proposed the theory of **segmented assimilation**, whereby immigrant ethnic groups will be absorbed into different segments of the stratified American society, depending on their socioeconomic status, social networks, other forms of capital (such as educational background). If immigrant ethnic groups assimilate into poorer, and perhaps racialized, communities then they (and their children) will have a more difficult time experiencing upward mobility and success in the United States.

Separatism

Another example of intergroup relations is **separatism**, or withdrawal, and is oftentimes a result of discrimination. In this case, it is the subordinate (or minority) group that attempts to separate itself from the dominant group and create a "self-sustaining society"

within the broader society. The goal is to create a separate ethnic community with its own social norms, cultural practices, and economy insulated from the larger dominant society. Aguirre and Turner (2007) provide an example of this with the early Black Muslim movement in America, which "advocated a separate African American community, self-supporting and isolated from 'white' institutions. Urban and rural communities were established and still prosper, although there has been a clear trend away from complete withrdrawal and isoolation among many Black Muslims" (p. 24). In 1963, Malcom X delivered a speech at UC Berkeley where he outlined his philosophy on Black nationalism and argued that racial separatism was the best solution to the serious social problems facing Black Americans.

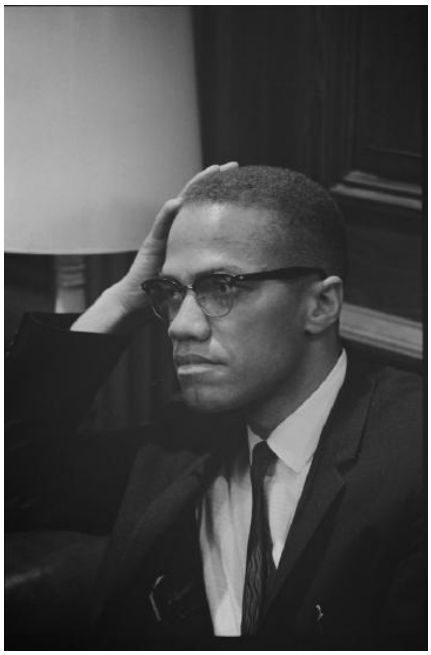


Figure **2.3.7**: "No Known Restrictions: 'Malcolm X Waits at King Press Conference' by Marion S. Trikosko, March 26, 1964 (LOC)." (CC PDM 1.0; pingnews.com via Flickr)

Amalgamation

Amalgamation is the process by which a people of color and a majority group combine to form a new group. Amalgamation creates the classic “melting pot” analogy; unlike the “salad bowl,” in which each culture retains its individuality, the “melting pot” ideal sees the combination of cultures that results in a new culture entirely. A significant component of this process is interracial relationships and the increase of biracial and multiracial people in the United States. Since the 1967 Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court case, which overturned anti-miscegenation laws in the United States, interracial marriage rates have steadily increased. Today, nearly 20% of all newlyweds are married to someone of a different race or ethnicity, up from 3% in 1967. Overall, about 11 million (about 10%) of all married people have a spouse of a different race or ethnicity. What does this mean for the future of race and ethnic relations in the United States? According to the assimilationist perspective, the increase in intermarriage rates is a reflection of the continuous process of the incorporation and integration of racial and ethnic groups into mainstream American society. Theorists like Park and Gordon predicted that this would occur over time, albeit perhaps at a slower rate for racialized groups. However, other social scientists who draw from the conflict or critical race theory perspectives would argue that the increase in intermarriage rates and biracial people does not necessarily guarantee that it will bring racial equality to the United States and that racism will persist in different forms.

Pluralism

Pluralism is represented by the ideal of the United States as a "salad bowl:" a great mixture of different cultures where each culture retains its own identity and yet adds to the flavor of the whole. True pluralism is characterized by mutual respect on the part of all cultures, both dominant and subordinate, creating a multicultural environment of acceptance. In reality, true pluralism is a difficult goal to reach. In the United States, the mutual respect required by pluralism is often missing, and the nation’s past pluralist model of a melting pot posits a society where cultural differences aren’t embraced as much as erased. In addition to embracing cultural and ethnic diversity, the pluralist stage will also include a more equal distribution of power in society including government roles

and positions, professional occupations, administrative roles, and socioeconomic resources, across racial and ethnic groups. In other words, the dominant group, defined by having relatively more power, property, and prestige in society, would cease to exist.

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Adalberto, A. & Turner, J.H. (2007). *American Ethnicity: The Dynamics and Consequences of Discrimination.* 5th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Gutiérrez, R.A. & Almaguer, T. (Eds.). (2016). *The New Latino Studies Reader: A Twenty-First-Century Perspective*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Portes, A. and Rumbaut R. (2001). *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation*. New York, NY: Russell Sage.

This page titled 2.3: Patterns of Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **2.3: Patterns of Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Immigration and Migration

3.1: History and Background

3.2: Intergroup Relations

3.3: Intersectionality

3.4: Social Institutions

3.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 3: Immigration and Migration is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

3.1: History and Background

History

Immigration is the act of foreigners passing or coming into a country for the purpose of permanent residence. Immigration occurs for many reasons, including economic, political, family re-unification, natural disasters, or poverty. Many immigrants came to America to escape religious persecution or dire economic conditions. Most hoped coming to America would provide freedom and opportunity.

Immigration to the United States has been a major source of population growth and cultural change. Different historical periods have brought distinct national groups, races and ethnicities to the United States. During the 17th century, approximately 175,000 Englishmen migrated to Colonial America. Over half of all European immigrants to Colonial America during the 17th and 18th centuries arrived as indentured servants. The mid-nineteenth century saw mainly an influx from northern Europe, the early twentieth-century mainly from Southern and Eastern Europe, and post-1965 mostly from Latin America and Asia.

Historical Race/Ethnic Population Demographics in America: A Brief Statistical Overview

- 1790—Population 4 million
  - 1 person in 30 urban=3.33
- 1820—Population 10 million
  - 1 Black to 4 whites=25% Black population
  - 14000 immigrants per year for decade
  - Almost all from England and N. Ireland (Protestants)
  - 1 in 20 urban=5%
- 1830—Population 13 million
  - 1 Black to 5 whites=20 Black population
  - 60,000 immigrants in 1832
  - 80,000 immigrants in 1837
  - Irish Catholics added to mix
- 1840—Population 17 million
  - 1 in 12 urban=8.33
  - 84,000 immigrants
- 1840-1850—immigration1.5 million Europeans
- 1850—Population 23 million
  - Irish 45% of foreign-born
  - Germans 20% of foreign-born
- 1850s—immigration2.5 million Europeans
  - 2% of the population of NYC were immigrants
  - In St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee the foreign-born outnumbered the native-born
- 1860—Population 31.5 million
  - 26% of the population of free states were urban
  - 10 of the population in the South were urban
  - Irish immigrant population in America=1.5 million
  - German immigrant population in America=1 million
- 1900—Population=76.1 million
- 2002—Population=280 million
- 2010—Population=309 million

For a more striking look at the history of immigration to the United States, please watch the video below by Metrocosm:



Video 3.1.1: "Here is Everyone Who Has Emigrated to the United States Since 1820." 2 Centuries of U.S. Immigration From 1920 to 2013, 79 million people obtained lawful permanent resident status in the United States. This map visualizes all of them based on their prior country of residence. The brightness of a country corresponds to its total migration to the U.S. at the given time. 1 dot = 10,000 people. (Text-based data table).
(Fair Use; Metrocosm via YouTube)

Contemporary Immigration

In recent years, immigration has increased substantially which is conveyed in the Figure 3.1.2 below. In 1965, ethnic quotas were removed; these quotas had restricted the number of immigrants allowed from different parts of the world. Immigration doubled between 1965 and 1970, and again between 1970 and 1990. Between 2000 and 2005, nearly 8 million immigrants entered the United States, more than in any other five-year period in the nation's history. In 2006, the United States accepted more legal immigrants as permanent residents than all other countries in the world combined. Though, as Table 3.1.3 reveals, fewer individuals received their authorized permanent resident status from 2016 through 2018. According to the U. S. and World Population Clock provided by the United States Census Bureau, the most current U. S. population count is 330,065,778 and rising.

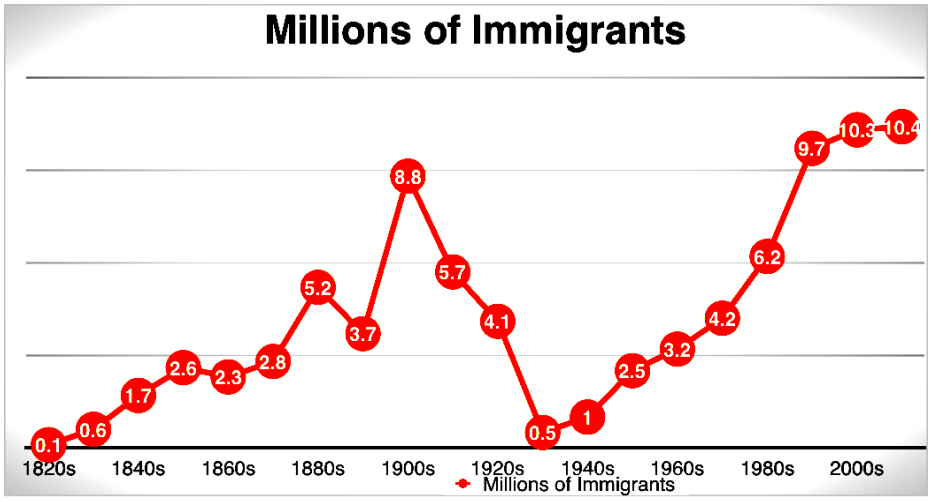


Figure 3.1.2: Legal Immigration in the United States, 1820-2020 (Data from Schaefer, 2015; United States Department of Homeland Security, 2013)

Table 3.1.3: Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Region of Birth: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018 (Data from the United States Department of Homeland Security)

Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Region of Birth Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018

Region of Birth	2016	2017	2018
Total	1,183,505	1,127,167	1,096,611
Africa	113,426	118,824	115,736
Asia	462,299	424,743	397,187
Europe	93,567	84,335	80,024
North America	427,293	413,650	418,991
Oceania	5,588	5,071	4,653
South America	79,608	79,076	78,869
Unknown	1,724	1,468	1,151

Recent Immigration Demographics

Until the 1930s most legal immigrants were male. By the 1990s, women accounted for just over half of all legal immigrants. Contemporary immigrants tend to be younger than the native population of the United States, with people between the ages of 15 and 34 substantially over-represented. Immigrants are also more likely to be married and less likely to be divorced than native-born Americans of the same age.

Immigrants come from all over the world, but a significant number come from Latin America. In 1900, when the U.S. population was 76 million, there were an estimated 500,000 Latinx. The Census Bureau projects that by 2050, one-quarter of the population will be of Hispanic descent. This demographic shift is jointly fueled by higher fertility rates amongst the Latinx population as well as immigration from Latin America.

Immigrants are likely to move to and live in areas populated by people with similar backgrounds. This phenomenon has held true throughout the history of immigration to the United States.

Table **3.1.4**: Selected Characteristics of Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Country of Birth: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018 (Data from the Department of Homeland Security)

Selected Characteristics of Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Country of Birth Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018

Country of Birth	2016	2017	2018
Mexico	174,434	170,581	161,858
China	81,772	71,565	65,214
Cuba	66,516	65,028	76,486
India	64,687	60,394	59,821
Dominican Republic	61,161	58,520	57,413
Philippines	53,287	49,147	47,258
Vietnam	41,451	38,231	33,834
El Salvador	23,449	25,109	28,326
Haiti	23,584	21,824	21,360
Jamaica	23,350	21,905	20,347

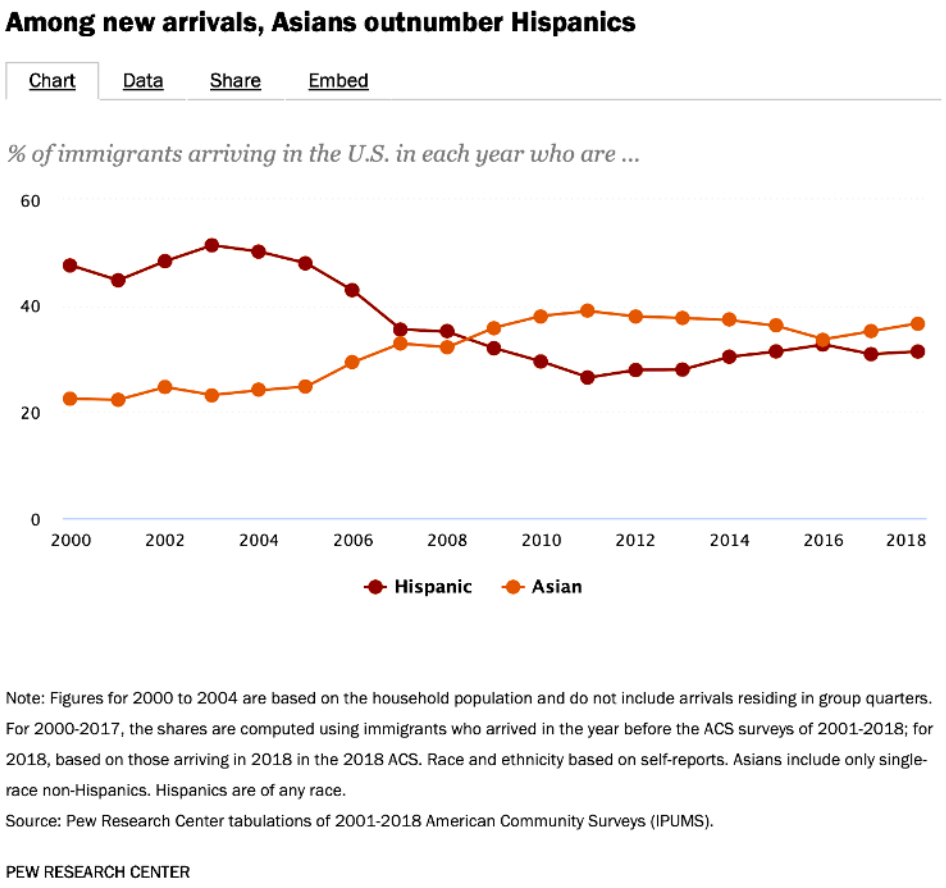


Figure **3.1.5**: Among New Immigrant Arrival, Asians Outnumber Latinx (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C.)

Although Europe has been the traditional sending region for immigrants to the U.S., the post WWII era (after 1946) shows a significant increase in migration from Mexico, South and Central America, the Caribbean, and Asia. (Recent data is conveyed in Table 3.1.4 and Figure 3.1.5 above). The latest migration trend also involves people from Africa. Please visit the following websites for more information: Foreign Born Data Tables and The Statistical Abstracts of the United States.

Public Opinion Toward Immigrants

American attitudes toward immigration are markedly ambivalent. American history is rife with examples of anti-immigrant opinion. Benjamin Franklin opposed German immigration, warning Germans would not assimilate. In the 1850s, the nativist Know Nothing movement opposed Irish immigration, promulgating fears that the country was being overwhelmed by Irish Catholic immigrants.

In general, Americans have more positive attitudes toward groups that have been visible for a century or more, and much more negative attitude toward recent arrivals. According to a 1982 national poll by the Roper Center at the University of Connecticut, “By high margins, Americans are telling pollsters it was a very good thing that Poles, Italians, and Jews emigrated to America. Once again, it’s the newcomers who are viewed with suspicion. This time, it’s the Mexicans, the Filipinos, and the people from the Caribbean who make Americans nervous.”

One of the most important factors regarding public opinion about immigration is the level of unemployment; anti-immigrant sentiment is highest where unemployment is highest, and vice versa. In fact, in the United States, only 0.16% of the workforce are legal immigrants. A more recent survey by the Pew Research Center (see Figure 3.1.6 below) suggests a more positive view of U. S. immigrants in which they are seen as a source of "strength."

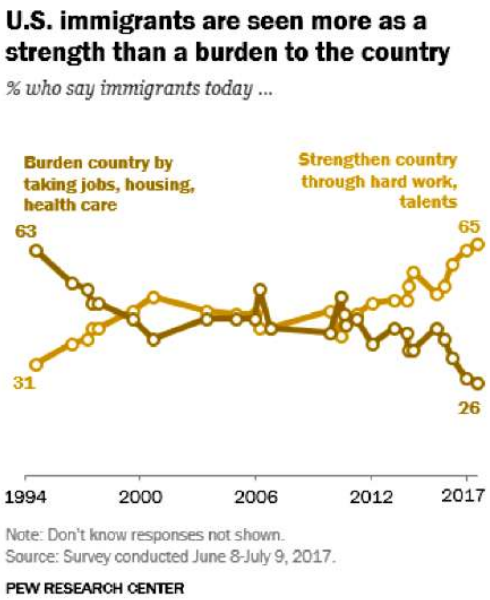


Figure 3.1.6: U. S. Immigrants are Seen More as a Strength than a Burden to the Country (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C.)

Unauthorized Immigration to the United States

Unauthorized immigration refers to to the act of entering the United States without governmental permission and in violation of the *United States Nationality Law*, or staying beyond the termination date of a visa, also in violation of the law. An **undocumented immigrant** in the United States is a person (non-citizen) who has entered the United States without government permission and in violation of United States Nationality Law, or stayed beyond the termination date of a visa, also in violation of the law. The undocumented immigrant population is estimated to be between 7 and 20 million. More than 50% of undocumented immigrants are from Mexico.

While the majority of undocumented immigrants continue to concentrate in places with existing large Hispanic communities, undocumented immigrants are increasingly settling throughout the rest of the country. A percentage of undocumented immigrants do not remain indefinitely but do return to their country of origin; they are often referred to as **sojourners**, which are people that leave or emigrate from their home country with the intention of returning to their homeland one day.

The continuing practice of hiring unauthorized workers has been referred to as the magnet for unauthorized immigration. As a significant percentage of employers are willing to hire undocumented immigrants for higher pay than they would typically receive in their former country, undocumented immigrants have prime motivation to cross borders. But migration is expensive and dangerous for those who enter without authorization. Participants in debates on immigration in the early twenty-first century have called for increasing enforcement of existing laws governing unauthorized immigration to the United States, building a barrier along some or all of the 2,000-mile (3,200 km) U.S.-Mexico border, or creating a new guest worker program.

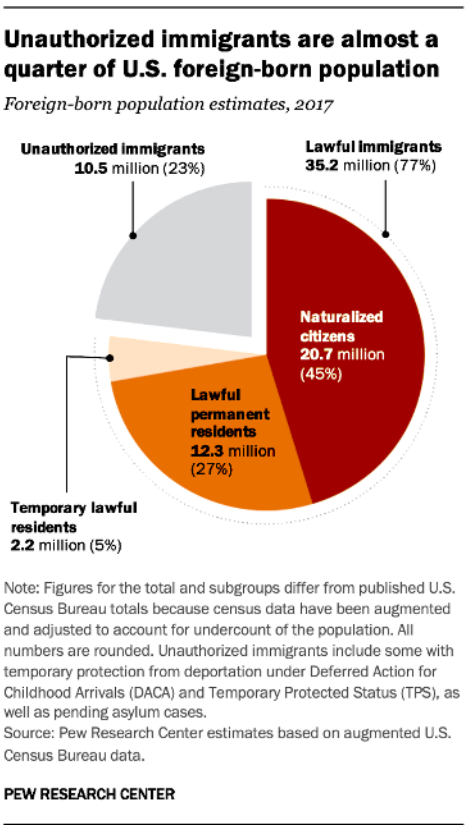


Figure 3.1.7: Unauthorized Immigrants are Almost a Quarter of U. S. Foreign-born Population (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C.)

Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Internally Displaced People

In 2013, the number of refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced people worldwide exceeded 50 million people for the first time since the end of World War II. Half these people were children. A **refugee** is defined as an individual who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster, while **asylum-seekers** are those whose claim to refugee status has not been validated. An **internally displaced person**, on the other hand, is neither a refugee nor an asylum-seeker (Ritzer, 2015). Internally displaced persons have fled their homes while remaining inside their country's borders. In the case of the United States, the 2018 Camp Fire displaced many residents in Paradise, California. Unfortunately there was not enough housing available or being built fast enough for all former city of Paradise residents to be able to return, thus making them internally displaced.

The war in Syria caused most of the 2013 increase, forcing 2.5 million people to seek refugee status while internally displacing an additional 6.5 million. Violence in Central African Republic and South Sudan also contributed a large number of people to the total (United Nations, 2014).

The refugees need help in the form of food, water, shelter, and medical care, which has worldwide implications for nations contributing foreign aid, the nations hosting the refugees, and the non-government organizations (NGOs) working with individuals and groups on site (United Nations, 2014). Where will this large moving population, including the sick, elderly, children, and people with very few possessions and no long-term plan, go?

Given current immigration policies, specifically admissions ceilings, the United States is not a frequent destination for refugees and asylum-seekers, although it is sought out by displaced individuals. This means that as of September 2019, there was 339,386 pending asylum applications. However, in 2018, only 25,439 people were granted asylum. As far as refugees, the United States recognized a total of 22,405 people as refugees. Again, while there is great demand by displaced folks, the United States is limiting the amount of refugees it recognizes and asylum applications it approves. Table 3.1.8 below lists the top five countries that the

United States recently recognized the largest amounts of refugees from - with striking annual reductions. Per the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the biggest declines in refugee recognition tend to be from predominantly Muslim countries.

Table **3.1.8**: Selected Characteristics of Refugee Arrivals by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018 (Data from the United States Department of Homeland Security)

Selected Characteristics of Refugee Arrivals by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018

Country of Nationality	2016	2017	2018
Total	84,988	53,691	22,405
Democratic Republic of Congo	16,370	9,377	7,878
Burma	12,347	5,078	3,555
Syria	12,587	6,557	62
Iraq	9,880	6,886	140
Somalia	9,020	6,130	257

Regarding contemporary asylum cases, individuals from China have the highest amounts of asylums granted affirmatively and defensively. According to the American Immigration Council (2020), an **affirmative asylum** is a person not in removal proceedings who may affirmatively apply for asylum through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), a division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The American Immigration Council (2020) defines **defensive asylum** as a person in removal proceedings who may "apply for asylum defensively by filing the application with an immigration judge at the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) in the Department of Justice. In other words, asylum is applied for as a defense against removal from the U.S." The second largest group of individuals being granted affirmative asylum are currently persons from Venezuela and for defensive asylum, it is people from El Salvador. With regards to the religious background of refugees, Blizzard and Batalova (2019) note, "2016 marked the only time since 2009 when the United States resettled more Muslim refugees than Christians. In that year, 84,994 refugees were admitted; of these, 46 percent (38,900) were Muslim and 44 percent (37,521) were Christian. More than half of Muslim refugees in 2016 were from Syria (32 percent) or Somalia (23 percent)."

Table **3.1.9**: Selected Characteristics of Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018 (Data from the Department of Homeland Security)

Selected Characteristics of Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018

Country of Nationality	2016	2017	2018
Total	11,634	15,846	25,439
China	1,387	2,820	3,844
Venezuela	316	482	5,966
El Salvador	1,380	2,121	1,177
Guatemala	1,285	1,996	1,337
Egypt	679	1,020	1,427

Table **3.1.10**: Selected Characteristics of Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018 (Data from the Department of Homeland Security)

Selected Characteristics of Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2016 to 2018

Country of Nationality	2016	2017	2018
Total	8,728	10,663	13,248
China	3,108	2,795	3,061
El Salvador	764	1,355	1,786
Honduras	618	956	1,188
Guatemala	636	953	1,021
India	315	470	956

It is clear that the rates for asylum granted defensively are much lower than those of asylum granted affirmatively. This seems to be consistent with a much tougher stance on immigration on behalf of the Trump administration, so folks facing removal proceedings are not likely be rewarded with asylum.

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- American Immigration Council. (2020, June 11). Asylum in the United States. *American Immigration Council.*
- Blizzard, B. & J. Batalova. (2019). Refugees and asylees in the United States. *Migration Policy Institute.*
- Budiman, A., Tamir, C., Mora, L., & Noe-Bustamante, L. (2020, August 20). Facts on U.S. immigrants, 2018. *Pew Research Center.*
- Current, R.N., Williams, T.H., Freidel, F., & Brinkley, A. (1987). *American History: A Survey. 6th ed.* New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- López, G., Bialik, K., & Radford, J. (2017, May 3). Key findings about U.S. immigrants. *Pew Research Center*, *3*(1),1.
- Ritzer, G. (2015). *Introduction to Sociology.* 3rd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Schaefer, R. T. (2015). *Racial and Ethnic Groups.* 14th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2014). *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights.* ST/ESA/SER.A/352.
- United States Department of Homeland Security. (2013). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2012.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.
- United Stated Department of Homeland Security. (2020). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2018.*

This page titled 3.1: History and Background is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **3.1: History and Background** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

3.2: Intergroup Relations

Assimilation, Acculturation, and Intergroup Relations

Classic assimilation theory or straight-line assimilation theory can be dated back to the 1920's originating from the Chicago School of Sociology (Park, Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925; Waters, Van, Kasinitz, & Mollenkopf, 2010). (See also Chapter 2.3). This early assimilation model set forth by Park (1928) described how immigrants followed a straight line of convergence in adopting "the culture of the native society" (Scholten, 2011). In many ways assimilation was synonymous with 'Americanization' and interpreted as 'becoming more American' or conforming to norms of the dominant Euro-American culture (Kazal, 1995). Assimilation theory posited that immigrant assimilation was a necessary condition for preserving social cohesion and thus emphasized a one-sided, mono-directional process of immigrant enculturation leading to upward social mobility (Warner & Srole, 1945). Assimilation ideas have been criticized for lacking the ability to differentiate the process of resettlement for diverse groups of immigrants; they fail to consider interacting contextual factors (van Tubergen, 2006).

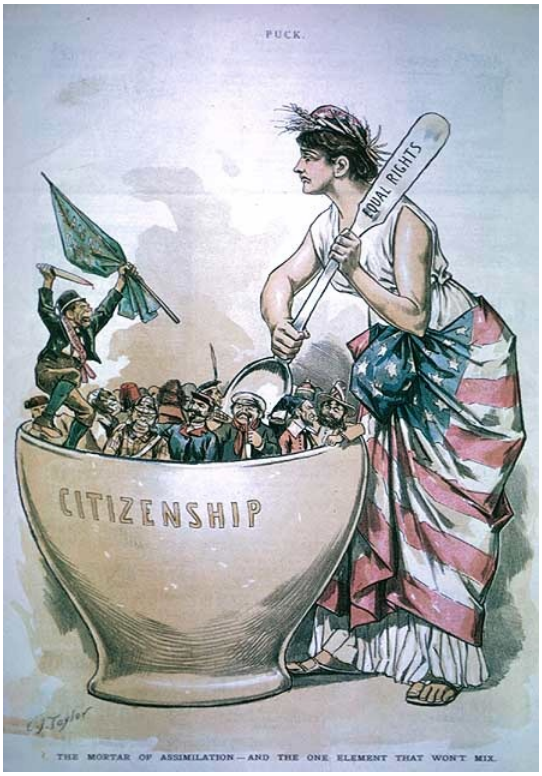


Figure **3.2.1**: "The Mortar of Assimilation and the One Element that Won't Mix." Cartoon from *PUCK* June 26, 1889. (CC PDM 1.0; *Puck* via Wikimedia)

Segmented assimilation theory emerged in the 1990's as an alternative to classical assimilation theories (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Waters et al., 2010). **Segmented assimilation theory** posits that depending on immigrants' socioeconomic statuses, they may follow different trajectories. Trajectories could also vary based on other social factors such as human capital and family structure (Xie & Greenman, 2010). This new formulation accounted for starkly different trajectories of assimilation outcomes between generations and uniquely attended to familial effects on assimilation. The term segmented assimilation is often employed when one group is at a greater advantage and is able to make shifts more readily (Boyd, 2002).

Later, Alba and Nee (2003) formulated a new version of assimilation, borrowing from earlier understandings yet rejecting the prescriptive assertions that later generations must adopt Americanized norms (Waters et al., 2010). Within their conceptualization, assimilation is the natural but unanticipated consequence of people pursuing such practical goals of getting a good education, a good job, moving to a good neighborhood and acquiring good friends (Alba & Nee, 2003).

Numerous studies have utilized assimilation theories to guide their inquiry with diverse foci like adolescent educational outcomes, college enrollment, self-esteem, depression and psychological well-being, substance use, language fluency, parental involvement in

school, and intermarriage among other things (Waters & Jimenez, 2005; Rumbaut, 1994). Despite such widespread use of assimilation, some scholars have noted that the theory may not adequately explain immigrants' diverse and dynamic experiences (Glazer, 1993) and some note that other theories such as models of self-esteem or social identity may be added to assimilation to bolster its value (Bernal, 1993; Phinney, 1991).

A further critique is that a push for assimilation may mask an underlying sentiment that immigrants and refugees are unwelcome guests who have to compete for scarce resources, which can significantly impact intergroup relations (Danso, 1999; Danso & Grant, 2000). These sentiments can impact the reception and adaptation experiences of immigrant populations in the receiving country (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001). Extreme nationalism and a sense of fear may encourage ideals of conformity that defines "successful integration" or "successful resettlement" as full adoption of the receiving country's ways and beliefs while giving up old cultures and traditions. There is little or no support for the maintenance of cultural or linguistic differences, and groups' rights may be violated. This belief can lead to misunderstandings when new United States residents speak, act, and believe differently than the dominant culture. It can result in an unwelcoming environment and prevent the development and offering of culturally and linguistically appropriate services for immigrant and refugee families, erecting barriers to their opportunity to adapt and thrive in their new homes. This unfriendly environment has serious repercussions for intergroup relations by keeping them hostile. Assimilation may implicitly assume that some cultures and traits are inferior to the dominant white-European culture of the receiving nation and therefore should be abandoned for ways more sanctioned by that privileged group.

Assimilation Patterns

While white ethnics, Cubans, Asians, non-Mexican Latinx, and Middle Easterners follow the traditional assimilation pattern, three significantly large marginalized groups do not: Mexican Americans (about 50%), Puerto Ricans, and African Americans. The assimilation patterns for these groups differ due to propinquity, method of immigration, and let us not mince words, racism. Approximately 50% of all Mexican immigrants to the United States do not follow the traditional assimilation pattern. This is partly due to the propinquity of the mother country, the nearly continuous new migration stream, a relatively high rate of return migration, racism, and in some cases, involuntary immigration in that parts of Mexico have been annexed by the United States so that some people's native land quite literally changed overnight—they went to bed Mexican and woke up American (Current, Williams, Freidel, & Brinkley, 1987; Harrison & Bennett, 1995; Marger, 1996).

Puerto Ricans, following the treaty that concluded the Spanish American War, became citizens of the United States, albeit citizens without suffrage. Therefore, Puerto Ricans, who are already citizens, have little incentive to assimilate and, like their Mexican counterparts, are physically close to their homeland, maintain a nearly continuous migration stream onto the mainland, and have a relatively high rate of return migration. Puerto Rico is a desperately poor colony of the United States populated primarily by Spanish-speaking, Hispanic-surnamed descendants of African slaves. Thus, entrenched intergenerational poverty, coupled with language difficulties and racism, have prevented assimilation. Most Puerto Ricans who live on the mainland live in poor, inner city neighborhoods in New York and Chicago. These neighborhoods are not ethnic enclaves but are rather huge concentrations of the poor, poorly educated, and Black underclass (Current, et al. 1987; Harrison & Bennett, 1995; Marger, 1996).

African Americans differ dramatically from all other migrants. Many, probably most, African Americans have been Americans far longer than most whites. Many African Americans can trace their ancestry back more than seven generations. Those ancestors however were involuntary immigrants who were stolen from their homes, thrown into the bellies of slave ships, and brought to these shores as pieces of property—chattel—to work for the rest of their lives and for the rest of the lives of their descendants in involuntary servitude as the slaves of white masters. No other people have involuntarily migrated to America in such vast numbers. No other people have been treated as property. No other people have suffered 350 years of slavery. No other people have been so vilely used, abused, mistreated, maltreated, and battered physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. It was not until the late 1860s that Blacks were granted Constitutional rights in the United States, and it was not until 1953, and then again in the middle 1960s through the mid 1970s, that real civil rights were finally established for African Americans. Until that time African Americans were second-class people who were often denied their political citizenship by being denied suffrage. Therefore, the opportunity for traditional assimilation for African Americans has not existed until very recently. Given the traditional assimilation pattern, African Americans for all practical purposes, are only second generation Americans regardless of how far back they can trace their actual ancestry in America (Current, et al. 1987; Harrison & Bennett, 1995; Marger, 1996).

For many non-white groups in America there has been denial of political citizenship through denial of suffrage, denial of economic citizenship through *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination that prevented competition for jobs and small business loans, denial of social citizenship through *de jure* and *de facto* residential segregation and educational segregation, and denial of human citizenship through racist public policies. This discrimination strains intergroup relations.



Figure **3.2.2**: "Captain America: Shield Agent" (CC BY 2.0; JD Hancock via Flickr)

There has often been the assumption that America is the land of opportunity for everyone, and indeed it can be, however, there are those who also make the assumption that America is a melting pot in which immigrants either do or should assimilate quickly and readily. If assimilation is the process by which a racial or ethnic group loses its distinctive identity and lifeways and conforms to the cultural patterns of the dominant group, then submerging one's self into the melting pot of American society means trying to be as white as possible. The dominant culture in America is white even though it has many aspects of great diversity and even though it has taken many elements from other cultures and incorporated them into its culture; it has in most cases stamped diversity with the imprimatur of white acceptance. While America is a melting pot for white ethnics, for people of color it has become a kind of tossed salad or lumpy stew where all share the same seasoning, (the sociocultural structure), while each still retains its separate identity. This societal pattern is called **pluralism**—cooperation among racial and ethnic groups in areas deemed essential to their well being (e.g. the economy the national political arena), while retaining their distinctive identities and lifestyles. (See also Chapter 2.3). In pluralistic societies, citizens share what they can and maintain what they can. With the notable exception of Switzerland with its four distinct ethnic/language groups, most pluralistic societies have destroyed themselves with bloody ethnic strife (Current, et al., 1987; Harrison & Bennett, 1995; Marger, 1996). Whether America can balance the melting pot with semi-pluralism is yet to be seen. The great experiment that is America may be the only nation on earth where the possibility of unity through diversity may actually come to fruition.

Middleman Minorities

Some minority immigrants, most notably Jews and Asians, have found themselves in the unique position of being **middleman minorities**. Marger (1996) explains the middlemen minority phenomenon:

> Certain ethnic groups in multiethnic societies sometimes occupy a middle status between the dominant group at the top of the ethnic hierarchy and subordinate groups in lower positions. These have been referred to as middleman minorities . . . Middleman minorities often act as mediators between dominant and subordinate ethnic groups. They ordinarily occupy an intermediate niche in the economic system being neither capitalists (mainly members of the dominant group) at the top nor working masses (mainly those of the subordinate group) at the bottom. They play such occupational roles as traders, shopkeepers, moneylenders, and independent professionals. . . . They perform economic duties that those at the top find distasteful or lacking in prestige and they frequently supply business and professional services to members of ethnic minorities who lack such skills and resources. . . . In times of stress they are . . . natural scapegoats. . . . Subordinate groups will view middleman minorities with disdain because they often encounter them as providers of necessary business and professional services [that members of their own group do not or cannot provide in sufficient numbers to supply the demand]. Such entrepreneurs therefore come to be seen as exploiters. . . . Because they stand in a kind of social no-man's-

land middleman minorities tend to develop an unusually strong in-group solidarity and are often seen by other groups as clannish.

Middleman minorities uniquely affect intergroup relations as they are fulfilling specific roles, hence, are accepted, but are not fully represented in the mainstream.

Acculturation and Adaptation

Later Milton Gordon's (1964) newer multidimensional formulation of assimilation theory provided that 'acculturation,' which refers to one's adoption of the majority's cultural patterns, happens first and inevitably. Contemporary acculturation models embrace some of the previous ideas of assimilation but can be less one-dimensional (Berry, 1990). At times, the terms assimilation and acculturation have been used interchangeably. John Berry employed the concept of acculturation and identified 4 modes: integration (where one accepts one's old culture and accepts one's new culture), assimilation (where one rejects one's old culture and accepts one's new culture), separation (where one accepts one's old culture and rejects one's new culture), and marginalization (where one rejects one's old culture and also rejects one's new culture) (Berry, 1990). This understanding of acculturation proposes that immigrants employ one of these four strategies by asking how it may benefit them to maintain their identity and/or maintain relationships with the dominant group, and it does not assume that there is a typical one-dimensional trajectory they would follow.

While assimilation is applied to the post-migration experience generally, acculturation refers to the psychological or intrapersonal processes that immigrants experience (Berry, 1997). Hence, the concept of acculturative stress –linked to psychological models of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) arose to describe how incompatible behaviors, values, or patterns create difficulties for the acculturating individual (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). Adaptation has been used in recent years to refer to internal and external psychological outcomes of acculturating individuals in their new context, such as a clear sense of personal identity, personal satisfaction in one's cultural context, and an ability to cope with daily problems (Berry, 1997).

Much of the discourse concerning adaptation has focused on the socio-economic adaptation of immigrants as measured by English language proficiency, education, occupation, and income. When culture is included, the emphasis is typically on concepts of ethnic intermarriage and language proficiency (van Tubergen, 2006). Much less attention has been paid to how immigrants form attachments to their new society, subjective conceptions of 'success' in the new country, or to the factors that lead some immigrants to retain distinct characteristics and identities but adopt to new ways of being. Some have gone further to identify three types of adaptation: psychological, sociocultural, and economic (Berry, 1997).

Multiculturalism and Pluralism

Theories of assimilation, acculturation, and adaptation are all focused on the immigrant. This is not to say that these theories have not included the receiving society or the dominant group's influence on the immigrant. However, a different way to conceptualize the post-migration experience may be by exploring how any society can support multicultural individuals, both United States-born and foreign-born, and how adjustments and accommodations are made by both the receiving culture and the immigrant culture to aid resettlement.



Figure 3.2.3: Critical Making. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Coco0612 via Wikimedia)

Multiculturalism and pluralism are often understood as the opposite of assimilation (Scholten, 2011), emphasizing a culturally open and neutral understanding of society. These ideas purport that diverse people need freedom to determine their method of resettlement and the degree to which they will integrate. A nation that embraces a multicultural view may promote the preservation of diverse ethnic identities, provide political representation, and protect rights of minority populations (Alba, 1999; Alexander, 2001). There are those, especially more liberally minded groups that support the idea that immigrant groups should not be judged according to their religion, skin color, ability or willingness to assimilate, language, or what is deemed culturally useful. This pluralist lens fosters greater and more positive intergroup relations. Because multiculturalism acknowledges differences and responds to inequality in a society, critics charge that it is a form of ethnic or "racial particularism" that goes against the solidarity on which the United States democracy stands (Alexander, 2001). Behind every policy are assumptions that implicitly or explicitly support a vast theoretical and ideological continuum. With the ebb and flow of immigration throughout the history of this country, some of these ideological positions have shifted, and also residuals of traditional nationalistic ideals remain.

Genocide

On the opposite end of the continuum from pluralism, immigrants from various countries have fled **genocide**, the systematic killing of an entire group of people. Thousands of Armenians escaped the the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1918 in the Ottomon Empire. Approximately 125,000 Germans, most of them Jewish, immigrated to the United States between 1933 and 1945, fleeing persecution and death at the hands of the Third Reich during World War II. Though estimates vary, somewhere between 180,000 and 220,000 European refugees immigrated to the United States between 1933 and 1945 (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). Hundreds of thousands of Germans, mainly Jewish, were on the waiting list to emigrate from Europe, most of them never allowed to come into the U.S., though the U.S. accepted more refugees fleeing the Nazi regime than any other country in the world (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). Escaping the Khmer Rouge genocide, Cambodian refugees fled their homeland from 1975-79 during the communist Pol Pot regime. Estimates of 1.5 to 2 million Cambodians were killed during this atrocious time. Between 1975 and 1994, nearly 158,000 Cambodians were admitted to the U.S. (Chan, 2015). "Refuge-seekers from other countries, including people from Iraq and Afghanistan where the United States has fought long wars, have also entered but in very small numbers compared to the (combined) millions of Cubans, Soviet Jews, and Indochinese (the last group includes Vietnamese, Sino-Vietnamese, Cambodians, lowland Lao, Hmong, Iu Mien, Tai Dam, and Cham)—all of them refugees from communism" (Chan, 2015).

Armenian Genocide

World War One gave the Young Turk government the cover and the excuse to carry out their plan. The plan was simple and its goal was clear. On April 24th 1915, commemorated worldwide by Armenians as Genocide Memorial Day, hundreds of Armenian leaders were murdered in Istanbul after being summoned and gathered. The now leaderless Armenian people were to

follow. Across the Ottoman Empire (with the exception of Constantinople, presumably due to a large foreign presence), the same events transpired from village to village, from province to province.

The remarkable thing about the following events is the virtually complete cooperation of the Armenians. For a number of reasons they did not know what was planned for them and went along with "their" government's plan to "relocate them for their own good." First, the Armenians were asked to turn in hunting weapons for the war effort. Communities were often given quotas and would have to buy additional weapons from Turks to meet their quota. Later, the government would claim these weapons were proof that Armenians were about to rebel. The able bodied men were then "drafted" to help in the wartime effort. These men were either immediately killed or were worked to death. Now the villages and towns, with only women, children, and elderly left were systematically emptied. The remaining residents would be told to gather for a temporary relocation and to only bring what they could carry. The Armenians again obediently followed instructions and were "escorted" by Turkish Gendarmes in death marches.

The death marches led across Anatolia, and the purpose was clear. The Armenians were raped, starved, dehydrated, murdered, and kidnapped along the way. The Turkish Gendarmes either led these atrocities or turned a blind eye. Their eventual destination for resettlement was just as telling in revealing the Turkish governments goal: the Syrian Desert, Der Zor. Those who miraculously survived the march would arrive to this bleak desert only to be killed upon arrival or to somehow survive until a way to escape the empire was found. Usually those that survived and escaped received assistance from those who have come to be known as "good Turks," from foreign missionaries who recorded much of these events and from Arabs.

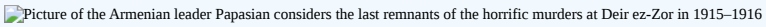


Figure **3.2.4**: Bodil Biørn's caption: "The Armenian leader Papasian considers the last remnants of the horrific murders at Deir ez-Zor in 1915–1916."

After the war ended, the Turkish government held criminal trials and found the triumvirate guilty in abstentia. All three were later executed by Armenians. Turkey agreed to let the US draw the border between the newly born Republic of Armenia and the Turkish government. What is now called Wilsonian Armenia included most of the six western Ottoman provinces as well as a large coastline on the Black Sea. Cilicia, a separate Armenian region on the Mediterranean, was to be a French mandate. Mustafa Kemal's forces pushed the newly returned Armenian refugees and forces from these lands and forced a new treaty to be written which was an insult to Armenian victims. They were basically told never to return and that they would never receive compensation. The Kars and Ardahan provinces of Armenia were taken as well in an agreement with the Soviet Union.

On the 50th anniversary of the genocide, the scattered survivors of the genocide and their children around the world began commemorating the genocide on April 24th, the day which marked the start of the full-scale massacres in 1915. Many Armenian Genocide Monuments have been built around the world since, as well as smaller plaques and dedications.

The Turkish government has in the past few decades been denying that a genocide ever occurred and spending millions of dollars to further that view. This is adding insult to injury and will cause bad feelings to continue much longer than would otherwise be the case between the peoples. Those who say forget about it, it is in the past, are wrong. Unless crimes like this are faced up to and compensated for, they will be committed again and again by people who do not fear prosecution or justice. Read what Hitler said before beginning the Jewish Holocaust here.

A class action suit against New York Life insurance company by genocide survivors was filed in 1999. They were sued for not being forthcoming in paying up for policies of those killed in the genocide. The suit was settled in 2004 for $20 million, and payouts began to individuals and some Armenian charitable organizations.

A 2002 study by the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), a New York-based human rights organization, ruled that the slaughter of some 1.5 million Armenians fits into the internationally accepted definition of genocide. The study was commissioned by TARC - a group of Armenians and Turks set up by the US State Department.

This section is licensed by CC BY-SA. Armenian Genocide (Armeniapedia). CC BY-SA 3.0.

Emigration, Immigration, and Intergroup Relations

Is America a melting pot or a lumpy stew/tossed salad? America is a nation of immigrants. With the exception of Native Americans, we all have immigrant ancestors or are ourselves immigrants. Assimilation is the process by which a racial or ethnic

minority loses its distinctive identity and lifeways and conforms to the cultural patterns of the dominant group. Cultural assimilation is assimilation of values, behaviors, beliefs, language, clothing styles, religious practices, and foods while structural assimilation is about social interaction. Primary structural assimilation occurs when different racial/ethnic groups belong to the same clubs, live in the same neighborhoods, form friendships, and intermarry. Secondary structural assimilation concerns parity in access to and accumulation of the goods of society, (wealth, power, and status), which is measured by SES and political power—it is becoming middle class or above. The traditional American assimilation pattern is that white ethnics, Asians, Cubans, and non-Mexican Latinx, by the *third generation* (third generation Americans are those people whose grandparents were foreign-born), have assimilated both culturally and structurally. However, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and African Americans do not follow this traditional pattern which differs due to propinquity, coercion, and lack of socioeconomic opportunity (Marger, 1996).

Push and Pull Factors in Emigration/Immigration

Emigration is the movement of people from one country to another while **immigration** is the movement of people into a country other than their land of birth. Emigration and immigration are ubiquitous among human beings: we have been moving ever since we were born in Africa tens of thousands of years ago. There are various reasons why people move from one country to another and we call those motivating forces push and pull factors. The table, below, shows some of the push and pull factors for sending and receiving countries.

Table **3.2.5**: Immigration Factors: Leaving Your Homeland.

Immigration	
Push Factors: Leaving Your Homeland	
Political Strife	**Social Strife**
War	Ethnic Conflict
Repressive Government	Religious Repression/Conflict
Lack of Individual Rights	Lack of Educational Opportunities
Abuse of Human Rights	Economic Instability
Fear of Arrest or Murder	Lack of Economic Opportunity
	Poverty

Table 3.2.6 Immigration Factors: Coming to America.

Immigration	
Pull Factors: Coming to America	
Political Factors	**Social Factors**
Peace	Ethnic Diversity
Freedom	Religious Freedom
Support of Individual Rights	Many Educational Opportunities
Support of Human Rights	Economic Stability
No Political Arrests or Murders	Economic Opportunity
No Fear of Torture	

Table 3.2.7: Immigration Factors: Push Me Pull You.

Immigration	
Pushmepullyou	
Push factors and pull factors work simultaneously	Push factors and pull factors work simultaneously
Which factor is strongest is situationally dependent	Which factor is strongest is situationally dependent
Migration Is a complex yet ancient and common phenomenon	Migration Is a complex yet ancient and common phenomenon
Migration may be forced	Migration may be forced
The "sending country" may expel unwanted groups	The "sending country" may expel unwanted groups
The "receiving country" may bring in foreigners as low level workers	The "receiving country" may bring in foreigners as low level workers

Assimilation is the process by which a racial or ethnic minority loses its distinctive identity and lifeways and conforms to the cultural patterns of the dominant group. It is submerging one's self into the melting pot of American society. There are two kinds of assimilation cultural and structural. **Cultural assimilation** concerns values, behaviors, beliefs, language, clothing styles, religious practices, and foods; whereas **structural assimilation** concerns social interaction in clubs, neighborhoods, friendship, marriage (primary structural assimilation), and parity in access to and accumulation of the goods of society (wealth power and status) measured by SES and political power (secondary structural assimilation).

There are certain patterns of primary and secondary structural assimilation (hereinafter referred to by the term assimilation) into American culture that differ based on race and ethnicity but before discussing those patterns an explanation of terminology is necessary. First generation Americans are those people who are foreign-born; second generation Americans are the children of foreign-born parents; and third generation Americans are the grandchildren of the foreign-born. For white ethnics—primarily Southern and Eastern Europeans, although arguably anyone who is not one of the primary racial or ethnic people of colors such as Arabs, Asians, Blacks, Latinx, American Indians could be considered a white ethnic—Asians, Cubans, South American, and other, non-Mexican Latinx, assimilation follows a fairly traditional pattern even though some prejudice and discrimination may continue to exist. First generation white ethnic Americans, although the vast majority learn and speak English, tend to maintain their native language in their own homes, to keep many of their traditional religious and holiday customs, retain native styles of dress and food

preferences, marry among themselves (endogamous marriage), and live near others from their homeland. Second generation white ethnic Americans generally lose much of the language of their parents, drift away from traditional religious and holiday customs, let go of native styles of dress and food preferences in favor of more American-style clothing and food, marry outside their parents' ethnic group, and move into neighborhoods that are ethnically mixed. By the third generation, most white ethnics have become thoroughly Americanized and have failed to learn all but a very few words of their grandparents language, found meaningless many of the traditional religious and holiday customs, and have adopted American customs (turkey instead of lasagna for Christmas dinner) instead, wear American-style clothing exclusively, eat fast food, marry outside their ethnic group (in fact third generation white ethnic Americans usually do not even consider the ethnic background of those they marry) and live in such ethnically-mixed communities that, except for the generalized whiteness, there is no consideration of the ethnic backgrounds of their neighbors. Moreover, by the third generation, most white ethnics enjoy relatively high levels of structural assimilation (Current, et al. 1987; Harrison & Bennett, 1995; Marger, 1996).

Some of this ease of both cultural and structural assimilation is based on the migration patterns of white ethnics. Although many white ethnics have come to America because they perceive it to be a land of economic and political freedom and opportunity, many have been driven from their homelands by border wars, internal ethnic conflict, economic uncertainty or collapse, lack of educational opportunities, less political freedom, and myriad other reasons. The primary **push factors**—those conditions which impel people to emigrate from their native lands and immigrate to a new and unknown country—are political and economic, and, as one might guess, the primary **pull factors**—those real or perceived conditions in the new country which beckon to those on foreign shores moving people to emigrate from the countries of their birth—are also political and economic. Regardless of the push or pull factors, white ethnics are voluntary migrants to America choosing to migrate, sometimes at great personal risk, because they choose to migrate; a migration pattern that sociologists call voluntary migration. Although many white ethnic groups—Jews, Irish, and Italians particularly—have experienced greater or lesser degrees of discrimination, complete assimilation by the third generation is the rule. However, that assimilation was often accomplished with the help of others.

Many white ethnic groups (and as will be shown many nonwhite migrants) formed neighborhoods where first, second, and third generation white ethnics lived and worked together in ethnic enclaves. (See also Chapter 1.3). In general, ethnic enclaves provide a safe haven with a variety of social supports for new immigrants that serve to ease their transition into a new and different culture. The Little Italys in New York, Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia; the Chinatowns of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York; the Little Saigons of Houston, Los Angeles, and Atlanta; the Calle Ocho Little Havana district of Miami and the Little Mexico Barrios in Houston, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Dallas, and Phoenix; the Crown Heights area of Brooklyn New York which is home to nearly 100,000 Lubavitsch-sect, ultra-Orthodox Jews; the Amish and other Old Order religious groups of Iowa, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and far Northwestern Minnesota are all primary exemplars of ethnic enclaves. Ethnic enclaves, once they have served their purpose of socializing new immigrants into American culture, tend to disappear as later generations follow the traditional assimilation pattern and move further and further out into the wider society (Current, et al. 1987; Harrison & Bennett, 1995; Marger, 1996).

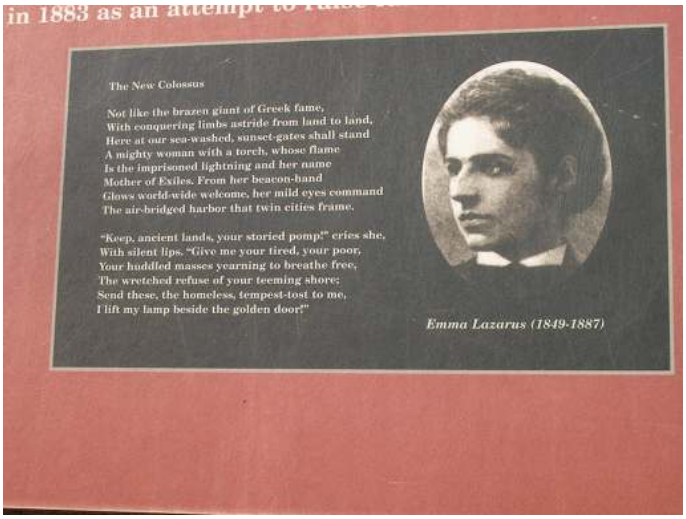


Figure **3.2.8**: "Give me your tired, your poor" (CC BY-NC 2.0; garden beth via Flickr)

The Statue of Liberty notwithstanding, ("give me your tired, your poor"), the United States has a long history of preventing immigration and attempting to block persons based on national origin and/or religion. There have been many anti-immigration groups and political parties in the United States beginning in the early 19th century and continuing until the present day. Many of our immigration laws have been discriminatory and have stultified migration rather than encouraged it. The Native American Party, the American Party, the American Protective Association, the Immigration Restriction League, and the Ku Klux Klan, among many other groups, were all founded based on their opposition to the immigration of anyone they considered unworthy—Italians, Jews, Greeks, Poles, Irish Catholics, Catholics or non-Protestants in general, and all non-whites which included, among people traditionally classified as non-white, Italians, Greeks, Turks, and other residents of the southern European, Mediterranean coast, and eastern European, mostly Catholic or Muslim, peoples. Congress vacillates between restricting and encouraging migration from various regions of the planet. Nevertheless, we were a nation of immigrants at our inception and remain a nation of immigrants to this day.

In 2010 there are still anti-immigration groups. PublicEye.org and the Southern Poverty Law Center each publish a list of about a dozen anti-immigrant groups that ranges from think tanks to the Christian right. In February 2010, former US House of Representatives member Tom Tancredo (R-CO), gave the keynote address to the first Tea Party convention arguing that we need "a civics literacy test" before anyone in this country can vote. He also stated that if John McCain had been elected president in 2009, "President Calderon and President McCain would be toasting the elimination of those pesky things called borders and major steps taken toward creation of a North American Union (Tancredo, 2010)." In other words, there are those today who would block all immigration into this country legal and illegal because they are afraid of the changes that immigrants make to the culture of the United States. The question then becomes, how have other immigrants changed America and has America changed them more than they have changed it? Most of the literature on this question would suggest that it is a reciprocal process but that the American ideology and the American constitution remain strong.

With regards with more contemporary anti-immigrant groups and the anti-immigrant movement, we will begin with Minutemen Project. Meredith Hoffman (2016) writes,

Between 2004 and 2009, Gilchrist's Minutemen were a powerful force in the anti-immigration movement, drawing in thousands of members who believed the government was doing too little to stop border crossings, and subsequently felt they should take enforcement into their own hands. The coalition against the Establishment—composed largely of veterans and retirees—tried to cover the border with 'outposts,' sometimes as barebones as lawn chairs, to block immigrants from coming into the US from Mexico.

Due to internal strife, the Minutemen Project eventually fell apart with some of its members joining other militias, like Arizona Border Recon (Hoffman 2016; Carranza, 2017). It is not surprising that anti-immigrant militias that patrol, like the Minutemen and Arizona Border Recon, have previously discussed and promoted border security, like building a wall. Thus, anti-immigrant groups were supportive of Donald Trump's proposed Wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and other austere immigration policies from his

administration (Grandin, 2019). Unfortunately, with the increasing xenophobia and **nativism** (actions and/or the promotion of policies usually from citizens that benefit citizens to the detriment of non-citizens like immigrants) displayed openly by political leaders, the anti-immigrant movement is on the rise. As reported by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL, 2018),

Anti-immigrant fervor, once relegated to more extreme quarters, has been increasingly mainstreamed over the last ten years. Over the last two years, with the advent of a new administration focused on much stricter immigration policies and complementary executive actions, anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment has made life substantially more difficult for all immigrants.

Among the anti-immigrant groups profiled by the ADL (2018) report were Federation for Immigration Reform (FAIR), Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), Numbers USA, The Remembrance Project, and San Diegans for Secure Borders. In order to successfully halt the anti-immigrant movement and its nativistic groups, the ADL (2018) suggests the following:

the government, media and general public must take the necessary steps to make sure that the demonization of immigrants and the bigotry that underlie it do not become further entrenched in our society. These ideas should not become part of the acceptable discourse in America's diverse and pluralistic society.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC other than Armenian Genocide which is CC BY-SA.

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Armenian Genocide (Armeniapedia). (CC BY-SA 3.0). (Contributed to Armenian Genocide)
- Immigrant and Refugee Families (Ballard, Wieling, and Solheim) (CC BY-NC 4.0)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Alba, R. (1999). Immigration and the American realities of assimilation and multiculturalism. *Sociological Forum, 14(1)*, 3-25.
- Alba, R. & Nee, V. (2009). *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Alexander, J.C. (2001). Theorizing the 'modes of incorporation': Assimilation, hyphenation, and multiculturalism as varieties of civil participation. *Sociological Theory, 19(3)*, 237-249.
- Anti-Defamation League. (2018). *Mainstreaming hate: The anti-immigrant movement in the U.S.* Anti-Defamation League.
- Bernal, M.E. (1993). *Ethnic Identity: Formation and Transmission Among Latinx and Other Minorities*. New York, NY: SUNY Press.
- Berry, J.W. (1990). Psychology of acculturation. In R. N. Dienstbier & J. J. Berman (Eds.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*: Vol. 37. Cross-cultural perspectives (pp. 201–234). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Berry, J.W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology 46(1)*, 5-34.
- Berry, J.W., Kim. U., Minde, T., & Mok, D. (1987). Comparative studies of acculturative stress. *International Migration Review, 21(1)*, 491-451.
- Boyd, M. (2002). Educational attainment of immigrant offspring: Success or segmented assimilation. *International Migration Review, 36*, 1037–1060.
- Carrranza, R. (2017). Border vigilantes, and the wall they might be watching. *USA Today*.
- Chan, S. (2015, September 3). Cambodians in the united states: refugees, immigrants, american ethnic minority. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia.*
- Current, R.N., Williams, T.H., Freidel, F, & Brinkley, A. (1987). *American History: A Survey.* 6th ed. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Danso, R. (1999, June 7). *Hosting the 'Unwanted' Guests: Public Reaction and Print Media Portrayal of Cross- border Migration in the New South Africa.* Paper presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Association of African Studies. Lennoxville, Québec.
- Danso R., & Grant, M. (2000). Access to housing as an adaptive strategy for immigrant groups: Africans in Calgary. *Canadian Ethnic Studies 32(3)* ,19–43.

- Esses, V.M., Dovidio, J.F., Jackson, L.M., & Armstrong, T.L. (2001). The immigration dilemma: The role of perceived group competition, ethnic prejudice, and national identity. *Journal of Social Issues 57(3)*, 389-412.
- Glazer, N. (1993). Is assimilation dead? *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 530(1)*, 122-136.
- Gordon, M.M. (1964). *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Grandin, G. (2019). How violent American vigilantes at the border led to Trump's wall. *The Guardian.*
- Harrison, R.J. & Bennett, C.E. (1995). Racial and Ethnic Diversity in *State of the Union: America in the 1990s Volume Two: Social Trends*. Reynolds Farley, Ed. New York, NY: Russell Sage, 141-210.
- Hoffman, M. (2016). Whatever happened to Arizona's minutemen? *VICE.*
- Kazal, R.A. (1995). Revisiting assimilation: The rise, fall, and reappraisal of a concept in American ethnic history. *American Historical Review 100:2*, 437-471.
- Lazarus. R.S. & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal and coping.* New York, NY: Springer.
- Marger, M. (1996). *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives.* 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Park, R.E., Burgess, E.W., & McKenzie, R.D. (1925). *The City*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Phinney, J.S. (1991). Ethnic identity and self-esteem: a review and integration. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences 13(2)*, 193-208.
- Portes, A. & Zhou, M. (1993).The new second generation: segmented assimilation and its variants. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences 530*, 74–96.
- Rumbaut, R.G. (1994). The crucible within: Ethnic identity, self-esteem, and segmented assimilation among children of immigrants. *International Migration Review 28:4*, 748-794.
- Scholten, P. (2011). *Framing Immigrant Integration: Dutch Research-Policy Dialogues in Comparative Perspective.* Amsterdamm, Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press.
- Tancredo, T. (2010). Tom Tancredo's feb. 4 tea party speech in Nashville. *Free Republic.*
- *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.* (n.d.) How Many Refugees Came to the United States from 1933-1945? Retrieved from https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/americ...from-1933-1945
- van Tubergen, F. (2006). *Immigrant Integration: A Cross-National Study*. New York, NY: LBF Scholarly Publishing LLC.
- Warner, W.L. & Srole, L. (1945). *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Waters, M.C., Van, V.C., Kasinitz, P., & Mollenkopf, J.H. (2010). Segmented assimilation revisited: types of acculturation and socioeconomic mobility in young adulthood. *Ethnic and Racial Studies 33(7)*, 1168-1193.
- Waters, M.C., & Jiménez, T.R. (2005). Assessing immigrant assimilation: new empirical and theoretical challenges. *Annual Review of Sociology* 31, 105-125.
- Xie, Y. & Greenman, E. (2010). The social context of assimilation: testing implications of segmented assimilation theory. *Social Science Research 40*, 965-984.

This page titled 3.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-NC license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **3.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

3.3: Intersectionality

Intersectionality and Stratification

Within intersectionality theory, an individual has multiple intersecting identities. These identities are informed by group memberships such as gender, class, race, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, religion, nativity, gender identity, and more (Case, 2013). Intersecting identities place an individual at a particular social location. Individuals may have similar experiences with other individuals within one community, such as similar experiences to others of their nation of origin, but their experiences may also be quite different depending on other identities they hold. For example, consider a dark-skinned, lesbian, middle class, female immigrant from Central America; all of her identities combine to create her unique experience which may vary significantly from other immigrants from Central America.

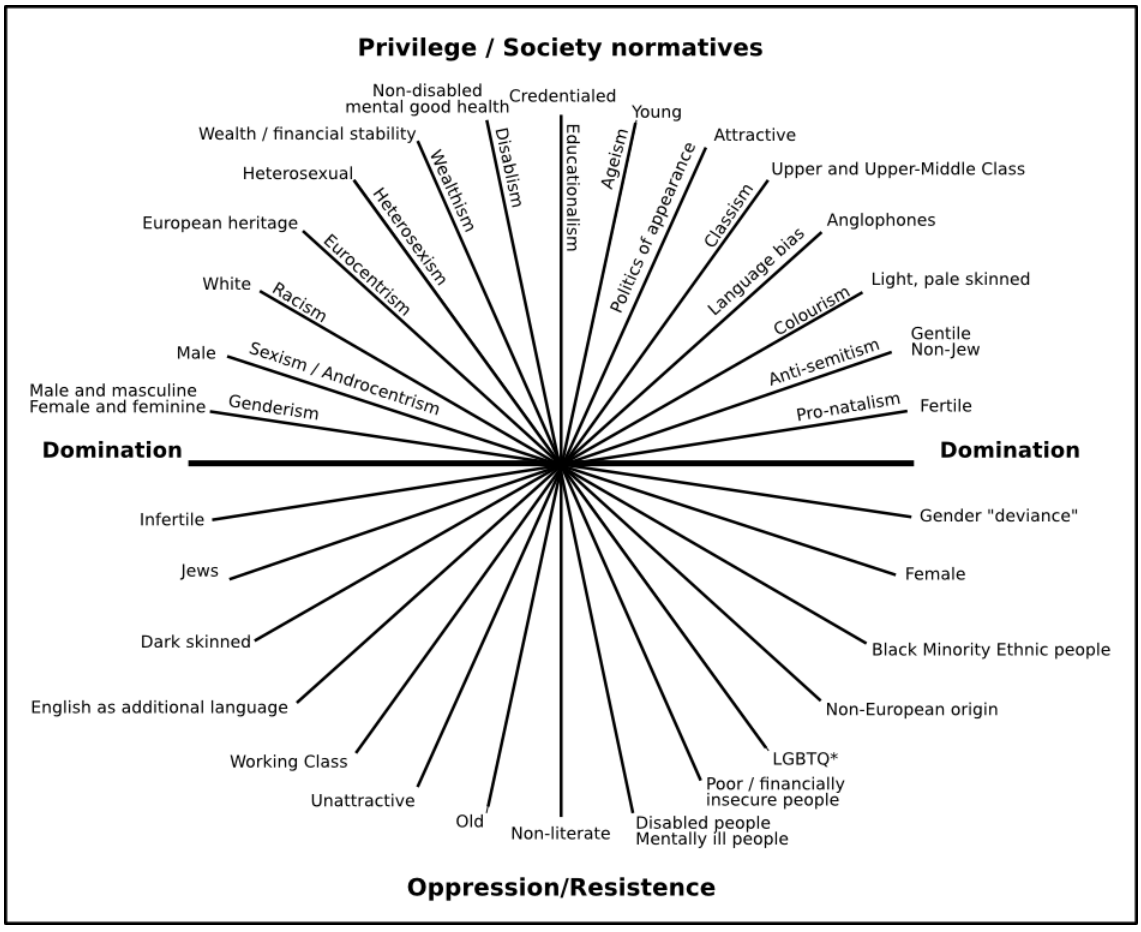


Figure 3.3.1: Diagram adapted by Natalya D. From Morgan, K. P. (1996). Describing the Emporaro's New Clothes: Three Myths of Education (In)Equality. In A. Diller (ed). The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy & Politics. Boulder, CO: Westview. (Diagram created by Natalya D. via Intersectionality)

Class and Labor

The most critical step towards economic well-being is obtaining adequate employment. Immigrants account for more than 17% of the United States work force, although they make up only 13% of the population (Migration Policy Institute, 2013). The unemployment rate for foreign-born persons is currently 5.6%, while it is 6.3% for native-born persons (United States Bureau of

Labor Statistics, 2015). Although immigrants have relatively high rates of labor force participation, the opportunities and benefits that are available to them depend on the level of employment they can obtain. We will address each in turn.



Figure **3.3.2**: Immigrant Children at Ellis Island (CC BY 2.0; David Fulmer (daveynin) via Flickr)

Low-skill labor force

Immigrants make up half of the low-skill labor force in the United States (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). In 2005, it was estimated that undocumented immigrants make up 23% of the low-skill labor force (Capps, Fortuny, & Fix, 2007). Low-skilled immigrant workers tend to be overrepresented in certain industries, particularly those with lower wages. Table **3.3.3** displays the foreign-born workforce by occupation.

Table **3.3.3**: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) (Tabulation of data from U.S. Census Bureau 2013 ACS)

Occupation	Share of Foreign-Born Workers in Occupation (%)	Share of Native-Born Workers in Occupation (%)
Management, professional, and related	29.8	37.7
Service	25.1	17
Sales and office	17.1	25.6
Production, transportation, and material moving	15.2	11.6
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	12.9	8.1

Approximately 20% of immigrant workers are employed in construction, food service, and agriculture (Singer, 2012). More than half of all workers employed in private households are immigrants, and immigrants also represent 1/3 of the workers in the hospitality industry (Newbuger & Gryn, 2009). The majority of the positions in these industries are low-wage jobs.



Figure **3.3.4**: South Central Farm in Los Angeles, one of the largest urban gardens in the United States. (CC BY 2.5; Jonathan McIntosh via Wikimedia)

Middle- and high-skill labor force

More educated and skilled immigrant workers can obtain jobs that are high paying and offer job stability such as those in healthcare, high-technology manufacturing, information technology, and life sciences. Immigrant workers are keeping pace with the native-born workforce in these high skill industries (Singer, 2012). As compared to their native-born peers, immigrants hold bachelors and graduate degrees at similar rates, 30% and 11% respectively (Singer, 2012).

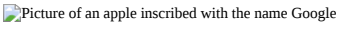


Figure **3.3.5**: "Google-apple" (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; tuaulamac via Flickr)

Barriers to better employment

The largest barriers to higher-paying employment for immigrants are a lack of education and English-speaking ability. Approximately 29% of immigrant workers do not hold a high school diploma compared to only 7% of their native-born peers (Singer, 2012). Moreover, about 46% of immigrant workers would classify themselves as limited English proficient speakers (Capps, Fix, Passel, Ost, & Perez-Lopez, 2003). More than 62% of immigrant workers in low-wage jobs are limited English language speakers compared to only 2% of native-born workers in low-wage jobs (Capps, Fix, Passel, Ost, & Perez-Lopez, 2003). A study conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Garrett, 2006) found that it is extremely difficult for refugees to move from low-paying to better paying jobs after they have adjusted to living in the United States because many lack English language skills and education. It is difficult for immigrants to seek more education or training, due to the pressing need to work to provide for their families. Leaving the workforce to train may leave them financially vulnerable.

Immigrant workers who are middle-wage earners are still disadvantaged. In comparison to their native-born peers who earn a median income of $820 weekly, a full-time salaried immigrant worker earns $664 weekly (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Moreover, these workers earn 12% less in hourly wages than their native-born counterparts; this wage gap is 26% in California, a state with the largest immigrant workforce at 37% (Bohn & Schiff, 2011).

These wage disadvantages are partially due to employer discrimination. In 1996, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IRCA) implemented additional restrictions on employment eligibility verification, including sanctions for employers who hired undocumented immigrants. Although it is illegal for an employer to discriminate based on national origin or citizenship status, many employers chose to avoid hiring individuals who appeared foreign, in order to avoid sanctions. A United States General Accounting Office report to Congress found that 19% of employers (approximately 891,000 employers) admitted to discriminating against people based on language, accent, appearance, or citizenship status because of fear of violating IRCA.

Immigrant workers also face high rates of wage and workplace violations. A study looking at workplace violations in three large metropolitan cities in the United States (Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City) found that immigrant workers were twice as likely to experience a minimum wage violation than their native-born peers (Bernhardt, Milkman, Theodore, Heckathorn, Auer, DeFilippis, González, Narro, Perelshteyn, Polson, & Spiller, 2008). Another study conducted by Orrenius and Zavodny (2009) also

found that immigrants are more likely to be employed in dangerous industries than their native-born peers, and they also experience more workplace injuries and fatalities. In these injuries, limited English skills are a contributing factor. These workers may be afraid to speak for themselves with their livelihood at stake and are left at the mercy of others. Immigrant workers are in dire need of representation, but infrequently have access to it. Only 10% of the immigrant workforce is represented by unions in contrast to 14 percent the native-born workforce (Batalova, 2011).

Lastly, as assessed and concluded by JooHee (2020), "I find that immigrants whose skin tone is darker are more penalized in the process of migration to the United States by experiencing steeper downward occupational mobility relative to those whose skin tone is lighter." While not all immigrants may need to contend with discrimination on the basis of legal status and/or language limitations, phenotype as an identifiable marker of race, impacts all immigrants because it is immediately visible/perceptible.

Healthcare and Mental Health

Although immigrants have high rates of labor force participation, they are less likely than native-born peers to have health insurance (Derose, Bahney, Lurie, & Escarce, 2009). There are few services in the United States that are as crucial and complex as the healthcare system, which continues to be a major indicator of socio-economic success. A person's inability to access and utilize healthcare services gives a strong indication of critical unmet needs and barriers that impede the ability of successful integration and participation in society. Immigrants face substantial barriers to healthcare access, including restricted access to government based healthcare services, language difficulties, and cultural differences.



Figure **3.3.6**: Air Force doctor provides services through an interpreter. (CC PDM 1.0; Staff Sgt. Veronica Pierce via Wikimedia)

Reduced Use of Healthcare

Total health care expenditures are lower for immigrant adults than for their native-born peers (Derose et al., 2009). Additionally, immigrants are less likely to report a regular source or provider for health care, and report lower health care use than native-born peers (Derose et al., 2009). This means that overall, immigrants have less access to healthcare and less healthcare use than do most native-born individuals.

Undocumented immigrants have particularly low rates of health insurance and health care use (Ortega, Fang, Perez, Rizzo, Carter-Pokras, Wallace, & Gelberg, 2007). Undocumented Latinos/as have fewer physician visits annually than native born Latinos/as (Ortega et al., 2007). Undocumented immigrants are more likely than documented immigrants or native-born individuals to state that they have difficulty understanding their physicians or think they would get better care if they were a different race or ethnicity. Despite their low rates of use, immigrants are in need of healthcare. Children of immigrants are also more than twice as likely as children of natives to be in "fair" or "poor" health (Reardon-Anderson, Capps & Fix, 2002).

Legal Status Restricts Healthcare Benefit Eligibility

Immigration status is an important legal criterion that may hinder access to healthcare benefits. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), established in 1996, restricted Medicaid eligibility of immigrants. Immigrants cannot receive coverage, except in cases of medical emergencies, during their first five years in the country. States can choose to

grant aid out of their own funds, but no federal welfare funds may be used for immigrant health care. The reform also stated that the eligibility of an immigrant for public services would be dependent on the income of the immigrant's sponsor, who could be held financially liable for public benefits used by the immigrant. Finally, the Act required that states or local governments who fund benefits for undocumented immigrants take steps to identify their eligibility (Derose, Escarce, & Lurie, 2007). Hence, health benefits and insurance for most immigrants are highly dependent on eligibility through employment.

Mental Health

Families immigrate to the United States for various reasons. Some voluntary immigrants may choose to leave their country of origin in search of better opportunities, while others are forced to flee due to war, political oppression, or safety issues. Some families manage to stay together over the course of their journey, but many are divided or separated through the migration process. This is particularly true of refugee families whose migration is involuntary, hasty, and traumatic in nature (Rousseau, Mekki-Berrada, & Moreau, 2001). Refugees in particular may have survived traumatic events and violence including war, torture, multiple relocations, and temporary resettlements in refugee camps (Glick, 2010; Jamil, Hakim-Larson, Farrag, Kafaji, & Jamil, 2002; Keys & Kane, 2004; Steel, Chey, Silove, Marnane, Bryant, & Van Ommeren, 2009). The destructive nature of war "involves an entire reorganization of family and society around a long-lasting traumatic situation" (Rousseau et al., 2001, p. 1264) and individuals and families may continue to experience traumatic stress related to family left behind and stressful living conditions long after they have resettled.

When it comes to mental and physical health, refugees are a part of an especially vulnerable population. While some adjust to life in the United States without significant problems, studies have documented the negative impact of a trauma history on the psychological wellbeing of refugees (Birman & Tran, 2008; Keller, Lhewa, Rosenfeld, Sachs, Aladjem, Cohen, Smith, & Porterfield, K, 2006). Pre-migration experiences may precipitate refugee mental health concerns, particularly in the early stages of resettlement (Beiser, 2006; Birman & Tran, 2008). These experiences may include witnessing and experiencing violence, fleeing from a family home located in a city or village that is being destroyed, and walking to find refuge and safety for days or weeks with limited food, water, and resources. Post-migration conditions, such as adapting to living in an overcrowded refugee camp or trying to rebuild life in a foreign country, as well as structural stressors, such as going through the legal process of obtaining asylum or legal documentation, may also precipitate a cascade of individual mental health and family relational issues. The pre- and post-migration experiences and stressors of refugees may compound and create a "cumulative effect on their ability to cope" (Lacroix & Sabbah, 2011). Spending weeks, months, or even years managing stressful and traumatic experiences may weaken an individual or family's ability to cope with continued change and the multiple stressors of resettlement.

While it is reported that refugees are at risk for higher rates of psychiatric disorders such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, complicated grief, psychosis, and suicide (Akinsulure-Smith & O'Hara, 2012; Birman & Tran, 2008; Jamil et al., 2002; Jensen, 1996; Kandula, Kersey, & Lurie, 2004; Steel et al., 2009), immigrants are also at risk for these mental health complications, especially if they have been exposed to multiple traumatic events. However, when working with immigrants and refugees, it is important to remember that one cannot assume that all members of an affected population are psychologically traumatized and will have the same mental health symptoms (Shannon, Wieling, Simmelink, & Becher, 2014; Silove, 1999). Further, mental health symptomatology is expressed in a variety of culturally sanctioned ways. For example, somatic complaints such as headaches, dizziness, palpitations, and fatigue might be a way to avoid stigma and shame often associated with admitting to mental health problems (Shannon, Wieling, Im, Becher, & Simmelink, 2014).

We know that the mental health of an individual does not exist in isolation; the experiences of one person in a family or community affect others. Unfortunately, the majority of the literature about immigrant and refugee mental health focuses on mental health as an individual process; the systemic ramifications are understudied and underrepresented in academic literature (Landau, Mittal, & Wieling, 2008; Nickerson, Bryant, Brooks, Steel, Silove, & Chen, 2011).

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)

- Immigrant and Refugee Families (Ballard, Wieling, and Solheim) (CC BY-NC 4.0)

Works Cited

- Akinsulure-Smith, A.M., & O'Hara, M. (2012). Working with forced migrants: therapeutic issues and considerations for mental health counselors. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling 34(1)*, 38-55.
- Anthias, F. (2001). The concept of social division and theorising social stratification: looking at ethnicity and class. *Sociology 35(4)*, 835-854.
- Anthias, F. & Yuval-Davis, N. (2005). *Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-racist Struggle.* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Batalova, J. (2011). Foreign-born wage and salary workers in the U.S. labor force and unions. *Migration Policy institute.*
- Beiser, M. (2006). Longitudinal research to promote effective refugee resettlement. *Transcultural Psychiatry 43:1*, 56-71.
- Berg, J.A. (2010). Race, class, gender, and social space: using an intersectional approach to study immigration attitudes. *The Sociological Quarterly 51*, 278–302.
- Bernhardt, A., Milkman, R., Theodore, N., Heckathorn, D., Auer, M., DeFilippis, J., González, A.Z., Narro, V., Perelshteyn, J., Polson, D., & Spiller, M. (2009). Broken laws, unprotected workers. *National Employment Law Project.*
- Birman, D. & Tran, N. (2008). Psychological distress and adjustment of Vietnamese refugees in the united states: association with pre- and post-migration factors. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 78(1)*, 109-120.
- Bohn, S. & Schiff, E. (2011). Immigrants and the labor market. *Public Policy Institute of California*.
- Bradley, H. (1996). *Fractured Identities: Changing Patterns of Inequality.* Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Capps, R., Fix, M., Passel, J.S., Ost, J., & Perez-Lopez, D. (2003). *A profile of the low-wage immigrant workforce*. The Urban Institute.
- Case, K. (2013). *Deconstructing Privilege: Teaching and Learning as Allies in the Classroom.* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cialdini, R.B., & Trost, M.R. (1998). Social influence: social norms, conformity, and compliance. In D.T. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske, G. Lindzey (Eds), *The Handbook of Social Psychology.* 4th ed, p. 151–192. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Cialdini, R.B. (2001). *Influence: Science and Practice.* 4th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Cole, E.R. (2009). Intersectionality and research in psychology. *American Psychologist 64*, 170–180.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracial politics. *The University of Chicago Legal Forum 140*, 139-167.
- Derose, K.P., Escarce, J.J., & Lurie, N. (2007). Immigrants and health care: sources of vulnerability. *Health Affairs 26(5)*, 1258-1268.
- Derose, K.P., Bahney, B.W., Lurie, N., & Escarce, J.J. (2009). Immigrants and health care access, quality, and cost. *Medical Care Research and Review 66(4)*, 355-408.
- Farver, J.A.M., Narang, S.K., & Bhadha, B.R. (2002). East meets west: ethnic identity, acculturation, and conflict in Asian Indian families. *Journal of Family Psychology 16(3)*, 338-350.
- Glick, J. (2010). Connecting complex processes: a decade of research on immigrant families. *Journal of Marriage and Family 72:3*, 498-515.
- Gottfried, H. (2000). Compromising positions: emergent neo-fordisms and embedded gender contracts. *The British Journal of Sociology 51:2*, 235-259.
- Jamil, H., Hakim-Larson, J., Farrag, M., Kafaji, T., & Jamil, L. (2002). A retrospective study of Arab American mental health clients: Trauma and the Iraqi refugees. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 72(3)*, 355-361.
- Jensen, S.B. (1996). Mental health under war conditions during the 1991–1995 war in the former Yugoslavia. *World Health Statistics Quarterly 49*, 213–217.
- JooHee, Han. (2020). Does skin tone matter? immigrant mobility in the U.S. labor market. *Demography* 57:2, 705-726.
- Kandula, N., Kersey, M., & Lurie, N. (2004). Assuring the health of immigrants: what the leading health indicators tell us. *Annual Review Public Health 25*, 357-376.
- Keller, A., Lhewa, D., Rosenfeld, B., Sachs, E., Aladjem, A., Cohen, I., Smith, H., & Porterfield, K. (2006). Traumatic experiences and psychological distress in an urban refugee population seeking treatment services. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease 194:3*, 188-194.
- Keys, E. & Kane, C. (2004). Belonging and adapting: mental health of Bosnian refugees living in the united states. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing 25*, 809-831.

- Lacroix, M. & Sabbath, C. (2011). Posttraumatic psychological distress and resettlement: the need for a different practice in assisting refugee families. *Journal of Family Social Work 14*, 43-53.
- Landau, J., Mittal, M., & Wieling, E. (2008). Linking human systems: strengthening individuals, families, and communities in the wake of mass trauma. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy 34(2)*, 193-209.
- *Migration Policy Institute.* (2010). Immigrant share of the U.S. population and civilian labor force, 1980-present.
- Modood, T., Berthoud, R., Lakey, J., Nazroo, J., Smith, P., Virdee, S., & Beishon, S. (1997). *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*, No. 843. London, UK: Policy Studies Institute.
- Nam, Y., Lee, E.J., Huang, J., & Kimm J. (2015). Financial capability, asset ownership, and later-age immigration: evidence from a sample of low-income older Asian immigrants. *Journal of Gerontology and Social Work 58(2)*, 114-27.
- Newburger, E. & Gryn, T. (2009). The foreign-born labor force in the United States: 2007. *United States Census Bureau.*
- Nickerson, A., Bryant, R.A., Brooks, R., Steel, Z., Silove, D., & Chen, J. (2011). The familial influence of loss and trauma on refugee mental health: A multilevel path analysis. *Journal of Traumatic Stress 24(1)*, 25–33.
- Orrenius, P.M. & Zavodny, M. (2009). Do immigrants work in riskier jobs? *Demography 46(3)*, 535-551.
- Ortega, A.N., Fang, H., Perez, V.H., Rizzo, J.A., Carter-Pokras, O., Wallace, S.P., & Gelberg, L. (2007). Health care access, use of services, and experiences among undocumented Mexicans and other Latinos. *Archives of Internal Medicine 167(21)*, 2354-2360.
- Phinney, J.S., Horenczyk, G., Liebkind, K., & Vedder, P. (2001). Ethnic identity, immigration, and well-being: An interactional perspective. *Journal of Social Issues 57(3)*, 493-510.
- Pollert, A. (1996). Gender and class revisited; or, the poverty of patriarchy. *Sociology 30(4)*, 639-659.
- Reardon-Anderson, J., Capps, R., & Fix, M.E. (2002). The health and well-being of children in immigrant families. *The Urban Institute.*
- Rousseau, C., Mekki-Berrada, A., & Moreau, B. (2001). Trauma and extended separation from family among Latin American and African refugees in Monteal. *Psychiatry Journal 64(1)*, 40-59.
- Rumbaut, R.G. (1994). The crucible within: ethnic identity, self-esteem, and segmented assimilation among children of immigrants. *International Migration Review 28(4)*, 748-794.
- Sakamoto, I. (2007). A critical examination of immigrant acculturation: toward an anti-oppressive social work model with immigrant adults in a pluralistic society. *British Journal of Social Work 37*, 515–535.
- Shannon, P., Wieling, E., Im, H., Becher, E., & Simmelink, J. (2014). Beyond stigma: barriers to discussing mental health in refugee populations. *Journal of Loss and Trauma 20:3*, 281-296.
- Shannon, P., Wieling, E., Simmelink, J., & Becher, E. (2014). Exploring the mental health effects of political trauma with newly arrived refugees. *Qualitative Health Research 25:4*, 443-457.
- Shields, S.A. (2008). Gender: an intersectionality perspective. *Sex Roles 59*, 301–311.
- Silove, D. (1999). The psychosocial effects of torture, mass human rights violations and refugee trauma: towards an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of Nervous & Mental Disease 187*, 200-207.
- Steel, Z., Chey, T., Silove, D., Marnane, C., Bryant, R.A., & Van Ommeren, M. (2009). Association of torture and other potentially traumatic events with mental health outcomes among populations exposed to mass conflict and displacement: systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of the American Medical Association 302*, 537–549.
- United States General Accounting Office. (1990). Immigration reform: Employer sanctions and the question of discrimination.
- *United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.* (2015). Foreign-born workers labor force characteristics.
- *United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.* (2013). National occupational employment and wage estimates united states.
- Weber, L. (1998). A conceptual framework for understanding race, class, gender, and sexuality. *Psychology of Women Quarterly 22:1*, 13-32.

This page titled 3.3: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY-NC license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **3.3: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

3.4: Social Institutions

Immigration and the Criminal Justice System

Many people in the United States take a dim view of immigration. In a 2009 Gallup Poll, 50% of Americans thought that immigration should be decreased, 32% thought it should stay at its present level, and only 14% thought it should be increased (Morales, 2009). As Morales (2009) notes, fear of job competition is a primary reason for the concern that Americans show about immigration. Yet another reason might be their fear that immigration raises the crime rate. A 2007 Gallup Poll asked whether immigrants are making "the situation in the country better or worse, or not having much effect" for the following dimensions of our national life: food, music and the arts; the economy; social and moral values; job opportunities; taxes; and the crime situation (Newport, 2007). The percentage of respondents saying "worse" was higher for the crime situation (58%) than for any other dimension. Only 4% of respondents responded that immigration has made the crime situation better (Newport, 2007).

However, research conducted by sociologists and criminologists finds that these 4% are in fact correct: immigrants have lower crime rates than native-born Americans, and immigration has apparently helped lower the U.S. crime rate (Immigration Policy Center, 2008; Vélez, 2006; Sampson, 2008). What accounts for this surprising consequence? One reason is that immigrant neighborhoods tend to have many small businesses, churches, and other social institutions that help ensure neighborhood stability and, in turn, lower crime rates. A second reason is that the bulk of recent immigrants are Latinos, who tend to have high marriage rates and strong family ties, both of which again help ensure lower crime rates (Vélez, 2006). A final reason may be that undocumented immigrants hardly want to be deported and thus take extra care to obey the law by not committing street crime (Immigration Policy Center, 2008).

Reinforcing the immigration-lower crime conclusion, other research also finds that immigrants' crime rates rise as they stay in the United States longer. Apparently, as the children of immigrants become more "Americanized," their criminality increases. As one report concluded, "The children and grandchildren of many immigrants—as well as many immigrants themselves the longer they live in the United States—become subject to economic and social forces that increase the likelihood of criminal behavior" (Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007).

As the United States continues to address immigration policy, it is important that the public and elected officials have the best information possible about the effects of immigration. The findings by sociologists and other social scientists that immigrants have lower crime rates and that immigration has apparently helped lower the U.S. crime rate add an important dimension to the ongoing debate over immigration policy.



Figure 3.4.1: "Immigration checkpoint" (CC BY 2.0; jonathan mcintosh via Flickr)

One other impact of the new wave of immigration has been increased prejudice and discrimination against the new immigrants. As noted earlier, the history of the United States is filled with examples of prejudice and discrimination against immigrants. Such problems seem to escalate as the number of immigrants increases. The past two decades have been no exception to this pattern. As

the large numbers of immigrants moved into the United States, blogs and other media became filled with anti-immigrant comments, and hate crimes against immigrants increased. The Southern Poverty Law Center report summarized this trend as,

There's no doubt that the tone of the raging national debate over immigration is growing uglier by the day. Once limited to hard-core white supremacists and a handful of border-state extremists, vicious public denunciations of undocumented brown-skinned immigrants are increasingly common among supposedly mainstream anti-immigration activists, radio hosts, and politicians. While their dehumanizing rhetoric typically stops short of openly sanctioning bloodshed, much of it implicitly encourages or even endorses violence by characterizing immigrants from Mexico and Central America as "invaders," "criminal aliens," and "cockroaches." The results are no less tragic for being predictable: although hate crime statistics are highly unreliable, numbers that are available strongly suggest a marked upswing in racially motivated violence against all Latinos, regardless of immigration status (Mock, 2007).

One example of one of these hate crimes impacted a New York City resident from Ecuador who owned a real estate company; he died in December 2008 after being beaten with a baseball bat by three men who shouted anti-Hispanic slurs. His murder was preceded by the death a month earlier of another Ecuadorean immigrant, who was attacked on Long Island by a group of males who beat him with lead pipes, chair legs, and other objects (Fahim & Zraick, 2008). An even more recent example is the mass shooting that took place at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas on August 3, 2019. This mass shooting has been linked with a spike in anti-Latinx hate crimes that "coincides with an ongoing debate over U.S. President Donald Trump's hardline immigration policies" (Brooks, 2019).

Meanwhile, the new immigrants have included thousands who came to the United States illegally. When they are caught, many are detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in local jails, federal prisons, and other detention facilities. Immigrants who are in the United States legally but then get arrested for minor infractions are often also detained in these facilities to await deportation. It is estimated that ICE detains about 300,000 immigrants of both kinds every year. Human rights organizations say that all of these immigrants suffer from lack of food, inadequate medical care, and beatings; that many are being detained indefinitely; and that their detention proceedings lack due process.

Arizona's Senate Bill 1070

As both legal and undocumented immigrants, and with high population numbers, Mexican Americans are often the target of stereotyping, racism, and discrimination. A harsh example of this is in Arizona, where a stringent immigration law—known as SB 1070 (for Senate Bill 1070)—has caused a nationwide controversy. The law requires that during a lawful stop, detention, or arrest, Arizona police officers must establish the immigration status of anyone they suspect may be here illegally. The law makes it a crime for individuals to fail to have documents confirming their legal status, and it gives police officers the right to detain people they suspect may be in the country illegally.



Figure **3.4.2**: Protesters in Arizona dispute the harsh new anti-immigration law. (CC BY 2.0; prathap ramamurthy via Flickr)

To many, the most troublesome aspect of this law is the latitude it affords police officers in terms of whose citizenship they may question. Having "reasonable suspicion that the person is an alien who is unlawfully present in the United States" is reason enough to demand immigration papers (Senate Bill 1070, 2010). Critics say this law will encourage racial profiling (the illegal practice of law enforcement using race as a basis for suspecting someone of a crime), making it hazardous to be caught

> "Driving While Brown," a takeoff on the legal term Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) or the slang reference of "Driving While Black." Driving While Brown refers to the likelihood of getting pulled over just for being nonwhite.
>
> SB 1070 has been the subject of many lawsuits, from parties as diverse as Arizona police officers, the American Civil Liberties Union, and even the federal government, which is suing on the basis of Arizona contradicting federal immigration laws (ACLU 2011). The future of SB 1070 is uncertain, but many other states have tried or are trying to pass similar measures. Do you think such measures are appropriate?

Immigration and the Government

Historical Chinese/Asian Exclusionary Policies

Many Chinese men had been recruited by the railroad companies to work on the Transcontinental Railroad—a vast, complex, engineering feat to span the continent and link the entire expanse of the middle of North America, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. By 1887, the project was complete and many of the Chinese workers, having saved the majority of their pay, returned home, or, conversely, began to send for their families—parents, siblings, wives and children, sweethearts, cousins—beginning a steady migration stream from China to the United States. Many of these former railroad workers settled along the West Coast and began to compete, economically, with the white population of the region. Feeling serious economic pressure from the Chinese immigrants, whites on the West Coast petitioned Congress to stop migration from China. Congress complied and passed a bill titled the "Asian Exclusionary Act." For more information regarding the use of national origin in the history of immigration policies and laws, please review Chapter 9.2.

From the 15th century through the 19th century, Japan was a xenophobic, feudal society, ostensibly governed by a God-Emperor, but in reality ruled by ruthless, powerful Shoguns. Japan's society changed little during the four centuries of samurai culture, and it was cut off from the rest of the world in self-imposed isolation, trading only with the Portuguese, Spanish, English, and Chinese, and then not with all of them at once, often using one group as middlemen to another group. In the mid-19th century, (1854), the United States government became interested in trading directly with Japan in order to open up new export markets and to import Japanese goods at low prices uninflated by middleman add-ons. Commodore Matthew Perry was assigned to open trade between the United States and Japan. With a flotilla of war ships, Perry crossed the Pacific and berthed his ships off the coast of the Japanese capital. Perry sent letters to the emperor that were diplomatic but insistent. Perry had been ordered not to take no for an answer, and when the emperor sent Perry a negative response to the letters, Perry maneuvered his warships into positions that would allow them to fire upon the major cities of Japan. The Japanese had no armaments or ships that could compete with the Americans, and so, capitulated to Perry. Within thirty years, Japan was almost as modernized as its European counterparts. They went from feudalism to industrialism almost over night.

Within a few years of the trade treaty between the United States and Japan, a small but steady trickle of Japanese immigrants flowed across the Pacific Ocean. This migration to the West Coast of the United States meant that Japanese immigrants were in economic competition with the resident population, most of whom were white. Fears of economic loss led the whites to petition Congress to stop the flow of immigrants from Japan, and in 1911 Congress expanded the Asian Exclusionary Act to include Japanese thereby stopping all migration from Japan into the United States. In 1914, Congress passed the National Origins Act which cut off all migration from East Asia.

In 1924, anti-minority sentiment in the United States was so strong that the Ku Klux Klan had four million, proud, openly racist members thousands of whom were involved in a parade down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, that was watched by thousands of Klan supporters and other Americans.

On December 7, 1941, at 7:55 A.M. local time the Japanese fleet in the South Pacific launched 600 hundred aircraft in a surprise attack against U.S. Naval forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Within four hours, 2,400 people, mostly military personnel had been killed, including the 1,100 men who will be entombed forever in the wreckage of the U.S.S. Arizona when it capsized during the attack. Although this was a military target, the United States was not at war when the attack occurred. In less than six months after the attack, Congress passed the Japanese Relocation Act. Below, is reproduced the order that was posted in San Francisco.



Figure **3.4.3**: "Pearl Harbor" (CC BY 2.0; The U.S. Army via Flickr)

Purposes of Immigration Policy

There are five primary purposes of immigration policy (US English Foundation, 2014; Fix & Passel, 1994):

1. Social: Unify citizens and legal residents with their families.
2. Economic: Increase productivity and standard of living.
3. Cultural: Encourage diversity, increasing pluralism and a variety of skills.
4. Moral: Promote and protect human rights, largely through protecting those feeling persecution.
5. Security: Control undocumented immigration and protect national security.

There are many ideological differences among the stakeholders in immigration policy and many different priorities. In order to meet the purposes listed above, policy-makers must balance the following goals against one another:

1. Provide refuge to all versus recruit the best. Some stakeholders desire to provide refuge for the displaced (Permanently stamped on the Statue of Liberty are the words, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free”). These stakeholders seek to welcome all who are separated from their families or face economic, political, or safety concerns in their current locations. Others aim to recruit those best qualified to add to the economy.
2. Meet labor force needs versus protect current citizen employment. Immigrant workers are expected to make up 30-50% of the growth in the United States labor force in the coming decades (Lowell, Gelatt, & Batalova, 2006). In general, immigrants provide needed employment and do not impact the wages of the current workforce. However, there are situations (i.e., during economic downturns) where immigration can threaten the current work force’s conditions or wages.
3. Enforce policy versus minimize regulatory burden and intrusion on privacy. In order to enforce immigration policy away from the border, the government must access residents’ documents. However, this threatens citizens’ privacy. When employers are required to access these documents, it also increases regulatory burden for the employers.



Figure **3.4.4**: Border fence. (CC BY-NC 2.0; BBC World Service via Flickr)

Key Stakeholders in Immigration Policy

There are many groups who are deeply invested in immigration and immigrant policy; their fortunes rise or fall with the policies set. These groups are called “stakeholders.” Key stakeholders in immigration and immigrant policy in the United States include the federal government, state governments, voluntary agencies, employers, families, current workers, local communities, states, and the nation as a whole.

Families

As described earlier in this chapter, one of the most common motivations for immigration is to provide a better quality of life for one’s family, either by sending money to family in another country or by bringing family to the United States (Solheim, Rojas-Garcia, Olson, & Zuiker, 2012). Immigration policy impacts these families’ abilities to migrate to access safer living conditions and seek economic stability. Further, immigration policy impacts a family’s opportunity for reunification. **Reunification** means that immigrants with legal status in the United States can apply for visas to bring family members to join them. Approximately two-thirds of the immigrants in the United States were sponsored by family members who migrated first and later became permanent residents (Kandel, 2014). The following quote from a Mexican immigrant epitomizes the priority of family:

My goals are to offer my family a decent life and economic stability, to guarantee them a future without serious problems, with a house, a means of transport… things that sometimes you can’t achieve in Mexico. Our goal must be for our family’s welfare, as much for my family here as for my family back there” (Solheim et al., 2012 p. 247).

Federal government

The federal government is currently solely responsible for the creation of immigration policies (Weissbrodt & Danielson, 2004). In the past, each state determined its own immigration policy according to the Articles of Confederation because it was unclear whether the United States Constitution gave the federal government power to regulate immigration (Weissbrodt & Danielson, 2011). A series of Supreme Court cases beginning in the 1850s upheld the federal government’s right to create immigration policies, arguing that the federal government must have the power to exclude non-citizens to protect the national public interest (Weissbrodt & Danielson, 2004). The Supreme Court has determined that the power to admit and to remove immigrants to the United States belongs solely to the federal government (using as precedents the uniform rule of Naturalization, Article 1.8.4, and the commerce clause, Article 1.8.3). In fact, there is no area where the legislative power of Congress is more complete (Weissbrodt & Danielson, 2004).

Immigration responsibilities were originally housed in the Treasury Department and the Department of Labor, due to its connection to foreign commerce. In the 1940s, the immigration office (later called the "INS," Immigration and Naturalization Service) was moved to the United States Department of Justice due to its connection to protecting national public interest (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2010). The federal departments and agencies that implement immigration laws and policies have changed significantly since the terrorist attacks of 2001. In 2001, the United States Commission on National Security created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which absorbed and assumed the duties of of the INS.

Three key agencies within DHS enforce immigration and immigrant policy (Figure **3.4.5**):

1. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): USCIS provides immigration services, including processing immigrant visa requests, naturalization petitions, and asylum/refugee requests. Its offices are divided into four national regions: (1) Burlington, Vermont (Northeast); (2) Dallas, Texas (Central); (3) Laguna Niguel, California (West); and (4) Orlando, Florida (Southeast). The director of USCIS reports directly to the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security. It is important to note that immigration officers, who traditionally hold law degrees, have broad discretion in deciding whether an application is complete and accurate (Weissbrodt & Danielson, 2011).
2. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE): ICE is primarily tasked with enforcing immigration laws once immigrants are inside the United States’ ICE is responsible for identifying and fixing problems in the nation’s security. This is accomplished through five operational divisions: (1) immigration investigations; (2) detention and removal; (3) Federal Protective Service; (4) international affairs; and (5) intelligence.
3. United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP): USCBP includes the Border Patrol, which is responsible for identifying and preventing undocumented aliens, terrorists, and weapons from entering the country. In addition to these

responsibilities, USCBP is responsible for regulating customs and international trade to intercept drugs, illicit currency, fraudulent documents or products with intellectual property rights violations, and materials for quarantine.

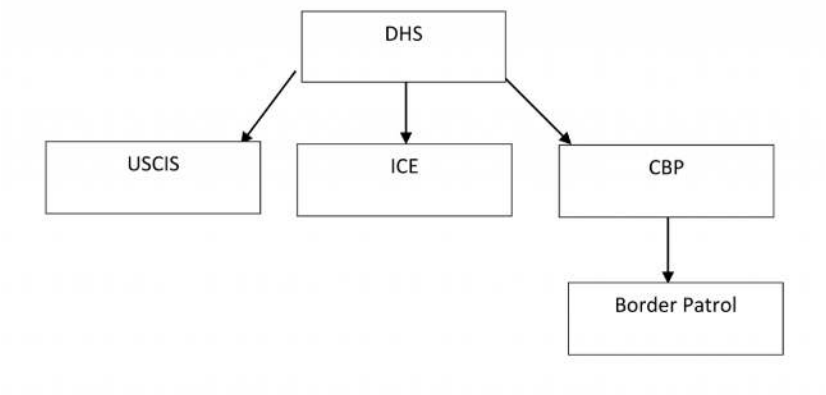


Figure **3.4.5**: Federal Immigration Organizations.

State governments

Although states have no power to create immigration policy, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA, 1996) enabled the Secretary of Homeland Security to enter into agreements with states to implement the administration and enforcement of federal immigration laws. States are also responsible for policy regarding immigrant and refugee integration. There is wide variation in how states pursue integration. Not all policies are welcoming. For example, several have passed legislation that limits access of public services to undocumented immigrants (e.g., Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina, and Utah). In contrast, states such as Minnesota have sought to expand immigrant access to public services. These drastically different approaches have promoted consideration of this critical important task at the federal level. In late 2014, President Obama formed the "white House Task Force on New Americans" whose primary purpose is to "create welcoming communities and fully integrating immigrants and refugees" (white House, 2014). This is the first time in United States history that the executive branch of the government has undertaken such an effort.

Employers

Employers have high stakes in policy that impacts immigration, particularly as it impacts their available labor force. United States employers who recruit highly skilled workers from abroad typically sponsor their employees for permanent residence. Other employers who need a large labor force, particularly for low-skill work, often look to immigrants to fill positions.

Employers are also impacted by requirements to monitor the immigrant status of employees. Following the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, it became illegal to knowingly employ undocumented immigrants. Many employers are now required by state law or federal contract to use the e-verify program to confirm that prospective employees are not undocumented immigrants. Such requirements aim to reduce incentives for undocumented immigration, but also pose burdens of liability and reduced labor availability for employers. The National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (2015) and the American Farm Bureau Federation oppose measures that could constrict immigration such as the e-Verify program, stating that it could have a detrimental impact on the country's agriculture.



Figure **3.4.6**: Farm worker in California. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Tony Webster via Wikimedia)

Current workforce

Overall, research demonstrates that immigration increases wages for United States-born workers (Ottaviano & Peri, 2008; Ottaviano & Peri, 2012; Cortes, 2008; Peri, 2010). Estimated increases in wages from immigration range from .1 to .6% (Borjas & Katz, 2007; Ottaviano & Peri, 2008; Shierholz, 2010). However, these wage increases are not unilaterally and consistently distributed across time, skill and education levels of workers. Some researchers have found that low-education workers have experienced wage decreases due to immigration, as large as 4.8% (Borjas & Katz, 2007). However, other researchers have found that among those without a high school diploma, wages decreased by approximately 1% in the short run (Shierholz, 2010; Ottaviano & Peri, 2012) but were increased slightly in the long run (Ottaviano & Peri, 2012).

Immigration generally does not decrease job opportunities for United States-born workers, and may slightly increase them (Peri, 2010). However, during economic downturns when job growth is slowed, immigration may have short-term negative effects on job availability and wages for the current workforce (Peri, 2010). Immigrants create growth in community businesses. It is nonetheless important to emphasize that the fear of non-citizens taking away employment opportunities from citizens is a primary driver for immigration laws (Weissbrodt & Danielson, 2011). While immigrants make up 16% of the labor force, they make up 18% of the business owners. Between 2000 and 2013, immigrants accounted for nearly half of overall growth of business ownership in the United States (Fiscal Policy Institute, 2015).

Communities

United States communities must provide education and health care regardless of immigration status (i.e., Plyer v. Doe, 1982). In areas with rapidly increasing numbers of immigrant workers and their families, this can tax local communities that are already overburdened (Meissner, Meyers, Papademetriou, & Fix, 2006). The Congressional Budget Office found that most state and local governments provide services to unauthorized immigrants that cost more than those immigrants generate in taxes (2007). However, studies have found that immigrants may also infuse new growth in communities and sustain current levels of living for residents (Meissner et al., 2006).

Country

Immigrants provide many benefits at a national level. Overall, immigrants create more jobs than they fill, both through demand for goods and service and entrepreneurship. Foreign labor allows growth in the labor force and sustained standard of living (Meissner et al., 2006). Even though immigrants cost more in services than they provide in taxes at a state and local governments level, immigrants pay far more in taxes than they cost in services at a national level. In particular, immigrants (both documented and undocumented) contribute billions more to Medicare through payroll taxes than they use in medical services (Zallman,

Woolhandler, Himmelstein, Bor & McCormick, 2013). Additionally, many undocumented immigrants obtain social security cards that are not in their name and thereby contribute to social security, from which they will not be authorized to benefit. The Social security administration estimates that $12 billion dollars were paid into social security in 2010 alone (Goss, Wade, Skirvin, Morris, Bye, & Huston, 2013).

Current Immigration Policy

Although the decision to migrate is generally made and motivated by families, immigration policy generally focuses on the individual. For example, visas are granted to individuals, not families. In this sub-section, immigration policies that are most influential for today's families are discussed.

1952 McCarran-Walter Act

This act and its amendments remains the basic body of immigration law. It opened immigration to all countries, establishing quotas for each (United States English Foundation, 2014). This act instituted a priority system for admitting family members of current citizens. Admission preference was given to: (1) unmarried adult sons and daughters of United States citizens; (2) spouses and unmarried sons and daughters of United States citizens; (3) professionals, scientists, and artists of exceptional ability; and (4) married adult sons and daughters of United States citizens. This meant that more families from more countries had the opportunity to reunite in the United States.

1965 Hart-Celler Immigration Act or Immigration and Nationality Act and 1978 Amendments

In this act, the national ethnicity quotas were repealed. Instead, a cap was set for each hemisphere. Once again, priority was given to family reunification and employment skills. This act also expanded the original four admission preferences to seven, adding: (5) siblings of United States citizens; (6) workers, skilled and unskilled, in occupations for which labor was in short supply in the United States; and (7) refugees from Communist-dominated countries or those affected by natural disasters. This expanded the opportunities for family members to reunite in the United States.

1990 Immigration Act

This act eased the limits on family-based immigration (United States English Foundation, 2014). It ultimately led to a 40% increase in total admissions (Fix & Passel, 1994).



Figure **3.4.7**: "DREAM Act Protesters for President Obama's Visit to Austin" (CC BY-SA 2.0; Todd Dwyer via Flickr)

DREAM Act and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

The DREAM Act, proposed in the Senate in 2001, would allow for conditional permanent residency to immigrants who arrived in the United States as minors and have long-standing United States residency. While this bill has not been signed into law, the Obama administration signed the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Executive Order in 2012, which provides renewable two-year work permits for those who meet the required standards. This has the largest impact on undocumented families. Many children travel to the United States without documents to be with their families, and then spend most of their lives in the United States. If the DREAM Act had passed, these children would have new opportunities to pursue higher education and jobs in the land they think of as home, without fear of deportation.

2000 Life Act and Section 245(i)

This allowed undocumented immigrants present in the United States to adjust their status to permanent resident, if they had family or employers to sponsor them (United States English Foundation, 2014).

2001 Patriot Act

The sociopolitical climate after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks drastically changed immigrant policies in the United States. This act created Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), greatly enhancing immigration enforcement.

2005 Bill

The House of Representatives passed a bill that increased enforcement at the borders, focusing on national security rather than family or economic influences (Meissner et al., 2006).

2006 Bill

The Senate passed a bill that expanded legal immigration, in order to decrease undocumented immigration (Meissner et al., 2006).

As these policies indicate, it is currently very difficult to enter the United States without documentation. There are few supports available to those who do make it across the border (see Table 3.4.8). However, the 2000 Life Act and the Dream Act provide some provisions for families who live in the United States to obtain documentation to remain together, at least temporarily.

For families who want to immigrate with documentation, current policy prioritizes family reunification. Visas are available for family members of current permanent residents, and there are no quotas on family reunification visas (see the next section). Even when family members of a current permanent resident are granted a visa, they are a long way from residency. They must wait for their priority date and process extensive paperwork. If a family wants to immigrate to the United States but does not have a family member who is a current permanent resident or a sponsoring employer, options for documented immigration are very limited.

Table **3.4.8**: Supports available to documented and undocumented immigrants. (CC BY-NC 4.0; Taken from United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2010)

What supports are available?	Documented Immigrants	Undocumented Immigrants
Free public education	X	X
Medical Services	X	X
Authorization to live and work in the United States	X	
Travel documents	X	
Social security	X	
Application for a driver's license	X	
Ability to request visas for spouse or unmarried child	X	
Ability to apply for welfare benefits	X	

Process of Becoming a Citizen, also called “Naturalization”

1. File a petition for an immigrant visa. The first step of documented immigration is obtaining an immigrant visa. There are a number of ways this can occur:

- For family members. A citizen or lawful permanent resident in the United States can file an immigrant visa petition for their immediate family members in other countries. In some cases, they can file a petition for a fiancé or adopted child.
- For sponsored employees. United States employers sometimes recruit skilled workers who will be hired for permanent jobs. These employers can file a visa petition for the workers.
- For immigrants from countries with low rates of immigration. The Diversity Visa Lottery program accepts applications from individuals in countries with low rates of immigration. These individuals can file an application, and visas are awarded based on random selection.

If prospective immigrants do not fall into one of these categories, their avenues for documented immigration are quite limited. For prospective immigrants who fall within one of these categories, their petition must be approved by USCIS and consular officers. However, they are still a long way from residency.

2. Wait for priority date. There is an annual limit to the number of available visas in most categories. Petitions are filed chronologically, and each prospective immigrant is given a “priority date.” The prospective immigrant must then wait until there is an available visa, based on their priority date.

3. Process paperwork. While waiting for the priority date, prospective immigrants can begin to process the paperwork. They must pay processing fees, submit a visa application form, and compile extensive additional documentation (such as evidence of income, proof of relationship, proof of United States status, birth certificates, military records, etc.) They must then complete an interview at the United States Embassy or Consulate and complete a medical exam. Once all of these steps are complete, the prospective immigrant received an immigrant visa. They can travel to the United States with a green card and enter as a lawful permanent resident (United States Visas, n.d.).

A lawful permanent resident is entitled to many of the supports of legal residents, including free public education, authorization to work in the United States, and travel documents to leave and return to the United States (FindLaw, 2018). However, permanent resident aliens remain citizens of their home country, must maintain residence in the United States in order to maintain their status, must renew their status every 10 years, and cannot vote in federal elections (USCIS, 2015).

4. Apply for citizenship. Generally, immigrants are eligible to apply for citizenship when they have been a permanent resident for at least five years, or three years if they are married to a citizen. Prospective citizens must complete an application, be fingerprinted and have a background check, complete an interview with a USCIS officer, and take an English and civics test. They must then take an Oath of Allegiance (USCIS, 2012).

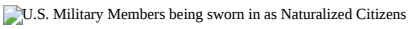


Figure **3.4.9**: "U.S. Military Members Become Naturalized Citizens" (CC BY-ND 2.0; U.S Embassy Kabul Afghanistan via Flickr)

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Immigrant and Refugee Families (Ballard, Wieling, and Solheim) (CC BY-NC 4.0)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- American Civil Liberties Union. (2011). *Appellate Court Upholds Decision Blocking Arizona’s Extreme Racial Profiling Law.*
- Borjas, G.J., & Katz, L.F. (2007). The evolution of the Mexican-born workforce in the united states. In G. J. Borjas, *Mexican Immigration to the United States*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Brooks, B. (2019). Victims of anti-Latino hate crimes soar in U.S.: FBI report. *Reuters.*
- Congressional Budget Office. (2007). The impact of unauthorized immigrants on the budgets of state and local governments.

- Cortes, P. (2008). The effect of low-skilled immigration on us prices: evidence from CPI data. *Journal of Political Economy 116(3)*, 381-422.
- Fahim, K. & Zraick, K. (2008). Killing haunts Ecuadorians' rise in New York. *The New York Times.*
- *FindLaw. (2018). Permanent resident rights.*
- Fiscal Policy Institute. (2015). Immigrant "Main Street" Business Owners Playing an Outsized Role.
- Fix, M.E. & Passel, J.S. (1994). Immigration and immigrants: setting the record straight. *Urban Institute.*
- Goss, S., Wade, A., Skirvin, J.P., Morris, M., Bye, D.M., & Huston, D. (2013). Effects of unauthorized immigration on the actuarial status of the social security trust funds. *Social Security Administration*, Actuarial Note No. 151.
- Immigration Policy Center. (2008). *From anecdotes to evidence: Setting the record straight on immigrants and crime.* Washington D.C: Immigration Policy Center.
- Kandel, W.A. (2014). U.S. family-based immigration policy. *Congressional Research Service Report for Congress.*
- Lowell, B.L., Gelatt, J., & Batalova, J. (2006). Immigrants and labor force trends: the future, past, and present. *Insight 17.*
- Meissner, D., Meyers, D.W., Papademetriou, D.G., & Fix, M. (2006). Immigration and America's future: a new chapter. *Migration Policy Institute.*
- Mock, B. (2007). Hate crimes against Latinos rising nationwide. *Southern Poverty Law Center.*
- Morales, L. (2009). Americans return to tougher immigration stance. *Gallup.*
- National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. (2015). *E-verify.*
- Newport, F. (2007). Americans have become more negative on impact of immigrants. *Gallup.*
- Ottaviano, G.I.P. & Peri, G. (2012). Rethinking the effect of immigration on wages. *Journal of the European Economic Association 10*, 152-197.
- Ottaviano, G. & Peri, G. (2008). Immigration and national wages: clarifying the theory and the empirics. *NBER Working Papers*, 14188. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Peri, G. (2010). The impact of immigrants in recession and economic expansion. *Migration Policy Institute.*
- Rumbaut, R.G. & Ewing, W.A. (2007). *The myth of immigrant criminality and the paradox of assimilation: Incarceration rates among native and foreign-born men.* Washington, DC: American Immigration Law Foundation.
- Sampson, R.J. (2008). Rethinking Crime and Immigration. *Contexts 7(2)*, 28–33.
- State of Arizona. (2010). *Senate Bill 1070.*
- Shierholz, H. (2010). Immigration and wages: methodological advancements confirm modest gains for native workers. *Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper* #255.
- Solheim, C.A., Rojas-Garcia, G., Olson, P.D., & Zuiker, V.S. (2012). Family influences on goals, remittance use, and settlement of Mexican immigrant agricultural workers in Minnesota. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies 43(2)*, 237-259.
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2012). *A Guide to Naturalization.*
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2005). *Information on the Legal Rights Available to Immigrant Victims of Domestic Violence in the United States and Facts about Immigrating on a Marriage-Based Visa.*
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2015). *USCIS Updates Welcome Guide for New Immigrants.*
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2010). *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants.*
- United States English Foundation, Inc. (2014). *American Immigration: An Overview.*
- United States Visas. (n.d.). *The Immigrant Visa Process*.
- Velez, M.B. (2006). Toward an understanding of the lower rates of homicide in Latino versus Black neighborhoods: a look at chicago. In R. D. Peterson, L. J. Krivo, & J. Hagan (Eds.), *The Many Colors of Crime: Inequalities of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America.* New York, NY: New York University Press, 91-107.
- Weissbrodt, D. & Danielson, L. (2004). *The Source and Scope of the Federal Power to Regulate Immigration and Naturalization.*
- Weissbrodt, D. & Danielson, L. (2011). *Immigration Law and Procedure in a Nutshell.* 6th ed. Eagan, MN: West Publishing Company.
- White House. (2014). *Presidential memorandum: Creating welcoming communities and fully integrating immigrants and refugees.*
- Zallman, L., Woolhandler, S., Himmelstein, D., Bor, D., & McCormick, D. (2013). Immigrants contributed an estimated $115.2 billion more to the Medicare trust fund than they took out in 2002-2009. *Health Affairs* 32(6), 1153-1160.

This page titled 3.4: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **3.4: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

3.5: Social Change and Resistance

Current Immigration Issues and the Need for Social Change

With the rise of tougher immigration policies and xenophobic-driven hate crimes (as discussed in Section 3.4), immigrants in the United States have many obstacles to overcome. The next section will highlight some of the most pressing legal matters, as well as, human rights concerns that require social change through a social justice lens.

Immigration Policy and Legal Status Issues

DACA, AB 540, and the DREAM Act

There have been some contemporary changes to immigration matters around undocumented youth in the United States. While these changes are positive, they are temporary. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) came about from an executive memorandum called, "Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children," on behalf of President Barack Obama in 2012 (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2012). DACA allows temporary protection to non-U. S. citizens from deportation, as well as, provide them with renewable work permits. The Anti-Defamatory League (ADL, 2020) writes,

DACA enables certain people who came to the U.S. as children and meet several key guidelines to request consideration for deferred action. It allows non-U.S. citizens who qualify to remain in the country for two years, subject to renewal. Recipients are eligible for work authorization and other benefits, and are shielded from deportation. The fee to request DACA is $495 every two years.

While DACA can be renewable, it is temporary and in 2017, the Trump administration attempted to end DACA, by rescinding it.

After the Trump administration ordered an end to DACA in 2017, several lawsuits were filed against the termination of DACA. Two federal appellate courts have now ruled against the administration, allowing previous DACA recipients to renew their deferred action, and the Supreme Court agreed to review the legal challenges" (ADL, 2020).

In June 2020, the Supreme Court issued a 5-4 decision finding that the Trump administration's termination of DACA was "judicially reviewable" and "done in an arbitrary and capricious manner" (National Immigration Center, 2020; Supreme Court of the United States, 2020). For now, DACA seems to be safe, but DACA is not a permanent solution.

In 2001, California Assembly Bill (AB) 540 was signed into law by Governor Gray Davis and it would go into effect in 2002. According to the UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education (2008), "AB 540 is a California law that allows out-of-state students and undocumented students who meet certain requirements to be exempt from paying nonresident tuition at all public colleges and universities in California." While AB 540 makes college education more accessible and affordable for undocumented immigrants, it provides no pathway for amnesty and permanent legal residency and/or citizenship.

A more permanent solution for undocumented/non-U.S. citizen youth would be to finally pass the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act). According to the ADL (n. d.), the DREAM Act "was a bill in Congress that would have granted legal status to certain undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children and went to school here." Though introduced in Congress in 2001, it has never passed. The minors that would have benefited from this act are referred to as, DREAMers. Given the stalemate regarding this immigration legislature and the unclear trajectory of DREAMers, President Obama promoted the DACA program. Regarding DACA, President Obama remarked,

Precisely because this is temporary, Congress needs to act. There is still time for Congress to pass the DREAM Act this year, because these kids deserve to plan their lives in more than two-year increments. And we still need to pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses our 21st century economic and security needs (Office of the Press Secretary, 2012).

In the interest of social justice and positive social change, the passage the DREAM Act would be a more solid step toward immigration reform. For more information regarding DACA and the DREAM Act, please review the Fact Sheet by the American Immigration Council.



Figure **3.5.1**: "Rally to Encourage Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner to Sign The Safe Zone Bill Chicago Illinois 8-8-18 3073" (CC BY-SA 2.0; www.cemillerphotography.com via Flickr)

Executive Order 13769 was signed by President Donald Trump in 2017 and it is most commonly referred to as the "Muslim Ban." This act attempted to ban immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim nations, which are Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen (white House, 2017). This ban has been challenged legally several times and was overturned in the courts but a revised policy was tentatively permitted by the Supreme Court. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU, 2020),

in a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court upheld the Trump administration's third Muslim ban. As disappointing as this decision is, it does not affect the ACLU of Washington's case against the Trump Administration's refugee ban, Doe et al. v. Trump.

The third Muslim Ban, otherwise known as Muslim Ban 3.0, was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2018 and it is currently in effect, but with some exceptions regarding refugee cases (ACLU, 2020). Muslim Ban 3.0 impacts immigrants from the following countries: Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen. The Muslim Bans reflect extreme **xenophobia** (fear of strangers and/or foreigners) and **Islamophobia** (prejudice and/or discrimination against Muslims and the Islamic religion).

Reunification

The United States policy prioritizes family reunification, and immigrant and refugees' spouses and children are eligible to immigrate without visa quotas. The majority of current immigrants are family members being reunited with United States citizens or permanent residents and all are processed through the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).



Figure **3.5.2**: USCIS providing answers about citizenship and immigration for soldiers and families at Army Community Services in Seoul. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.; US Army Garrison Red Cloud via Flickr)

In addition to these policies that promote family reunification, there are now more accepting policies to support reunification of gay citizens and their immigrant spouses. Historically, United States immigration policy has denied immigration to same-sex orientation applicants. Under the 1917 Immigration Act, homosexuality was grounds for exclusion from immigration. In 1965, Congress argued that gay immigrants were included in a ban on "sexual deviation" (Dunton, 2012). The ban against gay immigrants continued until 1990, when the Immigration and National Act was amended, removing the homosexual exclusion. Moreover, asylum has been granted for persecution due to sexual orientation (Dunton, 2012). Until 2013, immigrants and refugees could apply for residency or visas for their opposite-sex spouses. There was no provision made for same-sex partners. Following the overturn of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), citizens and permanent residents can now sponsor their same-sex spouses for visas. United States citizens can also sponsor a same-sex fiancé for a visa (USCIS, 2014).

Despite these advances, there are two large challenges faced by immigrants seeking reunification. First, it requires substantial time and resources, including legal counsel, to navigate the visa system. Adults can petition for permanent resident visas for themselves and their minor children, but processing such applications can take years. Currently, children of permanent residents can face seven-year wait times to be accepted as legal immigrants (Meissner, Meyers, Papademetriou & Fix, 2006).

In some cases, children can age out of eligibility by the time the application is processed and the visa is granted. Such children then go to the end of the waiting list for adult visa processing (Brown, 2014). The 2002 Child Status Protection Act is designed to protect children against aging out of visa eligibility when the child is the primary applicant for a visa, but the act does not state if it applies if a parent was applying on behalf of their family (Brown, 2014). In the 2014 ruling to Cuellar de Osorio v. Mayorkas, the Supreme Court found that the child status protection act does not apply for children when a parent is applying on behalf of their family. Such young adults have already generally been separated from family for many years, and will now be separated for years or decades more.

Undocumented Families

For families who do not have a sponsoring family member, have a sponsoring employer, or originate from a country with few immigrants, the options for legal immigration to the United States are very limited. Those families who choose to travel to the United States face substantial barriers, including a perilous trip across the border, few resources, and constant threat of deportation.

One of the most dangerous times for undocumented families is the risky trip across the border. In order to avoid border patrol, undocumented immigrants take very dangerous routes across the United States border. The vast majority of all apprehensions of undocumented immigrants are on the border (while the remainder is apprehended through interior enforcement). For example, in 2014 ICE conducted 315,943 removals, 67% of which were apprehended at the border (nearly always by the Border Patrol), and 33% of which were apprehended in the interior (ICE, 2014). The trip and efforts to avoid Border Patrol can be physically dangerous and in some cases, deadly. The acronym ICE symbolizes the fear that immigrants feel about capture and deportation. A deportee in Exile Nation: The Plastic People (2014), a documentary that follows United States deportees in Tijuana, Mexico, stated that ICE was chosen as the acronym for the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency because it "freezes the blood of the most vulnerable."

Even after arrival at the interior of the United States, undocumented immigrants feel stress and anxiety relating to the fear of deportation by ICE (Chavez, Lopez, Englebrecht, & Viramontez Anguiano, 2012). This impacts their daily life activities. Undocumented parents sometimes fear interacting with school, health care systems, and police, for fear of revealing their own undocumented status (Chavez et al., 2012; Menjivar, 2012). They may also avoid driving, as they are not eligible for a driver's license.

Since 2014, the United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) has placed a new emphasis on deporting undocumented immigrants. Department efforts generally prioritize apprehending convicted criminals and threats to public safety, but recent operations have taken a broader approach. In the opening weeks of 2016, ICE coordinated a nationwide operation to apprehend and deport undocumented adults who entered the country with their children, taking 121 people into custody in a single weekend. The majority of these individuals were families who applied for asylum, but whose cases were denied. Similar enforcement operations are planned (DHS Press Office, 2016). In many cases, the parents' largest concern is that immigration enforcement will break up the family. Over 5,000 children have been turned over to the foster care system when parents were deported or detained. This can occur in three ways:

1. when parents are taken into custody by ICE, the child welfare system can reassign custody rights for the child,

2. when a parent is accused of child abuse or neglect and there are simultaneous custody and deportation proceedings, and
3. when a parent who already has a case open in a child welfare system is detained or deported (Enriquez, 2015; Rogerson, 2012).

In the words of a Mexican Immigrant describing how his fear of deportation grew after his baby daughter was born,

one of my greatest fears right now is for anybody to take me away from my baby, and that I cannot provide for my baby. Growing up as a child without a father [as I did], it's very painful… I felt like there was no male to protect them (Enriquez, 2015).

Although the perilous trip and threat of deportation are significant challenges for undocumented immigrant families, there are two recent policy changes that offer new opportunities and protections for undocumented families. First, some states have sought to expand the educational supports available to undocumented immigrants. The State of Minnesota, for example, enacted the "Dream Act" into law in 2013. This unique act, which is also known as the "Path to Prosperity Act," makes undocumented students eligible for State financial aid (Brunswick, 2013).

Second, there are now greater protections for unaccompanied children. In some cases, children travel across the border alone, without their families. They may be traveling to join parents already in the United States, or their parents may send them ahead to try to obtain greater opportunities for them. As a result of human rights activism, unaccompanied and separated immigrant children are now placed in a child welfare framework by licensed facilities under the care of the Office of Refugee Replacement (ORR) (Somers, 2011). They provide for education, health care, and psychological support until they can be released to family or a community (Somers, 2011). Each year, 8,000 unaccompanied immigrant children receive care from the ORR (Somers, 2011).

Immigration Policy as Social Change

There are three shifts in immigration policy that are critical for the well-being of families. First, policy should shift to accelerate family reunification for those families whose visas have been accepted. Families are currently separated from their children for years, caught in a holding pattern of waiting. This leads to stress, grief, and difficulty building relationships during key developmental times in a child's life. Accelerating processing applications and shorter wait times would facilitate greater family well-being.

Second, policy could provide greater protection for vulnerable children in undocumented or mixed-status families. In cases where a parent is deported, the child's welfare should be carefully considered in whether to leave the child in the care of a local caregiver or provide the option to send the child to the home country with their parent.

Third, policies that are either directly and/or indirectly discriminate against a particular ethnic/racial/religious group, like the Muslim Ban, should be immediately rescinded. The jarring racism invoked by these kinds of policies justified as "national safety" is antithetical to a true democracy.

Human Rights Issues

While human rights have in large part been internationalized, they have to be implemented at the domestic level. According to Donnelly (2003), this dichotomy permits countries to fulfill dual and seemingly incompatible roles: essential protector and principle violator. In the United States, this duality can be seen in the difference between the laws upon which the country was founded and the implementation of these laws in an equitable fashion.

The Bill of Rights, as codified in the United States Constitution, lays out specific human rights that parallel those to which the majority of international human rights regimes adhere. Thus, the founding myths of this country are grounded in the central place of human rights (Donnelly, 2003). In fact, many if not most liberal democracies share these constitutive principles. As Koopmans (2012) points out, "internal constitutive principles – such as the right to exercise one's religion…imply that the granting of rights to individuals and groups will be more similar across democracies than it will be between them and non-democracies." And yet, there remain significant areas where United States domestic policy can be seen to violate various rights of various portions of the population at any given time.



Figure 3.5.3: The original Bill of Rights, United States. (CC PDM 1.0; National Archives)



Figure 3.5.4: Poster depicting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, English. (CC PDM 1.0; United Nations)

Political Issues

The most pressing human rights issues in the United States revolve around immigrant and refugee families. The strategic priorities outlined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) include: (a) countering discrimination; (b) combating impunity and strengthening accountability; (c) pursing economic, social and cultural rights and combating poverty; (d) protecting human rights in the context of migration; (e) protecting human rights during armed conflict, violence and insecurity; and (f) strengthening international human rights mechanisms and the progressive development of international human rights law. Priorities (a), (c) and (d) make up the elements most germane to the human rights situation in the United States today. The difficulties faced by immigrant and refugee families include classism, racism, sexism, and discrimination on the basis of religion as well as uncertain economic circumstances.



Figure **3.5.5**: Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, meets President of the United States, Barack Obama. (CC BY 3.0 US; White House)

The United States voted in favor of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) but it did not ratify (i.e., sign) the document. While various theories attempt to explain relevant reasons, numerous rights enshrined in the UDHR are in the Constitution and Bill of Rights (Advocates for Human Rights, n.d.) The United States' apparent sense of exceptionalism to international standards and norms has been evidenced over time in two main ways: the ongoing torture of Guantanamo Bay detainees and the revelation that American social scientists were involved in reverse engineering torture techniques for the government. While the United States may at times act outside of the limitations established by the international community (and specifically the UDHR) this stance is not the focus of this chapter. As the UNCHR notes, "national and local politicians have sought to mobilize electoral support by promoting xenophobic sentiments, exaggerating the negative impact of hosting refugees while ignoring the fact that refugees can actually attract international assistance and investment to an area, creating new jobs and trading opportunities" (2006). In this way the refugee situation has often been used as a political football in United States political culture.

Legal Issues

The current legal climate in the United States is negatively skewed against international human rights, particularly as it pertains to the legal status of **displaced persons** (persons who are forced to leave their home country due to war, persecution or natural disasters). There are many reasons to be pessimistic about successfully using international human rights arguments as a way of advancing displaced person's rights in the United States (Chilton, 2014; Cole, 2006; International Council on Human Rights, 2008). According to Cole (2006), in spite of its history as a nation of immigrants, the United States remains deeply nationalist and quite parochial; the law reflects that parochialism. Furthermore, "International human rights arguments are often seen as the advocates' last refuge pulled out only when there is no other authority to cite" (Cole, 2006).

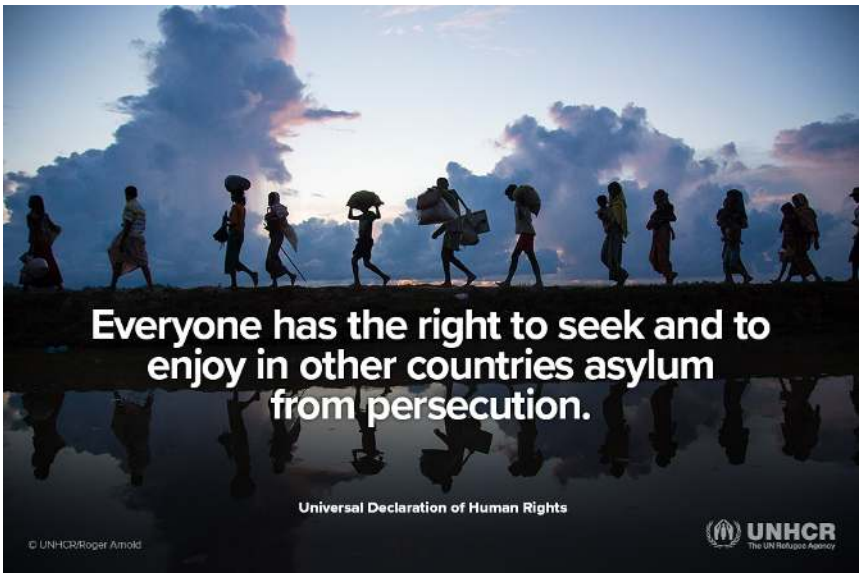


Figure **3.5.6**: Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (CC PDM 1.0; United Nations Refugee Agency via Twitter)

However, this trend seems to be moving the national towards the transnational in terms of how human rights law is perceived and implemented in the legal system and culture of the United States. This means that increased globalization and interdependence has had the effect of strengthening the influence of international human rights standards in the United States. The hope is that these standards may “command greater respect from our own domestic institutions" (Cole, 2006). Cole further posits that the paradigm shift in the United States from national to transnational, merging the national and the international, parallels the shift in the United States from state to federal power that occurred with the advent of the New Deal in the 1930s. In other words, there is reason to hope that gradual change is coming within the legal system in the United States with regards to its acceptance of the international human rights regimes norms and standards.

Refugee families and asylum seekers

The terms of refugee and asylum seeker are often used interchangeably, but there are important legal differences between them, as discussed in Chapter 3.1. These differences not only determine which resources they are eligible for once arriving in the United States, but also in which phase of the legal process they are currently.



Figure **3.5.7**: Refugees and displaced persons in South-East Asia; Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. (BY-NC-ND 2.0; United Nations Photo via Flickr)

Refugees

An estimated 51.2 million people were displaced since 2013 as a direct result of persecution, war, violence, and human rights atrocities (UNHCR, 2013). In 2013, the United States Department of Justice (USDOJ, 2014) received 36,674 asylum applications but only approved 9,993. The remaining applications were abandoned (1,439), withdrawn (6,400), or simply unaccounted for

(11,391). Being that the recent United States population estimate is 318 million people, refugees make up less than 1% of the population. The families seeking asylum from their home countries often have significant traumatic histories and thus can loom larger in the public sphere than other types of immigrants. Most of these families are fleeing extreme injustices in their home country, such as war, political instability, genocide and severe oppression. Because of the uncertainty of their original situation, it remains quite difficult for the USDHS to determine who is legitimately eligible for asylum.

Asylum seekers

A further complication for government agencies lies in trying to determine when and how to return rejected asylum seekers to their home countries (Koser, 2007). Within the domain of international migration studies there has been traditionally a differentiation made between refugees (involuntary migration) and labor seekers (voluntary migration). While the former group represents the political outcome of global systems and interactions and the latter group represents the economic outcome, nonetheless, it is quite clear that people migrate for a whole complex series of reasons, including social ones (Koser, 2007). If an asylum-seeker's claim for asylum is denied, they are placed in deportation proceedings. During this process, an immigration judge (IJ) works with the asylum-seekers' attorney to determine the removal process. It is important to note that displaced persons are rarely detained and/or immediately placed on the next flight to their country of origin.

Sex Trafficking and Human Trafficking

The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, defines **trafficking** as the "…recruitment, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by any means of threat or force…for the purpose of exploitation." This crime is globally categorized as either sex trafficking or labor trafficking. According to the DOJ (2006), there have been an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 sex trafficking victims in the United States since 2001. Furthermore, estimates of persons currently in situations of forced labor or sexual servitude in the United States range from 40,000 to 50,000.

The leading countries of origin for foreign victims in fiscal year (FY) 2011 were Mexico, Philippines, Thailand, Guatemala, Honduras, and India (United States Department of State, 2012). In 2011, "notable prosecutions included those of sex and labor traffickers who used threats of deportation, violence, and sexual abuse to compel young, undocumented Central American women and girls into hostess jobs and forced prostitution in bars and nightclubs on Long Island, New York" (United States Department of State, 2012). According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2016), globally an estimated 4.5 million women, men, and children are sexually exploited. There is some legal benefit (a self-petitioned visa in the United States) in place for those who cooperate in prosecuting their traffickers, as these visa victims can receive four years of legal status. Unfortunately, far fewer receive immigration aid than are identified as victims of sex trafficking (United States Department of State, 2012).

Human trafficking is another area where issues of physical safety and sexual exploitation of immigrant and refugee women and children come to the forefront as a human rights issue. Contrary to popular thought, sex trafficking is an ongoing and insidious activity that also includes young boys, and the prevalence of human and sex trafficking in the United States disproportionately affects the more vulnerable, under-resourced populations such as immigrant and refugee families (United States Department of State, 2012).

Mixed Status (Deportation) and Separation of Families

One of the most pressing human rights issues for displaced persons in the United States today is the mixed-status families (i.e., documented and undocumented). These are families whose members hold different levels of legal status in the country. Some members of the family may be documented persons (such as asylum-seeker, permanent resident or citizen) while others have undocumented status. Though the children born to undocumented migrants typically receive citizenship by birth, this does not change their parents' legal status. The exception, however, is when undocumented parents return to their country of origin and wait until that child is 18 years of age; at that point the young adult child can sponsor them in becoming United States citizens. When families consist of members whose legal status is documented as well as undocumented, this uncertain distal context can set the stage for significant vulnerabilities within the family.

Brabeck and Xu (2010), who studied of the effects of detention and deportation on children of Latino/a immigrants, found that the legal vulnerability of Latino/a parents, as measured by immigration status and detention and deportation experience, predicted child well-being. In other words, the children suffer when they cannot be sure whether their parents will be able to stay and live with them in United States on a day-to-day basis. Kanstroom (2010) writes that

although international law recognizes the power of the state to deport noncitizens, international human rights law has also long recognized the importance of procedural regularity, family unity, and proportionality. When such norms are violated the State may well be obligated to provide a remedy.

Once again the paradox of international human rights norms conflicts with the actual social and political practices of the United States; as of this writing the issue remains a political football in the United States.

The most egregious contemporary example of the separation of families are the children deliberately taken away from their families and put in cages. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), children who were already-traumatized were then caged within locked warehouses, left to sleep under blankets akin to aluminum foil (Vinson, 2020). This separation and harsh treatment is linked to the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance policy" in which

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions ordered prosecutors along the border to 'adopt immediately a zero-tolerance policy' for illegal border crossings. That included prosecuting parents traveling with their children as well as people who subsequently attempted to request asylum (Domonoske & Gonzales, 2018).

Amidst great pushback and critique of the "zero-tolerance policy," President Trump signed Executive Order 13841, Affording Congress an Opportunity to Address Family Separation, on June 20, 2018 (white House, 2018). Unfortunately, the SPLC reports that six days after Executive Order 13841 was signed,

U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw issued a nationwide injunction to halt family separations. But since then, the practice has continued under the American public’s nose (Vinson, 2020).

The result of these deliberate separations was not just the traumatization of migrant children, but the inability by the federally appointed lawyers "track down the parents of 545 children and that about two-thirds of those parents were deported to Central America without their children, according to a filing Tuesday from the American Civil Liberties Union" (Ainsley & Soboroff, 2020). However, the cruelty does not end there. There is a recent report that alleges that unaccompanied migrant children are treated poorly and inhumanely by the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staff (Armus, 2020). While those complaints are being investigated, there have been at least seven children that have died while in immigration custody (Acevedo, 2019). Thus, the report that migrant children are being mistreated seems to be accurate given these multiple deaths. Upholding immigration policies and laws should not violate human rights nor result in the abuse and/or death of migrants while in detention.



Figure **3.5.8**: Protesting for immigration reform. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Peoplesworld)

Detention Without Trial and Other Detention Issues

In 2011, United States Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that codified, for the first time since the McCarthy era, indefinite detention without charge or trial. Subjecting refugees to detention induces unnecessary psychological fear and harm. Furthermore, it does not uphold the fundamental human rights principles set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) preamble (Prasow, 2012). The notion that people, whether citizens, documented or undocumented

immigrants, could be held by the government indefinitely without access to the protections enshrined in the United States Constitution is a clear violation of international human rights law and anathema to human rights and civil liberties groups. As of late 2012, members of Congress proposed to have it repealed or amended. As noted by Senator Dianne Feinstein of California,

Just think of it. If someone is of the wrong race and they are in a place where there is a terrorist attack, they could be picked up, they could be held without charge or trial for month after month, year after year. That is wrong (Prasow, 2012).

The amendment that Senator Feinstein proposed, however, would protect only citizens and lawful residents; undocumented immigrants would still be subject to this odious practice.

Yet another odious practice associated with detention is the forced sterilization, by way of hysterectomies, of migrant women. As The Intercept reports, "At least 17 women treated by a doctor alleged to have performed unnecessary or overly aggressive gynecological procedures without proper informed consent remain in detention at Irwin County Detention Center, a privately run facility in Georgia housing U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement detainees" (Washington & Olivares, 2020). While this compulsory sterilization issue is focused around one facility and one doctor, it remains to be addressed if other facilities and/or doctors have also been involved. As these allegations are reviewed and investigated, some of the migrant women that have spoken out about these unnecessary and overly aggressive gynecological procedures have been deported while others are set to be deported (Washington & Olivares, 2020).

Past and Present Resistance

Immigrants face significant and complex challenges in achieving economic well-being. Legislation such as the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) currently limit immigrants' access to employment, housing, and health services. The implementation of these restrictive policies is often fueled by misconceptions of the economic impact of immigrants in the greater society, especially the perception that undocumented immigrants place an economic burden on our health care system. Federal policies that facilitate more effective access to employment, housing, and healthcare and financial services are needed. Since federal policies are currently not effective and, given other general obstacles that immigrants face, immigrants and their allies continue to resist and demonstrate their resiliency as outlined below.

Labor Organizations

Some of the first organizations to advocate for and organize immigrants were labor unions. Two notable examples are the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) and the United Farm Workers of America (UFW). Given the nature of the type of work that is represented by both unions, these unions were comprised of workers of many different characteristics including, but not limited to: immigrants, Latinos, Asian and Pacific Islanders, African Americans, men, and women.

UCAPAWA was formed in 1937 and unlike other unions at the time, this union embraced women in leadership roles. Moreover, this union demonstrated an intersectional approach to rights since labor, gender, and immigrant rights were so interconnected with one another. This intersectionality is best exemplified by Luisa Moreno, a Guatemalan immigrant that was the first Latina to serve on the executive committee of UCAPAWA (Acuña, 2015). Unfortunately, Luisa Moreno's efforts and activism were cut short as is stated here:

Moreno's commitment to immigrant laborers endured across World War II. But in the postbellum 'red scare' that marked the onset of America's Cold War with the Soviet Union, Moreno's workers' rights campaign was tragically truncated. Increasingly unsympathetic toward activist immigrants, the federal government in 1950 concocted a warrant for Moreno's immediate deportation, citing her association with the Communist Party as a threat to national security. Rather than subject herself to the humiliation of forced removal, Moreno left the U.S. that November (Smith, 2018).

The tactic of threatening to deport labor and/or political activists is not uncommon, but it clearly is meant to undermine the efforts by immigrants attempting to help others and resist exploitative practices (Acuña, 2015).

The UFW represents the 1962 merger of two labor organizations Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) and National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), but it became an actual labor union in 1965 under the name, UFW (Acuña, 2015). Agricultural work has and continues to rely on immigrant laborers, however, the UFW historically had an adverse policy around undocumented immigrant workers. According to Frank Bardacke (2013),

These first members of the UFW felt threatened by the open border and by the large number of green carders and illegals who lived in Mexicali and were beginning to work in the table grapes...Becoming part of the official labor movement did nothing to ease [Cesar] Chavez's fear that this new wave of illegal immigration would cripple his attempts to build his union, as the labor movement had a long history, especially in California, of opposing high wages for domestic union workers. The UFW's anti-illegals policies fit smoothly within what has been, until very recently, a standard organizing approach of much of US labor.

Eventually, the anti-undocumented immigrant policies promoted within the UFW were terminated and in an effort to combat this xenophobic reputation, "they led the fight against Proposition 187, took the lead in other pro-immigrant campaigns, and have been strong advocates for the undocumented ever since (Bardacke, 2013)." It is interesting to see how unions have had to navigate the concerns of the workers they represent, which includes legal immigrants, but in doing so, may have ostracized undocumented immigrants. However, that no longer seems to be the case for the UFW or the newer unions and labor organizations that have been formed. Ruth Milkman's book (2000) discusses how more contemporary labor organizing is inclusive of undocumented immigrants when describing the Justice for Janitors Campaign and the more recent strategies employed by both the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

California Proposition 187 and Arizona SB 1070

Unlike DACA and the proposed DREAM Act, not all contemporary immigration policies and legislation have been positive. To illustrate this point, California's Proposition 187 and Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 are among the most notorious examples of anti-immigrant discrimination. Regarding Proposition 187, Acuña (2015) writes,

the draconian SOS (Save Our State) Initiative, Proposition 187, appeared on the November 1994 California ballot. It proposed denying health and educational services to undocumented immigrants.

This proposition was approved by voters and was intended to go into effect, but was challenged legally. According to the ACLU (1999),

A court-approved mediation today ended years of legal and political debate over Proposition 187...The agreement confirms that no child in the state of California will be deprived of an education or stripped of health care due to their place of birth. It also makes clear that the state cannot regulate immigration law, a function that the U.S. Constitution clearly assigns to the federal government.

The extreme nativism of Proposition 187 galvanized immigrant's rights groups and allies whom took to the streets to protest. The Los Angeles Times (1994) reported that "In one of the largest mass protests in the city's history, an estimated 70,000 demonstrators marched from the Eastside to Downtown on Sunday in boisterous condemnation of Proposition 187, the anti-illegal immigration initiative, and its best-known advocate, Gov. Pete Wilson" (McDonnell & Lopez, 1994). The large protests against Prop. 187 are a poignant example of resistance by immigrants and their allies and for immigrant's rights and immigration reform.

Comparably, Arizona SB 1070 was signed into law in 2010 by Governor Jan Brewer and it

aimed at preventing illegal immigration that has significantly affected the Mexico-bordering state over many decades. The law, entitled Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, would require law enforcement officials to enforce existing federal immigration laws in the state by checking the immigration status of a person they have 'reasonable suspicion' of being in the U.S. illegally (FindLaw, 2018).

Like Prop. 187, this law was also legally challenged and was considered to be one of the strictest anti-immigrant laws in the U. S. (Archibold, 2010). Despite the years of legal battles, "the heart of SB1070 still beats, however faintly, after critics failed to strike down the requirement that law enforcers ask about people's legal status during routine stops" (del Puerto, 2016). As reported in the Tucson Sentinel,

tens of thousands of protesters marched on Arizona's State Capitol in Phoenix Saturday as they demonstrated against the state's controversial immigration law, SB 1070...Police declined to estimate the size of the crowd, but it appeared at least 10,000 to 20,000 protesters braved temperatures that were forecast to reach 95 degrees by mid-afternoon. Organizers had said they expected the demonstration to bring as many as 50,000 people (Smith, 2010).

Ongoing protests and resistance to SB1070 continue given that it "gave birth to a spirit of activism among young immigrants" and "a decade after SB 1070 became law, local police agencies are enforcing it in different ways" (Arizona Central, 2020).

May Day Protests

In the previous section, large-scale protests that opposed anti-immigrant legislation were discussed. Perhaps the biggest protest organized to support immigration reform and immigrant rights was the May Day March of 2006, also referred to as "A Day Without Immigrants." As reported by The Guardian,

A sea of white-shirted protesters 300,000 strong, chanting "Si, se puede" ('Yes, it can be done') surged through Los Angeles. In Chicago police said up to 400,000 protesters had taken part in a rally. Other large demonstrations took place in Denver, which saw 75,000 protesters, Houston and San Diego (Glaister & MacAskill, 2006).

The 2006 May Day protests were not just massive, but took place throughout the United States over concerns over HR 4437 that would criminalize undocumented immigrants, in the name of toughen border control. Crucially, it does not offer any path to citizenship for those already residing in the US (Glaister & MacAskill, 2006). Since comprehensive immigration reform that would include amnesty for undocumented immigrant has not been achieved, another May Day protest was organized.

The second May Day March took place in 2017, but these protests happened all over the world. As reported by Elliot C. McLaughlin (2017) for CNN, "May Day protests turned violent in several cities around the world Monday as 'anarchists' forced police to cancel permits and arrest dozens of protesters in a day meant to celebrate workers and the gains made by labor advocates." The global spread of these protests highlights the need to address immigrant rights as both a national and transnational issue. Although there was violence at some of these rallies, this violence should not be used to distract from the focus on equitable immigration reform and the growing resistance against anti-immigration policies and rhetoric.

Immigrant Rights Movement and Activism



Figure 3.5.9: "Arab, African, Middle Eastern, Muslim, South Asian Immigrant Rights Coalition" (CC BY 2.0; dignidadrebelde via Flickr)

Thus far, multiple examples of organizing and activism by and for immigrants have been discussed, and they would all be considered to be in support of the Immigrant Rights Movement. (See more discussion of the Immigrant Rights Movement in Chapter 11.2). Paul Engler (2009) from the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC) describes the Immigrant Rights Movement as "a vibrant social movement in the United States...emerged to protect these immigrants from discrimination and from many cases of excessively repressive enforcement of immigration laws, as well as to advocate for legislation that will provide a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants." Given the current and dramatic increase of nativism and xenophobia, the Immigrants Rights Movement has had an uptick in organizing efforts and activism. Here are a few examples:

1. #NoKidsinCages is a campaign promoted by The Refugee AND Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES) to support migrant justice and specifically bring attention to the the migrant children that have been separated from their families while still in immigration detention. People can become active by organizing, volunteering, donating, and even getting the word out via social media.

2. Families Belong Together is a campaign "of the National Domestic Workers Alliance formed in response to the 2018 family separation crisis. Families Belong Together works with nearly 250 organizations representing Americans from all backgrounds who have joined together to fight family separation and promote dignity, unity and compassion for all children and families." Like the #NoKidsinCages campaign, folks can become active by volunteering, using social media to get the word out, and signing letters/petitions demanding the shut down of detention facilities and even the resignation of DHS officials.
3. DREAMers the continued battle to finally get the DREAM Act passed has evolved and led to DREAMer activists that are "undocumented and unafraid." Most undocumented youth used to be scared to reveal their status for fear of reprisal, but more DREAMers are now outspoken about their situation and the need for immigration reform (Sabate, 2012). As described by Julissa Treviño (2018),

Beyond pushing for the DREAM Act, activists believe changes in the nation's public discourse present an opportunity to expand the conversation. The face of DACA – and the immigration movement overall – has been high-achieving young immigrants whose accomplishments made them sympathetic to the general public.

While there is no one organization that represents all DREAMers and their allies, United We Dream is the largest immigrant youth-led organization. Similar to the two campaigns listed above, people can become active by signing petitions, starting campaigns, donating to organizations that focus around immigrant rights, and getting the word out through social media.

Future Directions

Research is needed to more deeply understand the values, needs, and stressors in immigrant and refugee families as they transition to new environments. Worry about supporting their families creates stress which can lead to mental health issues. We need to understand the connections between financial worry, labor stability, educational access, and mental health in these families - and find ways to support them. Moreover, we must assess the extent of the impact of contemporary xenophobic and nativistic policies on migrant families and finally provide comprehensive immigration reform that has been desperately needed since 1986 IRCA's amnesty provision.

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Immigrant and Refugee Families (Ballard, Wieling, and Solheim) (CC BY-NC 4.0)

Works Cited

- Acevedo, N. (2019). Why are migrant children dying in U.S. custody? NBC News.
- Acuña, R.F. (2015). *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos.* 8th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Advocates for Human Rights. (n.d.). *Human Rights and the U.S.* The Advocates of Human Rights.
- Ainsley, J. & Soboroff, J. (2020). Lawyers say they can't find the parents of 545 migrant children separated by trump administration. *NBC News.*
- American Civil Liberties Union. (1999). *CA'S Anti-Immigrant Proposition 187 is Voided, Ending State's Five-Year Battle with ACLU, Rights Groups.* ACLU.org.
- American Civil Liberties Union. (2020). *Timeline of the Muslim Ban.* ACLU.org.
- Anti-Defamation League. (2020). *What is DACA and who are the DREAMers?* ADL.org.
- Anti-Defamation League. (n. d.). *What is the Dream Act and Who are the Dreamers?* ADL.org.
- Archibold, R.C. (2010). Arizona enacts stringent law on immigration. *The New York Times.*
- Arizona Central. (2020). *SB 1070: A legacy of fear, divisiveness and fulfillment.*
- Armus, T. (2020). Unaccompanied migrant children suffer 'inhumane and cruel experience' in cbp custody, report alleges. *The Washington Post*.
- Bardacke, F. (2013). The ufw and the undocumented. *International Labor and Working-Class History 83*, 162-169.
- Brabeck, K. & Xu, Q. (2010). The impact of detention and deportation on Latino immigrant children and families: a quantitative exploration. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences 32(3)*, 341-361.
- Brown, K.J. (2014). The long journey home: Cuellar de Osario v. Mayorkas and the importance of meaningful judicial review in protecting immigrant rights. *Boston College Journal Of Law & Social Justice 34(4)*, 1-13.

- Brunswick, M. (2013). Minnesota senate boosts undocumented students' college dreams. *Star Tribune*.
- Callahan, M. (2018). #Metoo, #Blacklivesmatter, #nobannowall: social movements likely to dominate 2018. *News@Northeastern.*
- Chavez, J.M., Lopez, A., Englebrecht, C.M., & Viramontez Anguiano, R.P. (2012). Sufren los niños: exploring the impact of unauthorized immigration status on children's well-being. *Family Court Review 50(4)*, 638-649.
- Chilton, A.S. (2014). Influence of international human rights agreements on public opinion. *The Chicago Journal of International Law 15:1*, 110-137.
- Cole, D. (2006). The idea of humanity: human rights and immigrants' rights. *Columbia Human Rights Law Review 37(3)*, 627-658.
- del Puerto, L. (2016). A Timeline – the tumultuous legal life of Arizona's sb1070. *The Arizona Capitol Times*.
- Domonoske, C. & Gonzales, R. (2018). What we know: Family separation and 'zero tolerance' at the border. *NPR.*
- Donnelly, J. (2003). *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice.* 2nd ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Dunton, E.S. (2012). Same sex, different rights: amending U.S. immigration law to recognize same-sex partners of refugees and asylees. *Family Court Review 50(2)*, 357-371.
- Engler, P. (2009). *The us immigrant rights movement (2004-ongoing). International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.*
- Enriquez, L.E. (2015). Multigenerational punishment: shared experiences of undocumented immigration status within mixed-status families. *Journal of Marriage and Family 77*, 939-953.
- FindLaw. (2018). *Arizona Immigration Law (S.B. 1070).*
- Glaister, D. & MacAskill, E. (2006). US counts cost of day without immigrants.*The Guardian*.
- International Council on Human Rights. (2008). *Climate Change and Human Rights: A Rough Guide*.
- Kanstroom, D. (2010). *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Koopmans, R. (2012). The Post-naturalization of immigrant rights: A theory in search of evidence. *The British Journal of Sociology 63(1)*, 22-30.
- Koser, K. (2007). Refugees, transnationalism and the state. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 33(2)*, 233-254.
- McConnell, P.J. & Lopez, R.J. (1994). L.A. March against prop. 187 draws 70,000: immigration: protesters condemn wilson for backing initiative that they say promotes 'racism, scapegoating.' *Los Angeles Times*.
- McLaughlin. E.C. (2017). May day rallies turn violent as 'anarchists' in one city throw smoke bombs, police say. *CNN*.
- Meissner, D., Meyers, D.W., Papademetriou, D.G., & Fix, M. (2006). Immigration and America's future: a new chapter. Migration Policy Institute.
- Menjívar, C. (2012). Transnational parenting and immigration law: central americans in the United States. J*ournal of Ethnic & Migration Studies 38(2)*, 301-322.
- Milkman, R. (2000). *Organizing Immigrants: The Challenge for Unions in Contemporary California*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- National Immigration Center. (2020). *Supreme Court Overturns Trump Administration's Termination of DACA.*
- Office of the Press Secretary. (2012). Remarks by the president on immigration. *The White House.*
- Peterson Institute for International Economics. (2005). *US Immigration Policy and Recent Immigration Trends.*
- Prasow, A. (2012). Indefinite detention is already bad, don't add discrimination. *The Huffington Post.*
- Rogerson, S. (2012). Unintended and unavoidable: The failure to protect rule and its consequences for undocumented parents and their children. *Family Court Review 50(4)*, 580-593.
- Sabate, A. (2012). The rise of being 'undocumented and unafraid.' *ABC News*.
- Smith. D. (2010). Tens of thousands protest sb 1070 at Phoenix march. *Tucson Sentinel.*
- Smith, R. P. (2018). Guatemalan immigrant Luísa Moreno was expelled from the U.S. for her groundbreaking labor activism. *Smithsonian Magazine*.
- Somers, A. (2011). Voice, agency and vulnerability: he immigration of children through systems of protection and enforcement. *International Migration 49(5)*, 3-14.
- Supreme Court of the United States. (2020). *Department of Homeland Security, et al. v. Regents of the University of California, et al.*
- Treviño, J. (2018). Leaving the perfect dreamer narrative behind: The immigrant rights movement in Trump's America. *Remezcla*.
- United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2006). *The State of the World's Refugees 2006: Human Displacement in the New Millennium*.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2013). *War's Human Cost: UNHCR Global Trends 2013*.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2013). *World at War: UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014*.
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2014). *Policy Manual*, Volume 12.
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2015). Lesson plan overview: female asylum applicants and gender-related claims. *Asylum Officer Basic Training.*
- United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2010). *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants.*
- United States Department of Homeland Security Press Office. (2016). Statement by secretary jeh c. johnson on southwest border security. *DHS Press Release*.
- United States Department of Homeland Security. (2012). *Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children*.
- United States Department of Justice. (2014). *FY 2013 Statistics Yearbook.*
- United States Department of Justice. (2006). *Trafficking in Persons Report.*
- United States Department of State. (2015). Myths and facts: resettling Syrian refugees. *DOS Press Release*.
- United States Department of State. (2012). *Trafficking in Persons Report 2012*.
- United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement. (2014). *ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report*
- University of California at Los Angeles Center for Labor Research and Education. (2008). *Underground Undergrads*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education.
- Vinson, L. (2020). Family separation policy continues two years after trump administration claims it ended. *SPLC*.
- Washington, J. and J. Olivares. (2020). Number of women alleging misconduct by ice gynecologist nearly triples. *The Intercept*.
- White House. (2017). *Executive Order 13769.*
- White House. (2018). *Executive Order 13841*.

This page titled 3.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY-NC license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **3.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism

4.1: Socialization and Culture

4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice

4.3: Discrimination

4.4: Racism

4.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 4: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

4.1: Socialization and Culture

Socialization is the process through which people are taught to be proficient members of a society. It describes the ways that people come to understand societal norms and expectations, to accept society's beliefs, and to be aware of societal values. Socialization helps people learn to function successfully in their social worlds. How does the process of socialization occur? How do we come to adopt the beliefs, values, and norms that represent its nonmaterial culture? This learning takes place through interaction with various agents of socialization, like peer groups and families, plus both formal and informal social institutions.

Socialization is critical both to individuals and to the societies in which they live. It illustrates how completely intertwined human beings and their social worlds are. First, it is through teaching culture to new members that a society perpetuates itself. If new generations of a society don't learn its way of life, it ceases to exist. Whatever is distinctive about a culture must be transmitted to those who join it in order for a society to survive.

Agents of Socialization

Social groups often provide the first experiences of socialization. Families, and later peer groups, communicate expectations and reinforce norms. People first learn to use the tangible objects of material culture in these settings, as well as being introduced to the beliefs and values of society.

Family is the first agent of socialization. Mothers and fathers, siblings and grandparents, plus members of an extended family, all teach a child what he or she needs to know. For example, they show the child how to use objects (such as clothes, computers, eating utensils, books, bikes); how to relate to others (some as "family," others as "friends," still others as "strangers" or "teachers" or "neighbors"); and how the world works (what is "real" and what is "imagined"). As you are aware, either from your own experience as a child or from your role in helping to raise one, socialization includes teaching and learning about an unending array of objects and ideas.

Sociologists recognize that race, social class, religion, and other societal factors play an important role in socialization. For example, poor families usually emphasize obedience and conformity when raising their children, while wealthy families emphasize judgment and creativity (National Opinion Research Center, 2008). This may occur because working-class parents have less education and more repetitive-task jobs for which it is helpful to be able to follow rules and conform. Wealthy parents tend to have better educations and often work in managerial positions or careers that require creative problem solving, so they teach their children behaviors that are beneficial in these positions. This means children are effectively socialized and raised to take the types of jobs their parents already have, thus reproducing the class system (Kohn, 1977). Likewise, children are socialized to abide by gender norms, perceptions of race, and class-related behaviors.

A **peer group** is made up of people who are similar in age and social status and who share interests. Peer group socialization begins in the earliest years, such as when kids on a playground teach younger children the norms about taking turns, the rules of a game, or how to shoot a basket. As children grow into teenagers, this process continues. Peer groups are important to adolescents in a new way, as they begin to develop an identity separate from their parents and exert independence. Additionally, peer groups provide their own opportunities for socialization since kids usually engage in different types of activities with their peers than they do with their families. Peer groups provide adolescents' first major socialization experience outside the realm of their families. Interestingly, studies have shown that although friendships rank high in adolescents' priorities, this is balanced by parental influence.

The social institutions of our culture also inform our socialization. Formal institutions—like schools, workplaces, and the government—teach people how to behave in and navigate these systems. Other institutions, like the media, contribute to socialization by inundating us with messages about norms and expectations.

School and classroom rituals, led by teachers serving as role models and leaders, regularly reinforce what society expects from children. Sociologists describe this aspect of schools as the **hidden curriculum**, the informal teaching done by schools.

For example, in the United States, schools have built a sense of competition into the way grades are awarded and the way teachers evaluate students (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). When children participate in a relay race or a math contest, they learn there are winners and losers in society. When children are required to work together on a project, they practice teamwork with other people in cooperative situations. The hidden curriculum prepares children for the adult world. Children learn how to deal with bureaucracy,

rules, expectations, waiting their turn, and sitting still for hours during the day. Schools in different cultures socialize children differently in order to prepare them to function well in those cultures. The latent functions of teamwork and dealing with bureaucracy are features of U.S. culture.

Schools also socialize children by teaching them about citizenship and national pride. In the United States, children are taught to say the Pledge of Allegiance. Most districts require classes about U.S. history and geography. As academic understanding of history evolves, textbooks in the United States have been scrutinized and revised to update attitudes toward other cultures as well as perspectives on historical events; thus, children are socialized to a different national or world history than earlier textbooks may have done. For example, information about the mistreatment of African Americans and Native American Indians more accurately reflects those events than in textbooks of the past.

Religion is an important avenue of socialization for many people. The United States is full of synagogues, temples, churches, mosques, and similar religious communities where people gather to worship and learn. Like other institutions, these places teach participants how to interact with the religion's material culture (like a mezuzah, a prayer rug, or a communion wafer). For some people, important ceremonies related to family structure—like marriage and birth—are connected to religious celebrations. Many religious institutions also uphold gender norms and contribute to their enforcement through socialization. From ceremonial rites of passage that reinforce the family unit to power dynamics that reinforce gender roles, organized religion fosters a shared set of socialized values that are passed on through society.

Mass media distribute impersonal information to a wide audience, via television, newspapers, radio, and the Internet. With the average person spending over four hours a day in front of the television (and children averaging even more screen time), media greatly influences social norms (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout 2005). People learn about objects of material culture (like new technology and transportation options), as well as nonmaterial culture—what is true (beliefs), what is important (values), and what is expected (norms).

Socialization by Race and Ethnicity

Racial-Ethnic Socialization

Racial-ethnic socialization is defined as the processes by which children acquire the behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of an ethnic group, and come to see themselves and others as members of the group.

This section is licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: Racial-Ethnic Socialization (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

The previously stated agents of socialization such as parents, mass media, and peers are significant teachers of how children see their own race or ethnicity - as well as how they view other groups and individuals. None of us are born racist, ethnocentric, or culturally competent. Racism is a learned trait.

The American Psychological Association explains that racial socialization should be understood differently depending on the race of children:

> Parents of Black children, along with parents of other ethnically underrepresented youth, are tasked with teaching their children how to navigate, and sometimes even survive, a society that may give messages that undermine parents' efforts. Parents often must counteract messages their youth receive from broader society including the media, and the judicial, educational and health systems, to name a few. The way in which parents teach their youth how to navigate the often contradictory messages or teach them what it means to be Black is called racial socialization (Gaskin, 2015).

Though parents may tailor these messages to their children differently depending on a child's skin tone, gender, age, or sexual orientation, Gaskin (2015) identifies the following communication that parents may have with their children of color:

1. Messages emphasizing pride in being Black or a person of color
2. Warnings about racial inequalities
3. Messages that de-emphasize the importance of race (sometimes called a "color-blind" approach) and instead may emphasize that hard work will ensure someone can overcome racism
4. Mistrust of other ethnic groups
5. Silence about race and racial issues

White parents are generally unlikely to discuss race or racism for that matter in any direct fashion with their white children, but of some white families do have these discussions. More frequently, the norm for many white children is learning color-blindness, which sociologists identify as a form or racism (discussed in this Chapter 4.4) or white silence. Additionally, white racial socialization tends to be a process by which white youth "learn what it means to be white in a society that currently values whiteness" (Michael & Bartoli, 2014). With their focus on racial socialization provided by schools, Michael & Bartoli (2014) explain that schools should be educating children on the following: understanding systemic racism, learning how anti-racist action is relevant to all, and understanding stereotypes and their counternarratives (stories that counter the stereotypes). Ultimately, this learning would align with critical race analysis (see critical race theory in Chapter 2.2).

As evidenced in Figure 4.1.1 below, many young white Americans were actively involved in the nationwide protests in the summer of 2020, in support of Black Lives Matter, representing a unique moment in U.S. history, a unique moment in the socialization of white Americans.



Figure **4.1.1**: "White Silence Is Violence." (CC BY 2.0; Tim Pierce via Flickr)

Cultural Hierarchies

Cultural distinctions make groups unique, but they also provide a social structure for creating and ranking cultures based on similarities or differences. A cultural group's size and strength influences their power over a region, area, or other groups. Cultural power lends itself to social power that influences people's lives by controlling the prevailing norms or rules and making individuals adhere to the dominant culture voluntarily or involuntarily.

Culture is not a direct reflection of the social world (Griswold, 2013). Humans mediate culture to define meaning and interpret the social world around them. As a result, dominant groups are able to manipulate, reproduce, and influence culture among the masses. Common culture found in society is actually the selective transmission of elite-dominated values (Parenti, 2006). This practice known as **cultural hegemony** suggests, culture is not autonomous, it is conditionally dictated, regulated, and controlled by dominant groups. The major forces shaping culture are in the power of elite-dominated interests which make limited and marginal adjustments to appear as though culture is changing in alignment with evolving social values (Parenti, 2006). The culturally dominating group often sets the standard for living and governs the distribution of resources.

Social and Cultural Capital

Social and cultural relationships have productive benefits in society. Research defines **social capital** as a form of economic (e.g., money and property) and cultural (e.g., norms, fellowship, trust) assets central to a social network (Putnam, 2000). The social networks people create and maintain with each other enable society to function. However, the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1972) found social capital produces and reproduces inequality when examining how people gain powerful positions through direct and indirect social connections. Social capital or a social network can help or hinder someone personally and socially. For example,

strong and supportive social connections can facilitate job opportunities and promotions that are beneficial to the individual and their social network. Weak and unsupportive social ties can jeopardize employment or advancement that are harmful to the individual and social group as well. People make cultural objects meaningful (Griswold, 2013). Interactions and reasoning develop cultural perspectives and understanding. The “social mind” of groups process incoming signals influencing culture within the social structure including the social attributes and status of members in a society (Zerubavel, 1999). Language and symbols express a person’s position in society and the expectations associated with their status. For example, the clothes people wear or car they drive represents style, fashion, and wealth. Owning designer clothing or a high performance sports car depicts a person’s access to financial resources and worth. The use of formal language and titles also represent social status such as salutations including your majesty, your highness, president, director, chief executive officer, and doctor.



Figure **4.1.2**: Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002). (CC PDM 1.0; Wikimedia).

People may occupy multiple statuses in a society. At birth, people are **ascribed** social status in alignment to their physical and mental features, gender, and race. In some cases, societies differentiate status according to physical or mental disability as well as if a child is female or male, or a racial minority. According to Dr. Jody Heymann, Dean of the World Policy Analysis Center at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, "Persons with disabilities are one of the last groups whose equal rights have been recognized" around the world (Brink, 2016). A report by the World Policy Analysis Center (2016) shows only 28% of 193 countries participating in the global survey guarantee a right to quality education for people with disabilities and only 18% guarantee a right to work.

In some societies, people may earn or **achieve** social status from their talents, efforts, or accomplishments (Griffiths, Keirns, Strayer, Cody-Rydzewsk, Scaramuzzo, Sadler, Vyain, Byer, & Jones, 2015). Obtaining higher education or being an artistic prodigy often correspond to high status. For example, a college degree awarded from an “Ivy League” university weighs higher in status than a degree from a public college. Similarly, talented artists, musicians, and athletes receive honors, privileges, and celebrity status.

Additionally, the social and political hierarchy of a society or region designates social status. Consider the social labels within class, race, ethnicity, gender, education, profession, age, and family. **Labels** defining a person’s characteristics serve as their position within the larger group. People in a majority or **dominant group** have higher status (e.g., rich, white, male, physician, etc.) than those of the marginalized or **subordinate group** (e.g., poor, Black, female, housekeeper, etc.). Overall, the location of a person on the social strata influences their social power and participation (Griswold, 2013). Individuals with inferior power have limitations to social and physical resources including lack of authority, influence over others, formidable networks, capital, and money.

Social status serves as method for building and maintaining boundaries among and between people and groups. Status dictates social inclusion or exclusion resulting in **cultural stratification** or hierarchy whereby a person’s position in society regulates their cultural participation by others. Cultural attributes within social networks build community, group loyalty, and personal and social identity.

People sometimes engage in status shifting to garner acceptance or avoid attention. As discussed in Chapter 1.1, DuBois (1903) described the act of people looking through the eyes of others to measure social place or position as double consciousness. His research explored the history and cultural experiences of American slavery and the plight of Black folk in translating thinking and

behavior between racial contexts. DuBois' research helped sociologists understand how and why people display one identity in certain settings and another in different ones. People must negotiate a social situation to decide how to project their social identity and assign a label that fits (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2012). Status shifting is evident when people move from informal to formal contexts. Our cultural identity and practices are very different at home than at school, work, or church. Each setting demands different aspects of who we are and our place in the social setting.

This short video summarizes Pierre Bourdieu's (1930-2002) theory of **cultural capital** as the cultural knowledge that serves as currency that helps us navigate culture and alters our experiences and the opportunities available to us. The video discusses three different forms of cultural capital: embodied state, objectified state, and institutionalized state with examples of each type that students can apply to their own lives. At the end of the video, discussion questions are included to assist students in applying the concept of cultural capital to what is happening in the world today.



Video **4.1.3**: According to Pierre Bourdieu, cultural capital is the cultural knowledge that serves as the currency that helps us navigate a culture and alters our experiences and the opportunities available to us. This theory focuses on the embodied, objectified and institutionalized states of capital and is significantly important in assisting us in understanding inequality in education and other social structures. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (CC BY-SA; Sociology Live! via YouTube)

Sociologists find cultural capital or the social assets of person (including intellect, education, speech pattern, mannerisms, and dress) promote social mobility (Harper-Scott & Samson, 2009). People who accumulate and display the cultural knowledge of a society or group may earn social acceptance, status, and power. Bourdieau (1991) explained the accumulation and transmission of culture is a social investment from **socializing agents** including family, peers, and community. People learn culture and cultural characteristics and traits from one another; however, social status effects whether people share, spread, or communicate cultural knowledge to each other. A person's social status in a group or society influences their ability to access and develop cultural capitol.

Cultural capital provides people access to cultural connections such as institutions, individuals, materials, and economic resources (Kennedy, 2012). Status guides people in choosing who and when culture or cultural capital is transferable. Bourdieu (1991) believed cultural inheritance and personal biography contribute more to individual success than intelligence or talent. With status comes access to social and cultural capital that generates access to privileges and power among and between groups. Individuals with cultural capital deficits face social inequalities (Reay, 2004). If someone does not have the cultural knowledge and skills to maneuver the social world she or he occupies, then she or he will not find acceptance within a group or society and access to support and resources.

Thinking Sociologically

Cultural capital evaluates the validity of culture (i.e., language, values, norms, and access to material resources) on success and achievement. You can measure your cultural capital by examining the cultural traits and patterns of your life. The following questions examine student values and beliefs, parental and family support, residency status, language, childhood experiences focusing on access to cultural resources (e.g., books) and neighborhood vitality (e.g., employment opportunities), educational and professional influences, and barriers affecting college success (Kennedy, 2012).

1. What are the most important values or beliefs influencing your life?

2. What kind of support have you received from your parents or family regarding school and your education?
3. How many generations has your family lived in the United States?
4. What do you consider your primary language? Did you have any difficulty learning to read or write the English language?
5. Did your family have more than fifty books in the house when you were growing up? What type of reading materials were in your house when you were growing up?
6. Did your family ever go to art galleries, museums, or plays when you were a child? What types of activities did your family do with their time other than work and school?
7. How would you describe the neighborhood where you grew up?
8. What illegal activities, if any, were present in the neighborhood where you grew up?
9. What employment opportunities were available to your parents or family in the neighborhood where you grew up?
10. Do you have immediate family members who are doctors, lawyers, or other professionals? What types of jobs have your family members had throughout their lives?
11. Why did you decide to go to college? What has influenced you to continue or complete your college education?
12. Did anyone ever discourage or prevent you from pursuing academics or a professional career?
13. Do you consider school easy or difficult for you?
14. What has been the biggest obstacle for you in obtaining a college education?
15. What has been the greatest opportunity for you in obtaining a college education?
16. How did you learn to navigate educational environments? Who taught you the “ins” and “outs” of college or school?

Cultural Hegemony

The very nature of cultural creation and production requires an audience to receive a cultural idea or product. Without people willing to receive culture, it cannot be sustainable or become an object (Griswold, 2013). Power and influence play an integral part in cultural creation and marketing. The ruling class has the ability to establish cultural norms and manipulate society while turning a profit. Culture is a commodity and those in a position of power to create, produce, and distribute culture gain further social and economic power.

Culture producing organizations such as multinational corporations and media industries are in the business of producing mass culture products for profit. These organizations have the power to influence people throughout the world. Paul Hirsch (1972) referred to this enterprise as the **culture industry system** or the “market.” In the culture industry system, multinational corporations and media industries (i.e., cultural creators) produce an excess supply of cultural objects to draw in public attention with the goal of flooding the market to ensure receipt and acceptance of at least one cultural idea or artifact by the people for monetary gain.

The culture industry system produces mass culture products to generate a culture of consumption (Grazian, 2010). The production of mass culture thrives on the notion that culture influences people. In line with the humanities’ perspective on culture, multinational corporations and media industries, believe they have the ability to control and manipulate culture by creating objects or products that people want and desire. This viewpoint suggests **cultural receivers**, or the people, are weak, apathetic, and consume culture for recognition and social status (Griswold, 2013). If you consider the cultural object of buying and owning a home, the concept of owning a home represents attaining the “American dream.” Even though not all Americans are able to buy and own a home, the cultural industry system has embedded home ownership as a requisite to success and achievement in America.



Figure 4.1.4: Street Lights of Times Square. (CC BY 4.0; Jose Francisco Fernandez Saura via Pexels)

In contrast, **popular culture** implies people influence culture. This perspective indicates people are active makers in the creation and acceptance of cultural objects (Griswold, 2013). Take into account one of the most popular musical genres today, rap music. The creative use of language and rhetorical styles and strategies of rap music gained local popularity in New York during the 1970s and entered mainstream acceptance in mid-1980s to early '90s (Caramanica, 2005). The early developments of rap music by the masses led to the genre becoming a cultural object.

Latinos are the largest and fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. The culture industry system is seeking ways to profit from this group. As multinational corporations and media industries produce cultural objects or products geared toward this population, their cultural identity is transformed into a new subculture blending American and Latinx values, beliefs, norms, and practices. Phillip Rodriguez is a documentary filmmaker on Latinx culture, history, and identity. He and many other race and diversity experts are exploring the influence of consumption on American Latinx culture.

1. Research the products and advertisements targeting Latinos in the United States. Describe the cultural objects and messaging encouraging a culture of consumption among this group.
2. What type of values, beliefs, norms, and practices are reinforced in the cultural objects or projects created by the culture industry system?
3. How might the purchase or consumption of the cultural objects or products you researched influence the self-image, identity, and social status of Latinos?
4. What new subculture arises by the blending of American and Latinx culture? Describe the impact of uniting or combining these cultures on Latinos and Americans.

Today, rap music like other forms of music is being created and produced by major music labels and related media industries. The culture industry system uses media gatekeepers to regulate information including culture (Grazian, 2010). Even with the ability of the people to create popular culture, multinational corporations and media industries maintain power to spread awareness, control access, and messaging. This power to influence the masses also gives the hegemonic ruling class, known as the culture industry system, the ability to reinforce stereotypes, close minds, and promote fear to encourage acceptance or rejection of certain cultural ideas and artifacts.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-SA other than Racial-Ethnic Socialization which is CC BY-SA.

- Johnson, Shaheen. Long Beach City College
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Beyond Race: Cultural Influences on Human Social Life (Kennedy) (CC BY-NC-SA)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Racial-Ethnic Socialization (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0) (Contributed to Race-Ethnic Socialization)

Works Cited

- Bourdieu, P. (1972). *Outline of a Theory of Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power.* Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in Capitalistic America: Educational Reforms and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brink, S. (2016). How is the world treating people with disabilities? *National Public Radio.*
- Caramanica, J. (2005). Hip-hop's raiders of the lost archives. *The New York Times*.
- Gaskin, A. (2015, August). Racial socialization: ways parents can teach their children about race. *American Psychological Association.*
- DuBois, W.E.B. (1903).*The Souls of Black Folk.* New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Grazian, D. (2010). *Mix It Up Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Society.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Griffiths, H., Keirns, N., Strayer, E., Cody-Rydzewsk, S., Scaramuzzo, G., Sadler, T., Vyain, S., Byer, J. & Jones, F. (2015). *Introduction to Sociology.* 2nd ed. Houston, TX: OpenStax College.
- Griswold, W. (2013). *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Harper-Scott, J.P.E. & Samson, J. (2009). *An Introduction to Music Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hirsch, P.M. (1972). Processing fads and fashions: n organization set analysis of culture industry systems. *American Journal of Sociology* 77, 639-659.
- Kennedy, V. (2012). The influence of cultural capital on Hispanic student college graduation rates. [Doctoral Dissertation], College of Education, Argosy University.
- Kohn, M.L. (1977). *Class and Conformity: A Study in Values*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.
- Michael, A. & Bartoli, E. (2014, Summer). What white children need to know about race. *National Association of Independent Schools.*
- National Opinion Research Center. (2007). *General Social Surveys, 1972–2006: Cumulative Codebook.* Chicago: National Opinion Research Center.
- Parenti, M. (2006). *The Culture Struggle*. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Reay, D. (2004). Education and cultural capital: The implications of changing trends in education policies. *Cultural Trends 13*(2):73-86.
- Roberts, D.F., Foehr, U.G., & Rideout, V. (2005). Parents, Children, and Media: A Kaiser Family Foundation Survey. *The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*.
- Zerubavel, E. (1999). *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

This page titled 4.1: Socialization and Culture is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **4.1: Socialization and Culture** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are oversimplified generalizations about groups of people. Stereotypes can be based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation—almost any characteristic. They may be positive (usually about one's own group, such as when women suggest they are less likely to complain about physical pain) but are often negative (usually toward other groups, such as when members of a dominant racial group suggest that a subordinate racial group is stupid or lazy). In either case, the stereotype is a generalization that doesn't take individual differences into account.

Where do stereotypes come from? In fact new stereotypes are rarely created; rather, they are recycled from subordinate groups that have assimilated into society and are reused to describe newly subordinate groups. For example, many stereotypes that are currently used to characterize Black people were used earlier in American history to characterize Irish and Eastern European immigrants. While cultural and other differences do exist among the various American racial and ethnic groups, many of the views we have of such groups are unfounded and hence are stereotypes. An example of the stereotypes that white people have of other groups appears in Figure 4.2.1 "Perceptions by Non-Latino white Respondents of the Intelligence of white and Black Americans", in which white respondents in the General Social Survey (GSS), a recurring survey of a random sample of the US population, are less likely to think Blacks are intelligent than they are to think whites are intelligent.

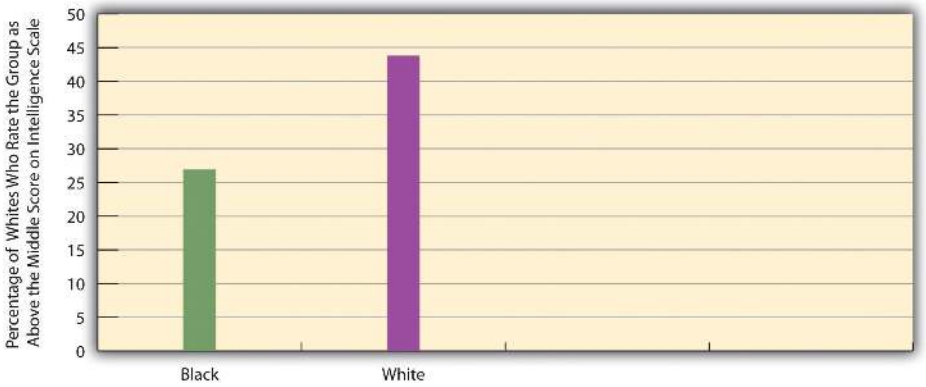


Figure **4.2.1**: Perceptions by Non-Latino white Respondents of the Intelligence of white and Black Americans. (CC BY 2.0; Data from General Social Survey)

Stereotypes of Latinx Population

Often exhibited in negative caricatures or terms, stereotypical representation of Hispanic and Latino/a characters are typically negatively presented and attack the entire ethnic group's morality, work ethic, intelligence, or dignity. Even in non-fiction media, such as news outlets, Hispanics are usually reported on in crime, immigration, or drug-related stories than in accomplishments. The stereotypes can also differ between men and women. Hispanic or Latino men are more likely to be stereotyped as unintelligent, comedic, aggressive, sexual, and unprofessional, earning them titles as "Latin lovers," buffoons, or criminals. That often results in the individuals being characterized as working less-respectable careers, being involved in crimes (often drug-related), or being uneducated immigrants. Hispanic characters are more likely than non-Hispanic white characters to possess lower-status occupations, such as domestic workers, or be involved in drug-related crimes. Hispanic and Latina women, similarly, are typically portrayed as lazy, verbally aggressive, and lacking work ethic. The stereotypes are furthered in pseudo-autobiographical characters like George Lopez, who lacks higher education and is written around humor, and Sofia Vergara, who is portrayed as an immigrant woman marrying a rich man and is often mocked for her loud and aggressive voice.

A very common stereotype, as well as mentality, is that all Hispanic/Latino individuals have the same ethnic background, race, and culture but there are really numerous subgroups, with unique identities. Americans tend to explain all of Latin America in terms of the nationalities or countries that they know. For instance, in the Midwest and the Southwest, Latin Americans are largely perceived as Mexicans, but in the East, particularly in the New York and Boston areas, people consider Latin Americans through their limited interactions with Dominicans and Puerto Ricans. In Miami, Cubans and Central Americans are the reference group for interpreting Latin America. The idea of homogeneity is so extensive in US society that even important politicians tend to treat Latin America as

a culturally-unified region. Hispanic/Latino Americans become a homogenous group, instead of their actual individual cultures, qualities, and differences.

Stereotypes of East Asians in the United States

Stereotypes of East Asians, like other ethnic stereotypes, are often portrayed in the mainstream media, cinema, music, television, literature, internet, and other forms of creative expression in American culture and society.

These stereotypes have been largely and collectively internalized by society and have mainly negative repercussions for Americans of East Asian descent and East Asian immigrants in daily interactions, current events, and government legislation. Media portrayals of East Asians often reflect an Americentric perception rather than realistic and authentic depictions of true cultures, customs and behaviors. East Asian Americans have experienced discrimination and have been victims of hate crimes related to their ethnic stereotypes, as it has been used to reinforce xenophobic sentiments.

Fictional stereotypes include Fu Manchu and Charlie Chan (representing a threatening, mysterious Asian character and an apologetic, submissive, "good" East Asian character).Asian men may be depicted as misogynistic predators, especially in WW II-era propaganda. East Asian women have been portrayed as aggressive or opportunistic sexual beings or predatory gold diggers, or as cunning "Dragon Ladies." This contrasts with the other stereotypes of servile "Lotus Blossom Babies", "China dolls", "Geisha girls", or prostitutes. Strong women may be stereotyped as Tiger Moms, and both men and women may be depicted as a model minority, with career success.

Stereotypes of Indigenous peoples

Worldwide stereotypes of Indigenous peoples include historical misrepresentations and the oversimplification of hundreds of Indigenous cultures. Negative stereotypes are associated with prejudice and discrimination that continue to impact the lives of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples of the Americas are commonly called Native Americans (United States excluding Alaska and Hawaii), Alaska Natives, or First Nations people (in Canada). The Circumpolar peoples, often referred to by the English term Eskimo, have a distinct set of stereotypes. Eskimo itself is an exonym, deriving from phrases that Algonquin tribes used for their northern neighbors. It is believed that some portrayals of natives, such as their depiction as bloodthirsty savages have disappeared. However, most portrayals are oversimplified and inaccurate; these stereotypes are found particularly in popular media which is the main source of mainstream images of Indigenous peoples worldwide.

The stereotyping of American Indians must be understood in the context of history which includes conquest, forced displacement, and organized efforts to eradicate native cultures, such as the boarding schools of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which separated young Native Americans from their families in order to educate and to assimilate them as European Americans.

Stereotypes of African Americans

Dating back to the period of African enslavement during the colonial era, stereotypes of African Americans are largely connected to the persistent racism and discrimination they faced while residing in the United States. Nineteenth-century minstrel shows used white actors in blackface and attire supposedly worn by African-Americans to lampoon and disparage Blacks. Some nineteenth century stereotypes, such as the sambo, are now considered to be derogatory and racist. The "Mandingo" and "Jezebel" stereotypes sexualizes African-Americans as hypersexual. The Mammy archetype depicts a motherly Black woman who is dedicated to her role working for a white family, a stereotype which dates back to Southern plantations. African-Americans are often stereotyped to have an unusual appetite for fried chicken.

In the 1980s and following decades, emerging stereotypes of Black men depicted them as drug dealers, crack addicts, hobos, and subway muggers. Jesse Jackson said media portray blacks as less intelligent. The magical Negro is a stock character who is depicted as having special insight or powers, and has been depicted (and criticized) in American cinema. Stereotypes of Black women include being depicted as welfare queens or as angry Black women who are loud, aggressive, demanding, and rude.

Explaining Prejudice

Prejudice refers to the beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes someone holds about a group. A prejudice is not based on experience; instead, it is a prejudgment, originating outside actual experience. Prejudice may be based on a person's political affiliation, sex, gender, social class, age, disability, religion, sexuality, language, nationality, criminal background, wealth, race, ethnicity, or other personal characteristic. The discussion in this section will largely focus on racial prejudice.

The 1970 documentary, Eye of the Storm, illustrates the way in which prejudice develops, by showing how defining one category of people as superior (children with blue eyes) results in prejudice against people who are not part of the favored category; Jane Elliot, then a 3rd grade teacher, conducted her "Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes" exercise to give her students a difficult, hands-on experience with prejudice and discrimination.

Where does racial and ethnic prejudice come from? Why are some people more prejudiced than others? Scholars have tried to answer these questions at least since the 1940s, when the horrors of Nazism were still fresh in people's minds. Theories of prejudice fall into two camps, social-psychological and sociological. We will look at social-psychological explanations first and then turn to sociological explanations. We will also discuss distorted mass media treatment of various racial and ethnic groups.



Video 4.2.5: "The Talk" highlights the painful, but necessary conversations Black parents have with their children to help prepare them for prejudices they may face growing up in a society that judges them based on the color of their skin. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; P&G (Procter & Gamble) via YouTube)

Social-Psychological Explanations of Prejudice

One of the first social-psychological explanations of prejudice centered on the **authoritarian personality** (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). According to this view, authoritarian personalities develop in childhood in response to parents who practice harsh discipline. Individuals with authoritarian personalities emphasize such things as obedience to authority, a rigid adherence to rules, and low acceptance of people (out-groups) not like oneself. Many studies find strong racial and ethnic prejudice among such individuals (Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). But whether their prejudice stems from their authoritarian personalities or instead from the fact that their parents were probably prejudiced themselves remains an important question.

Another early and still popular social-psychological explanation is called **frustration theory (or scapegoat theory)** (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). In this view individuals with various problems become frustrated and tend to blame their troubles on groups that are often disliked in the real world (e.g., racial, ethnic, and religious minorities). These minorities are thus scapegoats for the real sources of people's misfortunes. Several psychology experiments find that when people are frustrated, they indeed become more prejudiced. In one early experiment, college students who were purposely not given enough time to solve a puzzle were more prejudiced after the experiment than before it (Cowen, Landes, & Schaet, 1959).

Sociological Explanations of Prejudice

One popular sociological explanation emphasizes conformity and socialization and is called **social learning theory**. In this view, people who are prejudiced are merely conforming to the culture in which they grow up, and prejudice is the result of socialization from parents, peers, the news media, and other various aspects of their culture. Supporting this view, studies have found that people tend to become more prejudiced when they move to areas where people are very prejudiced and less prejudiced when they move to locations where people are less prejudiced (Aronson, 2008). If people in the South today continue to be more prejudiced than those outside the South, as we discuss later, even though legal segregation ended more than four decades ago, the influence of their culture on their socialization may help explain these beliefs.

The mass media plays a key role in how many people learn to be prejudiced. This type of learning happens because the media often present people of color in a negative light. By doing so, the media unwittingly reinforce the prejudice that individuals already have

or even increase their prejudice (Larson, 2005). Examples of distorted media coverage abound. Even though poor people are more likely to be white than any other race or ethnicity, the news media use pictures of African Americans far more often than those of whites in stories about poverty. In one study, national news magazines, such as Time and Newsweek, and television news shows portrayed African Americans in almost two-thirds of their stories on poverty, even though only about one-fourth of poor people are African Americans. In the magazine stories, only 12 percent of the African Americans had a job, even though in the real world more than 40 percent of poor African Americans were working at the time the stories were written (Gilens, 1996). In a Chicago study, television news shows there depicted whites fourteen times more often in stories of good Samaritans, even though whites and African Americans live in Chicago in roughly equal numbers (Entman & Rojecki, 2001). Many other studies find that newspaper and television stories about crime and drugs feature higher proportions of African Americans as offenders than is true in arrest statistics (Surette, 2011). Studies like these show that the news media "convey the message that Black people are violent, lazy, and less civic minded" (Jackson, 1997, p. A27).

A second sociological explanation emphasizes economic and political competition and is commonly called **group threat theory** (Quillian, 2006). In this view, prejudice arises from competition over jobs and other resources and from disagreement over various political issues. When groups vie with each other over these matters, they often become hostile toward each other. Amid such hostility, it is easy to become prejudiced toward the group that threatens your economic or political standing. A popular version of this basic explanation is Susan Olzak's (1992) **ethnic competition theory** which holds that ethnic prejudice and conflict increase when two or more ethnic groups find themselves competing for jobs, housing, and other goals.

The competition explanation is the macro equivalent of the frustration/scapegoat theory already discussed. Much of the white mob violence discussed earlier stemmed from whites' concern that the groups they attacked threatened their jobs and other aspects of their lives. Thus lynchings of African Americans in the South increased when the Southern economy worsened and decreased when the economy improved (Tolnay & Beck, 1995). Similarly, white mob violence against Chinese immigrants in the 1870s began after the railroad construction that employed so many Chinese immigrants slowed and the Chinese began looking for work in other industries. Whites feared that the Chinese would take jobs away from white workers and that their large supply of labor would drive down wages. Their assaults on the Chinese killed several people and prompted the passage by Congress of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 that prohibited Chinese immigration (Dinnerstein & Reimers, 2009).



Figure **4.2.6**: Chinese emigration to America: sketch on board the steam-ship Alaska, bound for San Francisco. During the 1870s, whites feared that Chinese immigrants would take away their jobs. (CC PDM 1.0; UC Berkeley via Wikimedia)

Correlates of Prejudice

Since the 1940s, social scientists have investigated the individual correlates of racial and ethnic prejudice (Stangor, 2009). These correlates help test the theories of prejudice just presented. For example, if authoritarian personalities do produce prejudice, then people with these personalities should be more prejudiced. If frustration also produces prejudice, then people who are frustrated with aspects of their lives should also be more prejudiced. Other correlates that have been studied include age, education, gender, region of country, race, residence in integrated neighborhoods, and religiosity. We can take time here to focus on gender, education,

and region of country and discuss the evidence for the racial attitudes of whites, as most studies do in view of the historic dominance of whites in the United States.

The findings on gender are rather surprising. Although women are usually thought to be more empathetic than men and thus to be less likely to be racially prejudiced, recent research indicates that the racial views of (white) women and men are in fact very similar and that the two genders are about equally prejudiced (Hughes & Tuch, 2003). This similarity supports group threat theory, outlined earlier, in that it indicates that white women and men are responding more as whites than as women or men, respectively, in formulating their racial views.

Findings on education and region of country are not surprising. Focusing again just on whites, less educated people are usually more racially prejudiced than better-educated people, and Southerners are usually more prejudiced than non-Southerners (Krysan, 2000). Evidence of these differences appears in Figure 4.2.7, which depicts educational and regional differences in a type of racial prejudice that social scientists call social distance, or feelings about interacting with members of other races and ethnicities. The General Social Survey asks respondents how they feel about a "close relative" marrying an African American. Figure 4.2.7 shows how responses by white (non-Latino) respondents to this question vary by education and by Southern residence. Whites without a high school degree are much more likely than those with more education to oppose these marriages, and whites in the South are also much more likely than their non-Southern counterparts to oppose them. To recall the sociological perspective, our social backgrounds certainly do seem to affect our attitudes.

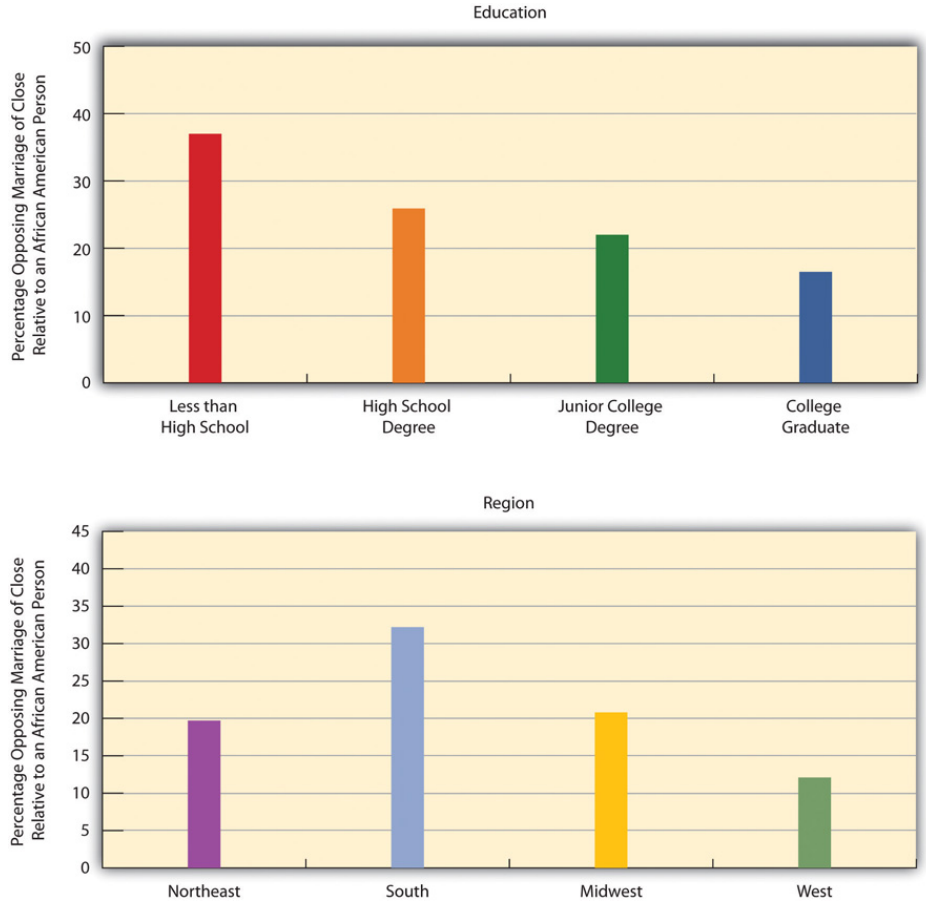


Figure 4.2.7: Education, Region, and Opposition by Non-Latino whites to a Close Relative Marrying an African American (CC BY 2.0; Data from General Social Survey)

The Changing Nature of Prejudice

Although racial and ethnic prejudice still exists in the United States, its nature has changed during the past half-century. Studies of these changes focus on whites' perceptions of African Americans. Back in the 1940s and before, an era of overt Jim Crow racism (also called traditional or old-fashioned racism) prevailed, not just in the South but in the entire nation. This racism involved blatant bigotry, firm beliefs in the need for segregation, and the view that Blacks were biologically inferior to whites. In the early 1940s,

for example, more than half of all whites thought that Blacks were less intelligent than whites, more than half favored segregation in public transportation, more than two-thirds favored segregated schools, and more than half thought whites should receive preference over Blacks in employment hiring (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997).

The Nazi experience and then the civil rights movement led whites to reassess their views, and Jim Crow racism gradually waned. Few whites believe today that African Americans are biologically inferior, and few favor segregation. So few whites now support segregation and other Jim Crow views that national surveys no longer include many of the questions that were asked a half-century ago.

But that does not mean that prejudice has disappeared. Many scholars say that Jim Crow racism has been replaced by a more subtle form of racial prejudice, termed laissez-faire, symbolic, or modern racism, that amounts to a "kinder, gentler, antiBlack ideology" that avoids notions of biological inferiority (Bobo, Kluegel, & Smith, 1997, p. 15; Quillian, 2006; Sears, 1988). Instead, it involves stereotypes about African Americans, a belief that their poverty is due to their cultural inferiority, and opposition to government policies to help them. Similar views exist about Latinos. In effect, this new form of prejudice blames African Americans and Latinos themselves for their low socioeconomic standing and involves such beliefs that they simply do not want to work hard.

Evidence for this modern form of prejudice is seen in Figure 4.2.8, which presents whites' responses to two General Social Survey (GSS) questions that asked, respectively, whether African Americans' low socioeconomic status is due to their lower "in-born ability to learn" or to their lack of "motivation and will power to pull themselves up out of poverty." While only 8.5 percent of whites attributed Blacks' status to lower innate intelligence (reflecting the decline of Jim Crow racism), about 48 percent attributed it to their lack of motivation and willpower. Although this reason sounds "kinder" and "gentler" than a belief in Blacks' biological inferiority, it is still one that blames African Americans for their low socioeconomic status.

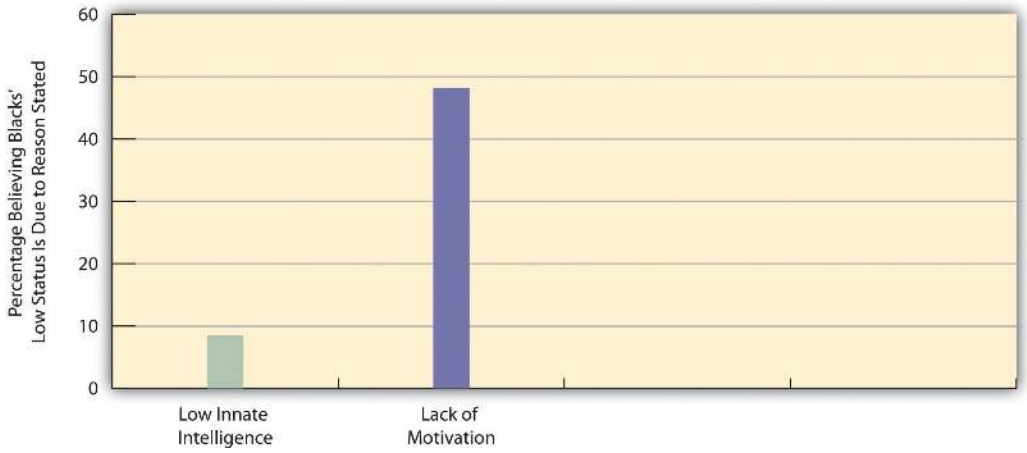


Figure 4.2.8: Attribution by Non-Latino whites of Blacks' Low Socioeconomic Status to Blacks' Low Innate Intelligence and to Their Lack of Motivation to Improve. (CC BY 2.0; Data from General Social Survey)

Prejudice and Public Policy Preferences

If whites do continue to believe in racial stereotypes, say the scholars who study modern prejudice, they are that much more likely to oppose government efforts to help people of color. For example, whites who hold racial stereotypes are more likely to oppose government programs for African Americans (Quillian, 2006). We can see an example of this type of effect in Figure 4.2.9, which compares two groups: whites who attribute Blacks' poverty to lack of motivation, and whites who attribute Blacks' poverty to discrimination. Those who cite lack of motivation are more likely than those who cite discrimination to believe the government is spending too much to help Blacks.

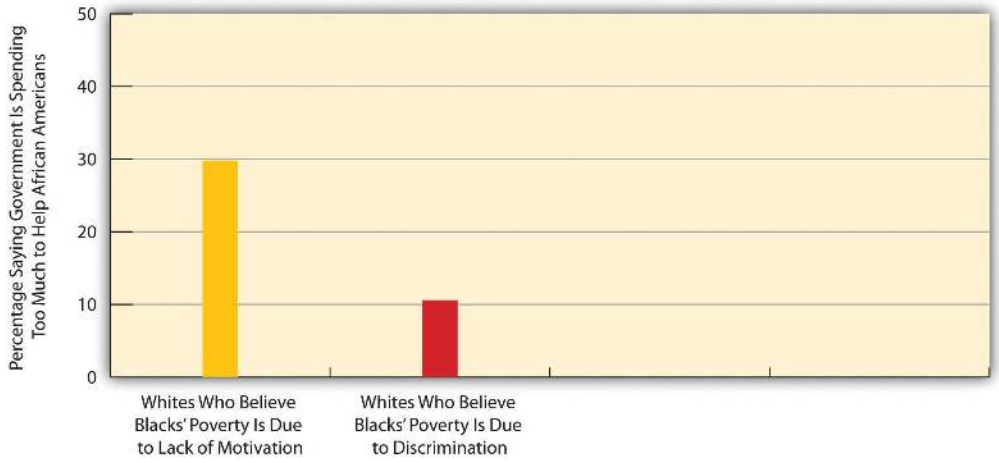


Figure 4.2.9: Racial Stereotyping by Non-Latino whites and Their Opposition to Government Spending to Help African Americans. (CC BY 2.0; Data from General Social Survey)

Racial prejudice influences other public policy preferences as well. In the area of criminal justice, whites who hold racial stereotypes or hostile feelings toward African Americans are more likely to be afraid of crime, to think that the courts are not harsh enough, to support the death penalty, to want more money spent to fight crime, and to favor excessive use of force by police (Barkan & Cohn, 2005; Unnever & Cullen, 2010).

If racial prejudice influences views on all these issues, then these results are troubling for a democratic society like the United States. In a democracy, it is appropriate for the public to disagree on all sorts of issues, including criminal justice. For example, citizens hold many reasons for either favoring or opposing the death penalty. But is it appropriate for racial prejudice to be one of these reasons? To the extent that elected officials respond to public opinion, as they should in a democracy, and to the extent that racial prejudice affects public opinion, then racial prejudice may be influencing government policy on criminal justice and on other issues. In a democratic society, it is unacceptable for racial prejudice to have this effect.

Implicit Bias



Figure 4.2.10: Microaggressions. (Courtesy of Shutterstock.com)

- Implicit biases are attitudes or stereotypes that unconsciously affect our actions, decisions, and understanding.
- Implicit biases can be positive (a preference for something or someone) or negative (an aversion to or fear of something or someone).
- Implicit biases are different from known biases that people may choose to conceal for social or political reasons. In fact, implicit biases often conflict with a person's explicit and/or declared beliefs.
- Implicit biases are formed over a lifetime as a result of exposure to direct and indirect messages. The media plays a large role in this formation process.
- Implicit biases are pervasive: everyone has them.
- Implicit biases are changeable, but research shows that this process takes time, intention, and training.

In this video, CNN journalist Van Jones gives a brief overview of implicit bias and references some of the ways it has manifested in recent events.



Video 4.2.11: Van's research on the concept of Implicit Bias and the role it is playing in race relations today. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; CNN on Rebuild the Dream via YouTube)

The Kirwan Institute is a leader in the field of implicit bias research. Watch their video, in which they explore some of the ways that individual impacts of implicit bias can compound to create large negative impacts for people of color.

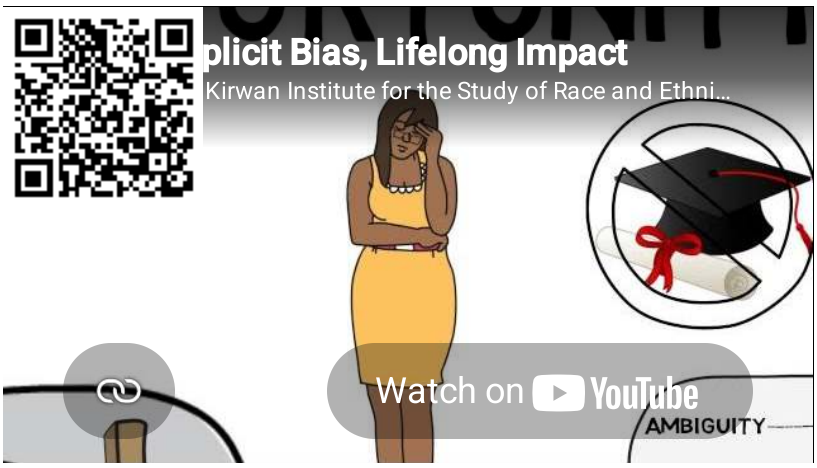


Figure 4.2.12: "Implicit Bias, Lifelong Impact." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity via YouTube)

Microaggressions

Implicit biases can impact our relationships and interactions with each other in many ways, some of which are described in the research findings listed above. One way that implicit biases can manifest is in the form of **microaggressions**: subtle verbal or nonverbal insults or denigrating messages communicated toward a marginalized person, often by someone who may be well-intentioned but unaware of the impact their words or actions have on the target. Examples of common microaggressions include statements like:

- Where are you really from?
- What are you?
- You don't act like a normal Black person.
- You're really pretty for a dark-skinned girl.

Microaggressions can be based on any aspect of a marginalized person's identity (for example, sexuality, religion, or gender). Individual microaggressions may not be devastating to the person experiencing them; however, their cumulative effects over time can be large. The Tumblr blog Microaggressions, which aims to "mak[e] visible the ways in which social difference is produced and policed in everyday lives," describes this as follows:

Often, [microaggressions] are never meant to hurt – acts done with little conscious awareness of their meanings and effects. Instead, their slow accumulation during a childhood and over a lifetime is in part what defines a marginalized experience, making

explanation and communication with someone who does not share this identity particularly difficult. Social others are microaggressed hourly, daily, weekly, monthly.

In his research, Dr. Derald Wing Sue found that **BIPOC** (Black Indigenous People of Color) experience microaggressions every day – from the time they get up in the morning until they go to bed at night. In his workshops, Sue asks white people in the room these questions:

Do you know what it's like to be a Black person in this society where you go into a subway and you sit down and people never sit next to you? Do you know what it's like to pass a man or a woman, and they suddenly clutch their purses more tightly?

As he notes, many whites have never thought about how this feels because they don't live this reality. It is invisible to them. By asking this question, Sue's goal is to make the invisible visible, to get white people (and all people) to "see" the microaggressions BIPOC experience on a daily basis, and to challenge them to understand how those microaggressions negatively impact the daily lived experiences of BIPOC.

To learn more about how young people experience microaggressions, watch this video, in which college students share their personal stories related to this issue.



Video **4.2.13**: "Microaggressions in the Classroom." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Focused.Arts.Media.Education. via YouTube)

What's the Impact on BIPOC?

Pervasive implicit bias and microaggressions do more than simply cause BIPOC to "feel bad." Constant exposure to racism in both implicit and explicit forms can have cumulative and serious impacts on BIPOC. Researchers are only now beginning to identify and understand some of these impacts. For example, scientists have begun linking prolonged racism-related stress to racial health disparities such as differences in maternal mortality rates between Black and white women. Other racial health disparities, such as differing rates of asthma and diabetes across racial groups, may also be linked to the stress impact of racism. Stress hormones, while harmless in small doses, are toxic with prolonged exposure, and can cause permanent damage to the nervous, cardiovascular, immune, and endocrine systems.

In addition to health disparities, the so-called "racial achievement gap" in education has also been attributed at least in part to the presence of implicit bias, stereotypes, and microaggressions. In the 1990s, psychologists Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson provided empirical evidence for the impact of stereotype threat (discussed earlier as understood by critical race theory in Chapter 2.2) on academic performance. The idea behind stereotype threat is that awareness of negative stereotypes about one's racial group raises stress and self-doubt among students, who then perform worse. Over two decades of data show that stereotype threat is common and consequential. For a summary of this phenomenon and related studies, read the American Psychological Association's "Research in Action" page.

In her research, Dr. Patricia F. Katopol looks at the impact of stereotype threat on the use of library reference services by BIPOC, specifically African American college students at primarily white institutions. Katopol argues that stereotype threat may be an element of information anxiety – an element that leads many Black students to attempt to find all of the information they need on their own rather than having to interact with librarians who they perceive as judging them. To learn more about stereotype threat in

library settings, read her article Avoiding the Reference Desk: Stereotype Threat in Library Leadership & Management, an open-source journal.

In each of these cases, current research is challenging our notions of cause and effect when it comes to implicit bias, stereotypes, racism, and life outcomes. Rather than attributing the causes of disparate life outcomes to inherent racial differences, this research asks us to consider racism itself as the cause. Kendi (2020) detests the use of the word "microaggression," as he argues it is actually racist abuse (racism) and should be labeled as such.

Key Takeaways

- Social-psychological explanations of prejudice emphasize authoritarian personalities and frustration, while sociological explanations emphasize social learning and group threat.
- Education and region of residence are related to racial prejudice among whites; prejudice is higher among whites with lower levels of formal education and among whites living in the South.
- Jim Crow racism has been replaced by symbolic or modern racism that emphasizes the cultural inferiority of people of color.
- Racial prejudice among whites is linked to certain views they hold about public policy. Prejudice is associated with lower support among whites for governmental efforts to help people of color and with greater support for a more punitive criminal justice system.
- Implicit biases, microaggressions, and stereotypes are interrelated concepts. Implicit biases are developed through exposure to stereotypes and other forms of misinformation over time. These implicit biases can then lead well-intentioned people to commit microaggressions against people of color, Native people, and others with marginalized identities.

Thinking Sociologically

1. Think about the last time you heard someone say a remark that was racially prejudiced. What was said? What was your reaction?
2. The text argues that it is inappropriate in a democratic society for racial prejudice to influence public policy. Do you agree with this argument? Why or why not?

Contributors and Attributions

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Project READY: Reimagining Equity & Access for Diverse Youth (Institute of Museum and Library Services) (CC BY 4.0)
- Social Problems: Continuity and Change v.1.0 (saylordotorg) (CC BY-NC-SA)
- Stereotypes_of_indigenous_peoples_of_Canada_and_the_United_States (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Stereotypes_of_East_Asians_in_the_United_States (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Stereotypes_of_African_Americans (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Stereotypes_of_Hispanic_and_Latino_Americans_in_the_United_States (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Adorno, T.W., Frenkel-Brunswick, E., Levinson, D.J., & Sanford, R.N. (1950). *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York, NY: Harper.
- Aronson, E. (2008). *The Social Animal* (10th ed.). New York, NY: Worth.
- Barkan, S.E., & Cohn, S.F. (2005). Why whites favor spending more money to fight crime: The role of racial prejudice. *Social Problems*, *52*, 300–314.
- Bobo, L., Kluegel, J.R., & Smith, R.A. (1997). Laissez-faire racism: The crystallization of a kinder, gentler, antiBlack ideology. In S.A. Tuch & J.K. Martin (Eds.), *Racial Attitudes in the 1990s: Continuity and change* (pp. 15–44). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Cowen, E.L., Landes, J., & Schaet, D.E. (1959). The effects of mild frustration on the expression of prejudiced attitudes. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, *64*, 33–38.

- Dinnerstein, L., & Reimers, D.M. (2009). *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Dollard, J., Doob, L.W., Miller, N.E., Mowrer, O.H., & Sears, R.R. (1939). *Frustration and Aggression*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Entman, R.M., & Rojecki, A. (2001). *The Black Image in the White Mind*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Gilens, M. (1996). Race and poverty in America: Public misperceptions and the American news media. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 60*, 515–541.
- Hughes, M., & Tuch, S.A. (2003). Gender differences in whites' racial attitudes: Are women's attitudes really more favorable? *Social Psychology Quarterly, 66*, 384–401.
- Jackson, D.Z. (1997, December 5). Unspoken during race talk. *The Boston Globe*, p. A27.
- Krysan, M. (2000). Prejudice, politics, and public opinion: Understanding the sources of racial policy attitudes. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*, 135–168.
- Larson, S.G. (2005). *Media & Minorities: The Politics of Race in News and Entertainment*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Olzak, S. (1992). *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Quillian, L. (2006). New approaches to understanding racial prejudice and discrimination. *Annual Review of Sociology, 32*, 299–328.
- Peters, W., Beutel, B., Elliott, J., ABC News Productions., & Admire Entertainment, Inc. (2003). *The Eye of the Storm*. Palisades, NY: Admire Productions.
- Schuman, H., Steeh, C., Bobo, L., & Krysan, M. (1997). *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations* (Rev. ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sears D. (1988). Symbolic Racism. In P.A. Katz & D.A. Taylor (Eds.), *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy* (pp. 53–84). New York, NY: Plenum
- Sibley, C.G., & Duckitt, J. (2008). Personality and prejudice: A meta-analysis and theoretical review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 12*, 248–279.
- Stangor, C. (2009). The study of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination within social psychology: A quick history of theory and research. In T. D. Nelson (Ed.), *Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination* (pp. 1–22). New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Surette, R. (2011). *Media, Crime, and Criminal Justice: Images, Realities, and Policies* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Tolnay, S.E., & Beck, E.M. (1995). *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882–1930*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Unnever, J.D., & Cullen, F.T. (2010). The social sources of Americans' punitiveness: A test of three competing models. *Criminology, 48*, 99–129.

This page titled 4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

4.3: Discrimination

Discrimination

Often racial and ethnic prejudice leads to discrimination against the subordinate racial and ethnic groups in a given society. **Discrimination** in this context refers to the arbitrary denial of rights, privileges, and opportunities to members of these groups. The use of the word arbitrary emphasizes that these groups are being treated unequally not because of their lack of merit but because of their race and ethnicity.

Usually prejudice and discrimination go hand-in-hand, but Robert Merton (1949) stressed this is not always so. Sometimes we can be prejudiced and not discriminate, and sometimes we might not be prejudiced and still discriminate. Table 4.3.1 illustrates his perspective. The top-left cell and bottom-right cell consist of people who behave in ways we would normally expect. The top-left one consists of "active bigots," in Merton's terminology, people who are both prejudiced and discriminatory. An example of such a person is the white owner of an apartment building who dislikes people of color and refuses to rent to them. The bottom-right cell consists of "all-weather liberals," as Merton called them, people who are neither prejudiced nor discriminatory. An example would be someone who holds no stereotypes about the various racial and ethnic groups and treats everyone the same regardless of her or his background.

Table 4.3.1: Robert Merton's view on the levels of discrimination. (Adapted from Merton, R. K. (1949). Discrimination and the American creed. In R. M. MacIver (Ed.), Discrimination and national welfare (pp. 99–126). New York, NY: Institute for Religious Studies.)

	Prejudiced?	
	Yes	No
Discriminates?		
Yes	Active bigots	Fair-weather liberals
No	Timid bigots	All-weather liberals

The remaining two cells of Table 4.3.1 are the more unexpected ones. On the bottom left, we see people who are prejudiced but who nonetheless do not discriminate; Merton called them "timid bigots." An example would be white restaurant owners who do not like people of color but still serve them anyway because they want their business or are afraid of being sued if they do not serve them. At the top right, we see "fair-weather liberals," or people who are not prejudiced but who still discriminate. An example would be white store owners in the South during the segregation era who thought it was wrong to treat Blacks worse than whites but who still refused to sell to them because they were afraid of losing white customers.

Explaining Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Biological Inferiority

As discussed in Chapter 1.2, one long-standing (racist) explanation is that Blacks and other people of color are biologically inferior: They are naturally less intelligent and have other innate flaws that keep them from getting a good education and otherwise doing what needs to be done to achieve the American Dream. As discussed earlier, this racist view is no longer common today. However, whites historically used this belief to justify slavery, lynchings, the harsh treatment of Native Americans in the 1800s, and lesser forms of discrimination. In 1994, Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray revived this view in their controversial book, The Bell Curve (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994), in which they argued that the low IQ scores of African Americans, and of poor people more generally, reflect their genetic inferiority in the area of intelligence. African Americans' low innate intelligence, they said, accounts for their poverty and other problems. Although the news media gave much attention to their book, few scholars agreed with its views, and many condemned the book's argument as a racist way of "blaming the victim" (Gould, 1994).

Cultural Deficiencies

Another explanation of racial and ethnic inequality focuses on supposed cultural deficiencies of African Americans and other people of color (Murray, 1984). These deficiencies include a failure to value hard work and, for African Americans, a lack of strong

family ties, and are said to account for the poverty and other problems facing these minorities. As we saw earlier, more than half of non-Latino whites think that Blacks' poverty is due to their lack of motivation and willpower. Ironically some scholars find support for this cultural deficiency view in the experience of many Asian Americans, whose success is often attributed to their culture's emphasis on hard work, educational attainment, and strong family ties (Min, 2005). If that is true, these scholars say, then the lack of success of other people of color stems from the failure of their own cultures to value these attributes.

How accurate is the cultural deficiency argument? Whether people of color have "deficient" cultures remains hotly debated (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Many social scientists find little or no evidence of cultural problems in minority communities and say the belief in cultural deficiencies is an example of symbolic racism that blames the victim. Citing survey evidence, they say that poor people of color value work and education for themselves and their children at least as much as wealthier white people do (Holland, 2011; Muhammad, 2007). Yet other social scientists, including those sympathetic to the structural problems facing people of color, believe that certain cultural problems do exist, but they are careful to say that these cultural problems arise out of the structural problems. For example, Elijah Anderson (1999) wrote that a "street culture" or "oppositional culture" exists among African Americans in urban areas that contributes to high levels of violent behavior, but he emphasized that this type of culture stems from the segregation, extreme poverty, and other difficulties these citizens face in their daily lives and helps them deal with these difficulties. Thus even if cultural problems do exist, they should not obscure the fact that structural problems are responsible for the cultural ones.

Structural Problems

A third explanation for US racial and ethnic inequality is based in conflict theory and reflects the blaming-the-system approach. This view attributes racial and ethnic inequality to structural problems, including institutional and individual discrimination, a lack of opportunity in education and other spheres of life, and the absence of jobs that pay an adequate wage (Feagin, 2006). Segregated housing, for example, prevents African Americans from escaping the inner city and from moving to areas with greater employment opportunities. Employment discrimination keeps the salaries of people of color much lower than they would be otherwise. The schools that many children of color attend every day are typically overcrowded and underfunded. As these problems continue from one generation to the next, it becomes very difficult for people already at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder to climb up it because of their race and ethnicity.

Individual Discrimination

The discussion so far has centered on **individual discrimination**, or discrimination that individuals practice in their daily lives, usually because they are prejudiced but sometimes even if they are not prejudiced. Individual discrimination is common, as Joe Feagin (1991), a former president of the American Sociological Association, found when he interviewed middle-class African Americans about their experiences. Many of the people he interviewed said they had been refused service, or at least received poor service, in stores or restaurants. Others said they had been harassed by the police, and even put in fear of their lives, just for being Black. Feagin concluded that these examples are not just isolated incidents but rather reflect the larger racism that characterizes US society.



Figure **4.3.2**: In February 2012, neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman fatally shot 17-year-old Trayvon Martin as Martin was walking back from a 7-Eleven carrying some Skittles and iced tea. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Michael Fleshman via Flickr)

To many observers, the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin in February 2012 was a deadly example of individual discrimination. Martin, a 17-year-old African American, was walking in a gated community in Sanford, Florida, as he returned from a 7-Eleven with a bag of Skittles and some iced tea. An armed neighborhood watch volunteer, George Zimmerman, called 911 and said Martin looked suspicious. Although the 911 operator told Zimmerman not to approach Martin, Zimmerman did so anyway; within minutes Zimmerman shot and killed the unarmed Martin and later claimed self-defense. According to many critics of this incident, Martin's only "crime" was "walking while Black." As an African American newspaper columnist observed, "For every Black man in America, from the millionaire in the corner office to the mechanic in the local garage, the Trayvon Martin tragedy is personal. It could have been me or one of my sons. It could have been any of us" (Robinson, 2012).

Much individual discrimination occurs in the workplace, as sociologist Denise Segura (Segura, 1992) documented when she interviewed 152 Mexican American women working in white-collar jobs at a public university in California. More than 40 percent of the women said they had encountered workplace discrimination based on their ethnicity and/or gender, and they attributed their treatment to stereotypes held by their employers and coworkers. Along with discrimination, they were the targets of condescending comments like "I didn't know that there were any educated people in Mexico that have a graduate degree."

Institutional Discrimination

Individual discrimination is important to address, but at least as consequential in today's world is **institutional discrimination**, or discrimination that pervades the practices of whole institutions, such as housing, medical care, law enforcement, employment, and education. This type of discrimination does not just affect a few isolated people of color. Instead, it affects large numbers of individuals simply because of their race or ethnicity. Sometimes institutional discrimination is also based on gender, disability, and other characteristics.

In the area of race and ethnicity, institutional discrimination often stems from prejudice, as was certainly true in the South during segregation. However, just as individuals can discriminate without being prejudiced, so can institutions when they engage in practices that seem to be racially neutral but in fact have a discriminatory effect. Individuals in institutions can also discriminate without realizing it. They make decisions that turn out, upon close inspection, to discriminate against people of color even if they did not mean to do so.

The bottom line is this: Institutions can discriminate even if they do not intend to do so. Consider height requirements for police. Before the 1970s, police forces around the United States commonly had height requirements, say five feet ten inches. As women

began to want to join police forces in the 1970s, many found they were too short. The same was true for people from some racial/ethnic backgrounds, such as Latinos, whose stature is smaller on the average than that of non-Latino whites. Of course, even many white males were too short to become police officers, but the point is that even more women, and even more men of certain ethnicities, were too short.

This gender and ethnic difference is not, in and of itself, discriminatory as the law defines the term. The law allows for bona fide (good faith) physical qualifications for a job. As an example, we would all agree that someone has to be able to see to be a school bus driver; sight therefore is a bona fide requirement for this line of work. Thus even though people who are blind cannot become school bus drivers, the law does not consider such a physical requirement to be discriminatory.

But were the height restrictions for police work in the early 1970s bona fide requirements? Women and members of certain ethnic groups challenged these restrictions in court and won their cases, as it was decided that there was no logical basis for the height restrictions then in effect. In short (pun intended), the courts concluded that a person did not have to be five feet ten inches to be an effective police officer. In response to these court challenges, police forces lowered their height requirements, opening the door for many more women, Latino men, and some other men to join police forces (Appier, 1998). Whether police forces back then intended their height requirements to discriminate, or whether they honestly thought their height requirements made sense, remains in dispute. Regardless of the reason, their requirements did discriminate.

Institutional discrimination affects the life chances of people of color in many aspects of life today. To illustrate this, we turn briefly to some examples of institutional discrimination that have been the subject of government investigation and scholarly research.

Health Care

People of color have higher rates of disease and illness than whites. One question that arises is why their health is worse. One possible answer involves institutional discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

Several studies use hospital records to investigate whether people of color receive optimal medical care, including coronary bypass surgery, angioplasty, and catheterization. After taking the patients' medical symptoms and needs into account, these studies find that African Americans are much less likely than whites to receive the procedures just listed. This is true when poor Blacks are compared to poor whites and also when middle-class Blacks are compared to middle-class whites (Smedley, Stith, & Nelson, 2003). In a novel way of studying race and cardiac care, one study performed an experiment in which several hundred doctors viewed videos of African American and white patients, all of whom, unknown to the doctors, were actors. In the videos, each "patient" complained of identical chest pain and other symptoms. The doctors were then asked to indicate whether they thought the patient needed cardiac catheterization. The African American patients were less likely than the white patients to be recommended for this procedure (Schulman et al., 1999).

Why does discrimination like this occur? It is possible, of course, that some doctors are racists and decide that the lives of African Americans just are not worth saving, but it is far more likely that they have unconscious racial biases that somehow affect their medical judgments. Regardless of the reason, the result is the same: African Americans are less likely to receive potentially life-saving cardiac procedures simply because they are Black. Institutional discrimination in health care, then, is literally a matter of life and death.



Figure **4.3.3**: "Health Insurance," piggy bank image illustrating the cost of health care which many cannot afford. (CC BY-SA 2.0; 401(K) 2013 via Flickr)

It is also significant to note that the Latinx population has the highest uninsured rates of any racial or ethnic group within the United States. In 2017, the Census Bureau reported that 49.0% of Latinx had private insurance coverage, as compared to 75.4% for non-Latinx whites (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). In 2017, 38.2% of all Hispanics had public health insurance coverage, as compared to 33.7% for non-Hispanic whites (ibid). Most Americans have health insurance through their employers, as the country does not ensure that all Americans have insurance. This "business as usual" practice has had a disproportionately negative impact on the Latinx population. As explained in an American Medical Association article, "the structural drivers that have led to health inequity in Latinx communities have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and have contributed to the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on these communities" (Robeznieks, 2020).

Mortgages, Redlining, and Residential Segregation

When loan officers review mortgage applications, they consider many factors, including the person's income, employment, and credit history. The law forbids them to consider race and ethnicity. Yet African Americans and Latinos are more likely than whites to have their mortgage applications declined (Blank, Venkatachalam, McNeil, & Green, 2005). Because members of these groups tend to be poorer than whites and to have less desirable employment and credit histories, the higher rate of mortgage rejections may be appropriate, albeit unfortunate.

To control for this possibility, researchers take these factors into account and in effect compare whites, African Americans, and Latinos with similar incomes, employment, and credit histories. Some studies are purely statistical, and some involve white, African American, and Latino individuals who independently visit the same mortgage-lending institutions. Both types of studies find that African Americans and Latinos are still more likely than whites with similar qualifications to have their mortgage applications rejected (Turner, Freiberg, Godfrey, Herbig, Levy, & Smith, 2002). We will probably never know whether loan officers are consciously basing their decisions on racial prejudice, but their practices still amount to racial and ethnic discrimination whether the loan officers are consciously prejudiced or not.

There is also evidence of banks rejecting mortgage applications for people who wish to live in certain urban, supposedly high-risk neighborhoods, and of insurance companies denying homeowner's insurance or else charging higher rates for homes in these same neighborhoods. Practices like these that discriminate against houses in certain neighborhoods are called **redlining**, and they also violate the law (Ezeala-Harrison, Glover, & Shaw-Jackson, 2008). Because the people affected by redlining tend to be people of color, redlining, too, is an example of institutional discrimination.



Figure **4.3.4**: Banks have rejected mortgage applications from people who wish to live in certain urban, high-risk neighborhoods. This practice, called redlining, violates the law. (CC BY 2.0; Taber Andrew Bain via Flickr)

Mortgage rejections and redlining contribute to another major problem facing people of color: residential segregation. Housing segregation is illegal but is nonetheless widespread because of mortgage rejections and other processes that make it very difficult for people of color to move out of segregated neighborhoods and into unsegregated areas. African Americans in particular remain highly segregated by residence in many cities, much more so than is true for other people of color. The residential segregation of African Americans is so extensive that it has been termed **hypersegregation** and more generally called American apartheid (Massey & Denton, 1993).

In addition to mortgage rejections, a pattern of subtle discrimination by realtors and homeowners makes it difficult for African Americans to find out about homes in white neighborhoods and to buy them (Pager, 2008). For example, realtors may tell African American clients that no homes are available in a particular white neighborhood, but then inform white clients of available homes. The now routine posting of housing listings on the Internet might be reducing this form of housing discrimination, but not all homes and apartments are posted, and some are simply sold by word of mouth to avoid certain people learning about them.

The hypersegregation experienced by African Americans cuts them off from the larger society, as many rarely leave their immediate neighborhoods, and results in concentrated poverty, where joblessness, crime, and other problems reign. For several reasons, then, residential segregation is thought to play a major role in the seriousness and persistence of African American poverty (Rothstein, 2012; Stoll, 2008).

Employment Discrimination

Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned racial discrimination in employment, including hiring, wages, and firing. However, African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans still have much lower earnings than whites. Several factors explain this disparity. Despite Title VII, however, an additional reason is that people of color continue to face discrimination in hiring and promotion (Hirsh & Cha, 2008). It is again difficult to determine whether such discrimination stems from conscious prejudice or from unconscious prejudice on the part of potential employers, but it is racial discrimination nonetheless.

A now-classic field experiment documented such discrimination. Sociologist Devah Pager (2003) had young white and African American men apply independently in person for entry-level jobs. They dressed the same and reported similar levels of education and other qualifications. Some applicants also admitted having a criminal record, while other applicants reported no such record. As might be expected, applicants with a criminal record were hired at lower rates than those without a record. However, in striking evidence of racial discrimination in hiring, African American applicants without a criminal record were hired at the same low rate as the white applicants with a criminal record.

Dimensions of Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Racial and ethnic inequality manifests itself in all walks of life. The individual and institutional discrimination just discussed is one manifestation of this inequality. We can also see stark evidence of racial and ethnic inequality in various government statistics. Sometimes statistics lie, and sometimes they provide all too true a picture; statistics on racial and ethnic inequality fall into the latter category. Table 4.3.5 presents data on racial and ethnic differences in income, education, and health.

Table **4.3.5**: Racial and ethnic differences in income, education, and health. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; Data from the U.S Census in Dimensions of Racial and Ethnic Inequality via Social Problems: Continuity and Change)

	White	African American	Latino	Asian	Native American
Median family income, 2010 ($)	68,818	39,900	41,102	76,736	39,664
Persons who are college educated, 2010 (%)	30.3	19.8	13.9	52.4	14.9 (2008)
Persons in poverty, 2010 (%)	9.9 (non-Latino)	27.4	26.6	12.1	28.4
Infant mortality (number of infant deaths per 1,000 births), 2006	5.6	12.9	5.4	4.6	8.

The picture presented by Table 4.3.5 is clear: US racial and ethnic groups differ dramatically in their life chances. Compared to whites, for example, African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans have much lower family incomes and much higher rates of poverty; they are also much less likely to have college degrees. In addition, African Americans and Native Americans have much higher infant mortality rates than whites: Black infants, for example, are more than twice as likely as white infants to die.

Although Table 4.3.5 shows that African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans fare much worse than whites, it presents a more complex pattern for Asian Americans. Compared to whites, Asian Americans have higher family incomes and are more likely to hold college degrees, but they also have a higher poverty rate. Thus many Asian Americans do relatively well, while others fare relatively worse, as just noted. Although Asian Americans are often viewed as a “model minority,” meaning that they have achieved economic success despite not being white, some Asians have been less able than others to climb the economic ladder. Moreover, stereotypes of Asian Americans and discrimination against them remain serious problems (Chou & Feagin, 2008). Even the overall success rate of Asian Americans obscures the fact that their occupations and incomes are often lower than would be expected from their educational attainment. They thus have to work harder for their success than whites do (Hurh & Kim, 1999).

The Increasing Racial/Ethnic Wealth Gap

Racial and ethnic inequality has existed since the beginning of the United States. Social scientists have warned that certain conditions have actually worsened for people of color since the 1960s (Hacker, 2003; Massey & Sampson, 2009). Recent evidence of this worsening appeared in a report by the Pew Research Center (2011), as evidenced in Figure 4.3.6. The report focused on racial disparities in wealth, which includes a family’s total assets (income, savings and investments, home equity, etc.) and debts (mortgage, credit cards, etc.). The report found that the wealth gap between white households on the one hand and African American and Latino households on the other hand was much wider than just a few years earlier, thanks to the faltering US economy since 2008 that affected Blacks more severely than whites.

According to the report, whites’ median wealth was ten times greater than Blacks’ median wealth in 2007, a discouraging disparity for anyone who believes in racial equality. By 2009, however, whites’ median wealth had jumped to twenty times greater than Blacks’ median wealth and eighteen times greater than Latinos’ median wealth. White households had a median net worth of about $113,000, while Black and Latino households had a median net worth of only $5,700 and $6,300, respectively (Figure 4.3.6). This racial and ethnic difference is the largest since the government began tracking wealth more than a quarter-century ago.

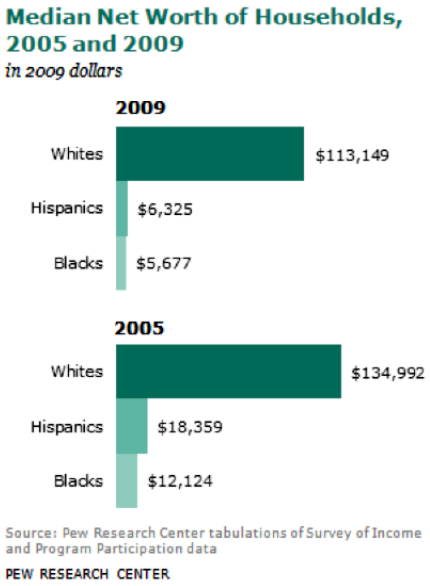


Figure 4.3.6: The Racial/Ethnic Wealth Gap (Median Net Worth of Households in 2009). (Used with permission; Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between whites, Blacks, Latinx. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2011))

A large racial/ethnic gap also existed in the percentage of families with negative net worth—that is, those whose debts exceed their assets. One-third of Black and Latino households had negative net worth, compared to only 15 percent of white households. Black and Latino households were thus more than twice as likely as white households to be in debt.

The Hidden Toll of Racial and Ethnic Inequality

An increasing amount of evidence suggests that being Black in a society filled with racial prejudice, discrimination, and inequality takes what has been called a "hidden toll" on the lives of African Americans (Blitstein, 2009). African Americans on the average have worse health than whites and die at younger ages. In fact, every year there are an additional 100,000 African American deaths than would be expected if they lived as long as whites do. Although many reasons probably explain all these disparities, scholars are increasingly concluding that the stress of being Black is a major factor (Geronimus et al., 2010).

In this way of thinking, African Americans are much more likely than whites to be poor, to live in high-crime neighborhoods, and to live in crowded conditions, among many other problems. As this chapter discussed earlier, they are also more likely, whether or not they are poor, to experience racial slights, refusals to be interviewed for jobs, and other forms of discrimination in their everyday lives. All these problems mean that African Americans from their earliest ages grow up with a great deal of stress, far more than what most whites experience. This stress in turn has certain neural and physiological effects, including hypertension (high blood pressure), that impair African Americans' short-term and long-term health and that ultimately shorten their lives. These effects accumulate over time: Black and white hypertension rates are equal for people in their twenties, but the Black rate becomes much higher by the time people reach their forties and fifties. As a recent news article on evidence of this "hidden toll" summarized this process, "The long-term stress of living in a white-dominated society 'weathers' Blacks, making them age faster than their white counterparts" (Blitstein, 2009, p. 48).

Although there is less research on other people of color, many Latinos and Native Americans also experience the various sources of stress that African Americans experience. To the extent this is true, racial and ethnic inequality also takes a hidden toll on members of these two groups. They, too, experience racial slights, live under disadvantaged conditions, and face other problems that result in high levels of stress and shorten their life spans.

Thinking Sociologically

1. If you have ever experienced individual discrimination, either as the person committing it or as the person affected by it, briefly describe what happened. How do you now feel when you reflect on this incident?
2. Do you think institutional discrimination occurs because people are purposely acting in a racially discriminatory manner? Why or why not?

3. Which of the three explanations of racial and ethnic inequality makes the most sense to you? Why?
4. Why should a belief in the biological inferiority of people of color be considered racist?

Key Takeaways

- People who practice racial or ethnic discrimination are usually also prejudiced, but not always. Some people practice discrimination without being prejudiced, and some may not practice discrimination even though they are prejudiced.
- Although a belief in biological inferiority used to be an explanation for racial and ethnic inequality, this belief is now considered racist.
- Cultural explanations attribute racial and ethnic inequality to certain cultural deficiencies among people of color.
- Structural explanations attribute racial and ethnic inequality to problems in the larger society, including discriminatory practices and lack of opportunity.
- Individual discrimination is common and can involve various kinds of racial slights. Much individual discrimination occurs in the workplace.
- Institutional discrimination often stems from prejudice, but institutions can also practice racial and ethnic discrimination when they engage in practices that seem to be racially neutral but in fact have a discriminatory effect.

Contributors and Attributions

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Social Problems: Continuity and Change v.1.0 (saylordotorg) (CC BY-NC-SA)

Works Cited

- Anderson, E. (1999). *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Appier, J. (1998). *Policing women: The Sexual Politics of Law Enforcement and the LAPD.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Blitstein, R. (2009). Weathering the storm. *Miller-McCune*, *2*(July–August), 48–57.
- Blank, E.C., Venkatachalam, P., McNeil, L., & Green, R.D. (2005). Racial discrimination in mortgage lending in Washington, DC: A mixed methods approach. *The Review of Black Political Economy*, *33*(2), 9–30.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2009). *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America.* 3rd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Chou, R.S. & Feagin, J.R. (2008). *The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism.* NY: Routledge.
- Ezeala-Harrison, F., Glover, G.B., & Shaw-Jackson, J. (2008). Housing loan patterns toward minority borrowers in Mississippi: Analysis of some micro data evidence of redlining. *The Review of Black Political Economy*, *35*(1), 43–54.
- Feagin, J.R. (1991). The continuing significance of race: AntiBlack discrimination in public places. *American Sociological Review*, *56*, 101–116.
- Feagin, J.R. (2006). *Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression.* London, UK: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Geronimus, A.T. , Hicken M.T., Pearson J.A., Seashols S.J., Brown K.L., & Cruz T.D. (2010). Do us Black women experience stress-related accelerated biological aging?: A novel theory and first population-based test of black-white differences in Telomere Length. *Human Nature*, 21(1):19–38.
- Gould, S.J. (1994). Curveball. *The New Yorker*, pp. 139–149.
- Hacker, A (2003 [1992]). *Two Nations: Black & White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*. New York, NY: Scribner.
- Herrnstein, R.J. & Murray, C. (1996).*The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life.* New York, NY: Free Press.
- Hirsh, C.E., & Cha, Y. (2008). Understanding employment discrimination: A multilevel approach. *Sociology Compass*, *2*(6), 1989–2007.
- Holland, J. (2011). Debunking the big lie right-wingers use to justify Black poverty and unemployment. *AlterNet*.
- Hurh, W.M., & Kim, K.C. (1999). The “success” image of Asian Americans: Its validity, and its practical and theoretical implications. In C. G. Ellison & W. A. Martin (Eds.), *Race and ethnic relations in the United States* (pp. 115–122). Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

- Massey, D.S., & Sampson, R.J. (2009). Moynihan redux: Legacies and lessons. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 621*, 6–27.
- Massey, D.S. & Denton, N.A. (1993). *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Merton, R.K. (1949). Discrimination and the American creed. In R.M. MacIver (Ed.), *Discrimination and National Welfare* (pp. 99–126). New York, NY: Institute for Religious Studies.
- Min, P.G. (Ed.). (2005). *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Muhammad, K.G. (2007). White may be might, but it's not always right. *The Washington Post*, p. B3.
- Murray, C. (1984). *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950–1980*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Pager, D. (2003). The mark of a criminal record. *American Journal of Sociology, 108*, 937–975.
- Robeznieks, A. (2020, October 23). Why covid-19 hits Latinx at nearly double overall U.S. rate. *American Medical Association.*
- Robinson, E. (2012, March 23). Perils of walking while Black. *The Washington Post*, p. A19.
- Rothstein, R. (2012). Racial segregation continues, and even intensifies. *Economic Policy Institute.*
- Stoll, M.A. (2008). Race, place, and poverty revisited. In A.C. Lin & D.R. Harris (Eds.), *The Colors of Poverty: Why Racial and Ethnic Disparities Persist* (pp. 201–231). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Schulman, K.A., et al. (1999). The effect of race and sex on physicians' recommendations for cardiac catheterization. *The New England Journal of Medicine, 340*, 618–626.
- Segura, D.A. (1992). Chicanas in white-collar jobs: "You have to prove yourself more." In C.G. Ellison & W.A. Martin (Eds.), *Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States: Readings for the 21st Century* (pp. 79–88). Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.
- Smedley, B.D., Stith, A.Y., & Nelson, A.R. (2003). *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Stoll, M.A. (2008). Race, place, and poverty revisited. In A.C. Lin & D.R. Harris (Eds.), *The colors of poverty: Why racial and ethnic disparities persist* (pp. 201–231). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Turner, M.A. (2002). *All Other Things Being Equal: A Paired Testing Study of Mortgage Lending Institutions*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
- United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2019, August 22). *Profile: Latino/Hispanic Americans.*

This page titled 4.3: Discrimination is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **4.3: Discrimination** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

4.4: Racism

Racism

The terms stereotype, prejudice, discrimination, and racism are often used interchangeably in everyday conversation, but sociologists do not view them as the same. While prejudice is not necessarily specific to race, **racism** is a doctrine of racial supremacy that sees one racial category as somehow superior or inferior to others. The Ku Klux Klan is a racist organization; its members' belief in white supremacy has encouraged over a century of hate crime and hate speech.

According to Ibram X. Kendi (2020), racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities. Kendi defines a **racist** as someone who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea. Further, **racial inequity** is defined as when two or more race-ethnic groups are not standing on equal footing - which is a result of racist policies or ideas (Kendi, 2020). For Kendi, the polar of a racist is an **anti-racist**, one who is supporting an anti-racist policy through their actions or expressing an anti-racist idea. To say that one is not racist is a hollow statement as it is devoid of action. In Chapter 12.1, equity is further explained, but like anti-racism, it requires action to counter racial inequities.

Institutional racism refers to the way in which racism is embedded in the fabric of society. For example, the disproportionate number of Black men arrested, charged, and convicted of crimes may reflect racial profiling, a form of institutional racism. (At the end of this section, various types of racism are further defined, with examples).

Sociologists, in general, recognize "race" as a social construct. This means that, although the concepts of race and racism are based on observable biological characteristics, any conclusions drawn about race on the basis of those observations are heavily influenced by cultural ideologies. Racism, as an ideology, exists in a society at both the individual and institutional level.

While much of the research and work on racism during the last half-century or so has concentrated on "white racism" in the Western world, historical accounts of race-based social practices can be found across the globe. Kendi reminds us though that a person of any race-ethnic background could be racist. Racism can be broadly understood to encompass individual and group prejudices and acts of discrimination that result in material and cultural advantages conferred on a majority or a dominant social group. So-called "white racism" focuses on societies in which white populations are the majority or the dominant social group. In studies of these majority white societies, the aggregate of material and cultural advantages is usually termed "white privilege."

Racism in the United States traces the attitudes, laws, practices and actions which discriminate against various groups in the United States based on their race or ethnicity; while most white Americans enjoy legally or socially sanctioned privileges and rights which have at various times been denied to members of other ethnic or minority groups. European Americans, particularly affluent white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, are said to have enjoyed advantages in matters of education, immigration, voting rights, citizenship, land acquisition, bankruptcy, and criminal procedure throughout United States history.

Racism against various ethnic or minority groups has existed in the United States since the colonial era. African Americans in particular have faced restrictions on their political, social, and economic freedoms throughout much of United States history. Native Americans have suffered genocide, forced removals, and massacres, and they continue to face discrimination. In addition, East, South, and Southeast Asians along with Pacific Islanders have also been discriminated against. Hispanics have continuously experienced racism in the United States despite the fact that many of them have European ancestry. Middle Eastern groups such as Jews, Arabs, and Iranians continuously face discrimination in the United States, and as a result, some people who belong to these groups do not identify as, and are not perceived to be, white.



Figure 4.4.1: A man holding sign during Iranian hostage crisis protest in 1979. (CC PDM 1.0; Library of Congress (Marion S. Trikosko) via Wikimedia)

Racism has manifested itself in a variety of ways, including genocide, slavery, segregation, Native American reservations, Native American boarding schools, immigration and naturalization laws, and internment camps. Formal racial discrimination was largely banned by the mid-20th century and over time, coming to be perceived as being socially and morally unacceptable. Racial politics remains a major phenomenon, and racism continues to be reflected in socioeconomic inequality. In recent years research has uncovered extensive evidence of racial discrimination in various sectors of modern U.S. society, including the criminal justice system, business, the economy, housing, health care, the media, and politics. In the view of the United Nations and the U.S. Human Rights Network, "discrimination in the United States permeates all aspects of life and extends to all communities of color."

Anti-Middle Eastern Sentiment

Anti-Middle Eastern sentiment is feelings and expression of hostility, hatred, discrimination, or prejudice towards the Middle East and its culture, and towards persons based on their association with the Middle East and Middle Eastern culture.

Anti-Middle Eastern racism has a long history in the United States, although it had generally been limited to Jews until recent decades. It is suggested by Leo Rosten that as soon as they left the boat, Jews were subject to racism from the port immigration authorities. The derogatory term kike was adopted when referring to Jews (because they often could not write so they may have signed their immigration papers with circles – or kikel in Yiddish). In early films, such as Cohen's Advertising Scheme (1904, silent), Jews were stereotyped as "scheming merchants," often with exaggerated West Asian racial features such as big, hooked noses, big lips, small eyes, black curly hair, and olive and/or brown-colored skin.

From the 1910s, Southern Jewish communities were attacked by the Ku Klux Klan, who objected to Jewish immigration, and often used "The Jewish Banker" in their propaganda. In 1915, Leo Frank was lynched in Georgia after being convicted of rape and sentenced to death (his punishment was commuted to life imprisonment). The second Ku Klux Klan, which grew enormously in the early 1920s by promoting "100% Americanism", focused its hatred on Jews, as well as Catholics and African Americans.

In 1993, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee confronted The Walt Disney Company about anti-Arab racist content in its animated film *Aladdin*. At first, Disney denied any problems but eventually relented and changed two lines in the opening song. Members of the ADC were still unhappy with the portrayal of Arabic characters and the referral to the Middle East as "barbaric".

Figure 4.4.2: Iranian Revolution anniversary 2017. (CC BY 4.0; Mohammad Hassanzadeh via Wikimedia)

Since 9/11, anti-Middle Eastern racism has risen dramatically. A man in Houston, Texas, who was shot and wounded after an assailant accused him of "blowing up the country", and four immigrants shot and killed by a man named Larme Price, who confessed to killing them as revenge for the September 11 attacks. Price said he was motivated by a desire to kill people of Arab descent after the attacks. Although Price described his victims as Arabs, only one was from an Arab country. This appears to be a trend; because of stereotypes of Arabs, several non-Arab, non-Muslim groups were subjected to attacks in the wake of 9/11,

including several Sikh men attacked for wearing their religiously-mandated turban. Price's mother, Leatha Price, said that her son's anger at Arabs was a matter of mental illness, not ethnic hatred.

A 2007 survey by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) concluded that 15% of Americans hold anti-Semitic views, which was in-line with the average of the previous ten years, but a decline from the 29% of the early sixties (The Marttila Communications Group). The survey concluded that education was a strong predictor, "with most educated Americans being remarkably free of prejudicial views" (Ibid). The belief that Jews have too much power was considered a common anti-Semitic view by the ADL. Other views indicating anti-Semitism, according to the survey, include the view that Jews are more loyal to Israel than America, and that they are responsible for the death of Jesus of Nazareth. The survey found that anti-Semitic Americans are likely to be intolerant generally, e.g. regarding immigration and free-speech. The 2007 survey also found that 29% of foreign-born Hispanics and 32% of African-Americans hold strong anti-Semitic beliefs, three times more than the 10% for whites. A 2009 study published in Boston Review found that nearly 25% of non-Jewish Americans blamed Jews for the financial crisis of 2007–2008, with a higher percentage among Democrats than Republicans; 32% of Democrats blamed Jews for the financial crisis, versus 18% for Republicans.

Anti-Asian Sentiment

Asian Americans, including those of East Asian, South Asian, and Southeast Asian descent, have experienced racism since the first major groups of Chinese immigrants arrived in America. The Naturalization Act of 1790 made Asians ineligible for citizenship. First-generation immigrants, children of immigrants, and Asians adopted by non-Asian families are still impacted by discrimination. During the Industrial Revolution in the United States, labor shortages in the mining and rail industries were prevalent. Chinese immigrant labor was often used to fill this gap, most notably with the construction of the First Transcontinental Railroad, leading to large-scale Chinese immigration. These Chinese immigrants were seen as taking the jobs of whites for cheaper pay, and the phrase Yellow Peril, which predicted the demise of Western Civilization as a result of Chinese immigrants, gained popularity.

In 1871, one of the largest lynchings in American history was committed against Chinese immigrants in Los Angeles, California. It would go on to become known as the Chinese massacre of 1871. The 1879 Constitution of the California prohibited the employment of Chinese people by state and local governments, as well as by businesses that were incorporated in California. Also, the 1879 constitution delegated power to local governments in California to remove Chinese people from within their borders. The federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 banned immigration of Chinese labourers for ten years after thousands of Chinese immigrants had come to the American West. Several mob attacks against Chinese people took place, including the Rock Springs massacre of 1885 in Wyoming in which at least 28 Chinese miners were killed and 15 injured, and the Hells Canyon massacre of 1887 in Oregon where 34 Chinese miners were killed.

Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic, which started in the city of Wuhan, Hubei, China, in December 2019, has led to an increase in acts and displays of sinophobia as well as prejudice, xenophobia, discrimination, violence, and racism against people of East Asian, North Asian and Southeast Asian descent and appearance around the world. With the spread of the pandemic and formation of hotspots, such as those in Asia, Europe, and the Americas, discrimination against people from these hotspots has been reported.

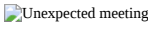


Figure **4.4.3**: "Unexpected meeting" (CC BY 2.0: Go-tea 郭天 via Flickr)

According to a June 2020 Pew Research study, 58% of Asian Americans and 45% of African Americans believe that racist views toward them had increased since the pandemic. There were a few thousand incidences of xenophobia and racism against Asian Americans between 28 January and 24 February 2020, according to a tally compiled by Russell Jeung, professor of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University. An online reporting forum called "Stop AAPI Hate" recorded "650 direct reports of discrimination against primarily Asian Americans" between 18 and 26 March 2020, this later increased to 1,497 reports by 15 April 2020, and most targets were of Chinese (40%) and Korean (16%) descents. According to a WHYY-FM report (21 April 2020), incidents of anti-Asian racism, including discrimination, racial slurs and violent attacks, especially towards Chinese Americans, were caused both by white Americans and African-Americans; most cases remain unreported to the authorities.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump frequently referred to COVID-19 as the "Chinese Virus" and the "China Virus" in an attempt to point to its origin, a term considered to be anti-Chinese and racist. He later argued this was "not racist at all" after lawmakers including Elizabeth Warren raised objections about the statement. Trump also stated on Twitter, on 23 March 2020, that the

coronavirus was not Asian Americans' fault and their community should be protected. Trump brushed off the alleged use of the derogatory term "Kung Flu" by a White House official to refer to COVID-19 when asked by a reporter during a media session on 18 March 2020. Eventually he pulled back on the "Chinese Virus" name due to Asian communities facing increased number of racist taunts and incidents as the illness spread across the U.S. however, at his Tulsa, Oklahoma rally on 20 June, Trump referred to the virus as "Kung Flu." On 14 March 2020, more than 200 civil rights groups in the United States demanded that the House of Representatives and Senate leadership publicly denounce the growing amount of anti-Asian racism related to the pandemic and take "tangible steps to counter the hysteria" around the coronavirus, offering the passage of a joint resolution denouncing the racism and xenophobia as one solution.

Types of Racism

A general definition of racism has been provided above. Yet, in reality, sociologists have identified multiple types of racism, which are defined and described below. The analysis of these different types of racism provides more depth and complexity which can help to better diagnose, critically analyze, and potentially remedy racism.

Thinking Sociologically

Color-blind racism is defined as the use of race-neutral principles to defend the racially unequal status quo. While a mainstream definition of color-blindness suggests that race or racial classification does not affect a person's life chances or opportunities, sociologists such as Bonilla-Silva argues that this more subtle form of racism ignores race and structural racism and is the dominant ideology in the U.S. Yet, as shown below structural racism permeates every aspect of our lives, and color blind racism ignores the structural inequalities that disproportionately affect people of color.

- Example: "We are all equal" and "race doesn't matter" are phrases uttered and may sound but, but in reality these phrases ignore structural problems such as the prison industrial complex, poverty, the wealth gap, and educational inequailties - all of which hamper the life chances of people of color which means we do not all have equal chances.
- How can we reach a point where our differences are acknowledged and even celebrated or where are unequal life experiences are understood as real?

Environmental racism: Structurally analogous to environmental sexism, environmental racism involves a conceptual association between people of color and nature that marks their dual subordination (Bullard, 1983). Environmental racism is seen in the deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste disposal and the siting of polluting industries(Ibid). It is racial discrimination in the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in communities of color (Ibid). And, it is racial discrimination in the history of excluding people of color from the mainstream environmental groups, decision-making boards, commissions, and regulatory bodies (Ibid).

- Example: Government-sanctioned lead-contaminated drinking water in Flint, Michigan, disproportionately impacting the African-American population.
- What race-ethnic representation exists in your local, appointed and elected municipalities (government), including those that regulate water and air pollution? What environmental groups exist in your community to provide checks on these governing boards, particularly with regards to the communities populated by people of color?

Ideological racism: An ideology that considers a groups' unchangeable physical characteristics to be linked in a direct, causal way to psychological or intellectual characteristics and that, on this basis, distinguishes between superior and inferior groups (Feagin & Feagin, 1998).

- Example: The justification of slavery as "saving" Africans from their homeland's "primitive culture;" Manifest Destiny that purported Euro-Americans God-given rights to the lands in the eastern United States at the expense of Native Americans who were symbolized as "savages;" former President Trump's statements on the campaign trail linking Mexicans to rapists and criminals.
- How can the stereotypes that shape ideological racism be challenged or changed - on an individual level, in our families, in the media, and in society at large?

Internalized racism: Members of the target group are emotionally, physically, and spiritually battered to the point that they begin to actually believe that their oppression is deserved, is their lot in life, is natural and right, and that it doesn't even exist

(Yamato, 2004).

- Example: A person of color who hates their skin color and wishes to marry out of their race-ethnic group so their children will be of lighter complexion. Another example: the root of the alcohol problem in Indigenous communities can be traced to the effects of colonization, internalizing the colonizer's message (i.e. American Indians are inferior or "savage").
- In some communities and families, internalized racism has been in the works over centuries. What types of mental health supports exist in your communities or schools that may serve to address internalized racism?

Inter-group or inter-personal racism: This is the racism that occurs between individuals or groups; it is the holding of negative attitudes towards a different race or culture (Safe Places for the Advancement of Community and Equity). Interpersonal racism often follows a victim/perpetrator model (Ibid). Within poor communities, ignorance and suspicion of groups or individuals of a different race-ethnic background may result in tension between various race-ethnic groups.

- Example: In urban spaces such as Los Angeles, Long Beach, Chicago, New York City, poor Latinx, Asian, and African American gangs fight each other rather than the capitalist system that perpetuates class inequalities.
- Can you identify examples of multiracial coalitions in your community? One such multiracial collective is Californians for Justice, located in Oakland, San Jose, Fresno, and Long Beach, which is a statewide youth-powered organization fighting for racial justice, particularly in our public schools.

Intra-group racism: Racist attitudes and behaviors against people of your "same racial group." Colorism is a type of intra-group racism which is the ranking or judgment of individuals based on skin tone (Schaefer, 2019).

- Example: A light-skinned person of color who evaluates a dark-skinned person of color as inferior; a wealthy person of any particular "race" who speaks pejoratively of less financially wealthy individuals in their "race."
- Have you ever experienced colorism in your family, community, or social media? How did you respond to this colorism, or how could have you responded to it?

Modern racism: White beliefs that serious anti-Black (or anti-Mexican, anti-Arab, anti-Asian, etc.) discrimination does not exist today and that African Americans (or other communities of color) are making illegitimate demands for social changes. (Feagin & Feagin, 1998). This type of racism may be understood as color-blind racism.

- Example: One white male (David C.) in the film, The Color of Fear, was sure he was not racist at all and sure that racism is a thing of the past and only a figment in the imagination of the minds of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, etc.



Video 4.4.4: The Color of Fear Trailer. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; StirFry Seminars & Consulting via YouTube)

- In this film, through dialoguing with other men of color and white men, David C. barely begins to understand white privilege and the systems of power that oppress people of color. Another male featured in the film, Roberto, acknowledges that unmasking white privilege is painful, as he proclaims,"The cure of the pain is in the pain." How would you respond to someone who proclaims that racism is not real, but is rather an illusion or a figment of one's imagination?

Structural racism/Systemic racism: A shorthand term for the many systemic factors that work to produce and maintain racial inequities in America today. These are aspects of our history and culture that allow the privileges associated with "whiteness" and the disadvantages associated with "color" to remain deeply embedded within the political economy. Public policies, institutional practices and cultural representations contribute to structural racism by reproducing outcomes that are racially inequitable. (The Aspen Institute)

- Example: The criminal justice system contributes to systemic racism through over-policing of communities of color, disproportionate police brutality experienced by people of color, and disproportionate mass incarceration of Black men.
- The Summer 2020 protests called to dismantle systemic racism in this country, particularly in policing. What do you think needs to happen to rid this country of system racism that is evident in our laws, schooling, mass media, criminal justice system, political representation, employment patterns, etc.?

Subtle, covert racism: Hidden, camouflaged, pernicious racism.

- Example: Merriam-Webster's Dictionary definitions of racially-coded labels such as Black, minority, and savage all contain derogatory meanings.
- What do you think is more harmful to our society: overt (obvious) racism or subtle, covert racism? While laws may address overt racism such as hate crimes, addressing covert racism may be far more challenging. How might we raise children in a way to prevent subtle, covert racism?

Contributors and Attributions

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Racism (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Anti-Middle_Eastern_sentiment (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Racism in the United States Asian Americans (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- List of incidents of xenophobia and racism related to the COVID-19 pandemic (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Alfa, I. (2020, July 25). Hutterites face covid-19 stigma across the prairies, says author who grew up on Mmanitoba colony. *CBS News.*
- Asmelash, L. (2020, February 1). UC berkeley faces backlash after stating 'xenophobia' is 'common' or 'normal' reaction to coronavirus. *CNN.*
- Bamford, A. (2020, July 28). Coronavirus: hutterian safety council asks province to stop 'outing' infected colonies. *Global News.*
- Better, S. (2007). *Institutional Racism: A Primer on Theory and Strategies for Social Change.* 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Bullard, R.D. (1983). *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots.* Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Carmichael, S. & Hamilton, C.V. (1967). *Black Power:The Politics of Liberation.* New York, NY: Random House.
- Feagin, J.R. & Feagin, C.B. (1998). *Race and Ethnic Relations.* 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Forgey, Q. (2020, March 18). Trump on 'chinese virus' label: 'it's not racist at all'. *POLITICO*.
- Gershenson, S., Holt, S.B., & Papageorge, N.W. (2016, June). Who believes in me? the effect of student-teacher demographic match on teacher expectations. *Economics of Education Review,* 52, 209-224.
- Gilliam, W.S., Maupin, A.N., Reyes, C.R., Accavitti, M., & Shic, F. (2016). Do early educators' implicit biases regarding sex and race relate to behavior expectations and recommendations of preschool expulsions and suspensions? *Yale Child Study Center.*
- Hoffman, K.M., Trawalter, S., Axt, J.R., & Oliver, M.N. (2016). Racial bias in pain assessment. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113(16), 4296-4301.
- Izri, T. & Lefebvre, C. (2020, July 23). 'It's not an idle threat': hutterite colony considers filing human rights complaint against manitoba government. *CTV News Winnipeg.*

- Katopol, P. (2014). Avoiding the Reference Desk: Stereotype Threat. *Library Leadership & Management*, 28 (3).
- Kendi, I. (2020). *How to Be an Anti-Racist.* New York, NY: Random House.
- Mastrangelo, D. (2020, March 19). Chris cuomo blasts trump for saying 'chinese virus': 'it could have come from anywhere. *Washington Examiner.*
- Milkman, K.L., Akinola, M., & Chugh, D. (2012). Temporal distance and discrimination: an audit study in academia. *Psychological Science*, 23(7), 710 – 717.
- Okonofua, J.A., & Eberhardt, J.L. (2015). Two strikes: race and the disciplining of young students. *Psychological Sciences*, 26(5), 617-624.
- Pager, D., Bonikowski, B., & Western, B. (2009). Discrimination in a low-wage labor market: a field experiment. *American Sociological Review,* 74(5), 777-799.
- Safe Places for the Advancement of Community and Equity (n.d.). *Race and Racism.*
- Smith, J.A. (2015, May 7). Why teachers are more likely to punish Black students. *Greater Good Magazine.*
- Schaefer, R.T. (2019). *Racial and Ethnic Groups.* 15th ed. New York, NY: Pearson.
- Steele, C.M. & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.
- Sue, D.W. (2010). *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual orientation.* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- The Aspen Institute. (n.d.). *Glossary for Understanding the Dismantling Structural Racism/Promoting Racial Equity Analysis.*
- The Marttila Communications Group. (2007, October). American attitudes towards jews in america (PDF). *Anti-Defamation League.*
- Wilson, J.P., Hugenberg, K., & Rule, N.O. (2017). Racial bias in judgments of physical size and formidability: from size to threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 113(1), 59 – 80.
- Wingfield, M. & Karaman, B. (n.d). Arab Stereotypes and American Educators (PDF). *National Council for the Social Studies.*
- Wu, N. (2020, March 18). Asian americans lawmakers denounce 'rumors' and 'xenophobia' about coronavirus. *USA Today.*
- Yamato, G. (2004). Something about the subject makes it hard to name. In Margaret L. Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins (Eds.) *Race, Class, and Gender.* 5th Ed. New York, NY: Thomson/Wadsworth Pub. Pp. 99-103.

This page titled 4.4: Racism is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **4.4: Racism** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

4.5: Social Change and Resistance

Now that we have examined prejudice, discrimination and racism in the United States, what have we found? Did the historic election of Barack Obama as president in 2008 signify a new era of equality between the races, "post-racial" as many observers wrote, or did his election occur despite the continued existence of pervasive racial and ethnic inequality?

On the one hand, there has been cause for hope. Legal segregation is gone. The vicious, “old-fashioned”, overt racism that was so rampant in this country into the 1960s declined dramatically since that tumultuous time (though such racism is on the uptick). People of color made have made important gains in several spheres of life, and African Americans and other people of color now occupy some important elected positions in and outside the South, a feat that would have been unimaginable a generation ago. Perhaps most notably, Barack Obama has African ancestry and identifies as an African American, and on his 2008 election night people across the country wept with joy at the symbolism of his victory. Certainly progress has been made in US racial and ethnic relations. In a surprise win in 2018, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has become one of the most outspoken members in the U.S. House. Kamala Harris is now the first female, and first person of color, to hold the position of Vice-President of the U.S. In a 2021 competitive run-off election in Georgia, Reverend Raphael Warnock claimed victory, and he became the 11th African American elected to the U.S. Senate.

On the other hand, there is also cause for despair. Old-fashioned racism has been replaced by a modern, symbolic racism that still blames people of color for their problems and reduces public support for government policies to deal with their problems. Remember how Asian Americans were stigmatized and blamed for COVID-19? Institutional discrimination remains pervasive, and hate crimes, cross burnings, and white supremacist rallies remain all too common. Pervasive is also suspicion of people based solely on the color of their skin, as the Trayvon Martin, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor tragedies reminds us. And, Obama's election triggered the racist "birther movement" - which erroneously charged that he was not born in the United States - and perhaps fueled the alt-right, white supremacist backlash that has reared its head many times in the past several years, most recently with domestic terrorism at the U.S. Capitol riot on January 6, 2021.

Reducing Prejudice through Intergroup Contact

One of the reasons that people may hold stereotypes and prejudices is that they view the members of out-groups as different from them. We may become concerned that our interactions with people from different racial groups will be unpleasant, and these anxieties may lead us to avoid interacting with people from those groups (Mallett, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2008). What this suggests is that a good way to reduce prejudice is to help people create closer connections with members of different groups. People will be more favorable toward others when they learn to see those other people as more similar to them, as closer to the self, and to be more concerned about them.

The idea that intergroup contact will reduce prejudice, known as the **intergroup contact hypothesis**, is simple: If children from different race-ethnic groups play and interact together in school, their attitudes toward each other should improve. And, if we encourage college students to travel abroad, they will meet people from other cultures and become more positive toward them.



Video **4.5.1**: Intergroup Contact Hypothesis (also known as Intergroup Contact Theory) provides an example of reducing prejudice. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Emily Andre via YouTube)

One important example of the use of intergroup contact to influence prejudice came about as a result of the important U.S. Supreme Court case Brown v. Board of Education in 1954. In this case, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed, based in large part on the testimony of psychologists, that bussing Black children to schools attended primarily by white children, and vice versa, would produce positive outcomes on intergroup attitudes, not only because it would provide Black children with access to better schools, but also because the resulting intergroup contact would reduce prejudice between Black and white children. This strategy seemed particularly appropriate at the time it was implemented because most schools in the United States then were highly segregated by race.

The strategy of bussing was initiated after the Supreme Court decision, and it had a profound effect on schools in the United States. For one, the policy was very effective in changing school makeup—the number of segregated schools decreased dramatically during the 1960s after the policy was begun. Bussing also improved the educational and occupational achievement of Blacks and increased the desire of Blacks to interact with whites; for instance, by forming cross-race friendships (Stephan, 1999). Overall, then, the case of desegregating schools in the United States supports the expectation that intergroup contact, at least in the long run, can be successful in changing attitudes. Nevertheless, as a result of several subsequent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, the policy of desegregating schools via bussing was not continued past the 1990s.

Although student bussing to achieve desegregated schools represents one prominent example of intergroup contact, such contact occurs in many other areas as well. Taken together, there is substantial support for the effectiveness of intergroup contact in improving group attitudes in a wide variety of situations, including schools, work organizations, military forces, and public housing. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) conducted a meta-analysis in which they reviewed over 500 studies that had investigated the effects of intergroup contact on group attitudes. They found that attitudes toward groups that were in contact became more positive over time. Furthermore, positive effects of contact were found on both stereotypes and prejudice and for many different types of contacted groups.

The positive effects of intergroup contact may be due in part to increases in other-concern. Galinsky and Moskowitz (2000) found that leading students to take the perspective of another group member—which increased empathy and closeness to the person—also reduced prejudice. And the behavior of students on college campuses demonstrates the importance of connecting with others and the dangers of not doing so. Sidanius, Van Laar, Levin, and Sinclair (2004) found that students who joined exclusive campus groups, including fraternities, sororities, and minority ethnic organizations (such as the African Student Union), were more prejudiced to begin with and became even less connected and more intolerant of members of other social groups over the time that they remained in the organizations. It appears that memberships in these groups focused the students on themselves and other people who were very similar to them, leading them to become less tolerant of others who are different.

Although intergroup contact does work, it is not a panacea because the conditions necessary for it to be successful are frequently not met. Contact can be expected to work only in situations that create the appropriate opportunities for change. For one, contact will only be effective if it provides information demonstrating that the existing stereotypes held by the individuals are incorrect. When we learn more about groups that we didn't know much about before, we learn more of the truth about them, leading us to be less biased in our beliefs. But if our interactions with the group members do not allow us to learn new beliefs, then contact cannot work.

When we first meet someone from another category, we are likely to rely almost exclusively on our stereotypes (Brodt & Ross, 1998). However, when we get to know the individual well (e.g., as a student in a classroom learns to know the other students over a school year), we may get to the point where we ignore that individual's group membership almost completely, responding to him or her entirely at the individual level (Madon et al., 1998). Thus contact is effective in part because it leads us to get past our perceptions of others as group members and to individuate them.

When we get past group memberships and focus more on the individuals in the groups, we begin to see that there is a great deal of variability among the group members and that our global and undifferentiating group stereotypes are actually not that informative (Rothbart & John, 1985). Successful intergroup contact tends to reduce the perception of out-group homogeneity. Contact also helps us feel more positively about the members of the other group, and this positive affect makes us like them more.

Intergroup contact is also more successful when the people involved in the contact are motivated to learn about the others. One factor that increases this motivation is **interdependence**—a state in which the group members depend on each other for successful

performance of the group goals (Neuberg & Fiske, 1987). The importance of interdependence can be seen in the success of cooperative learning techniques, such as the jigsaw classroom (Aronson, Blaney, Stephan, Sikes, & Snapp, 1978; Aronson, 2004).

The **jigsaw classroom** is an approach to learning in which students from different racial or ethnic groups work together, in an interdependent way, to master material. The class is divided into small learning groups, where each group is diverse in ethnic and gender composition. The assigned material to be learned is divided into as many parts as there are students in the group, and members of different groups who are assigned the same task meet together to help develop a strong report. Each student then learns his or her own part of the material and presents this piece of the puzzle to the other members of his or her group. The students in each group are therefore interdependent in learning all the material. A wide variety of techniques, based on principles of the jigsaw classroom, are in use in many schools around the world, and research studying these approaches has found that cooperative, interdependent experiences among students from different social groups are effective in reducing negative stereotyping and prejudice (Stephan, 1999).

In sum, we can say that contact will be most effective when it is easier to get to know, and become more respectful of, the members of the other group and when the social norms of the situation promote equal, fair treatment of all groups. If the groups are treated unequally, for instance, by a teacher or leader who is prejudiced and who therefore treats the different groups differently, or if the groups are in competition rather than cooperation, there will be no benefit. In cases when these conditions are not met, contact may not be effective and may in fact increase prejudice, particularly when it confirms stereotypical expectations (Stangor, Jonas, Stroebe, & Hewstone, 1996). Finally, it is important that enough time be allowed for the changes to take effect. In the case of bussing in the United States, for instance, the positive effects of contact seemed to have been occurring, but they were not happening particularly fast.

Why is it Important to Reduce Racial Prejudice and Racism?

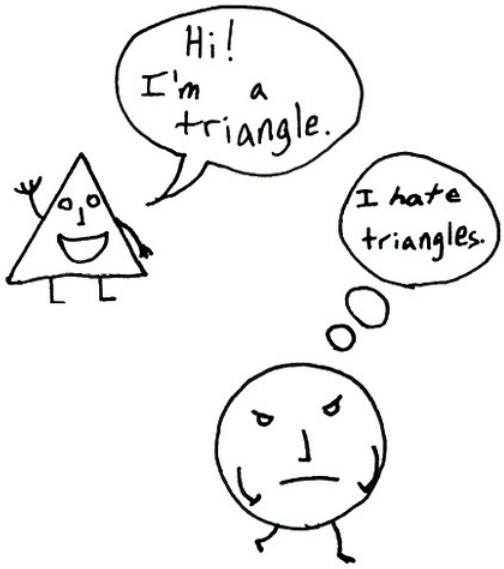


Figure 4.5.2: "Prejudice" image illustrates a triangle introducing itself to a circle who in turn replies, "I hate triangles." (CC BY-NC 2.0; DanAllison via Flickr)

Here are some reasons why racial prejudice and racism should be reduced:

- They impede or prevent the object of racism from achieving his or her full potential as a human being.
- They impede or prevent the object of racism from making his or her fullest contribution to society.
- They impede or prevent the person or group engaging in racist actions from benefiting from the potential contributions of their victim, and, as a result, weaken the community as a whole.
- They increase the present or eventual likelihood of retaliation by the object of racist actions.
- They go against many of the democratic ideals upon which the United States and other democracies were founded.
- Racism is illegal, in many cases.

Racial prejudice and racism feed on each other. If racial prejudice is not reduced, it could lead to racism, and if racism is not addressed, it could lead to more prejudice. This is why strategies to address discrimination on the basis of race should be thorough and multifaceted so that both individual attitudes and institutionalized practices are affected.

In addition, here are some examples of why racial prejudice and racism should be addressed in your community building effort if more than one racial or ethnic group is involved:

- Every participant in your effort has his or her own understanding of the world and how it works. The European American residents in the neighborhood don't understand why the new immigrants from Guatemala have to stand at the street corner to get work (they are commonly referred to as day laborers). They think it is because they are either "illegal" or too lazy to find full-time jobs. Part of the problem is that the residents have not had the opportunity to debunk these stereotypes through direct interaction and contact with the day laborers and to hear their stories.
- Every participant in your effort is polite, respectful, and empathetic towards each of the others, and understands that in order to address a common concern, they all have to work together; yet, they have not been able to engage a representative from the Black members in their community. It helps to understand why Black folx have traditionally been "left out" and how important it is to keep finding ways to engage them.
- The board of directors of a local community center gets together to discuss ways to improve the center so that it is more welcoming to people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. They come up with ideas such as hiring more culturally diverse staff, posting notices in different languages, hosting food festivals, and celebrating various cultural events. It helps the participants to understand that even though they are taking the first steps to becoming culturally sensitive, their institutional policies may still be racist because they have not included anyone from the various racial and ethnic groups to participate in the strategic planning process, thereby not sharing their power.

Addressing racial prejudice and racism also means dealing with racial exclusion and injustice. Ultimately, this means that your community building effort is promoting democracy, a value of the United States and its Constitution.

In other words, there are both moral and sometimes legal reasons to act against racism. There are also strong pragmatic reasons as well. Racial prejudice and racism can harm not only the victims, but also the larger society, and indirectly the very people who are engaging in the acts. What's more, some important new research suggests that in some cases, racist actions can cause physiological harm to the victims. For example, a recent review of physiological literature concludes:

> Interethnic group and intraethnic group racism are significant stressors for many African-Americans. As such, intergroup and intragroup racism may play a role in the high rates of morbidity and mortality in this population (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999).

Before you decide on the best activities and strategies, do the following:

- Learn about your community (e.g., what groups live there, what has been the nature of their relationships, what incidents have occurred in the past due to racial prejudice or racism).
- Document activities in your community that reflect racial prejudice or racism. Documentation will show proof that there is a problem, especially when the community is in denial that racism exists.
- Invite a group of people to participate in the planning process, if appropriate (e.g., the advocates who always take action, the representatives of each group, the people who are affected).
- Understand the depth of the problem (e.g., it's a new problem because of a group of newcomers, or it's an old problem that won't go away).
- Identify and understand the kinds of policies that may need to be challenged.
- Determine the short-term and long-term, if any, goals of your strategy (e.g., change people's attitudes and/or change an institutional policy).
- Consider how far the selected strategy(ies) will take your community (e.g., as far as initial awareness, or all the way to electing officials from the under-represented groups).
- Consider what existing resources you can build on and what additional assistance or resources you may need (e.g., anti-racism training, funding, or buy-in from the mayor).
- Consider how much time you have (e.g., are you responding to a crisis that needs to be dealt with immediately, to the need to curb a festering issue, or to the desire to promote the value of diversity).

- Review your strategies to ensure that they deal with racial prejudice and racism at the individual, community, and institutional levels, and they link dialogue to action.

Things You Can Do in the Workplace: From Reducing Racial Prejudice to Reducing Racism

- Actively recruit and hire a racially and ethnically diverse staff.

While it's not enough just to fill your staff with a rainbow of people from different backgrounds, representation from a variety of groups is an important place to start. Contact minority organizations, social groups, networks, media, and places where people of different ethnic and cultural groups congregate or access information. If you use word-of-mouth as a recruitment tool, spread the word to members of those groups, or key contact people. Also, consider writing an equal-opportunity policy for hiring and promoting staff.

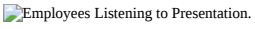


Figure **4.5.3**: Diverse employees listening to presentation. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; ScoRDS via Flickr)

- Actively recruit culturally and ethnically diverse board members, executives, and managers.

Racial prejudice can be reduced if the staff becomes diverse and raises the awareness of each other, but racism is reduced when power is shared by the leadership.

In order to move beyond racial prejudice and ensure inclusiveness, your organization's board members and executives should reflect the communities or constituencies it serves. For instance, one group decided to reserve a certain number of slots on its governing board for representatives of the cultural and ethnic groups in the community.

- Talk to the people of color on your staff and ask them what barriers or attitudes they face at work. Examine your newsletter or other publications and look out for negative portrayals, exclusion, or stereotypes.

Find out how you can improve your workplace for members from diverse racial and ethnic groups that work there. This will not only give you some practical ideas about what you need to work on, but it will also signify that the needs of every group is taken seriously. Look around at any artwork you have in your offices. Are any groups represented in a stereotypical way? Is there diversity in the people portrayed? For example, if all the people in the clip art used in your newsletter are European Americans, you should make an effort to use clip art that shows a bigger variety of people.

- Form a permanent task force or committee dedicated to forming and monitoring a plan for promoting inclusion and fighting racism in your workplace.

Racial prejudice is reduced by developing relationships and ensuring that materials are culturally sensitive, but racism is reduced when there is a permanent task force or committee that becomes part of the governance structure to ensure inclusive and just institutional policies.

Things You Can Do in the Media: Reducing Racial Prejudice to Reducing Racism

- Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper or contact your local TV and radio station when the coverage is biased or when there is no coverage at all.

The media plays a powerful role in conveying messages to the public. Racial prejudice exists in the media if, for instance, the reporters always reveal the cultural or ethnic background of a group of loitering youth when they are persons of color, but not otherwise. Writing a letter or contacting the local media stations will help increase their staff's awareness about the implications of the prejudiced way in which they cover the news.

- Organize a coalition of leaders from diverse communities and from the local media groups to discuss how they can work together to address the way people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are presented in the media.

Having a long-term vision of how the community and media representatives can work together will help address racism at the institutional level. In order to do this, it is advisable to organize the community leaders and media representatives separately to discuss their issues and then facilitate a meeting between them. This will provide you and the facilitator a chance to know about the concerns and challenges before convening everyone.

- Contact the local media and organize presentations.

You can contact and organize presentations to educate the staff about the values and traditions of diverse groups and help them understand the negative implications of their coverage related to race and ethnicity.



Figure 4.5.4: "Chinese New Year news coverage" image illustrates the importance of news coverage of diverse communities. (CC BY 2.0; Gary Soup via Flickr)

- Pressure the local media organizations to develop and enforce policies for hiring staff from different racial and ethnic background.

You can help broker relationships between the media organizations and organizations that serve a specific cultural or ethnic group (e.g., NAACP, National Council of La Raza) so that networks can be developed to distribute job announcements.

In order to get information about how to cover different cultural and ethnic groups, media representatives can seek advice from the following:

- Asian American Journalists Association
- South Asian Journalists Association
- National Association of Black Journalists

Things You Can Do in the Schools: Reducing Racial Prejudice to Reducing Racism

- Form a diversity task force or club. Recognize holidays and events relating to a variety of cultural and ethnic groups.

This can be done in a school or university setting. Your diversity group can sponsor panel discussions, awareness activities, and cultural events to help prevent racism. Observing and conducting educational activities about events like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, Juneteenth, and other dates of significance to people of colors provides an opportunity for students to learn about the history of different cultural and ethnic groups and reduce misinformed or inaccurate perceptions.

- Conduct field trips to historical places that represent struggles against racism or places that embody the values and traditions of another group of people.



Video 4.5.5: Six ways to be an anti-racist educator, with Dena Simmons. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use: Edutopia via YouTube)

- Work to include anti-racism education in your school's curriculum. Develop a strategy to change racist policies in your school.

Recognizing the traditions of other cultural and ethnic groups and developing intercultural relationships will reduce racial prejudice. Examine and change school policies that perpetuate exclusion of some cultural or ethnic groups.

Develop procedures for dealing with racist acts and provide incentives (e.g., extra credits, special recognition) for efforts to promote cross-racial understanding.

Lobby your school board to make changes or additions to the curriculum to teach anti-racism and to provide seed grants to teachers or instructors to help them conduct research and activities about racism and to promote anti-racist values and principles.

Examine the recruitment, application, and admissions process for students, teachers, and staff from different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Things You Can Do in Your Neighborhood: Reducing Racial Prejudice to Reducing Racism

- Welcome all newcomers. Make "safe zone" signs or stickers.

Form a committee to welcome anyone who moves into your neighborhood regardless of what they look like. Send representatives from your committee or neighborhood association over to the new person's house with flowers, a fruit basket, or some other small gift and say, "We're glad you're living here. We welcome you." Some neighborhoods have made small signs or stickers for their homes that read, "We welcome good neighbors of all traditions, backgrounds, and faiths." These stand in contrast to the small signs in many yards that warn would-be intruders of the particular security system they've had installed.



Figure **4.5.6**: Welcoming sign on a community church near rural Oakridge, Oregon. Sign presents a welcome, with no exceptions, to all: homeless, LGBT, poor, Muslim, brown, Black, and refugee. (Janét Hund via jhund@lbcc.edu)

Write articles about different cultures and their traditions in the neighborhood newsletter or newspaper. Place advertisements about different cultural celebrations.

- Identify and change policies that are exclusive and maintain the status quo.

Making someone feel a part of your neighborhood helps to reduce racial prejudice. Addressing redlining (the illegal practice of a lending institution denying loans or restricting their number for certain areas of a community) reduces racist policies.

Organize a committee of lawyers, real-estate agents, lending institutions, and community and civil rights leaders to conduct a study and present the facts to the local government. If there is a neighborhood association or council, consider if it is representative of the

neighborhood's demographics and diversity. If not, develop strategies for engaging leaders (formal and informal) from the underrepresented groups.

Things You Can Do in Your Community: Reducing Racial Prejudice to Reducing Racism

- Organize a cleanup or rebuilding campaign to erase racist graffiti or eliminate vandalism. Put up "Hate Free Zones" signs in the community.

Doing something as a community to repair physical damage done by racism shows that the people in your town won't stand for such displays of hatred. It also can attract media attention to your cause and put a positive spin on a negative situation.

- Organize a city-wide coalition of community leaders made up of representatives from the different cultural and ethnic groups, as well as different community sectors (e.g., police, schools, businesses, local government) to examine their existing policies and determine what needs to change.

Doing something as a group of residents demonstrates the individuals' commitment to reduce prejudice. Creating a governing body that represents institutional leaders helps to reduce racism at the institutional level.

Reviewing hiring and contracting policies in the city government will help change institutional norms that could be perpetuating economic disparities.

- Identify and support new candidates from different racial and ethnic groups to run for city council and other community-wide governing bodies.

Conducting candidate forums and voter registration drives will increase residents' knowledge about the candidates and what they stand for, and increase the candidates' accountability to their constituents should they win.

> ***Examples:***
> *St. Francis De Sales Central Elementary Cleanup Campaign*
> *In Morgantown, West Virginia, a convenience store had been painted with racist skinhead graffiti. After their teacher showed them a video on how another town had fought hate, a 6th grade class at St. Francis De Sales Central Elementary decided that if the graffiti was left alone, it would give the impression that the community didn't care about racism. The kids got together and painted over the graffiti, earning them the thanks of the state Attorney General and publicizing their point.*
>
> *Toronto Coalition Against Racism*
> *In the summer of 1993, Toronto experienced a rise in increasingly violent racism, much of which was directed at Tamil immigrants. Much of the violence was being done by neo-Nazis. Eventually, a large protest was held, with 3,000 people led by the Tamil community chanting "Immigrants In! Nazis Out!"*
>
> *The people who organized the protest went on to form the Toronto Coalition Against Racism. TCAR is a coalition of 50 community-based anti-racist and social justice organizations. According to its website, TCAR has been involved in many community actions since forming, including:*
>
> - *Opposing a ban placed on Filipino youth from entering a local mall*
> - *Working with the Somali community to oppose harassment by security guards and landlords at a housing complex*
> - *Mobilizing the public through forums and actions in defense of immigrant and refugee rights*

> - *Supporting the Tamil Resource Center as it struggled to rebuild its library and office after a firebombing in May 1995*

- Put together a community forum or town event on racism.

Give citizens a chance to talk about how racism affects your community can give you insight into how people feel on the subject, ideas on what you and others can do to combat racism, a chance to let people who share similar concerns to network with each other, and to publicly let racists know that your community will not stand for racism in its midst.

- Create an intentional strategy that engages local government, business, education, media, and other leaders to demonstrate the commitment to eliminate racism in the institutions in your community.

Conducting public forums and events will increase awareness and reduce racial prejudice. Working in a coalition made up of cross-sector leaders and developing a clear plan will move your community towards a more sustainable effort to eliminate racism.

Bringing together leaders to create a strategy that deliberately, systematically, and explicitly deals with racism will enable your community to have a longer-term vision for a just and healthy community. Each institution should find a way for how it can contribute to eliminating racism in its policies and practices. The media should be involved to help get the word out. Credible leaders need to take a public stand to promote and validate the effort. Work to ensure that diversity is valued and included in the city government's mission statement

- Make an effort to support events that celebrate the traditions of different cultural and ethnic groups.

This can be as simple as including such events on the community calendar and actively publicizing them. Your organization can also co-sponsor these events to show its support.

- Organize vigils, anti-racism demonstrations, protests, or rallies.

If a racist group or incident occurred in your community, organizing a vigil, demonstration or public protest will not only give you and others some effective way to respond, but also help give hope to your community by having everyone come.

> *After September 11, various immigrant communities held vigils to express their sympathy for the World Trade Center and Pentagon victims and their families, speak out against anti-Muslim acts, and show their commitment and loyalty to the United States.*
>
> *The Center for Healthy Communities in Dayton, Ohio hosted a community forum titled "Race, Ethnicity and Public Policy: A Community Dialogue" in the fall of 1997. This community forum gave a panel of local expert as well as members of the audience the chance to ask mayoral and city commission candidates questions about the impact of racism on the Dayton community and the role it plays in local public policy decisions. More than 150 people attended, including state and local officials, community organizers, clergy, citizens, and students.*

> ***South Orange/Maplewood Coalition on Race's long-term vision for an integrated community***
> *The Coalition developed strategies at the individual, community, and institutional levels to foster and support an integrated neighborhood. The Coalition is planning to conduct study circles to provide residents an opportunity to build relationships. A community-wide activity was to invite Beverly Daniel Tatum to a community forum to talk about racism and how it affects our children's education. The Coalition worked with local bookstores to first sell Ms. Tatum's book at a reduced cost and to publicize the community forum. During the community forum after Ms. Tatum's presentation, small group discussions were held by facilitators that the Coalition provided. At the institutional level, there is*

> *loan program for homebuyers that is designed to encourage and improve neighborhood diversity in particular areas of the community where one race is underrepresented. They also worked closely with the school district to "reinvent" a school to become a "Lab school," which has attracted a more diverse student population to the school, and increased demand among people of different races for the neighborhood around the school.*

Things You Can Do as an Individual: Fighting Racial Prejudice to Fighting Racism

You don't have to form a group to do something about racism. As an individual, there are many steps that you can take to reduce another person's prejudice, including:

- Make a commitment to speak up when you hear racial slurs or remarks that signal racial prejudice.
- Take advantage of events and other informational materials during Black History Month or Hispanic Heritage Month and make it a point to learn something new about different cultures.
- Think about ways to improve your workplace to promote racial understand and equity. Be proactive about making suggestions.
- If you are a parent, give your child opportunities to attend events about other cultures. Integrate different traditions about parenting and children's festivals into your parent teacher association and your child's school. Work with the teachers to coordinate such opportunities.

Changing people's attitudes and institutional practices is hard but necessary work. A commitment among individuals, organizations, and institutions to valuing diversity is essential for healthy communities. Changes will not happen overnight, but you can begin to take small steps towards making a difference, as suggested in this section. These small steps build the foundation for more organized, deeper, and larger efforts to build inclusive communities, a topic that will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Summary

As we all learn how to be more committed and caring to each other, we will build a strong foundation for change in our communities. The stronger the trust and commitment people have, as individuals and between groups, the more effective they will be in uniting around important issues.

Contributors and Attributions

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Principles of Social Psychology (Lumen) (CC BY-NC-SA)
- Social Problems: Continuity and Change v.1.0 (saylordotorg) (CC BY-NC-SA)
- Community Tool Box (University of Kansas) (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Aronson, E. (2004). Reducing hostility and building compassion: Lessons from the jigsaw classroom. In A. G. Miller (Ed.), *The social psychology of good and evil* (pp. 469–488). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Aronson, E., Blaney, N., Stephan, C., Sikes, J., & Snapp, M. (1978). *The Jig-saw Classroom*. London, England: Sage.
- Blair, I.V. (2002). The malleability of automatic stereotypes and prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 6*(3), 242–261.
- Blair, I.V., Ma, J. E., & Lenton, A.P. (2001). Imagining stereotypes away: The moderation of implicit stereotypes through mental imagery. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*(5), 828–841.
- Bodenhausen, G.V., Schwarz, N., Bless, H., & Wanke, M. (1995). Effects of atypical exemplars on racial beliefs: Enlightened racism or generalized appraisals? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 31*, 48–63.
- Brodt, S.E., & Ross, L.D. (1998). The role of stereotyping in overconfident social prediction. *Social Cognition, 16*, 225–252.
- Clark, R., Anderson, N.B., Clark, V.R., & Williams, D.R. (1999). Racism as a stressor for African Americans: A biopsychosocial model. *American Psychologist, 54*(10), 805–816. doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.10.805

- Czopp, A.M., Monteith, M.J., & Mark, A.Y. (2006). Standing up for a change: Reducing bias through interpersonal confrontation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*(5), 784–803.
- Gaertner, S.L., & Dovidio, J.F. (Eds.). (2008). *Addressing Contemporary Racism: The Common Ingroup Identity Model*. New York, NY: Springer Science + Business Media.
- Gaertner, S.L., Mann, J., Murrell, A., & Dovidio, J.F. (1989). Reducing intergroup bias: The benefits of recategorization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*(2), 239–249.
- Galinsky, A.D., & Moskowitz, G.B. (2000). Perspective-taking: Decreasing stereotype expression, stereotype accessibility, and in-group favoritism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*(4), 708–724.
- Halpert, S.C. (2002). Suicidal behavior among gay male youth. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy, 6*, 53–79.
- Jetten, J., Spears, R., & Manstead, A.S.R. (1997). Strength of identification and intergroup differentiation: The influence of group norms. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 27*(5), 603–609.
- Kaiser, C.R., & Miller, C.T. (2001). Stop complaining! The social costs of making attributions to discrimination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*, 254–263.
- Kawakami, K., Dovidio, J. F., Moll, J., Hermsen, S., & Russin, A. (2000). Just say no (to stereotyping): Effects of training in the negation of stereotypic associations on stereotype activation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,78* (5), 871–888.
- Klonoff, E.A., Landrine, H., & Campbell, R. (2000). Sexist discrimination may account for well-known gender differences in psychiatric symptoms. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 24*, 93–99.
- Klonoff, E.A., Landrine, H., & Ullman, J.B. (1999). Racial discrimination and psychiatric symptoms among blacks. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 5*(4), 329–339.
- Macrae, C.N., Bodenhausen, G.V., Milne, A.B., & Jetten, J. (1994). Out of mind but back in sight: Stereotypes on the rebound. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*(5), 808–817.
- Madon, S., Jussim, L., Keiper, S., Eccles, J., Smith, A., & Palumbo, P. (1998). The accuracy and power of sex, social class, and ethnic stereotypes: A naturalistic study in person perception. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 24*(12), 1304–1318.
- Mallett, R.K., Wilson, T.D., & Gilbert, D.T. (2008). Expect the unexpected: Failure to anticipate similarities leads to an intergroup forecasting error. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 94*(2), 265–277. doi: 10.1037/0022–3514.94.2.94.2.265.
- Neir, J.A., Gaertner, S.L., Dovidio, J.F., Banker, B.S., Ward, C.M., & Rust, C.R. (2001). Changing interracial evaluations and behavior: The effects of a common group identity. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 4*, 299–316.
- Neuberg, S.L., & Fiske, S.T. (1987). Motivational influences on impression formation: Outcome dependency, accuracy-driven attention, and individuating processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*, 431–444.
- Oreopolous, P. (2011). Why do skilled immigrants struggle in the labor market? A field experiment with six thousand résumés. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 3*(4), 148-171.
- Page-Gould, E., Mendoza-Denton, R., & Tropp, L.R. (2008). With a little help from my cross-group friend: Reducing anxiety in intergroup contexts through cross-group friendship. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*(5), 1080–1094.
- Pettigrew, T.F., & Tropp, L.R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*(5), 751–783.
- Richeson, J.A., & Shelton, J.N. (2007). Negotiating interracial interactions: Costs, consequences, and possibilities. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 16*(6), 316–320. doi: 10.1111/j.1467–8721.2007.00528.x.
- Rothbart, M., & John, O.P. (1985). Social categorization and behavioral episodes: A cognitive analysis of the effects of intergroup contact. *Journal of Social Issues, 41*, 81–104.
- Rudman, L.A., Ashmore, R.D., & Gary, M.L. (2001). “Unlearning” automatic biases: The malleability of implicit prejudice and stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*(5), 856–868.
- Sechrist, G., & Stangor, C. (2001). Perceived consensus influences intergroup behavior and stereotype accessibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 80*(4), 645–654.
- Shelton, J.N., Richeson, J.A., Salvatore, J., & Hill, D.M. (Eds.). (2006). *Silence is Not Golden: The Intrapersonal Consequences of Not Confronting Prejudice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Shelton, N.J., & Stewart, R.E. (2004). Confronting perpetrators of prejudice: The inhibitory effects of social costs. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 28*, 215–222.
- Sherif, M., Harvey, O.J., white, B.J., Hood, W.R., & Sherif, C. (1961). *Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation: The Robbers’ Cave Experiment*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

- Shook, N.J., & Fazio, R.H. (2008). Interracial roommate relationships: An experimental field test of the contact hypothesis. *Psychological Science*, *19*(7), 717–723. doi: 10.1111/j.1467–9280.2008.02147.x.
- Sidanius, J., Sinclair, S., & Pratto, F. (2006). Social dominance orientation, gender, and increasing educational exposure. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *36*(7), 1640–1653.
- Sidanius, J., Van Laar, C., Levin, S., & Sinclair, S. (2004). Ethnic enclaves and the dynamics of social identity on the college campus: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *87*(1), 96–110.
- Stangor, C., Jonas, K., Stroebe, W., & Hewstone, M. (1996). Development and change of national stereotypes and attitudes. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *26*, 663–675.
- Stephan, W. (1999). *Reducing Prejudice and Stereotyping in Schools*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- Swim, J.K., Hyers, L.L., Cohen, L.L., & Ferguson, M.J. (2001). Everyday sexism: Evidence for its incidence, nature, and psychological impact from three daily diary studies. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*(1), 31–53.
- Swim, J.K., Hyers, L.L., Cohen, L.L., Fitzgerald, D. C., & Bylsma, W. H. (2003). African American college students' experiences with everyday racism: Characteristics of and responses to these incidents. *Journal of Black Psychology*, *29*(1), 38–67.
- Williams, D.R. (1999). Race, socioeconomics status, and health: The added effect of racism and discrimination. In Adler, N. E., Boyce, T., Chesney, M. A., & Cohen, S. (1994). Socioeconomic status and health: The challenge of the gradient. *American Psychologist*, *49*, 15-24.
- Wright, S.C., Aron, A., McLaughlin-Volpe, T., & Ropp, S.A. (1997). The extended contact effect: Knowledge of cross-group friendships and prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*(1), 73–90.

This page titled 4.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **4.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

5: Native Americans

5.1: History and Demographics

5.2: Intergroup Relations

5.3: Intersectionality

5.4: Social Institutions

5.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 5: Native Americans is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

5.1: History and Demographics

Land Acknowledgement

"That was our hunting ground and you have taken it from us. This is what sits heavy [on our hearts] and the hearts of all nations." - Cornstalk, Shawnee chief

The greatest struggle for American Indians has been over their land. To understand this struggle is to understand our genocidal history and the role we have played and continue to play in systems in which power and resources, such as land, are distributed unequally. This chapter will begin by acknowledging that Long Beach, California is Kizh and Tongva land. Puvungna are tribal lands where sacred Tongva villages historically existed in what is now Long Beach, California. Unfortunately, these historical and archeological sites are under threat of or have been developed rather than being preserved per the efforts of the Tongva people (Loewe, 2016; Saltzgaver, 2020). Let us take into consideration the struggles that have occurred on these lands and honor the Indigenous peoples that sustain them.

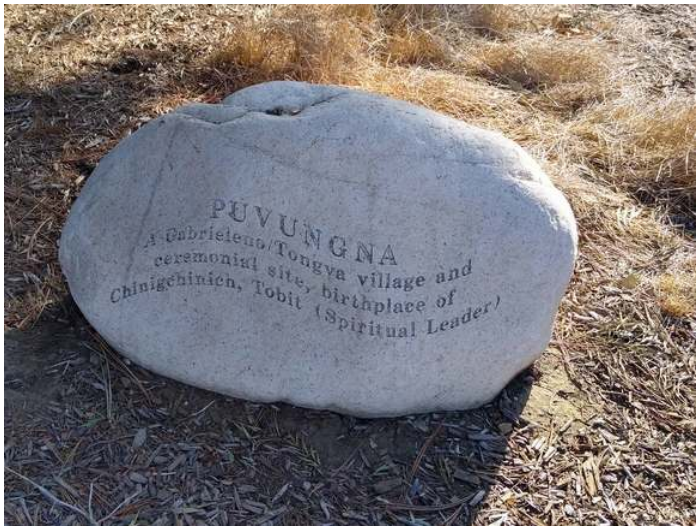


Figure **5.1.1**: A picture of the Puvungna Rock at California State University Puvungna. (Photo courtesy of Ian Williford)

If you are interested in finding out what Indigenous lands your U. S. city are on, please text your city name and state (e.g., Long Beach, California) to (907) 312 - 5085. This chapter will use the terms Native Americans and **AI/AN** (American Indian/Alaska Natives) given that there is no specific consensus among scholars regarding terminology. Moreover, some Indigenous people prefer to be identified by their Nation. Lastly, the concept of **Indigenous**, people who live or have lived within the past several centuries in non-state societies, will be utilized to discuss people and cultures that existed in the United States prior to European contact.

Background in America

American Indians have been on this continent much longer than any other racial or ethnic group. According to the **Bering Strait theory**, sometime between 17,000 and 30,000 years ago, hunter-gatherers from Siberia came across the frozen Bering Strait, or across a land bridge formed during the Ice Age, in search of game. Over the millennia, they became the people we call Native Americans or American Indians. They are the Indigenous people of the North and South American continents (Dunn, 2010). However, this theory has been challenged from both from a philosophical angle (Deloria, 1995) and from new research uncovered from an evolutionary genetic approach (Daley, 2016; Ewen, 2017).

Pre-European Contact

It is difficult to determine how many Native Americans existed in the United Stated prior to European contact. Emmanuel Domenech (1860) estimated that the Native American population pre-European contact was between 16 to 17 million people. Years later, a more generally accepted scientific estimate was provided by James Mooney (1928) in which he estimated that the North American "aboriginal" population was 1.2 million at the onset of European contact. A more recent estimate has been provided by Matthew Snipp (1986) in which he places the pre-European contact population from 2 to 5 million. The population figures

discussed are only estimates and some scholars suggest that the Indigenous American population pre-European contact was larger than the last estimate Snipp (1986) provided.

Post-European Contact

Race and ethnicity have torn at the fabric of American society ever since the time of Christopher Columbus, when about 1 million Native Americans were thought to have populated the eventual United States. By 1900, their numbers had dwindled to about 240,000, as tens of thousands were killed by white settlers and U.S. troops and countless others died from disease contracted from people with European backgrounds. Scholars have stated that this mass killing of Native Americans amounted to genocide (Wilson, 1999).

European colonization of the Americas was detrimental to the Indigenous populations. **Colonization** is the act of taking land by a foreign group or nation, most frequently through force, and then settling in the newly acquired territory which displaces the original Indigenous people to those lands. War, famine, forced removal, lack of immunity to European diseases, and the exploitation of this lack of immunity as intentional "biological" warfare, such as blankets infected with diseases, decimated American Indians (Snipp, 1989). Using the estimates mentioned above and U. S. Census data, Figure 5.1.2 below shows the early dramatic decrease and gradual recent increase of the Native American population, specifically American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) alone (meaning not mixed with other race-ethnic groups).

In the United States, **settler-colonialism** is the specific type of colonization practiced. According to Morris (2019), "We can begin by defining settler-colonialism as it relates specifically to Indigenous peoples of North America. The goal of settler-colonization is the removal and erasure of Indigenous peoples in order to take the land for use by settlers in perpetuity." Once lands have been colonized, European settlers move into the lands usually cleared by European colonizers and further expanded these settlements both spatially and temporally. This results in the continued and, most frequently, permanent displacement of Indigenous communities from their ancestral homelands.

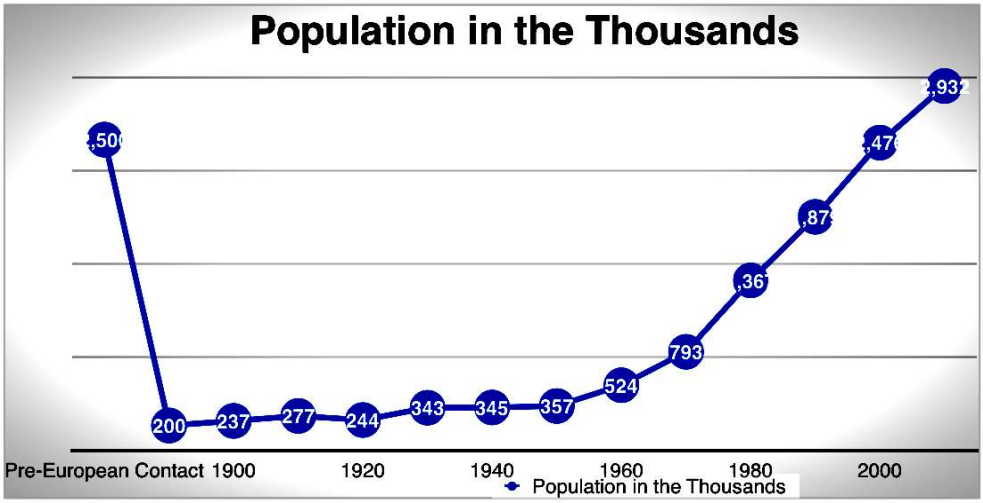


Figure **5.1.2**: American Indian and Alaska Native Alone by Year. Pre-European contact, the American Indian and Alaska Native population is estimated to have been more than 2.5 million; the population plummeted to 200,000 at the onset of European contact. It remained static until the 1960s, after which time the population steadily increased to nearly 3 million in 2000. (Data from Spinden, 1928; Snipp, 1986; Thornton, 2001; 2000 and 2010 U. S. Census Bureau)

Reservations

Concerning modern American Indians, Gary Sandefur, a professor of social work and sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and an affiliate of the Institute for Research on Poverty writes:

“How American Indians came to be concentrated on reservations is a complicated story that most Americans know only very little about from their courses in American history in high school and college. The isolation and concentration of American Indians began very early, but it received its first legal justification in the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Subsequent to the passage of this legislation, most of the Indians who were located east of the Mississippi were relocated to areas west of the river...Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the federal government revised its principal approach to the "Indian problem" to one of forced

assimilation rather than forced isolation. This change in policy was in part motivated by awareness that the quality of life on the isolated reservations was very, very low. The concerns about the reservations resembled in many respects the current analyses of problems in the central city...The next major attack on the reservation system occurred in the early 1950s. Public opinion and political leaders were distressed by the miserable living conditions on Indian reservations, on the one hand, and the special legal relationship between American Indian groups and the federal government, on the other hand. In 1953, termination legislation was passed and signed into law. The intent of this legislation was to end the special relationship between Indian tribes and the federal government. Reservations would cease to exist as independent political entities...Since the 1950s the proportion of the American Indian population living on reservations has declined from over 50 percent to approximately 25 percent in 1980. This decline has been due to the migration of American Indians away from these impoverished, isolated areas. In 1980, 336,384 American Indians lived on reservations. Although some of these reservations are quite small, 250,379 Indians lived on 36 reservations with populations of 2,000 or more. Three-quarters of these Indians lived on the 18 reservations that had poverty rates of 40 percent or higher. In other words, approximately 14 percent of all American Indians in 1980 lived on large reservations with poverty rates of 40 percent or higher (Sandefur, 1989)."

Though most AI/AN do not live on reservations, the table below conveys the largest reservations.

Table 5.1.3: Largest Native American Reservations. (Data from the U. S. Census Bureau (2010))

American Indian Reservation	American Indian or Alaska Native (Alone or in Combination)
Navajo (AZ, NM, UT)	169,321
Pine Ridge (SD, NE)	16,906
Fort Apache (AZ)	13, 014
Gila River (AZ)	11,251
Osage (OK)	9,920
San Carlos (AZ)	9,901
Rosebud (SD)	9,809
Tohono O'oodham (AZ)	9,278
Blackfeet (MT)	9,149
Flathead (MT)	9,138

Demographics

The only fully nonimmigrant ethnic group in the United States, Native Americans once numbered in the millions but by 2010 made up only 0.9 percent of U.S. populace (U.S. Census, 2010). Currently, about 2.9 million people identify themselves as Native American alone, while an additional 2.3 million identify themselves as Native American mixed with another ethnic group (Norris, Vines, & Hoeffel, 2012).

Table 5.1.4: American Indian and Alaska Natives, 2010. (Data from the U. S. Census Bureau (2010); Norris, Vines, and Hoeffel (2012))

	Alone	Alone or in combination (two or more groups)
All American Indians and Alaska Natives	2,932,248	5,220,579
American Indians	2,164,193	3,631,571
Alaska Natives	122,990	168,786

There are about 3 million Native Americans currently living in the US. Their tribal affiliations (as of census 2000) are 16% Cherokee, 12% Navajo, 6% Chippewa, 6% Sioux, 4% Choctaw, 46% all other tribes; the ten largest nations are detailed in the table below. Less than 2% of the US population is Native American with 22.3% living on reservations and trust lands; 10.2% living in tribal jurisdiction statistical areas; 2.7% in tribal designated statistical areas; 2.4% in Alaska native village statistical areas. However, the largest group of American Indians, 62.3%, do not live on traditional tribal lands or reservations. The geographical distribution is as follows: 6.25% of all American Indians live in the Northeast U.S., 17.93% of all American Indians live in the Midwest U.S., 30.21% of all American Indians live in the Southern U.S., and 45.59% of all American Indians live in the Western U.S. (U. S. Census Bureau).

Table 5.1.5: American Indian or Alaska Native Population by Tribal Grouping. (Data from the U. S. Census Bureau (2010); Norris, Vines, and Hoeffel (2012))

Tribal Grouping	One Tribal Grouping Reported
1. Navajo	286,731
2. Cherokee	284,247
3. Ojibwa/Chippewa	112,757
4. Sioux	112,176
5. Choctaw	103,916
6. Apache	63,193
7. Lumbee	62,306
8. Pueblo	49,695
9. Creek	48,352
10. Iroquois	40,570

Native Americans speak: English, Spanish, French, and over 150 Native Languages and thousands of dialects. American Indians come from: United States, Mexico, Canada, Central America, South America. Although some Indigenous languages have survived, there are several languages that are at risk of becoming extinct. While it is difficult to estimate how many Indigenous languages have been lost, a recent estimate suggests that in the United States, it has been at least 125 languages (Koyfman, 2017).

Table 5.1.6: Major Tribal Languages. (Data from the 2006 - 2010 American Community Survey in Siebens and Julian (2011))

Tribal Grouping	One Tribal Grouping Reported
1. Navajo	169,471
2. Yupik (Alaska)	18,950
3. Dakota (Sioux)	18,616
4. Apache	13,083
5. Keres (Pueblo)	12,495
6. Cherokee	11,610
7. Choctaw	10,343
8. Zuni	9,686
9. Ojibwa	8,371
10. Pima	7,270

Currently, Native Americans are more likely to live in a city rather than a reservation, as the figure conveys below. The trend towards urbanization began to increase after the passage of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, then dropped a bit leading up to the 1953 Termination Act. Urbanization then sharply increased in the 1950s with multiple government programs created to encourage Native Americans to move to the cities, such as the establishment of American Indian Centers and after 1962, the Employment Assistant Program (Healey & O'Brien, 2015; Schaefer, 2015).

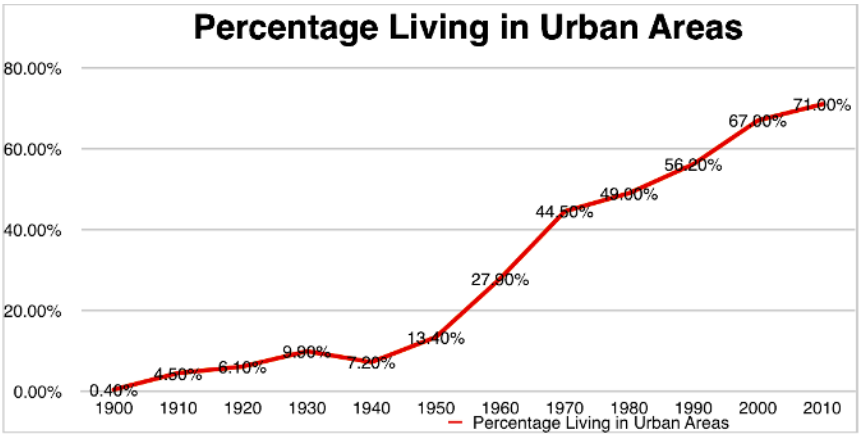


Figure **5.1.7**: Urbanization of American Indians, 1900 - 2010. (Data from Thornton, 2001; 2000 and 2010 U. S. Census Bureau)

The urbanization trend is supported by the 2010 U. S. Census data which indicates that U. S. cities hold the largest number of Native Americans, as shown in Table 5.1.8. California is the state with the largest Native American population.

Table **5.1.8**: Ten Places with the Largest American Indian or Alaska Natives, 2010. (Data from the U. S. Census Bureau (2010))

Place	Alone or in Combination
1. New York City	111,749
2. Los Angeles	54,236
3. Phoenix	43,724
4. Oklahoma City	36,572
5. Anchorage	36,062
6. Tulsa	35,990
7. Albuquerque	32,571
8. Chicago	26,933
9. Houston	25,521
10. San Antonio	20,137

Assuming these demographic trends continue as conveyed in USA Facts, the Native American population will continue to rise, demonstrating American Indian resilience.

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Aguirre, A., Jr. & Jonathan, H.T. (2004). *American Ethnicity: The Dynamic and Consequences of Discrimination.* 4th ed. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Cook. R. (n.d.). *Heart of Colonialism Bleeds Blood Quantum*.
- Daley, J. (2016). First humans entered the americas along the coast, not through the ice. *Smithsonian Magazine*.
- Deloria, V., Jr. (1995). *Red Earth, white Lies*. New York, NY: Scribner's.
- Domenech, E. (1860.) *Seven Years Residence in the Great Deserts of North America*. London, UK: Longmans.
- Ewen, A. (2017). *The Bering Strait Theory*. New York, NY: Indian Country Today.
- Healey, J. F. & Eileen O. (2015). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change*. 7th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Koyfman, S. (2017). What was, and what is: Native American languages in the us. *Babbel Magazine*.
- Loewe, R. (2016). *Of Sacred Lands and Strip Malls: The Battle for Puvungna*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mooney, J. (1928). *The Aboriginal Population of America North of Mexico*. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Miscellaneous Collections, 80:7.
- Morris, A. (2019). *What is settler-colonialism? Teaching Tolerance.*
- Norris, T., Vines, P.L., and Hoeffel, E.M. (2012). *The American Indian and the Alaska Native population:2010*. C2010BR-10.
- Saltzgaver, H. (2020). Dirt dumped on Puvungna at cal state long beach prompts lawsuit. *The Grunion*.
- Sandefur, G.D. (1989). American Indian reservations: the first underclass areas? *Focus 12* 1:37-41.
- Schaefer, R.T. (2015). *Racial and Ethnic Groups.* 14th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Siebens, J. &Tiffany, J. (2011). *Native North American Languages Spoken at Home in the United States and Puerto Rico: 2006-2010.* ACSBF/10-10.
- Snipp, M.C. (1986). The changing political and economic status of the American Indians: From captive nations to internal colonies. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 45, 145-57.

- Snipp, M.C. (1989). *American Indians: The First of This Land*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Spinden, H. (1928). The population of ancient America. *Geographical Review* 18,640-60.
- Thornton, R. (2001). Trends among American Indians in the United States. In N. Smelser, W. Wilson, and F. Mitchell (Eds.), *America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences* (1:135-69).Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press.
- United States Census Bureau. (2010). *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2010*.
- Wilson, J. (1999). *The Earth Shall Weep: A History of Native America*. New York, NY: Atlantic Monthly Press.

This page titled 5.1: History and Demographics is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **5.1: History and Demographics** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

5.2: Intergroup Relations

Intergroup consequences applied to Native Americans range from genocide to pluralism. The first few centuries of European colonialism contributed to experiences of genocide, expulsion, and internal colonialism. By the end of the 19th century, with the advent of reservations and the boarding school system, segregation and assimilation guided intergroup relations between Indigenous peoples and Euro Americans. Though, Native resistance against oppression through this troublesome history, through more recent history, can be characterized as separatism. As most Native Americans are mixed with other races, fusion is a relevant intergroup contemporary consequence. The sharing of Indigenous cultures with Native and non-Native groups through pow wows provides an example of pluralism.

Patterns of Intergroup Relations: Native Americans

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g. Trail of Tears, Indian Removal Act).
- **Expulsion/ Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. Native Americans reservations).
- **Internal Colonialism:** The dominant group exploits the marginalized group (e.g. California missions).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. reservations).
- **Separatism:** The marginalized group desires physical separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. American Indian Movement).
- **Fusion/ Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. intermarriage, biracial. pan-Indian).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. boarding schools).
- **Pluralism/ Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. pow wows).

History of Intergroup Relations

Native American culture prior to European settlement is referred to as pre-Columbian: that is, prior to the coming of Christopher Columbus in 1492. Mistakenly believing that he had landed in the East Indies, Columbus named the Indigenous people “Indians,” a name that has persisted for centuries despite being a geographical misnomer and one used to blanket 500 distinct groups who each have their own languages and traditions. Towards the end of the 19th century, with the advent of boarding schools and reservations, assimilation and segregation became the guiding forces of relations between Indigenous and Euro Americans, though some efforts of separatism have characterized Indigenous resistance to oppression. As most Native Americans are mixed with other races today, fusion

Genocide, Expulsion, Segregation, and Internal Colonialism

The history of intergroup relations between European colonists and Native Americans is a brutal one. Given that colonization uses force, the result for Indigenous populations was **genocide**, which is the deliberate systematic killing of an entire people or nation. Although Native Americans’ lack of immunity to European diseases caused the most deaths, overt mistreatment of Native Americans by Europeans was devastating as well.

From the first Spanish colonists to the French, English, and Dutch who followed, European settlers took what land they wanted and expanded across the continent at will. If Indigenous people tried to retain their stewardship of the land, Europeans fought them off with superior weapons. A key element of this issue is the Indigenous view of land and land ownership. Most tribes considered the earth a living entity whose resources they were stewards of; the concepts of land ownership and conquest didn’t exist in Native American society. Europeans’ domination of the Americas was indeed a conquest; one scholar points out that Native Americans are the only minoritized group in the United States whose subordination occurred purely through conquest by the dominant group (Marger, 1993).

After the establishment of the United States government, discrimination against Native Americans was codified and formalized in a series of laws intended to subjugate them and keep them from gaining any power. Some of the most impactful laws are as follows:

- The Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced the relocation of Creek, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Choctaw, Seminole, and other eastern American Indian tribes to lands west of Mississippi River. These lands were cleared of Native Americans so that white Americans and their African slaves can settle upon them. This act was signed into law by President Andrew Jackson and it is an example of legal and **institutionalized discrimination:** discrimination as unequal treatment that has been established and enforced within an institution like the government. Perhaps the most ruthless example of this removal policy enforcement is the Trail of Tears.
- In 1838, about 17,000 Cherokee were forced to traverse approximately 1200 miles to their new location in what is now Oklahoma. During this move, the Cherokee were exposed to brutal weather and trail conditions which resulted in at least 4,000 deaths, but some estimates suggest it is as high as 8,000 Cherokee deaths (Healey & O'Brien, 2015; Schaefer, 2015). In addition to this act being discriminatory and genocidal, it is also an example of direct **expulsion** (forced migration and/or removal) as exhibited by the Trail of Tears.
- The 1851 and 1871 Indian Appropriation Acts funded further removals and declared that no Indian tribe could be recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with which the U.S. government would have to make treaties. The 1851 Act created the reservation system. As an example of forced **segregation**, physical separation enforced by the dominant group, Native Americans were not allowed to leave the reservations without permission. The 1851 and 1871 Acts made it even easier for the U.S. government to take land it wanted. This provided the foundation and continued development of **internal colonialism**, where the dominant group exploits the people of color. The establishment of the California mission system set the tone for internal colonialism given that these missions specifically exploited Indigenous labor under the guise of conversion (Acuña, 2015).
- The Relocation Act of 1956 led to the creation of job training centers and job training programs in urban centers. The result was that there were more American Indians moving out of reservations and moving to the cities, which is an example of indirect **expulsion**. Some of these programs required Native Americans to sign an agreement not to return to the reservations (Aguirre & Turner, 2004).

The continued discrimination, **paternalism** (dominant and subordinate group dynamics that exhibit extreme inequality with regards to wealth, power, and prestige that results in the infantilizing of the subordinate group, and **ideological racism** (beliefs and/or ideas that are usually held by an entire society regarding the inferiority of a certain group or groups) directed at Native Americans by the U. S. government violently culminated in the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre.



Video **5.2.1**: "Ghost Dance" portrays the Indigenous spiritual resistance to Anglo encroachment on the traditional Native American way of life. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; John Fitz via YouTube)

According to Dee Brown (1970), the soldier chiefs (U. S. Army) at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation were not satisfied with the amount of guns taken from American Indians (Lakotas) and ordered further searches of them by taking away their blankets among other items. Black Coyote raised his Winchester above his head and stated he bought it. Somehow, Black Coyote's rifle went off

and the U. S. Army soldiers fired at the Native Americans. It is estimated that 153 were known to be dead, but that the final total was about 300 American Indians were dead. The U. S. Army had 25 soldier fatalities and 39 wounded soldiers (Brown, 1970). This massacre represents a concrete example of Native American genocide.

Assimilation, Cultural Genocide, and Fusion

Kill the Indian, save the man. - Richard Pratt (Army officer and developer of Carlisle Indian School)



Video **5.2.2**: "Unseen Tears: The Native American Boarding School Experience in Western New York Part 1." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; alchemicalmedia via YouTube)

Forced assimilation of Native Americans began with the establishment of boarding schools in 1860. These schools, run by both Christian missionaries and the United States government, had the express purpose of “civilizing” Native American children and assimilating them into white society. The boarding schools were located off-reservation to ensure that children were separated from their families and culture. Schools forced children to cut their hair, speak English, and practice Christianity. Physical and sexual abuses were rampant for decades; only in 1987 did the Bureau of Indian Affairs issue a policy on sexual abuse in boarding schools. Some scholars argue that many of the problems that Native Americans face today result from almost a century of mistreatment at these boarding schools. While these boarding schools represented forced assimilation, they also resulted in **cultural genocide** which is the deliberate annihilation of a group's material and non-material/symbolic culture, like languages and traditions. Take into consideration the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, their overt mission was cultural genocide, as noted in the infamous quote by Richard Pratt above.



Figure 5.2.3: Carlisle Boarding School Native American pupils pictured in uniformity. (CC PDM 1.0; Frontier Forts via Wikimedia)

In a somewhat similar fashion, the Dawes Act of 1887 reversed the policy of isolating Native Americans on reservations, instead forcing them onto individual properties that were intermingled with white settlers, thereby reducing their capacity for power as a group. Along with boarding schools, this act represents forced **assimilation**, which is the process by which a people of color takes on the characteristics of the dominant group. Moreover, the Dawes Act deprived American Indians of the ownership of their ancestral land and established the reservation system that exists even now. This act set up a blood quantum for Native Americans in which those that were full-blooded qualified for land deeds and those that were "mixed-blood" received land rental agreements. As an aside, Congress has never, in its entire history, kept any treaty it has made with any American Indian tribe. The current treaties are so bent that they are about to break and there is a law suit in federal court concerning the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which is part of the Department of the Interior, and it is responsible for the management of reservation land and the people living on reservations. The suit alleges that the BIA has misallocated, misappropriated, or simply lost, over ten million dollars that was earmarked for social services on a reservation. This suit has been languishing in the federal court system since 1995 (Aguirre & Turner, 2004).

Another act that contributed to cultural genocide is the 1953 Termination Act. While this act intended to help Native Americans by attempting to give them more autonomy, it actually reduced federal funding to achieve that. The result was that federal services were cut from reservations leaving some of them without the most basic services such as medical care and fire protection (Schaefer, 2015). Additionally, there are communities who consider themselves to be Native American, but through treaties and the policy of termination do not have tribal lands or federal recognition. Many of these societies, such as the Abenaki of Vermont and the Lumbee of North Carolina, have waged legal battles with state and federal governments to gain recognition (Stebbins, 2013).

With regards to the discussion of assimilation, it is important to consider the complex situation of people with mixed Native American and Euro-American or African-American heritage, reflecting intergroup consequences of both **fusion** (dominant and minoritized groups combining together to form a new group) and **amalgamation** (intermarriage). Before European contact, most Indigenous societies, through their kin groups, easily assimilated individuals from other societies through adoption. Early in their encounters with Europeans, this practice continued, and in some instances continues today. For example, President Barack Obama was adopted by the Crow Nation and given a Crow name (One Who Helps People Throughout the Land). In Canada the Metis, the descendants of French, Irish, and Scots traders who intermarried with various Native American groups are a recognized political-ethnic minority. While there are similar groups in the United States, there is no similar recognition.

In the United States, governmental agencies such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) instituted a policy of federal recognition of Indigenous peoples based on blood quantum. This is not a policy based on the DNA profiles of individuals (which were not available decades ago when this policy was established), but on the family genealogies of individuals; you were considered American Indian based on the number of your ancestors who could be determined to be Indigenous from written documents. The U.S. government collected this information as part of the Dawes Act, which functioned largely to terminate the federal government’s treaty responsibilities to Indigenous societies. The family genealogies they collected are called the Dawes Rolls. This

policy is fundamentally different than another governmental policy of the same time in U.S. history that stated if a person had “one drop of Negro blood,” no matter how many generations ago or the **phenotype** (physical appearance) of an individual, that individual was Negro (African-American) and was subject to the Jim Crow and **anti-miscegenation laws** (laws that sought to prevent marriage or sexual relations between people of different races). While the one drop rule functioned to preserve the African identity of people for the enforcement of Jim Crow and anti-miscegenation laws, blood quantum and documents like the Dawes Act sought to reduce or eliminate the identity of Indigenous peoples and the government’s treaty obligations to them. As in the situation of armed representatives of another political entity on tribal land, such as that at Akwesasne, an important issue for Native peoples in twenty-first century America will be their continued attempts to have control of their lands, resources, and identities while remaining citizens of the United States and Canada.

Separatism and Pluralism

Resistance efforts against oppression may be understood as separatist efforts. Further discussion of resistance efforts of Tecumseh (Shawnee) in the early 1800s and The American Indian Movement (originated in 1969) are provided in Section 5.5 (Red Power Movement and Activism). This quote by Tecumseh epitomizes his stance against oppression experienced by Indigenous nations:

> My heart is a stone, heavy with sadness for my people; cold in the knowledge that no treaty will keep the whites out of our small lands that we are now left with; hard with the determination to resist for so long as I live and breathe. Now we are weak and many of our people are afraid. But hear me: a single twig breaks easily, but the bundle of twigs is strong. Someday I will embrace our brother tribes and draw them into a bundle and together we will win our country back from the whites (Eckert, 1993).



Figure **5.2.4**: "Tecumseh Statue" in Annapolis, Maryland. Statue commemorates Tecumseh as a warrior resisting against Anglo encroachment upon the traditional Indigenous way of life. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Mr.TinDC via Flickr)

Tecumseh's embrace of **pan-Indianism**, the one-ness of all Indigenous nations, may also be understood from a pluralist lens, in that his ultimate goal was to unite the diverse Indigenous nations into one powerful force against Euro American encroachment on native lands. **Pluralism**, the mutual respect and co-existence of many cultures, may also be used to understand the contemporary pow wow culture. While the Gathering of Nations in Albuquerque, New Mexico is the largest pow wow in the U.S., these social events, consisting of dancing, drumming, singing as well as the commercial sale of food (e.g. frybread) and arts, occur somewhere in the U.S. every weekend of the year. Pow wows tend to be intertribal, inviting Indigenous performers from many nations, and they are also frequented by non-Indigenous individuals who have a chance to celebrate, honor, and learn from Indigenous cultures.

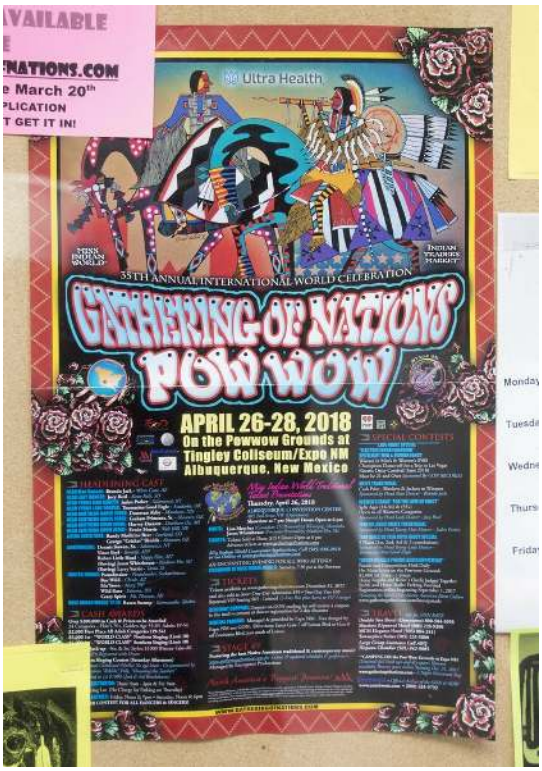


Figure 5.2.5: "Gathering of Nations Pow Wow" flyer from April 26-28, 2018 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; A.Davey via Flickr)

Conflicts, Coalitions, and Collaborations

It is clear that the U. S. government and its policies were antagonistic to Native Americans. These policies sustained the tone of strained intergroup relations that began with conflict over resources between European colonists and American Indians. However, not all intergroup relations were negative since there are examples of coalitions and collaborations.

Intragroup Relations

According to James H. Merrell (1989), various Native American tribes would be at war with each other, often over trade or land having been pushed out by European colonists. Some of the most striking examples are Iroquois fighting the Piedmont Indians, Piedmont Indians versus Savannahs, and Catawbas versus Iroquois. Curiously, this intragroup conflict is connected to intragroup coalitions and collaborations. After the Tuscarora War, the remaining Tuscaroras sought refuge with the Five Nations, which are the Iroquois. The Tuscarora refugees were eventually formally adopted by the Iroquois becoming the Six Nations around 1722. Another example is the Yamasee War, where the Yamasee were allied with the Waxhaw and Santee tribes to fight against the Catawbas and Cherokee (Merrell, 1989). It can be argued that European colonists exploited intragroup tensions, particularly in the case of the Yamasee War since the European colonists and militias supported the Catawbas and Cherokee against the Native American tribal coalition of Yamasee, Santee, and other Indigenous groups.

Aggressive Intergroup Relations

European colonists and Native Americans had the capacity to live in peace and even collaborate, but this peace would not last. Consider the 1620 Plymouth example, a Pemaquid by the name of Samoset and three Wampanoags by the names of Massasoit, Squanto, and Hobomah helped the Plymouth colonists survive, which they regarded as "helpless children." As more European colonists moved in, the Wampanoags were pushed out, but they fought back. Unfortunately, by 1675, the Wampanoags were virtually exterminated (Brown, 1970). These early aggressive intergroup relations would influence the government policies towards Native Americans after the Revolutionary War.

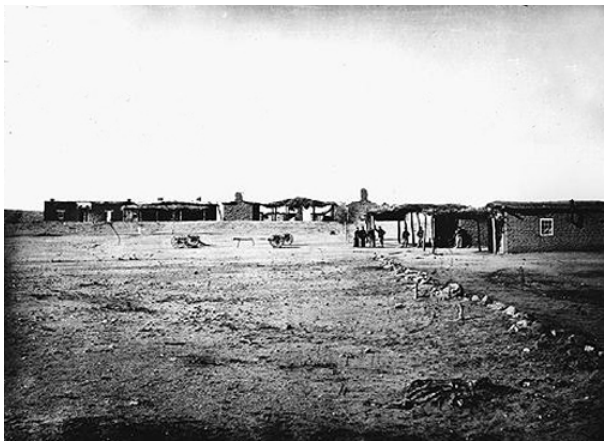


Figure **5.2.6**: Old Camp Grant Arizona. (CC PDM 1.0; Legends of America via Wikimedia)

There are examples of coalitions and collaborations, like the Yamasee War mentioned above. One such example took place in 1871, and it is regarded as the Camp Grant Massacre. Rodolfo Acuña writes, "6 Euro-Americans, 48 Mexicans, and 94 Tohono O'odhams attacked a defenseless Apache camp near Camp Grant, massacring more than 100 Apache women and children (Acuña, 2015)." The result of the Camp Grant Massacre was obviously violent, but it was nonetheless a coalition of a Native American group, Euro-Americans, and Mexican Americans all fighting against their common enemy, the Apache, another Native American group. While these varied racial groups generally do not collaborate, they set aside their differences to form a coalition.

Perhaps the most notorious example of violent intergroup relations happened with the 1862 Uprising also known as the 1862 Dakota War. In August of that year, after a drought, lack of annuities from the federal government, broken treaties, loss of land, and outright starvation experienced by the Dakota, the Santee Sioux attacked a the white settlement of New Ulm which resulted in the Santee capturing more than 200 white women and children (Brown, 1970). Another account of this attack states that it resulted in the killing of 490 white settlers which included women and children (Wiener, 2012). It is unknown how many Dakotas lost their lives during the period leading up to the 1862 Uprising. According to Brown (1970), there were 303 convicted Santees that President Lincoln was being pressured to execute. The result was that 38 of the convicted Santees were hung on December 26, 1862 making this the largest mass execution in U. S. history, yet accounts dispute whether any of these 38 executed men were actually part of the raids and killings. This mass execution did not bode well for future intergroup relations between Native Americans and white settlers/citizens. In remembrance of this jarring history, Reconciliation Park in Mankato, Minnesota seeks to mend this history with a giant scroll recognizing the 38 men who were publicly hung as well as a Mni Wiconi mural (honoring the Minnesota River), a large limestone buffalo, and a bench with the enscription, FORGIVE EVERYONE EVERYTHING.



Figure **5.2.7**: Reconciliation Park: Limestone buffalo symbolizing the spiritual survival of the Dakota people and giant scroll enscripted with the names of the 38 Dakota men hanged by the government. (Janét Hund via jhund@lbcc.edu)

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Native Peoples of North America (Stebbins) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Acuña, R. F. (2015). Occupied *America: A History of Chicanos.* 8th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Aguirre, A., Jr.& Jonathan H. T. (2004). *American Ethnicity: The Dynamic and Consequences of Discrimination.* 4th ed. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Brown, D. (1970). *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the America West*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Eckert, A.W. (1983). *A Sorrow in Our Heart: The Life of Tecumseh.* New York, NY: Bantam.
- Landis, B. (1996). *Carlisle Indian Industrial School History*. Carlisle Indian School Research.
- Healey, J. . & Eileen O. (2015). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change.* 7th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Marger, M. (2003). *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Merrell, J.H. (1989). *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact Through the Era of Removal*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Company
- Schaefer, R.T. (2015). *Racial and Ethnic Groups.* 14th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Wiener, J. (2012). Largest mass execution in US History: 150 years ago today. *The Nation*.

This page titled 5.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **5.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

5.3: Intersectionality

Gender

"Remember your birth, how your mother struggled to give you form and breath. You are evidence of her life and her mother's, and hers. Remember your father, his hands cradling your mother's flesh, and maybe her heart, too and maybe not. He is your life also." - Joy Harjo, Creek

As with other societies, AI/AN communities encountered gendered matters particularly over chores/obligations such as child rearing, hunting, gathering, trade, etc. Given that Native American Nations are not a monolith, gender roles are rather diverse and do not necessarily follow traditional gender roles as seen more frequently among Euro-Americans. Moreover, the concept and acceptance of a third gender/sex was embraced among some AI/AN groups. In the following discussion, it becomes clear that gender continues to be a salient status/characteristic that can have significant impacts within Indigenous communities.

Women and Power

Among Indigenous peoples, most tribes were **patrilineal** (tracing descent through the father's line) while about 25% were **matrilineal** (tracing descent through mother's side). In many societies, women had considerable power and respect and often held positions of chief, physician, politician, and warrior (Benokraitis, 2014). However, post European contact, the concept of land ownership was introduced and land could only be held by men given historical laws of coverture which prevented women from owning/holding property. For example, following tradition, Cherokee land was passed down from generation to the next by the women. "This matrilineal pattern was abandoned in favor of the European pattern of men's ownership when the Cherokee attempted (futilely, as it turned out) to acculturate and avoid relocation under the Indian Removal Act of 1830" (Evans, 1989; Healey & O'Brien, 2015). Moreover, early in their encounters with Europeans, the Indigenous societies of the Northwest were able to conduct trade on their own terms. They gradually shifted their focus from getting resources for their own subsistence to getting trade items. In some cases, this led to the over-exploitation of some resources. The Europeans did not like trading with women, a task in which they had traditionally participated. The arrival of missionaries in the nineteenth century further reduced the status of women, as they did not see trade as an appropriate role for women. As a result, the status of women became reduced. Formerly, women were held in high esteem in many Indigenous cultures; for example, the Iroquois Women's Council could veto any policy set forward by the Iroquois Confederacy. Nations such as the Hopi were matrilineal and **matrilocal** (a newly married/created couple lives with the wife's/woman's side of the family), and clan names were chosen by women and that land stewardship followed the mother. In contrast and as a result of the trade with Europeans, the chiefs (men) became richer and their political power solidified because the Europeans preferred to work with one individual they saw as being in power.

Despite the efforts to keep AI/AN women from positions of power, there has been a modern resurgence of Native American women elected to positions of power. In 1985, Wilma Mankiller became the first female Cherokee Principal Chief, which she sustained for 10 years (Nagel, 1996). Given the glass ceiling breakthrough by Wilma Mankiller, more Indigenous women were recognized for their leadership and elected to office. Some current notable examples are Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) and Sharice Davids (Ho-Chunk Nation) both of whom represent the first two Native American women elected to U.S. Congress in 2018, as well as, reelected in 2020 (Aratani, 2020). Another important example is Winona LaDuke (Ojibwe) who was the first AI/AN woman to run on the presidential ticket, as the vice presidential candidate, with Ralph Nader both in 1996 and 2000 (Bitetti). The trend of AI/AN women in Congress continues as Yvette Herrell (Cherokee) was elected to the House of Representatives in 2020. Perhaps we will soon see a Native American woman as a Senator and/or as the President of the United States. President-elect Biden has nominated Deb Haaland for Secretary of Interior; this marks a significant shift for national politics as: she would be the first Indigenous woman appointed to a Presidential Cabinet, she has led environmental justice efforts, and this position represents coming full-circle with the centuries of inhumane treatment of Indigenous communities from the Department of Interior and formerly the Department of War.

Women and Health

In the 1970s, medical doctors from the United States Public Health Service's Indian Health Services branch, whose mandate is to provide health care on Indian reservations, often forcibly, sterilized, without their knowledge or consent, more than 25,000 American Indian women on several reservations. This practice of forced sterilizations continued into the 1990s. The rationale was that the women were too poor to manage children and that the doctors and nurses were providing indispensable help to these

women by limiting their child bearing. A further argument was that sterilization was prevention for fetal alcohol syndrome in alcoholic American Indian women. How far should government go in protecting us from ourselves? Does the government have a legitimate concern regarding what we do with our bodies? Should the poor be prevented from having children? Should alcoholic or drug addicted women be allowed to get pregnant?

Gender and Ethnicity

Two-Spirit (also **two spirit** or **twospirit**) is a modern umbrella term used by some Indigenous North Americans to describe gender-variant individuals in their communities.The term was adopted in 1990 at an Indigenous lesbian and gay international gathering to encourage the replacement of the anthropological term berdache. It is a spiritual role that is recognized and confirmed by the Two-Spirit's Indigenous community. While some have found the term a useful tool for intertribal organizing, not all Indigenous cultures conceptualize gender this way, and most tribes use names in their own languages. While pan-Indian terms are not always appropriate or welcome, the term has generally received more acceptance and use than the term it replaced.



Figure 5.3.1: Two-spirited marchers at San Francisco Pride Parade in 2014. (CC BY 4.0; Sarah Stierch via Wikimedia)

Third and fourth gender roles traditionally embodied by two-spirit people include performing work and wearing clothing associated with both men and women. Not all tribes/nations have rigid gender roles, but, among those that do, some consider there to be at least four genders: feminine woman, masculine woman, feminine man, and masculine man.

The presence of male-bodied two-spirits "was a fundamental institution among most tribal peoples" and, according to Will Roscoe (1991), both male- and female-bodied two-spirits have been documented "in over 130 North American tribes, in every region of the continent."

Before the late twentieth-century, non-Native (e.g., non-Native American/Canadian) anthropologists used the generic term berdache/bərˈdæʃ/ to identify an Indigenous individual fulfilling one of many mixed gender roles in their tribe, but that term has now fallen out of favor. Anthropologists primarily used it to identify feminine Native men. Its etymology, however, has meant that it is now considered outdated and potentially offensive: it derives from the French bardache (English equivalent: "bardash") meaning "passive homosexual," "catamite" or even "male prostitute." Bardache, in turn, derived from the Persian بردہ barda meaning "captive," "prisoner of war," "slave." Spanish explorers who encountered two-spirits among the Chumash people called them "joyas," the Spanish for "jewels."

Use of berdache has generally been replaced by the self-chosen two-spirit, which, in 1990, gained widespread popularity during the third annual intertribal Native American/First Nations gay and lesbian conference in Winnipeg. Two-spirit is a term chosen to express the Native/First Nations' distinct approach to gender identity and variance in contrast to the imposed non-Native in addition to replacing the otherwise imposed and non-Native terms of berdache and gay.

"Two-spirited" or "two-spirit" usually indicates a Native person who feels their body simultaneously manifests both a masculine and a feminine spirit, or a different balance of masculine and feminine characteristics than usually seen in masculine men and feminine women.

Two-spirit individuals are viewed in some tribes as having two identities occupying one body. Their dress is usually a mixture of traditionally male and traditionally female articles, or they may dress as a man one day, and a woman on another. According to Dr. Sabine Lang (1998), a German anthropologist, many tribes have distinct gender and social roles. Some specific roles sometimes held by male assigned at birth two-spirits include:

- conveyors of oral traditions and songs (Yuki);
- foretellers of the future (Winnebago, Oglala Lakota);
- conferrers of lucky names on children or adults (Oglala Lakota, Tohono O'odham);
- potters (Zuni, Navajo, Tohono O'odham);
- matchmakers (Cheyenne, Omaha, Oglala Lakota);
- makers of feather regalia for dances (Maidu);
- special role players in the Sun Dance (Crow, Hidatsa, Oglala Lakota).

Social Class

"Sell a country! Why not sell the air, the clouds, the great sea, as well as the earth? Did not the great spirit make them all for the use of his children?" - Tecumseh, Shawnee chief

As mentioned earlier and described by Tecumseh's quote above, the idea of land ownership, as a commodity, was not common among AI/AN tribes. Utilizing Max's Weber definition of **social class** (groups of people who rank closely to one another in wealth, power, and prestige), a poignant picture emerges of the historical class background of Indigenous communities (Ritzer, 2015). Despite efforts to resist colonization and land theft, American Indians had to adapt to the patrilineal land ownership imposed by Euro-American colonizers and their government. In the face of great discrimination, expulsion, and even genocide, AI/AN were systematically and intentionally stripped of their wealth, power, and prestige. Although the impacts of this historical mistreatment continues to affect Native Americans' social class, there has been a rise in upward mobility among some tribes.

Race, Class, and Education

The interactive effects of race, class, and education are quite stark for many Native Americans. In 2012, American Indian and Alaska Natives accounted for only 2% of the total U. S. population, yet their poverty rate is disproportionately higher despite having high school completion rates in the 80% range. Figure 5.3.2 provides a comparison of poverty and education rates of American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) in contrast to the total U. S. population; note that the experiences of the Choctaw Nation, one of the "5 civilized tribes," compares more closely to the total population than the Dine (Navajo Nation).

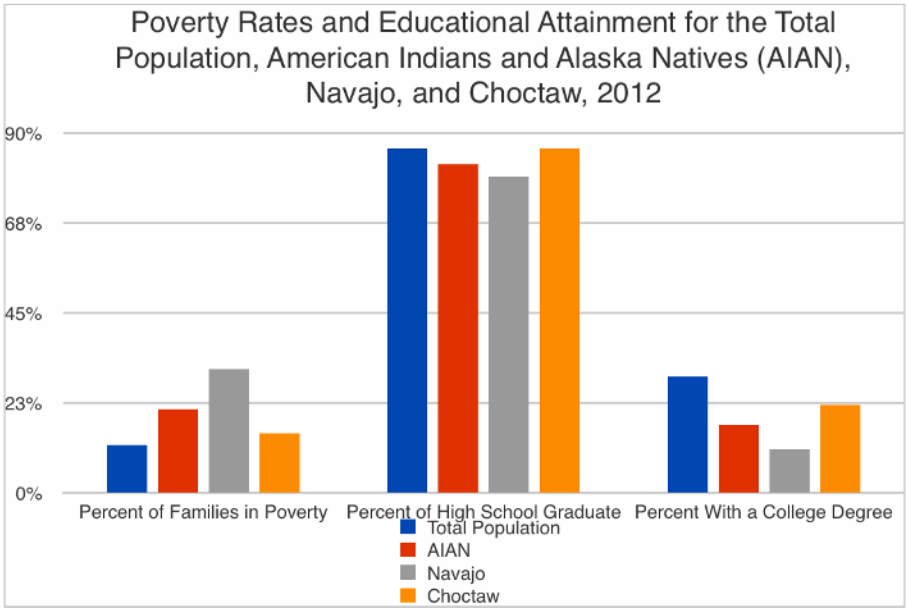


Figure **5.3.2**: Educational Attainment and Poverty Rates for American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN). The percent of AI/AN families in poverty well exceeds the total population, with the rate of Navajo families in poverty nearly tripling the percentage of the total population in poverty. While the majority of the entire U.S. population, AI/AN, Navajo, and Choctaw populations have graduated from high school, the percentage of Navajo high school graduates is lowest. The total population with a college degree exceeds 25%, the population of AI/AN with college degrees is well under 20%, with Choctaw college-graduates at nearly 23% and Navajo college-graduates at less than 10%. (Data from the U. S. Census (2013); Healey and O'Brien (2015))

One possible explanation of the intersection between race, class, and to some extent, education is the **split-labor market theory:** a theory that suggests that the labor market is divided into two tiers in which the upper tier consists of higher wages, safer working

conditions, job stability, and the opportunity to be upwardly mobile while the lower tier consists of lower wages, less safe working conditions, job instability, and very limited opportunities to be upwardly mobile. This division happens to be racialized since the upper tier tends to be predominantly represented by Euro-American people and the lower tier is most frequently represented by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Book: Cultural Anthropology (Evans) (Contribution from Lumen Learning) (CC BY 4.0)
- Native Peoples of North America (Stebbins) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Aratani, L. (2020). Record number of native American women elected to congress. *The Guardian*.
- Benokraitis, N.V. (2014). *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints.* 8th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Bitetti, D. (n.d.). *Winona LaDuke: Activist, Author & Politician.*
- Burrus, V. & Keller, C. (2007). *Toward a Theology of Eros: Transfiguring Passion at the Limits of Discipline.* New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- de Vries, K.M. (2009). Berdache (Two-Spirit). In J. O'Brien (Ed), *Encyclopedia of Gender and Society.* Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Estrada, G.S. (2011). Two spirits, Nádleeh, and lgbtq2 Navajo gaze. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal 35*(4), 167-190.
- Evans, S.M. (1989). *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Flannery, K. & Marcus, J. (2012). *The Creation of Inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gilley, B.J. (2006). *Becoming Two-Spirit: Gay Identity and Social Acceptance in Indian Country*. Omaha, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Healey, J.F. & O'Brien, E. (2015). R*ace, Ethnicity, Gender and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change.* 7th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Jacobs, S., Thomas, W., & Lang, S. (1997):*Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Lang, S. (1998). *Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Cultures.* Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Medicine, B. (2002). Directions in gender research in American Indian societies: two spirits and other categories. In W. J. Lonner, D. L. Dinnel, S. A. Hayes, & D. N. Sattler (Eds.), *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture.* Bellingham, WA: Center for Cross-Cultural Research, Western Washington University.
- Nagel, J. (1996). *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ritzer, G. (2015). *Introduction to Sociology.* 3rd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Roscoe, W. (1998). *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America.* New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Roscoe, W. (1991).*The Zuni Man-Woman.* Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Steingass, F.J. (1892). *A comprehensive Persian English dictionary, including the Arabic words and phrases to be met with in Persian literature.* London, UK: Routledge & K. Paul.
- Williams, W.L. (1986). *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Cultures*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

This page titled 5.3: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **5.3: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

5.4: Social Institutions

Government/Politics

The contentious tone between the United States government and Indigenous peoples was set when in 1824, President James Monroe expedited "the handling of the affairs of the tribes and with the concept of protecting them...initiated the the formation of a fiscal bureau in the War Department called the **BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs)** (Coffer, 1979)." The BIA was eventually moved to the Department of Interior, but it was clear that the government was expecting to manage AI/AN folks in a hostile and paternalistic fashion. The next few examples will demonstrate the ongoing tension and partial resolutions between the U. S. government and Native Americans.



Figure **5.4.1**: Representative Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo), one of the first two Native American women elected to Congress (in 2018), speaks at the U.S. Capitol for the sixth annual “Play-In” for Climate Action. Haaland became the first Native American appointed to a Presidential cabinet, Secretary of the Interior. "Representative Deb Haaland (NM-01)" (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Moms Clean Air Force via Flickr)

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

This government placed the running of Native American reservations upon this federal agency rather than tribal elders. This included control over reservation budgets, schools, and even tribal membership (Healey & O'Brien, 2015). Eventually, the power of the BIA diminished, but it had long standing paternalistic effects upon American Indians.

1851 Indian Appropriations Act

According to Elliott (2015),

the Indian Appropriations Act of 1851 authorized the creation of Indian areas in what is now Oklahoma. Native peoples were again forced to move to even smaller parcels of land now called reservations. The U.S. government had promised to support the relocated tribal members with food and other supplies, but their commitments often went unfulfilled, and the Native Americans’ ability to hunt, fish and gather food was severely restricted.

This act further promoted and supported settler-colonialism.

1862 Homestead Act

This Act allowed for any qualified citizen (at the time, it was primarily white Americans) to claim land for settlement purposes. The land that was being "claimed" was taken/stolen from American Indians (Acuña, 2015).

1871 Indian Appropriations Act

This Act removed the status of American Indian tribes as sovereign nations, which meant that Native Americans were now wards of the state. By taking away their independent nation status, the result was full **paternalism** in which the United States was "parenting" Native Americans for their "own good" (Healey & O'Brien, 2015).

1885 Major Crimes Act

This Act allowed for the United States to defy and/or nullify any treaty with Native American Nations regarding autonomous jurisdiction in tribal lands. In other words, should an American Indian commit certain types of crimes on tribal lands, the United States could violate the sovereignty of these lands to attempt to capture said "criminal" rather than that "criminal" being dealt with by that particular American Indian nation (Aguirre & Turner, 2004).

1924 Indian Citizenship Act

Despite being the original inhabitants of the United States, Native Americans were one of the last racial groups to be conferred U. S. citizenship. The 1924 Indian Citizenship Act provided U. S. citizenship to any Native American person born within U. S. territories. It has been argued that the intent of this act was to reduce the demand for Indigenous identity among American Indians. Tribal nations such as the Hopi and Onondaga rejected this Act by providing their own tribal passports (Aguirre &Turner, 2004).

1934 Indian Reorganization Act

This Act attempted to provide more autonomy to Native Americans by rescinding the Dawes Act and allowing tribes to adopt their own constitution and elect their own tribal council. Although the goal was for more self-governance, the expectation was for tribes to conform to the values and practices of dominant (white) society. Moreover, having one tribal leader to represent an entire reservation could manifest intragroup conflict since a reservation could be made up of different American Indian tribes (Healey & O'Brien, 2015; Schaefer, 2015).

1946 Indian Claims Commission Act

In an effort to provide legal recourse to American Indians, this Act established a Claims Commission that would hear cases brought about by Native Americans regarding the loss of their lands. Unfortunately, this commission did not have the authority to return lands, but rather financially compensated American Indians for those lands. This financial compensation would not result in much money or cover the true value of these stolen lands (Aguirre & Turner, 2004).

1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

In this act signed by President Richard Nixon, the sovereign status of American Indian nations in Alaska was revoked, which basically made an estimated 44 million acres of formerly Native American lands the property of the United States (Aguirre & Turner, 2004). As of 50 years ago, the U. S. was still appropriating millions of acres of American Indian lands.

1990 National Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

Enacted in 1990, NAGPRA

describes the rights of Native American lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations with respect to the treatment, repatriation, and disposition of Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony, referred to collectively in the statute as cultural items, with which they can show a relationship of lineal descent or cultural affiliation (McManamon, 2000).

Museums like the Smithsonian, have a dedicated Repatriation Office tasked with fulfilling the parameters of both the 1989 National Museum of the American Indian Act (NMAI), as well as NAGRPA. In 2017, the remains of 24 Alaska Natives from the village of Igiugig (Alaskan Yupik) were repatriated over 80 years after they were taken (Daley, 2017). Although NAGPRA has made repatriation efforts more accessible, these efforts are not equitable. According to Rebecca Kitchens (2012), current laws, including NAGPRA, grant some Nations legal access to their cultural objects at the expense of other Nations or Indigenous peoples, ultimately a hierarchy legally favoring some over others.

Like repatriation efforts, it is also important to bring attention to the trust status of tribes which guarantees their lands to be returned to them. In a notable example, the state of Alaska was suing the federal government arguing that trust status conflicts with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. That legal interpretation meant Alaska Natives were banned from putting lands into trust until recently (Estus, 2016). The State of Alaska eventually dropped its lawsuit, but this legal battle represents one of the many challenges for AI/AN people to establish and/or maintain trust status.



Figure 5.4.2: "Pottery removed as part of NAGPRA (National Graves Protection and Repatriation Act." (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Sam_Wise via Flickr)

Education

Historically, American Indian children did not have much of a choice with regards to their education since the U. S. government, through the BIA, intentionally sent children far away from their families to Native American boarding schools, discussed in Chapter 5.2. The purpose of these boarding schools was to coercively assimilate Native American children which meant that they could only speak English and convert to Christianity. It was forbidden for them to use tribal languages, dress, religion, and any other Native cultural element. Mary Crow Dog describes the boarding schools as "run like a penal colony" (Dog, 1990).



Figure 5.4.3: "Haskell Indian Nations University" sign, located in Lawrence, Kansas. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; miracc via Flickr)

Native American boarding schools were mostly all closed by the 1970s, but they left an indelible impact on the educational attainment of American Indians up to the present. The 2012 educational attainment data from the U. S. Census indicates that American Indians were very likely to attend high school, but college attendance and/or completion was not likely as shown in Figure 5.4.4. Once the model of American Indian education shifted from coercively assimilating them to having tribally controlled colleges, there was an increased shift in their educational attainment, but not yet to the levels of non-Hispanic whites.

The 1975 Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act provided Native American Nations much more autonomy with setting their own administrative and governing structures absent of BIA interference, as well as, gave them the tools and resources to address and improve their situations (Healey & O'Brien, 2015). Specifically, this Act significantly impacted AI/AN education

because it helped pave the way for tribal colleges to be controlled by Indigenous peoples not the government or the BIA. Now deceased Indigenous leader Wilma Mankiller's words echo in this change: Whoever controls the education of our children controls the future.

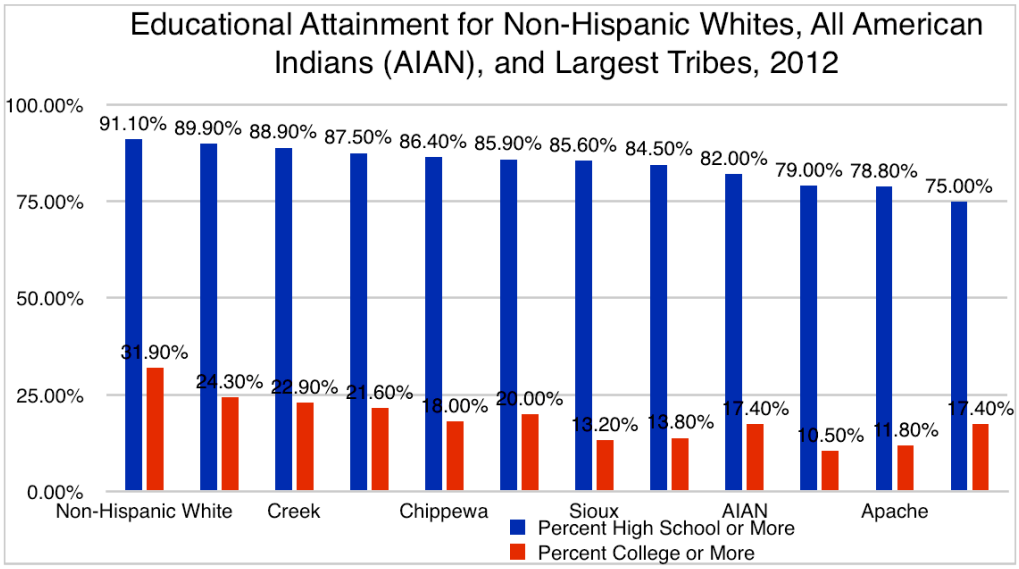


Figure 5.4.4: Educational Attainment for American Indians. The overwhelming majority of all groups have a high school diploma or more, the rates for all AI/AN groups are lower than their non-Hispanic and white counterparts. While approximately 32% of non-Hispanics were college educated in 2012, a lesser percentage of all AI/AN groups were college educated. (Data from the U.S. Census (2013); Healey & O'Brien (2015))

Family

The following categories can be used to understand kinship:

- **Matrilineal**—kin relationships are traced through the mother, children belong to the kin group of their mother.
- **Patrilineal—**kin relationships are traced through the father, children belong to the kin group of their father.
- **Bilineal (bilateral)**—kin relationships are traced through both the father's and mother's kin groups.

These categories may seem relatively simple, but they can have strong impacts on other aspects of society. And are they so simple? How would you categorize the dominant kin groups of the United States and Canada? Bilineal? If so, why do most of us have the last names of our fathers, as in patrilineal societies? Further, in a patrilineal or matrilineal society the incest taboo is applied differently to the mother's or father's side of the family. So whether a society is matrilineal or patrilineal can determine with whom you can have sex and marry and who you cannot.

Societies are also understood by social scientists as being either **endogamous** or **exogamous.** In an exogamous society people typically (in some instances must) marry someone from outside of their group or **locality** (where they live, their village or town). In an endogamous society people typically marry someone from their community. Cross cousin marriage are typically found in endogamous societies and the practice helps to increase the relationships between families, which encourages those related families to work with each other in getting resources. In an exogamous society, individuals and families build relationships with families in other localities. Another kinship organization of society are **moieties.** In moieties, the kin groups of a particular society are divided into two groups, which may be exogamous. Moieties often function as ceremonial divisions in a society. For example, among the Iroquois, when a member of your kin group dies, the members of a different moiety will plan and conduct the funeral to "help wipe the tears from your eyes." Among the Tewa, a Puebloan Nation living in the southwestern part of the U.S. moieties function as a very important part of the ritual and ceremonial aspect of the society. Men and women must marry someone from another moiety, and women will be adopted into the moiety of their husbands after they marry (Ortiz, 1969).

Other concepts that help to understand kinship are **lineage** and **clan.** In societies that recognized lineages (they are often patrilineal), the members of the lineage can trace their descent from a common ancestor. A clan is harder to define. The members of a clan believe they are related, even if they cannot trace their descent to a common ancestor. Both lineages and clans are

exogamous. Lineages are often found in patrilineal societies, clans in matrilineal societies. Many Native American societies recognize clans. While European societies are now generally patrilineal (although, less than a 1,000 years ago the Irish were matrilineal), Native American societies can be matrilineal, patrilineal, or bilineal. Further, these kinship organizations are very flexible and have changed within the last 200 years.

In Tewa society there are two patrilineal clans: Summer and Winter. Ortiz (1969) states that children are not automatically born into those clans, but must go through several rituals of “incorporation.” Women are generally adopted into the clan of their husbands after marriage. Further, children may be adopted into the other clan, even after being incorporated into a clan. Ortiz (1969) gives an example of a man who had only daughters. When they married, they were adopted into the clan of their husbands. The father then adopted a son of his oldest daughter into his clan. Medicine people and healers would also adopt apprentices who were not of their clan into their clan. All these adoptions involved rituals of incorporation (Ortiz, 1969).

The Iroquois (Haundenosaune) society is a group of Native Americans linked by language, political organization, and kin groups. They have and continue to occupy the area of what are now northern New York and southern Quebec and Ontario for around 2,000 years. The Iroquois are a matrilineal society in which the consanguine kin groups are organized into clans: Bear, Wolf, Deer, Hawk, Snipe, Heron, Turtle, Beaver and Eel. The Iroquois don’t believe they are descended from these animals, but in the ancient times of oral tradition, the relationship between animals and people was so close they could even communicate with each other. As in the story about Sky Woman, the Turtle provided a place for her to land and on which the Earth now resides. The women of the Bear clan learned about medicinal plants from a shape-changing bear.

The Navajo (Dine) are also considered to be a matrilineal society. Unlike the Iroquois, a Navajo would say they is born to the clan of their mother and for the clan of their father. Further, the Dine recognize their relatedness to their maternal and paternal grandfathers’ clans. The Navajo are considered matrilineal because the inheritance of **usufruct rights** (the rights of individuals to use land or other resources) transfers from mother to daughters.



Figure 5.4.5: "Inuit Language." Grandmother-figure is shown smiling with a child with Inuit symbolis and alphabet in the background. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; pietroizzo via Flickr)

The Inuit of the Arctic are an example of a bilateral society. Kinship is equally traced through both the mother’s and the father’s side. The Inuit live in a challenging natural environment. Their kinship organization may be because the people of this society must depend on one another for survival. The more people you can call on for help, the more likely you (and they) will survive. Bilateral societies are typically foragers, traveling from area to area to get needed resources. They may have been mobile and bilateral for centuries, like the Inuit. Others, like the Cheyenne and Sioux, may have became bilateral after changes in economic and settlement patterns caused by Euro American intrusions into their territory resulting in them morphing from settled, horticultural societies to foraging societies. Bilateral kinship organization was more adaptive to the mobility of foragers and increased kin networks.

Religion and Spiritual Beliefs

The origin stories of Indigenous peoples throughout North America are also quite different from each other. Each Native American society has its own origin story; there is no one story as there is in Christianity and Judaism. Origin stories are just one aspect of religious or spiritual beliefs for any society.

In many Indigenous origin stories, animals, plants, and even forces of nature like the snakes that ate the disrespectful young man, are active participants in the story. Unlike the Judeo-Christian story in which the serpent is the only animal to have a part mentioned, in Native American stories the animals are very important to the action of the story; often they help humans to survive. Animals may sometimes be tricksters, like Coyote of southwestern stories or the Great Hare of the Southeast, but even they sometimes help humans. You may notice from many of the stories mentioned, humans and animals cooperate and work together. Many Native American societies believe that all things in the world have souls or spirits: therefore all things in the world must be treated respectfully. Social scientists call this **animism,** the belief that key parts of nature have spirits. In foraging societies there are thanksgiving rituals for the animals that give their lives for us to eat. Failing to enact the rituals may result in the animals withdrawing themselves. For all living things there are expectations of behavior, and when humans or animals do not meet these expectations, there are consequences.

Ceremonies and rituals are another important part of any religious tradition. Among many Native American societies there are rituals or ceremonies that re-enact aspects of origin stories. Among the Hidatsa, Sioux in North Dakota, this ceremony is called the Naxpike or hide beating, and has many of the elements common to the Sun Dance practiced by societies throughout the Plains' Nations. The ceremonial grounds where the ritual will take place are prepared and blessed by the elder women, then a post made from a cottonwood tree is placed in the middle of the grounds by the elder men. Young men volunteer to re-enact the suffering and torture of Spring Boy, the first to person to do the Naxpike. By doing so they achieve individual visions and help renew the earth for their community (Bonvillain, 2001). As with origin stories, rituals and ceremonies vary from society to society.

Rituals and ceremonies can meet the needs of individuals and the community. For instance, horticultural or agricultural societies have ceremonies or rituals to ensure the growth of their crops. Among the Haundenosaune of the Iroqouis Nation in the Northeastern U.S., there are ceremonies for the coming of maple sap and strawberries. There are several for corn: the planting of the seeds, the “greening of the corn,” when the plant “tassels,” and the harvesting of the crop. Many societies also have rituals that renew the earth itself, such as the Hidatsa’s Naxpike or the Sun Dance practiced by many Plains societies. The Naxpike or Sun Dance may be done to fulfill an individual’s vow or to invoke a vision. These rituals also fulfill community needs, bringing the community together and renewing the earth for the upcoming year.

In addition to offering thanks, these ceremonies were and are also an opportunity for the community to come together, iron out grievances, have a good time, and look for potential marriage partners. Modern-day pow-wows function in a similar way for contemporary Native American communities. While the traditional ceremonies are still practiced by many societies, pow-wows are an opportunity for those who no longer live on the reservation or reserve to come home to celebrate their culture and family connections. Pow-wows are used to honor respected members of the community, and currently are often held to welcome returning war veterans and incorporate them back into the community. These gatherings are an example of how rituals function on a societal level, bringing the community together for mutual purposes and benefits.



Figure 5.4.6: The Grand Portage Pow Wow, held annually in Minnesota. Image shows Indigenous dancers and veterans. (CC BY-SA 3.0, Wpwatchdog via Wikimedia)

Among the most specialized of spiritual roles is that of a **shaman.** The word "shaman" is Siberian in origin and refers to a man or woman who is able to travel to the spirit world through a trance state. In traditional Native American societies, all people have some access to spiritual power and knowledge. Shamans typically work for the entire community to find out why the crops have failed or why hunting has been unsuccessful. In many Arctic societies, it is believed that the animals they depend on were made from the fingers of a woman named Sedna, the guardian of the animals. Sedna will withdraw or remove the animals if hunters have not treated them respectfully and done the thanksgiving rituals after killing them. If hunting becomes unsuccessful, the community's shaman will enter a trance state and travel underwater to where Sedna lives to find out why the animals have been withdrawn and what must be done to bring them back. To appease Sedna, the shaman will comb her hair, which she can no longer do because of the loss of her fingers.

Shamans and trances are part of the spiritual traditions of many societies around the world. In some societies, anyone may attain a trance through dancing, drumming, chanting, or the use of hallucinate drugs, but they are not recognized as shamans because their trances are typically for individual purposes, while a shaman typically goes into a trance state to benefit his/her community. Shamans are usually called to what can be very difficult roles in their society. An individual may be called through dreams. In many Native American societies, people who have nearly died, particularly through an illness, are thought to have the power to become a shaman because they have already traveled to the spirit world and returned. Among the societies of the Northwest coast, individuals might spend their lifetimes training to become a shaman, often apprenticing themselves to a shaman and inheriting their teacher's powers upon their death.

While shamans have special spiritual powers, Native American societies believe all people—indeed, all living things—have access to spiritual power. One of the ways spiritual power is attained is through dreams. Revitalization movements were often started in response to dreams. Dreams are seen as a conduit between people and the spirit realm. Through dreams the spirits tell people how to live their lives, what they're doing wrong, even warning them of danger. Many Native American societies have rituals in which people seek advice about their dreams. A person with a troubling dream may go to a shaman; or, as among the Haundenosaune (Iroqouis), they may tell it to the entire community for advice about its meaning. The Iroquois, and many other Native American societies, believe the messages of dreams must be acted upon or there will be negative consequences for the individual and the entire community.

Another way individuals have access to spiritual power is through visions. Men and women will undertake a vision quest as a way to attain spiritual power. In a vision quest individuals will go to a solitary place and go without food, water, and sleep in order to obtain a vision. It is believed the spirits will tell individuals what is expected from them through visions.

The vision quest can be part of **life cycle rituals**—rituals that mark important transitions in a person's life. Not all Native American societies have the same life cycle rituals, but there are typically rituals to mark birth, the attainment of personhood, adulthood,

marriage, and death. A mother (and sometimes the father) may begin rituals before a child is born. A mother may abstain from some foods, such as rabbit, to ensure the child will be brave and not run away from danger. Rituals are done to ensure an easy delivery and a healthy child. Among the Dine, a blessingway song is sung over the mother to ensure an easy birth and protect the child and mother from evil spirits. The mother may also be given medicinals, and the women in her family may manipulate her abdomen to aid in the birth. After birth and bathing, the baby is sprinkled with white and yellow corn pollen, and the women of the mother's family will gently press the baby's body to ensure good health.

It is a sad fact that not all children who are born survive. Factors like malnutrition, diseases, and poor water supplies can all affect the survival rates of infants. In non-industrial societies, infants who die are generally not given their society's typical burial rituals. Many societies believed the infant's soul enters the body of another newborn, went into an animal or bird, or returned to the spirit world until it could be born again. So while ceremonies may be done at birth, a child is often not considered a person or given a name until she or he has lived for a time. Such rituals are personhood rituals, as they incorporate the child into his or her society. Among the Tewa Pueblo Nation, for example, children are incorporated into their moiety and given a moiety-specific name during the water-giving ritual when they are eight days old. The Zunis believe a newborn child is soft or not yet ripened, so it is kept in the house away from the sun for eight days after birth. Before dawn on the eighth day the child's umbilical cord is buried, connecting the child to Mother Earth and the underworld from which its ancestors emerged. The baby is washed, put in its cradleboard, and cornmeal is put in its hands. Its paternal grandmother will carry the baby outside, facing the rising sun. The baby usually does not receive a name then. The family will wait until the baby has hardened (gotten older) and are confident the child will survive (Bonvillain, 2001).

Among the most important rituals for any individual are coming of age rituals. Coming of age rituals mark the transition from childhood to adulthood. The **vision quest** is an example of a coming of age ritual for young men. Often, for the first time, they must go into the woods, mountains, or desert by themselves, fast, and try to stay awake until they receive a vision. Killing an animal for food or fighting an enemy may also be part of a young man's coming of age ritual. The young man's family will hold a feast and often give-aways, in which goods and resources are given away, to mark his transition to adulthood.

Young women also go through coming of age rituals, usually when they start menstruating. Among the most elaborate is the **kinaalda**, girl's puberty rite, of the Dine. The kinaalda is a four-day ceremony. At dawn and noon on each day, the young woman, accompanied by friends and family members, races to the east to build up her strength and endurance. A respected older woman will knead her body (as newborn babies are kneaded) to mold her to also become a respected woman. The young woman and her family prepare large amounts of food, particularly corn, to be part of a community feast held on the fourth day. On this day the young woman washes, and then her face is painted with white lines. She then distributes food to all the guests (Schwarz, 1997).

Historically, Native American marriage ceremonies were not as elaborate as those of contemporary U.S. and Canadian societies. The ceremony would often consist of the exchange of gifts between the bride and groom and their families and a feast. Of more importance were death or funeral rituals. Like birth and adulthood, death is a transition, so anthropologists often call rituals that mark them **rites of passage**. For many Native American societies, birth is the transition from the spirit world; death is a transition back to the spirit world. Death rituals may be started before the individual dies to help in this transition. Among the Dine', for example, a night way ceremony may be held to help prepare the individual and his/her family for the death. The Dine' have a great fear of ghosts; so, much of the behavior at the funeral ritual is to ensure the ghost of the dead does not stay around kin members. The body is carefully washed and dressed by kin members, but the left moccasin is put on the right foot and the right moccasin is put on the left foot, to make it difficult for the ghost to walk. If the person dies at home, the body is carried out through a hole cut into the wall so as to not contaminate the usual paths of the living. If the deceased dies in a **hogan**, the traditional house-structure of the Dine, the hogan is abandoned or burnt down. The body is transported in silence to a remote spot. Burial typically takes place in the ground, or a rock niche that is then sealed. The mourners return by a different path, go through a purification ceremony, and never speak the name of the deceased. These observances help to ensure that the ghost of the deceased does not follow or return to haunt family members (Bonvillain, 2001). The Dine believe the deceased must become part of nature or the cosmos, "as a drop of water is part of a rain cloud."

Mass Media

The sports world abounds with team names like the Indians, the Warriors, the Braves, and even the Savages and Redskins. These names arise from historically prejudiced views of Native Americans as fierce, brave, and strong savages: attributes that would be

beneficial to a sports team, but are not necessarily beneficial to people in the United States who should be seen as more than just fierce savages.



Figure 5.4.7: Figure 5.4.8: Many Native Americans (and others) believe sports teams with names like the Indians, Braves, and Warriors perpetuate unwelcome stereotypes. (Photo (a) CC PDM 1.0; David F. Barry via Wikimedia; Photo (b) CC BY-NC 2.0; Charlie Lyons-Pardue via Flickr)

Since the civil rights movement of the 1960s, the **National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)** has been campaigning against the use of such mascots, asserting that the "warrior savage myth . . . reinforces the racist view that Indians are uncivilized and uneducated and it has been used to justify policies of forced assimilation and destruction of Indian culture" (NCAI Resolution #TUL-05-087 2005). The campaign has met with only limited success. While some teams have changed their names, hundreds of professional, college, and K–12 school teams still have names derived from this **stereotype** (Chapter 4.2). Another group, American Indian Cultural Support (AICS), is especially concerned with the use of such names at K–12 schools, influencing children when they should be gaining a fuller and more realistic understanding of Native Americans than such stereotypes supply. What do you think about such names? Should they be allowed or banned? What argument would a symbolic interactionist make on this topic?

In 2020, amidst the Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd, the Washington Redskins retired their mascot. The Washington Football Team has since followed suit (Rathborn, 2020). Finally, the 2018 NCAI Resolution for National Football League (NFL) teams to discontinue promoting institutional racism and disparaging and diminishing terminology has been realized.



Video 5.4.9: "Proud to Be (Mascots)" video produced by the National Congress of American Indians with intention to be aired during Superbowl coverage in 2014. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use: National Congress of American Indians via YouTube)

On a final note, there have been some incredible documentaries regarding Indigenous peoples created by and/or from a Native perspective. On the topic of mascots, More Than a Word and In Whose Honor? are remarkable documentaries. Powwows.com and

Indian Country Today are contemporary Indigenous media sources.

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Native Peoples of North America (Stebbins) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Acuña, R.F. (2015). *Occupied America: A history of Chicanos.* 8th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Aguirre, A., Jr. & Turner, J.H. (2004). *American Ethnicity: The Dynamic and Consequences of Discrimination.* 4th ed. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Bonvillain, N. (2001). *Native Nations: Cultures and Histories of Native North America*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Brown, D. (1970). *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Coffer, W.E. (1979). *Phoenix: The Decline and Rebirth of the Indian People*. New York, NY: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.
- Dog, M.C. & Erdoes , R. (1990). *Lakota Woman*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- Elliott, S.K. (2015). How American Indian Reservations Came to Be. *Public Broadcasting Service.*
- Estus, J. (2016). Alaska drops appeal of tribal land into trust regulation. *KTOO Public Media*.
- Healey, J.F. & O'Brien, E. (2015). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change.* 7th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Kitchens, R. (2012). Insiders and outsiders: The case for Alaska reclaiming its cultural property. *Alaska Law Review 29*(1), 113-147.
- McManamon, F. (2000). The Native American graves protection and repatriation act (nagpra). In L. Ellis (Ed), *Archeological Method and Theory: An Encyclopedia. New York, NY and London, UK: Garland Publishing Co.*
- National Congress of American Indians. (2005). *The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #tul-05-087: Support for NCAA Ban on 'Indian' Mascots.*
- Ortiz, A. (1969). *The Tewa World: Space, Time and Becoming in a Pueblo Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Rathborn, J. (2020). Washington redskins confirm new name. *The Independent*.
- Schaefer, R.T. (2015). *Racial and Ethnic groups.* 14th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Schwarz, M.T. (1997). *Molded in the Image of Changing Woman: Navajo Views on the Human Body and Personhood*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

This page titled 5.4: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **5.4: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

5.5: Social Change and Resistance

Historical Resistance of American Indians

I am a red man. If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man he would have made me so in the first place. Now we are poor but we are free. No white man controls our footsteps. If we must die, we die defending our rights. - Sitting Bull, Hunkpapa Sioux

In November 1875, President Ulysses S. Grant had a "high-level" meeting with General William T. Sherman representing the U. S. Army and Secretary Columbus Delano representing the Indian Bureau within the Department of the Interior (Anderson, 1996). At this meeting, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was asked to "step aside" and allow the army to resolve the "problem" with Sioux Indians. An ultimatum was then given to the Sioux in the Black Hills to report to a reservation by January 31, 1876 or be punished. Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse refused to comply and utilized a contingent of Cheyenne, Lakota, Oglala and other Sioux people to resist resulting in pushing back General George Crook and eventually killing General George A. Custer in the Battle of Little Big Horn. Although the mostly Sioux group of American Indian warriors won the battle, the U. S. Army continued their directive against Native Americans which resulted in the death of Crazy Horse in 1877 while Sitting Bull and his people escaped to Canada (Anderson, 1996).



Figure **5.5.1**: Sitting Bull, 1885. Image portrays the Hunkpapa Sioux warrior holding a traditional pipe. (CC PDM 1.0; David F. Barry via Wikimedia)

Another example of resistance was embodied by Geronimo, a Chiricahua Apache subchief to Chief Cochise. Geronimo has been described as, "one of the finest fighting men who ever lived...he outwitted, outfought, and made fools of thousands of U. S. troops under the leadership of the ablest 'Indian fighters' of the period" (Coffer, 1979). In 1886, Geronimo surrendered to General Nelson Miles, and he was sent to prison along with 750 other Apaches, of which some of the Apaches imprisoned were scouts for the U. S. Army that had assisted with Geronimo's capture (Coffer, 1979).

Red Power Movement and Activism

In the 1960's and 1970's, Native American folks became more socially and politically active generally around issues of self-determination and American Indian identification and cultural revival (Coffer, 1979; Nagel, 1996). According to Joanne Nagel,

the transformations of identity and culture that mark late twentieth-century American Indian ethnicity were forged in the crucible of Red Power. Red Power activism was the progenitor of an American Indian ethnic rebirth (Nagel, 1996).

Prior to the development of the American Indian Movement (AIM), Native American activists used non-violent civil disobedience tactics from the Civil Rights Movement to organize "fish-ins" primarily in the states of Washington and Oregon. Nagel writes, "a fish-in involved, quite simply, illegal fishing in bodies of water (rivers, streams, lakes, coastal waters) from which Indigenous fishermen were legally restricted or banned despite their claims to treaty rights" (Nagel, 1996). Some of these fish-ins generated mass arrests and even violent confrontations, but the courts eventually ruled in favor of American Indians' treaty rights to fish in bodies of water (Healey & O'Brien, 2015).

In July 1968, AIM was organized in Minneapolis, comprising over twenty American Indian organizations from that city. Although AIM first began challenging police brutality and discrimination against American Indians within the criminal justice system in Minneapolis, it expanded its reach to the West Coast by helping to organize the occupation of Alcatraz Island in November 1969 (Coffer, 1979). A group of eighty-nine Native Americans calling themselves "Indians of All Tribes" occupied the unused federal property of Alcatraz and claimed it as "right of discovery" and offered a purchase price of $24 for Alcatraz Island (Nagel, 1996; History is a Weapon). By June 1971, federal agents retook Alcatraz Island and AIM sought out other protest actions.

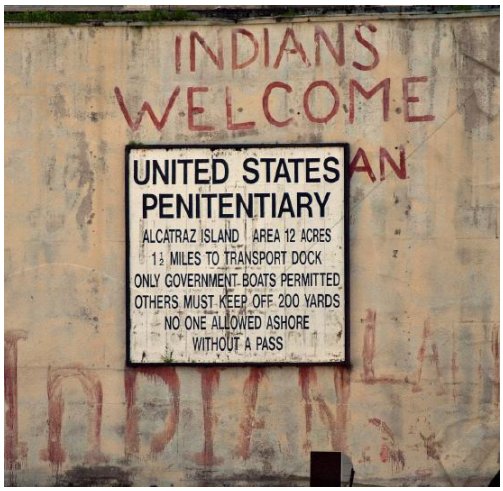


Figure **5.5.2**: Alcatraz Island Occupation sign with writing "Indians Welcome." (CC BY 3.0; Loco Steve via Wikimedia)

Another notable Red Power activist event was the "Trail of Broken Treaties" that took place 1972. Again, AIM helped to organize an automobile caravan of hundreds of American Indians that started in October of 1972 from the west (Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles) to arrive in the BIA building in Washington, D. C. (Coffer, 1979; Nagel, 1996). While this event received media coverage given the November 1972 election coverage already in Washington, D. C., the demands made by American Indians were not met. It is important to note that more contemporary Native American resistance and activism stems from **panethnicity**, which is cooperation and unity among different ethnic groups. Two centuries prior, Tecumseh (1768-1813) a leader/prophet of the Shawnee Nation, envisioned a pan-Indian, Red Nation, united against the land encroachment by Euro-Americans, though his vision was never realized. For American Indians, panethnicity manifests as Pan-Indian and/or supratribal identity and solidarity, rather than on specific tribal identification. Given that the Native American population has become more urban and dispersed away from reservations and/or original tribal lands, supratribal ethnicity increased, but is "by no means an argument for the disappearance of tribe as a central component of Indian ethnicity" (Nagel, 1996).

AIM continued their activism, but shifted their focus onto Wounded Knee in 1973. As Joane Nagel (1996) explains,

the conflict at Wounded Knee, a small town on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, involved a dispute within Pine Ridge's Oglala Lakota (Sioux) tribe over the controversial tribal chairman, Richard Wilson. Wilson was viewed as a corrupt puppet of the BIA by some segments of the tribe, including those associated with AIM. An effort to impeach Wilson resulted in a division of the tribe into two opposing camps. These groups eventually armed themselves and entered into a two-and-one half-month-long siege.

The outcome of the occupation (Wounded Knee II), was that two FBI agents were killed but countless American Indians were killed: “Just another dead Indian.” Moreover, Richard Wilson remained in office while the AIM members involved in the siege faced the threat of litigation, exile, and even prison (Nagel, 1996). Gladys Bissonette, Oglala Lakota Nation, involved member of Wounded Knee II and AIM wrote the following about the occupation,

this was one of the greatest things that ever happened in my life. And although today is our last day here, I still feel like I'll always be here because this is part of my home...I hope that the Indians, at least throughout the Pine Ridge Reservation, unite and stand up together, hold hands and never forget Wounded Knee. We didn't have anything here, we didn't have anything to eat. But we had one thing--that was unity and friendship amongst 64 different tribes...I have never seen anything like this (Ward, 2013).

The visibility of Wounded Knee II and the plight of AI/AN peoples in general, was bolstered by Marlon Brando's refusal to accept his Academy Award for Best Actor in person, in which he sent Sacheen Littlefeather, an Apache actress, in his place.

Global Resistance

The current dominant global political and legal order, invented in Europe, is state-centric and has since spread everywhere to create the discrete borders that mark the geopolitical world map most use today. Putting an end to decades of brutal violence and endemic conflict throughout Europe, the 1648 Peace of Westphalia cemented the total and enduring notion of **state sovereignty**, which is classically defined as supreme legal authority (d'Errico, n. d.). Europe's response to anarchy, conflict and disorder among nations (or peoples) was thus the creation of a system of inter-state relations bolstered by states mutually recognizing one another's sovereign authority. Indigenous understandings of international relations differ from inter-state approaches, particularly when it comes to the ways that Indigenous peoples renew and act on their sacred commitments and interdependencies with the natural world. Assertions of Indigenous resurgence, which entails reclaiming and regenerating relationships with lands, cultures and communities, promote positive, alternative visions of the international order, challenging the dominant inter-state model.

The concept of state sovereignty fuelled modern state-building strategies and, almost without exception, led to the destruction of Indigenous nations. Each state tries to build a vision of a common people sharing a culture, values, history, language, currency (and so on) through education, military conquest and other state-driven initiatives. This is often called a national identity, and is associated with ideas like patriotism and nationalism. Indigenous encounters with European empires saw them time and again face a stark choice (if the choice was even put to them at all): assimilate to the new settler colonial order being imposed over them and their lands or face dislocation – even genocide. As George Manuel and Michael Posluns (1974) point out, the colonial system is always a way of gaining control over another people for the sake of what the colonial power has determined to be "the common good." People can only become convinced of the common good when their own capacity to imagine ways in which they can govern themselves has been destroyed.

Speaking to Indigenous battles over state-building efforts that alienate Indigenous peoples from their lands and resources, Manuela Picq (2015) suggests that Indigenous perspectives offer three specific challenges to the state-centric perspective. First, they challenge the state's ultimate authority by asserting their authority over their nations, lands/waters, and the natural world. Second, they expose the colonial foundations of the state-centric system by highlighting Indigenous views that both challenge and sit outside the dominant system. In other words, states as we know them owe their existence to processes of colonization and settlement rooted in cultural imperialism, violence, destruction, genocide, and ultimately the eradication of Indigenous identities and relationships to the land if not the eradication of the peoples themselves. Third, Indigenous peoples' world views and practices challenge us to imagine what it might be like to share power within and think beyond state borders and the prevailing global state system. The children's book, *Encounter*, similarly offers an opportunity for readers to imagine a world not marred by colonialism - if our past were different.

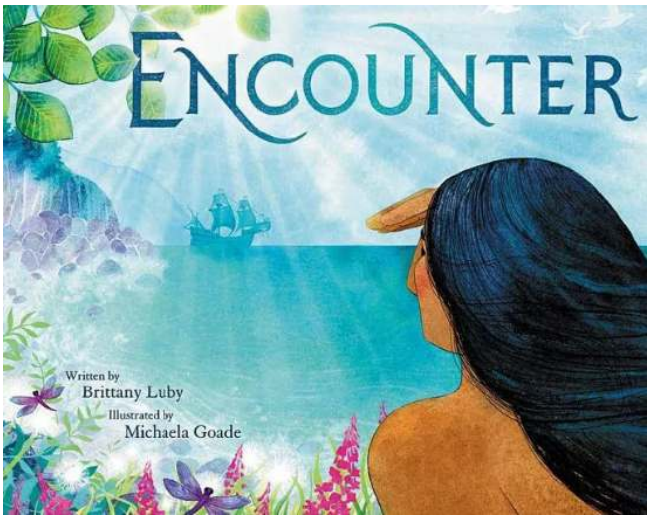


Figure 5.5.3: Encounter book, authored by Indigenous woman Brittany Luby and based on the real journal kept by French explorer Jacques Cartier in 1534, imagines a first meeting between a French sailor and a Stadaconan fisher. Encounter invites readers to reckon with the past, and to welcome, together, a future that is yet unchartered, not marred by colonialism. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Janét Hund)

The principle of **self-determination** has provided stateless Indigenous nations with ways to attempt to (re)assert and (re)claim their authority. Self-determination provides an avenue for Indigenous peoples to create political entities that can be recognized by the international community. The process is based on the idea that people should be free to form their own governments and control their own affairs – something central to the ethics and legality underpinning the United Nations. Indigenous claims of this nature have gained significant traction over the past century, especially post-1945 when **decolonization**, the physical and ideological actions and/or movements of a colony gaining its independence and becoming an autonomous former colony, became a key international process. The sources of self-determining authority are admittedly a source of contention. For Indigenous nations it emanates from complex relationships with their homelands, waters, sacred living histories, animal nations, plant nations, ceremonies, languages and the natural world. The sources of self-determining authority for states are much different, originating from colonial policies. For instance, the Doctrine of Discovery, dating back to the fifteenth century, espouses that land occupied by non-Christians could be legally "discovered" and claimed as territory owned by the Crown. Other invented political and legal constructs have also become embedded within state legal histories and practices, shaping international practices that deny alternative Indigenous conceptions of relations between nations.

One example of the tension between state sovereignty and Indigenous self-determination can be seen in the story of Cayuga (current day New York) chief Deskaheh's European visit, first to the United Kingdom in 1921 and then to the League of Nations in 1923. In his capacity as the Speaker of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), he felt compelled to make the long trans-Atlantic journey as conflicts between the Haudenosaunee and Canadian peoples had reached an impasse. He felt it unjust that his people were being imprisoned for protesting the Canadian state's imposition of its self-declared sovereignty over their lands, claiming it to be tantamount to an invasion and stating that "we are determined to live the free people that we were born" (League of Nations, 1923). The lands were, and still are, subject to treaties expressing an alternative vision of shared authority over shared lands and mutual respect between peoples as equal nations cooperatively governing the same territory – an idea that is largely antithetical to the Westphalian vision of exclusive territorial authority by one people. However, Chief Deskaheh's appeals fell on deaf ears in both London and Geneva as the states concerned refused to interfere in the domestic affairs of one of their peers, namely Canada (Corntassel, 2008). He eventually left Europe empty-handed, dying soon after in 1925 in New York state, exiled from his homeland that had by then been all but overrun by the Canadian settler state.

Some progress has been made since Chief Deskaheh's time and now appears in prominent places. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) urges states to recognize that

Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development (United Nations General Assembly, 2007).

There is also momentum within the United Nations to support what many consider the heart of self-determination – namely, an Indigenous veto over all matters affecting them, their communities and their territories. On the surface, the Declaration seems to secure for Indigenous nations powers previously extended only to states. As white Face (2013) points out, conspiring states refused to adopt it until it included limiting language that eventually made its way into Article 46, which states that "nothing in this declaration may be interpreted … or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent states" (United Nations General Assembly, 2007). Article 46 can be seen as perpetuating the above-mentioned Doctrine of Discovery or at least its impacts despite its formal repudiation in 2012. Unfortunately, the legal fictions of the Doctrine of Discovery via Article 46 of the UNDRIP as well as other inter-state legal instruments continue to impact Indigenous nations in profound and destructive ways that undermine their self-determining authority (Miller et al., 2010; United Nations General Assembly, 2010).

Indigenous self-determination movements mount a more robust and fundamental challenge to the system itself. Even if most Indigenous nations do not seek its wholesale elimination, they strive for ways of being included on their own terms that tend to reject the Westphalian idea of state sovereignty. Given that there are approximately 5,000 Indigenous nations throughout the world, there are many ways of asserting self-determining authority. Many Indigenous alternatives even reject the very idea that there should be a robust set of overarching principles that govern relations between peoples, arguing that we should be tolerant of a plurality of approaches to promoting peace among peoples and with the environments that sustain us.



Figure **5.5.4**: "Tribal Sovereignty." Woman holds sign which reads "Tribal Sovereignty - It's the Law." (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Ian Sane via Flickr)

There is an emerging scholarship on Indigenous international relations that challenges state-centric expressions of sovereignty and self-determination. As Anishinaabe scholar Hayden King (2015) states, "in our political world views the state and sovereignty melt away." Indigenous nations have expressed solidarity with one another through the establishment of new confederacies, treaties and agreements that promote peace, friendship and new strategic alliances. Indigenous international relations are enduring and sacred, and making treaties with foreign countries has not prevented Indigenous nations from continuing their own diplomatic relations with one another. For example, the Treaty of Peace, Respect, and Responsibility between the Heiltsuk Nation and the Haida Nation (both in current day Western Canada) was the first peace treaty between these two nations since the 1850's and was premised on the assumption that "there are greater troubles facing our lands and waters and depletion of resources generated from forces outside of our nations" (Crist, 2014). This treaty was enacted between the two Indigenous nations through a potlatch ceremony and sought to challenge a common threat posed by the state-sanctioned commercial herring fishery in Heiltsuk waters.

Iiniiwa

In 2014, another historic treaty was initiated between Indigenous nations living along the medicine line (the United States-Canada border). **Iiniiwa**, which is the Blackfoot name for bison, have a deep, longstanding relationship with the land, people and cultural practices of prairie ecosystems. When discussing the role of the bison on their homelands, Blackfoot scholar Leroy Little Bear (2014) pointed out that acting as a natural bio-engineer in prairie landscapes, they shaped plant communities, transported and

recycled nutrients, created habitat variability that benefited grassland birds, insects and small mammals, and provided abundant food resources for grizzly bears, wolves and humans.

Unfortunately, the widespread slaughter of bison in the nineteenth century led to the deterioration of the prairie ecosystems and with this the health and wellbeing of Blackfoot people. The decimation of the bison also impacted the cultural practices of the region's Indigenous peoples, which has prompted the need for community-led action to restore the iiniiwa to Indigenous homelands.

On 23 September 2014, eight Indigenous nations (the Blackfoot Nation, Blood Tribe, Siksika Nation, Piikani Nation, the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes of Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of Fort Peck Indian Reservation, the Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Indian Reservation, and the Tsuu T'ina Nation) gathered in Blackfoot territory near Browning, Montana to sign the historic Buffalo Treaty. It involved Indigenous nations on both sides of the medicine line and called for the return of iiniiwa to the prairie ecosystems. Given that it was the first cross-border Indigenous treaty signed in over 150 years, the Buffalo Treaty was also a way of renewing and regenerating old alliances. It outlined several community-led goals, including engaging tribes and First Nations in continuing dialogue on iiniiwa conservation; uniting the political power of the tribes and First Nations of the Northern Great Plains; advancing an international call for the restoration of the iiniiwa; engaging youth in the treaty process and strengthening and renewing ancient cultural and spiritual relationships with iiniiwa and grasslands in the Northern Great Plains.

As an example of Indigenous international relations, the above-mentioned treaty provisions demonstrate the sacred nature of treaty-making as a way for Indigenous nations "to extend their relationships of connection to all of the different peoples of the world" (Williams, 1997). In addition to having Indigenous nations as signatories, the Buffalo Treaty also outlines a vision for the involvement of federal, state and provincial governments, as well as farmers, ranchers and conservation groups in the restoration of iiniiwa to Indigenous homelands. As individual Indigenous nations, these communities would have a limited ability to promote iiniiwa restoration. However, with a unified vision, they collectively exerted their self-determining authority to facilitate the return of iiniiwa to some 6.3 million acres of their homelands.

The Buffalo Treaty is also a living document that requires periodic renewal and re-interpretation. Two years after the Treaty was signed, the number of signatories had gone from eight to 21. In September 2016, signatories held a pipe ceremony in Banff National Park to honor the planned reintroduction of sixteen iiniiwa to the area. In addition to restoring the buffalo population, signatories called on the Government of Alberta in Canada to change the name of Tunnel Mountain in Banff to Sacred Buffalo Guardian Mountain. The vision for the regeneration and perpetuation of iiniiwa also entails changing the landscape to reflect the places where the iiniiwa live. New forms of Indigenous treaty-making reflect the complex diplomacies and spiritual re-awakenings that constitute Indigenous inter-national relations.

Current Issues and Continued Social Change

Contemporary examples of Native American resistance and activism, in particular the opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline, are further discussed in Chapter 11.4. There are a few current issues impacting American Indians that require further attention. The first is the rise of missing and murdered Indigenous women and Two-Spirit in the United States and Canada, where British Columbia's Highway 16 referred to as the "Highway of Tears" (Palacios, 2016). According to Carolyn Smith-Morris, "Native American women are murdered and sexually assaulted at rates high as 10 times the average in certain counties in the United States—crimes overwhelmingly committed by individuals outside the Native American community" (Smith-Morris, 2020). Given the importance and now greater visibility of this issue, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order 13898 in November 26, 2019. This Executive Order established a task force that would focus on missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives (Operation Lady Justice).



Video 5.5.5: Wind River. This drama film portrays the coverup of the death of an Indigenous woman, Natalie, near the big oil and pipeline construction on Wind River reservation (Wyoming). (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use: KinoCheck via YouTube)

The second and even more current issue impacting American Indians is the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the Native American population. According to a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, "Although non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) persons account for 0.7% of the U.S. population (based on 2018 U. S. Census), a recent analysis reported that 1.3% of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases reported to CDC with known race and ethnicity were among AI/AN persons" (Hatcher, et al., 2020). Similarly, Kizzie Wade (2020) reports that Native Americans are 3.5 times more likely that whites to be diagnosed with COVID-19, as some Indigenous communities such as the Navajo/Dine have been ravaged by the pandemic. In contrast, standing on the shoulders of Wilma Mankiller, champion of social welfare for her people, the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma has practiced impressive public health care and tribal leadership, experiencing low incidence of COVID-19. Since the pandemic is an ongoing situation, more information and data is being collected to assess the full impact of coronavirus on AI/AN populations. It is clear more research is needed to analyze how class stratification, access to healthcare, and other institutional issues contribute to the disparate COVID-19 effects on Indigenous populations.

Contributors and Attributions

- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- International Relations Theory (McGlinchey, Walters and Scheinpflug) (CC BY-NC 4.0)

Works Cited

- Anderson, G.C. (1996). *Sitting Bull and the Paradox of Lakota Nationhood*. New York, NY: Harper Collins College Publishers.
- Brown, D. (1970). *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the America West*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Coffer, W.E. (1979). *Phoenix: The Decline and Rebirth of the Indian People*. New York, NY: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.
- Corntassel, J. (2008). Toward sustainable self-determination: rethinking the contemporary Indigenous-rights discourse. *Alternatives 33*(1): 105– 132.
- Crist, V. (2014). A peace of mind: haida heiltsuk affirm historic relationship. *Haida Laas: Newsletter of the Council of the Haida Nation;* 8–10.
- d'Errico, P. (n. d.). Sovereignty: A brief history in the context of U.S. "Indian law." *University of Massachusetts at Amherst.*
- Hatcher, S.M., Agnew-Brune, C., Anderson, M., et al. (2020). COVID-19 among American Indian and Alaska native persons — 23 states, January 31–July 3, 2020. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report,* 69:1166–1169.

- Healey, J.F. & O'Brien, E. (2015). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change.* 7th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- King, H. (2015). The problem with Indigenous peoples: reconsidering international Indigenous rights activism. In Elaine Coburn (Ed), *More Will Sing Their Way to Freedom: Indigenous Resistance and Resurgence*, 167–183. Halifax, Canada: Fernwood Publishing.
- League of Nations. (1923). Petition to the league of nations from the six nations of the grand river. *Communications by the Government of the Netherlands, document* C.500.1923.VII.
- Manuel, C.G. & Posluns, M. (1974). *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality*. New York, NY: Collier Macmillan Canada.
- Miller, R.J., Ruru, J., Behrendt, L, & Lindberg, T. (2010). *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Nagel, J. (1996). *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Palacios, L.C. (2016). Killing abstractions: Indigenous women and Black trans girls challenging media necropower in white settler states. *Critical Ethnic Studies*, 2, 35-60.
- Picq, M.. (2015). Self-determination as anti-extractivism: how Indigenous resistance challenges world politics. In M. Woons (Ed), *Restoring Indigenous Self-Determination: Theoretical and Practical Approaches.* Bristol: E-International Relations.
- United Nations General Assembly. (2007). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Resolution.* Adopted by the General Assembly, 2 October 2007. UN. Doc. A/ RES/61/295.
- United Nations General Assembly. (2010). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People, James Anaya.* General Distribution to the General Assembly. Un. Doc. A/HRC/15/37
- Vassar, S. (2020, September 15). The harsh reality behind 'Wind River.' *Film School Rejects.* Retrieved from https://filmschoolrejects.com/wind-r...-native-women/
- Wade, K. (2020). COVID-19 data on native americans is ‘a national disgrace.’ this scientist is fighting to be counted. *Science.*
- Ward, B. (2013). Remembering the wounded knee occupation *Paperblog*.
- White F.C. (2013). *Indigenous Nations’ Rights in the Balance: An Analysis of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press.
- Williams, R.A. (1997). *Linking Arms Together: American Indian Treaty Visions of Law & Peace 1600–1800*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

This page titled 5.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY-NC license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **5.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: Euro Americans and Whiteness

6.1: History and Demographics

6.2: Intergroup Relations

6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility

6.4: Intersectionality

6.5: Social Institutions

6.6: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 6: Euro Americans and Whiteness is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

6.1: History and Demographics

Although many **white ethnics**, individuals and groups who society deems to be "white" but actually have ethnic ties to their homeland in a country (e.g., Germany, Poland, Netherlands, Ireland, Syria, Cuba, etc.) other than the U.S., have migrated to the U.S. because they perceived it to be a land of economic and political freedom and opportunity, many have been driven from their homelands by border wars, internal ethnic conflict, economic uncertainty or collapse, lack of educational opportunities, less political freedom, and a myriad of other reasons. The primary push factors—those conditions which impel people to emigrate from their native lands and immigrate to a new and unknown country—are political and economic, and, as one might guess, the primary pull factors—those real or perceived conditions in the new country which beckon to those on foreign shores moving people to emigrate from the countries of their birth—are also political and economic. Regardless of the push or pull factors, white ethnics are frequently voluntary migrants to the U.S. choosing to migrate, sometimes at great personal risk, because they choose to migrate.

Immigrants from England

In 1607, the English founded their first permanent settlement in present-day America at Jamestown in the Virginia Colony. Individuals from the north of England, Scotland, and northern Ireland (Scotch-Irish) constituted most of the migration to the early U.S. colonies. Most of the early European immigrants during this colonial time period were from England; 60% of the 3 million white Americans in 1790 were English (Schaefer, 2019). The government institutions followed the English mold and adopted the English language, as this group of white Anglo Saxon Protestants (WASP) established themselves as the dominant group in the U.S. Thus, they defined what it meant to be white. Fleeing religious persecution and seeking religious freedom in the U.S., the Puritans and Quakers sought economic opportunities in this new country. Many of these immigrants were indentured servants, performing cheap labor for the colonies for a period of typically four to seven years - only to be replaced with the more lucrative enslaved African population. Immigrants from Scotland, Germany and Ireland soon came to outnumber the English, but the English colonists maintained their dominant position.



Figure **6.1.1**: British flag. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; ianonline via Flickr)

Immigrants from Germany, Ireland and Italy

White ethnic Europeans formed the second and third great waves of immigration, from the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. They joined a newly minted United States that was primarily made up of white Protestants from England. While most immigrants came searching for a better life, their experiences were not all the same.

Though pockets of German, Swedish and Dutch had immigrated prior to the end of the American Revolution, the first major influx of European immigrants came from Germany and Ireland, starting in the 1820s. Germans came both for economic opportunity and to escape political unrest and military conscription, especially after the Revolutions of 1848. Many German immigrants of this period were political refugees: liberals who wanted to escape from an oppressive government. They were well-off enough to make their way inland, and they formed heavily German enclaves in the Midwest that exist to this day. Their migration into middle America displaced many Indigenous populations and contributed to the Dakota War of 1862. German immigration continued into

the next century, but Germany's role in the World Wars contributed to many German Americans distancing themselves from their homeland. Nonetheless, the U.S. has experienced steady immigration from Germany, the country with the largest single source of ancestry of people currently residing in the U.S.



Figure **6.1.2**: Flags of the world. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Penn State via Flickr)

As the second largest group of immigrants during the colonial period, Irish immigrants reflected a broad economic spectrum. Though, the Irish Potato Famine of 1845 led many to flee their homeland as they struggled with poverty and starvation. Irish immigrants settled mainly in the cities of the East Coast, where they were employed as laborers and where they faced significant discrimination. They performed hard, manual labor in the decades in which they were immigrating, thus contributing greatly to the physical infrastructure of the U.S. Though Ireland as a country condemned slavery and many Irish Americans shared the plight at the bottom of the U.S. social hierarchy with African Americans, the Irish immigrants instead distanced themselves from African Americans. The low position the Irish held in the racial hierarchy in Europe was repeated in the U.S., but in pursuit of whiteness, the Irish immigrants began to also distance themselves from their ethnic background. Yet, Irish Americans have been influential in the U.S. Roman Catholic Church.

Irish immigration continued into the late 19th century and earlier 20th century, at which point the numbers for Southern European immigrants started growing as well. Italians, mainly landless and from the southern part of the country, began arriving in large numbers in the 1880s. Italian immigrants hailed from diverse ethnic backgrounds; thus, they were not a homogenous cultural group. As discussed in Chapter 3.1, the influx of newcomers resulted in fierce anti-immigrant sentiment, **nativism**, among factions of the U.S. "native" born predominantly White Angle Saxon Protestant (WASP) population. The new arrivals were often viewed as unwanted competitors for jobs. The Catholic European immigrants, including the Irish and Italians, faced discrimination for their religious beliefs; though Italians further found discomfort in the Irish American domination of the Catholic Church. The anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic Know-Nothing political party of the 1850s attempted to curb immigration. They also called themselves the "Native Americans" in efforts to prevent non-native born Americans from taking political office. Still, Italian Americans have experienced success at the local political level, though they still experience challenges with the stereotype of being associated with organized crime.

Immigrants from Eastern Europe

Eastern European immigrants—people from Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, and Austria-Hungary—started arriving around the turn of the 20th century as well, though Polish immigrants were among the early settlers in Jamestown, Virginia in 1608. Many Eastern Europeans were peasants forced into a difficult existence in their native lands; political unrest, land shortages, and crop failures drove them to seek better opportunities in the United States at the end of the 19th century. Many Polish Americans performed work that others would not do, including laboring in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. While earlier waves of Polish immigrants consisted largely of Catholics, the Eastern European immigration wave also included Jewish people escaping pogroms (anti-Jewish uprisings) of Eastern Europe and the Pale of Settlement in what was then Poland and Russia. Over 2 million Jews from Eastern Europe entered the U.S. between 1880 and 1920, fleeing religious persecution. After the Holocaust and the end of World War II, Congress passed special legislation enabling refugees from Europe and the former Soviet Union to enter the United States.

Immigration Act of 1924

Throughout most of U.S. history, the flow of immigration from Europe was unfettered. The Immigration Act of 1924 created a quota system that restricted entry to 2 percent of the total number of people of each nationality into the U.S. as of the 1890 national census–a system that favored immigrants from Western Europe–and largely prohibited immigrants from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. This legislation served to ensure that the U.S. would remain a largely white nation for decades. It was not until the Immigration Act of 1965 that the immigration doors opened to the rest of the world, particularly Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa.

Legally White

The Naturalization Act of 1790 allowed any free white person of “good character,” who has been living in the United States for two years or longer to apply for citizenship. Without citizenship, nonwhite residents were denied basic constitutional protections, including the right to vote, own property, or testify in court. Free whites were allowed to become citizens. In 1922, Takao Ozawa, a Japanese American immigrant, sought his naturalized status; as part of his case, he claimed he was lighter than other whites. The unanimous Supreme Court decision however determined that the status of white was meant to identify only individuals of Caucasian descent. Thus, Ozawa was denied naturalization. A few months later, Bhagat Singh Thind, a high caste-Hindu of full Indian blood, also sought to become a naturalized citizen. He too was denied naturalization on the same grounds as Ozawa.



Figure **6.1.3**: The courts have legally determined who is white. (CC PDM 1.0; Best Law via Flickr)

Throughout the Jim Crow system resulting in segregated housing, schools, and other public facilities, white individuals were afforded better opportunities in these social settings and institutions. As many African Americans have both European and African DNA, many African Americans have "passed" for white, thereby getting access to better societal resources and social institutions. But, not all who, by all intents and purposes, passed as white were legally considered white, as you may recall from the Phipps case discussed in Chapter 1.2. Though she identified as white and aimed to legally change her racial status to white, because Ms. Phipps' birth certificate read Black, the courts ruled against her desire. Thus, the legacy of the "one drop" rule has extended as recently at the 1980s.

Currently, the U.S. Census Bureau includes the "original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East" among white people; though members of some of these groups desired more specific ethnic categories in the Census. Further discussion of the Census and the Middle Eastern population is provided in Chapter 10.5. Also, the majority of those identifying as Latinx in the 2010 Census marked that they were white.

Thinking sociologically

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, many white individuals have ethnic ties to their homeland or the homeland of their ancestors. If you identify as white, do you have an understanding of the ethnic background of your ancestors? Do you know their country of origin, the reasons your ancestors migrated to the U.S., and their early experiences in the U.S.?

Current Demographics

Most people in the 2010 Census identified as white, comprising 76.3% of the U.S. population according to the U.S. Census. As stated in Chapter 1.6 and Chapter 12.5, the white portion of the U.S. population is declining.

The U.S. Census from 2008 revealed that 16.5% of respondents reported being of German descent, the largest white ethnic group in the country at the time. For many years, German Americans endeavored to maintain a strong cultural identity, but they are now culturally assimilated into the dominant U.S. culture.

There are now more Irish Americans in the United States than there are Irish in Ireland. Irish Americans have slowly achieved acceptance and assimilation into the dominant group.

Myers (2007) states that Italian Americans' cultural assimilation is "almost complete, but with remnants of ethnicity." The presence of "Little Italy" neighborhoods—originally segregated slums where Italians congregated in the nineteenth century—exist today. While tourists flock to the saints' festivals in Little Italies, most Italian Americans have moved to the suburbs at the same rate as other white groups.

Key Takeaways

- A variety of push and pull factors have contributed to the migration of white ethnic individuals into the U.S.
- The experiences of white ethnics in the U.S. has ranged from entering the ranks of the dominant group to experiences of nativism.
- Historically and in contemporary society, legally identifying as white has sometimes been mired in friction.
- The population of white Americans in the U.S. is declining.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Myers, J.P. (2007). *Dominant-Minority Relations in America*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Schaefer, R. (2019). *Racial and Ethnic Groups.* 15th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *Quick Facts, United States.*

This page titled 6.1: History and Demographics is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **6.1: History and Demographics** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

6.2: Intergroup Relations

"Can we all just get along?" This is the question expressed by Rodney King, as he tried to calm the 1992 rebellion that rippled through the Los Angeles region, following the jury's acquittal of police officers accused of excessive use of force against King. The answer to King's question depends. Depends on the time period, the context or situation, geographical location, and also the individuals or groups involved. On one hand, the answers to King's question is "No, groups cannot get along," as race-ethnic intergroup relations result in inhumane consequences such as genocide or expulsion, which has explained the migration of experiences of some individuals in the white/Euro Americans category. Some in this group have also experienced mildly less inhumane consequences, resulting in internal colonialism and segregation, as experienced by non-**WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant)** immigrants. A more tolerable intergroup outcome, fusion or amalgamation, can be used to explain the experiences of intermarriage or multiracial children within the category of white/Euro Americans. Assimilation appears as another favorable intergroup consequence; however, it can also be argued that assimilation serves to deny one's ethnic identity, which should also be understood as a troubling consequence that explains the loss of ancestral cultures amongst many white Americans. The most tolerant intergroup consequence of race-ethnic relations is pluralism or multiculturalism which may be evidenced in contemporary ethnic enclaves or communities of white ethnics.

Patterns of Intergroup Relations: White/Euro Americans

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g. Holocaust).
- **Expulsion/ Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. Eastern European exiles).
- **Internal Colonialism:** The dominant group exploits the marginalized group (e.g. indentured servants).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Little Italy; “No Irish Need Apply”).
- **Fusion/ Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. whiteness, intermarriage, multiracial children).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. white/Anglo conformity).
- **Pluralism/ Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. Little Italy, Little Warsaw, Greektown, Germantown, Jewish ethnic enclave).

Genocide and Expulsion

Eastern European and Jewish individuals and groups fled persecution and even **genocide**, systematic killing of an entire people, in their home countries. Such was the case during WWII in which more than 6 million Jews were killed in Europe during the Hitler's Third Reich leading to the Holocaust. Well before World War II, many Eastern Europeans experienced **expulsion**, as they were pushed out of their homelands, fleeing to other European countries and then the U.S. Between 1880 and 1920, more than 2 million Jews from Eastern Europe migrated to the U.S., escaping religious persecution at home. Other Eastern Europeans, including Polish immigrants, came to the U.S. as exiles, refugees, or displaced people. As described in Chapter 3.2, more than 1 million Armenians were victims of genocide during World War 1.

Internal Colonialism and Segregation

Other sub-groups of Euro American immigrants experienced challenging circumstances in their homeland and upon their migration to the U.S. Indentured servants from England and Scotland reflected **internal colonialism** (exploitation by the dominant group), in that they were kept in servitude in the U.S. for 4-7 years. While German immigrants were not victimized to the same degree as many of the other communities of color, they incurred opposition from dominant white groups, particularly during the lead up to World War (and through World War II), sometimes resulting in de facto **segregation**, physical separation of groups resulting in inequality such as when a small number of German Americans were interned during WWII. Earlier in U.S. history, German immigrants were sometimes not allowed residency in Anglo American neighborhoods.

Irish immigrants, many of whom were very poor, were more of an underclass than the Germans. Akin to internal colonialism and **cultural genocide** (systematic killing off of one's culture as discussed in Chapter 5.2) in Ireland, the English had oppressed the

Irish for centuries, eradicating their language and culture and discriminating against their religion (**anti-Catholicism**). Although the Irish comprised a larger population than the English, they were a subordinate group, lacking political and economic power. This dynamic reached into the new world, where Anglo Americans saw Irish immigrants as a race apart: dirty, lacking ambition, and suitable for only the most menial jobs. In fact, Irish immigrants were subject to criticism identical to that with which the dominant group characterized African Americans resulting in de facto **segregation**. For example, in eastern U.S. cities, common signage read "No Irish Need Apply." By necessity, Irish immigrants formed tight communities as they were segregated from their Anglo neighbors.



Figure **6.2.1**: Irish Dancers participate in the Dublin Irish Festival, Dublin, Ohio. (CC BY-NC 2.0; OZinOH via Flickr)

The later wave of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe was also subject to intense discrimination and prejudice from Anglo and other Euro Americans. In particular, the dominant group—which now included second- and third-generation Germans and Irish—saw Italian immigrants as the dregs of Europe and worried about the purity of the American race (Myers, 2007). Italian immigrants lived in segregated slums known as Little Italy in Northeastern cities, and in some cases were even victims of violence and lynchings as were African Americans in the same time period, discussed in Chapter 7.2. Lynchings against Italian Americans were not widespread, but one of the most vicious attacks occurred in New Orleans in 1891 in which 11 Italians were lynched. In general, Italians worked harder and were paid less than other workers, often doing the dangerous work that other laborers were reluctant to take on.

Assimilation and Fusion/Amalgamation

In colonial U.S. history, immigrants from a variety of European countries such as England, Scotland, France, Spain, Germany, and the Scandinavia struggled for dominance, with the dominant group becoming English Americans. Hence, the U.S. society is largely based on the culture, laws, customs, and practices of English Americans. **Assimilation**, conforming to the norms and values of the dominant culture, is the most typical intergroup consequence applicable to white Americans. This **Anglo-conformity** model posits that other race-ethic groups should strive to follow the White Anglo Saxon Protestant (WASP) norms in food, dress, language, religion, holidays, and other cultural practices.

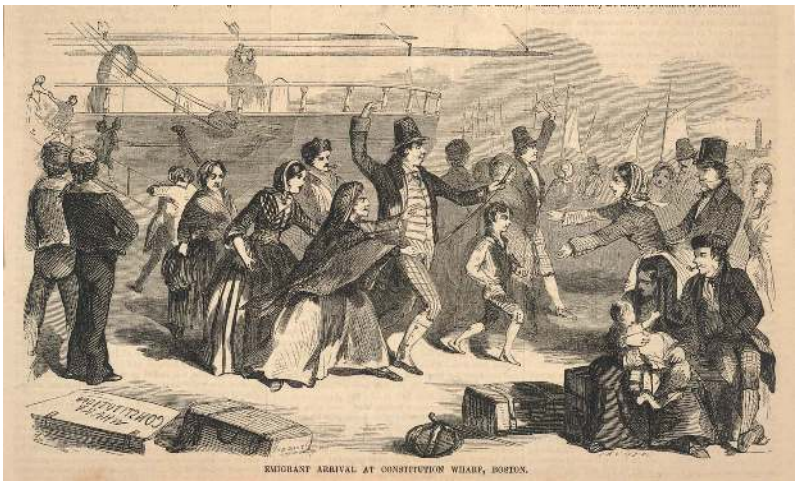


Figure **6.2.2**: "Emigrant Arrival at Constitution Wharf" by Winslow Homer (1857). (CC PDM 1.0; Smithsonian American Art Museum via Wikimedia)

While positioned similarly with African Americans in their struggle against Anglo domination during the mid 1800s, over time the Irish ultimately followed the assimilation model. In Noel Ignatiev's study of Irish immigrants in the 19th-century United States, How the Irish Became white, he posited that the Irish triumph over nativist efforts, thus their assimilation, marked the incorporation of the Irish into the dominant group of American society: white. Ignatiev claimed that the Irish gained acceptance as white when they supported slavery and violence against free African Americans. Only through their own violence against free Blacks and support of slavery did the Irish gain acceptance as white and thus admission into jobs, neighborhoods, and schools. One might say the Irish exchanged their greenness for whiteness, and thus collaborated against Blackness.

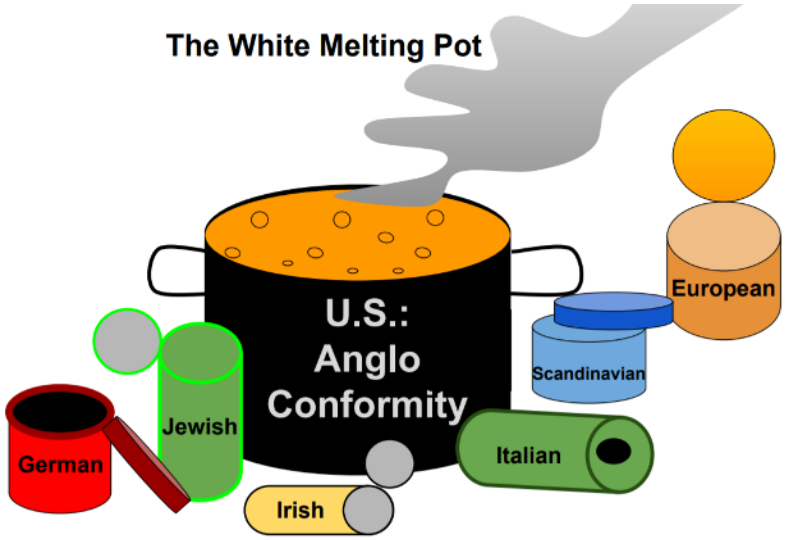


Figure **6.2.3**: The White Melting Pot. (Diagram created by Jakobi Oware)

As shown in Figure 6.2.4, the melting pot analogy connects to this assimilation, but it is also relevant to the intergroup consequence of **fusion** or **amalgamation**, the converging of different race-ethnic groups into a new group. The category of white is a uniquely American concept, with little historical relevance in Europe. Yet, over the past few centuries of European immigration to the U.S., many white Americans no longer have any ties to the homeland of their ancestors. White has also become an amalgamated concept for individuals whose ancestors may hail from more than one European country, or even North African, Middle Eastern, or Latin American country - but rather than identifying with the nationality or ethnicity, they connect with white, which is the absence of ethnicity. Many white Americans have little knowledge of their immigrant ancestors or their ethnic heritage, thus not even possessing **symbolic ethnicity**, a minor aspect of one's identity tied to the old country. However, Hansen in 1938 proposed the principle of **third generation interest**, what the second generation tries to forget, the third generation tries to remember. This

melting of the white ethnicity in favor of the socially constructed term of white will be discussed further in the next section, and should be equated with an absence of ethnicity.

Additionally, **miscegenation**, intermarriage between members of different race-ethnic groups, has also contributed to the consequence of fusion or amalgamation. In the middle of the 19th century, many Irish and African Americans lived side by side and shared work spaces. Their close contact sometimes led to intermarriage and bi-racial children. In the 1850 U.S. Census, the term mulatto appeared primarily due to the intermarriage between Irish and African Americans. Yet, such unions were extremely threatening to white supremacy which regards "sexual purity" to maintain this construct. Miscegenation was regarded as a threat to whiteness. In fact, the racist film Birth of a Nation in 1909 portrayed the danger of race mixing and the threat that Black men posed for white women. Yet, during the institution of slavery, Black women were regularly raped by their white slaver owners, thereby created a mixed population; though during the peculiar institution and the "one drop rule" reign, these individuals were regarded as Black.

Today, the third fastest growing group in the U.S. is multiracial individuals, people who are "two or more races." Most of these multiracial individuals have a white parent and a parent of color. Similarly, most intermarriages in the U.S. involve a white partner married to an individual of color.

Thinking Sociologically

If you are multiracial mixed with white ancestry, do you have a connection to your white or white ethnic background? Why or why not?

Pluralism

Glimpses of **pluralism**, mutual respect for and coexistence of a variety of cultures, may today be understood by the presence of white ethnic enclaves. (Ethnic enclaves were defined in Chapter 1.3). Earlier Euro American immigrant groups who settled into ethnic enclaves or communities in the 19th and 20th centuries did so as a result of segregation they experienced upon their migration to the U.S. However, to be considered pluralist, these ethnic enclaves must be free of discrimination which was clearly not always the case in previous centuries. The following all include examples of white ethnic enclaves: The Little Italys in New York, Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia; the Crown Heights area of Brooklyn New York which is home to nearly 100,000 Lubavitsch-sect, ultra-Orthodox Jews; the Amish and other Old Order religious groups of Iowa, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and far Northwestern Minnesota are all primary exemplars of ethnic enclaves.



Figure **6.2.4**: Little Italy at Christmastime. (CC BY-SA 2.0; annulla via Flickr)

These white ethnic groups formed neighborhoods where first, second, and third generation white ethnics lived and worked together in ethnic enclaves. By 1920, New York City became a major destination for Eastern European Jewish immigrants, who fled religious persecution and **anti-Semitism**, intense prejudice and racism against Jews (discussed further in Chapter 10.2). These

Jewish immigrants performed both skilled and unskilled labor. These Jewish immigrants created dense networks of commercial, financial, and social cooperation (Healey, 2014). These enclaves provided access to cultural resources included jobs, foodways, cultural traditions, holidays, and ethnic pride. Another examples of pluralism can be understood with the Amish population. This traditional, religious group is committed to a way of life organized around farming with an absence of technology in their lives.

Little Armenia

Little Armenia (Armenian: Փոքր Հայաստան) is a neighborhood in central Los Angeles, California. It is named after the Armenians who came from Asia Minor and made their way to Los Angeles during the early part of the 20th century, escaping the Armenian genocide, as described in Chapter 3.2. Los Angeles has the second largest Armenian diaspora community in the world, after Moscow, Russia.



Figure 6.2.6: "Western Little Armenia" (CC BY-NC 2.0; jrmyst via Flickr)

Ethnic enclaves tend to survive if is there is constant migration. Many of the aforementioned white ethnic enclaves have survived for several generations, but later generations tend to follow the traditional assimilation patterns and move further into the wider society, particularly the suburbs. More likely these white ethnic enclaves today reflect symbolic ethnicity such as Little Italy in New York City which is comprised of a few bakeries and restaurants or the St. Patrick's Day celebration in this same city, reflecting a hint of Irishness.

Key Takeaways

- Though assimilation may be the intergroup consequence most applicable to the experiences of white Americans, the following intergroup consequences are relevant for certain white ethnic groups: genocide, expulsion, internal colonialism, segregation, fusion, and pluralism.
- Anti-Catholicism and Anglo-conformity as well as prejudice and discrimination contributed to more challenging experiences with intergroup relations amongst Euro Americans/white ethnics.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Little Armenia (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Griffith, D.W., Dixon, T., & Triangle Film Corporation. (1915). *Birth of a Nation*. [Motion picture]. Los Angeles, CA: Triangle Film Corp.
- Hansen, M. (1938). *The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant*. Rock Island, IL: Augustana Historical Society.
- Healey, J.F. (2014). *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender.* Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publication.
- Ignatiev, N. (1995). *How the Irish Became white.* London, UK: Routledge.
- Myers, J.P. (2007). *Dominant-Minority Relations in America*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

This page titled 6.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **6.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility

Whiteness

As Isabel Wilkerson describes in her 2020 book, Caste, white is a uniquely American category, constructed during the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade to characterize that which was not Black. In 1936, Ralph Linton wrote that the last thing a fish would ever notice would be water. Likewise, **whiteness** has largely been invisible to the modern white world. The invisibility of whiteness is rather unique as compared to the visibility of other racial categories such as Black. This invisibility or normality of whiteness corresponds to white being the "default" race or the notion that whites do not have a race. The uniqueness of whiteness's invisibility lies in the contradictions therein: while whiteness partakes of normality and transparency, it is also dominant, insistently so (Whiteness - Sociology of Race - iResearchNet, 2020).



Figure **6.3.1**: Unlearn Racism. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Joe Brusky via Flickr)

It is this dominance of whiteness that had made whiteness into something so normal. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva identified this color-blind racism in Racism Without Racists. Bonilla-Silva asserts that there is no doubt that the majority of white people in the U.S. subscribe to the doctrines of color-blind racism. Bonilla-Silva argues that the rhetoric of **color-blind racism** as "the current and dominant racial ideology in the United States, constructs a social reality for people of color in its practices, which are subtle, institutional, and apparently nonracial" (p. 3, 2007). He argues further that this race rhetoric supports a racial hierarchy that maintains white privilege and superiority; race and racism are structured into the totality of our social relations and practices that reinforce white privilege (p. 9, 2007). Further Bonilla-Silva states,

> Instead of relying on name calling (niggers, spics, chinks), color-blind racism otherizes softly ("these people are human, too"); instead of proclaiming that God placed minorities in the world in a servile position, it suggests they are behind because they do not work hard enough; instead of viewing interracial marriage as wrong on a straight racial basis, it regards it as "problematic" because of concerns over the children, location, or the extra burden it places on couples (Bonilla-Silva, 2007).

In summary, Bonilla-Silva explains that this color-blind racism perpetuates white dominance and privilege in a more passive way than racism was carried out in the past, and often those who display color-blind racism think they are not racist.

In his book, How the Irish Became white, Noel Ignatiev wrote that white chauvinism amounts to the practice of white supremacy. Ignatiev explains that whiteness rests on the notion of whiteness as equated with a higher social class, thereby eliminating any possibility of **class consciousness**, awareness of one's class status. White individuals connecting with their whiteness rather than their class commonalities with working class populations leads them to voice, "I may be poor and exploited, but at least I'm white" and not Black (Whiteness - Sociology of Race - iResearchNet, 2020). This is the psychological wage of whiteness that DuBois wrote about in 1935. Whiteness has thus been understood as the absence of color, the absence of culture, the absence of racialization which has also made it extremely difficult for white Americans to really see their whiteness. Yet, of course people of color tend to easily see whiteness.

The final section of this chapter discusses social change and resistance with regards to whiteness. For example, the abolition of whiteness is discussed as necessary for the advancement of humanity. Yet, in order to abolish whiteness, it would need to not only be seen by whites, but be seen as unusual and detrimental to the human race.

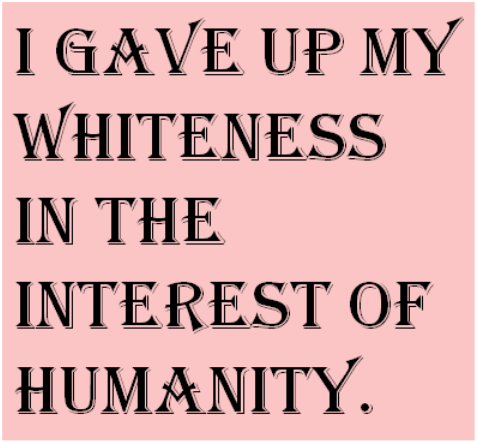


Figure **6.3.2**: Original creation by the co-author, Janét Hund.

White Privilege

It is important to discuss the advantages that U.S. Whites enjoy in their daily lives simply because they are white. Social scientists term these advantages white privilege, informing that whites benefit from being white whether or not they are aware of their advantages (McIntosh, 2007). **White privilege** is the benefit that white people receive simply by being part of the dominant group. McIntosh wrote that whites are carefully taught not to be aware of their race, rather to be unaware of their unearned assets and advantages. Using the analogy of an invisible knapsack, McIntosh created an initial list of 26 and later expanded to 52 the benefits of whiteness that white Americans carry in their backpacks. For example, whites can usually drive a car at night or walk down a street without having to fear that a police officer will stop them simply because they are white. They can count on being able to move into any neighborhood they desire to as long as they can afford the rent or mortgage. They generally do not have to fear being passed up for promotion simply because of their race. College students who are white can live in dorms without having to worry that racial slurs will be directed their way. White people in general do not have to worry about being the victims of hate crimes based on their race. They can be seated in a restaurant without having to worry that they will be served more slowly or not at all because of their skin color. If they are in a hotel, they do not have to think that someone will mistake them for a bellhop, parking valet, or maid. If they are trying to hail a taxi, they do not have to worry about the taxi driver ignoring them because the driver fears they will be robbed. If they are stopped by the police, they do not have to fear for their lives.

Social scientist Robert W. Terry (1981, p. 120) once summarized white privilege as follows: “To be white in America is not to have to think about it. Except for hard-core racial supremacists, the meaning of being white is having the choice of attending to or ignoring one’s own whiteness” (emphasis in original). For people of color in the United States, it is not an exaggeration to say that race is a daily fact of their existence. Yet whites do not generally have to think about being white. As all of us go about our daily lives, this basic difference is one of the most important manifestations of racial and ethnic inequality in the United States. While most white people are willing to admit that nonwhite people live with a set of disadvantages due to the color of their skin, very few are willing to acknowledge the benefits they receive.

Whites in the United States infrequently experience racial discrimination making them unaware of the importance of race in their own and others’ thinking in comparison to people of color (Konradi & Schmidt, 2004). Many argue racial discrimination is outdated and are uncomfortable with the blame, guilt, and accountability of individual acts and institutional discrimination. By paying no attention to race, people think racial equality is an act of color-blindness, and it will eliminate racist atmospheres (Konradi & Schmidt, 2004). They do not realize the experience of not “seeing” race itself is racial privilege.

Thinking Sociologically

In her 1988 article White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, Peggy McIntosh introduced the following 26 daily effects of white privilege in her life.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.

2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
6. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
8. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
9. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
10. Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
11. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
12. I can swear, or dress in second-hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
13. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
14. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
15. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
16. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
17. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.
18. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.
19. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
20. I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.
21. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.
22. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.
23. I can choose public accommodations without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
24. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.
25. If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.
26. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more less match my skin.

Which one(s) of these most strike(s) you, and why? Which, if any, are least relevant in our contemporary time period? What other daily effects of white privilege would you add to the list?

Black Like Me

In 1959, John Howard Griffin, a white writer, changed his race. Griffin decided that he could not begin to understand the discrimination and prejudice that African Americans face every day unless he experienced these problems himself. So he went to a dermatologist in New Orleans and obtained a prescription for an oral medication to darken his skin. The dermatologist also told him to lie under a sun lamp several hours a day and to use a skin-staining pigment to darken any light spots that remained.

Griffin stayed inside, followed the doctor's instructions, and shaved his head to remove his straight hair. About a week later he looked, for all intents and purposes, like an African American. Then he went out in public and passed as Black.

New Orleans was a segregated city in those days, and Griffin immediately found he could no longer do the same things he did when he was white. He could no longer drink at the same water fountains, use the same public restrooms, or eat at the same restaurants. When he went to look at a menu displayed in the window of a fancy restaurant, he later wrote,

> I read, realizing that a few days earlier I could have gone in and ordered anything on the menu. But now, though I was the same person with the same appetite, no power on earth could get me inside this place for a meal (Griffin, 1961, p. 42).

Because of his new appearance, Griffin suffered other slights and indignities. Once when he went to sit on a bench in a public park, a white man told him to leave. Later a white bus driver refused to let Griffin get off at his stop and let him off only eight blocks later. A series of stores refused to cash his traveler's checks. As he traveled by bus from one state to another, he was not allowed to wait inside the bus stations. At times, white men of various ages cursed and threatened him, and he became afraid for his life and safety. Months later, after he wrote about his experience, he was hanged in effigy, and his family was forced to move from their home.



Figure **6.3.3**: Demonstrators marching in the street holding signs during the March on Washington, 1963. (CC PDM 1.0; via Library of Congress)

Griffin's reports about how he was treated while posing as a Black man, and about the way African Americans he met during that time were also treated, helped awaken white Americans across the United States to racial prejudice and discrimination. The Southern civil rights movement, which had begun a few years earlier and then exploded into the national consciousness with sit-ins at lunch counters in February 1960 by Black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, challenged Southern segregation and changed life in the South and across the rest of the nation.

White Supremacy

"White Supremacist Held Without Bond in Tuesday's Attack," the headline read. In August 2009, James Privott, a 76-year-old African American, had just finished fishing in a Baltimore city park when he was attacked by several white men. They knocked him to the ground, punched him in the face, and hit him with a baseball bat. Privott lost two teeth and had an eye socket fractured in the assault. One of his assailants was arrested soon afterwards and told police the attack "wouldn't have happened if he was a white man." The suspect was a member of a white supremacist group, had a tattoo of Hitler on his stomach, and used "Hitler" as his nickname. At a press conference attended by civil rights and religious leaders, the Baltimore mayor denounced the hate crime. "We all have to speak out and speak up and say this is not acceptable in our communities," she said. "We must stand together in opposing this kind of act" (Fenton, 2009, p. 11).

Arising in the late 1860s after slavery was abolished in the U.S, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) originated in resistance and white supremacy during the Reconstruction Era. Its members' belief in white supremacy has encouraged over a century of hate crime and hate speech. For example in 1924, the KKK marched down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C.; the KKK had 4 million members out of a national population of about 114 million. In the words of DuBois a century ago: "the Ku Klux Klan is doing a job

which the American people, or certainly a considerable portion of them, want done; and they want it done because as a nation they have fear of the Jew, the immigrant, the Negro."

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, white nationalist groups espouse white supremacist or white separatist ideologies, often focusing on the alleged inferiority of nonwhites. These supremacist groups include the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Confederate, neo-Nazi, racist skinhead and Christian identity groups. Contemporary white supremacist sympathizers have characterized some of President Trump's Cabinet appointees (e.g., Steve Bannon, Larry Kudlow, and Stephen Miller) as well as violent counter-protestors at the anti-police brutality protests since the George Floyd murder in 2020. The 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia climaxed in the killing of one anti-racist white protester. President Trump shortly thereafter stated that there were good and bad people on both sides. In 2019, following the white supremacist killing of 51 Muslim worshippers in Christchurch, New Zealand, the white supremacist manifesto continued with a shooter in Poway, California at a Jewish synagogue and a gunman in a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas who left 23 dead, mostly Latinx victims.

While we are accustomed to thinking about white supremacy in terms of the aforementioned violent hate groups or white nationalist or white power groups, Bonilla-Silva (2007) and DiAngelo (2018) inform us that we should be more concerned with the insidious white supremacy that surrounds our entire society and exists in us, particularly white Americans. According to DiAngelo, white progressives maintain white supremacy - largely through their silence and discomfort with addressing race and racism. Building upon the works of Bonilla-Silva (2007) and Takaki (1993), Hephzibah V. Strmic-Pawl (2015) defines **White supremacy** as "systematic and systemic ways that the racial order benefits those deemed white and operates to oppress people of color."

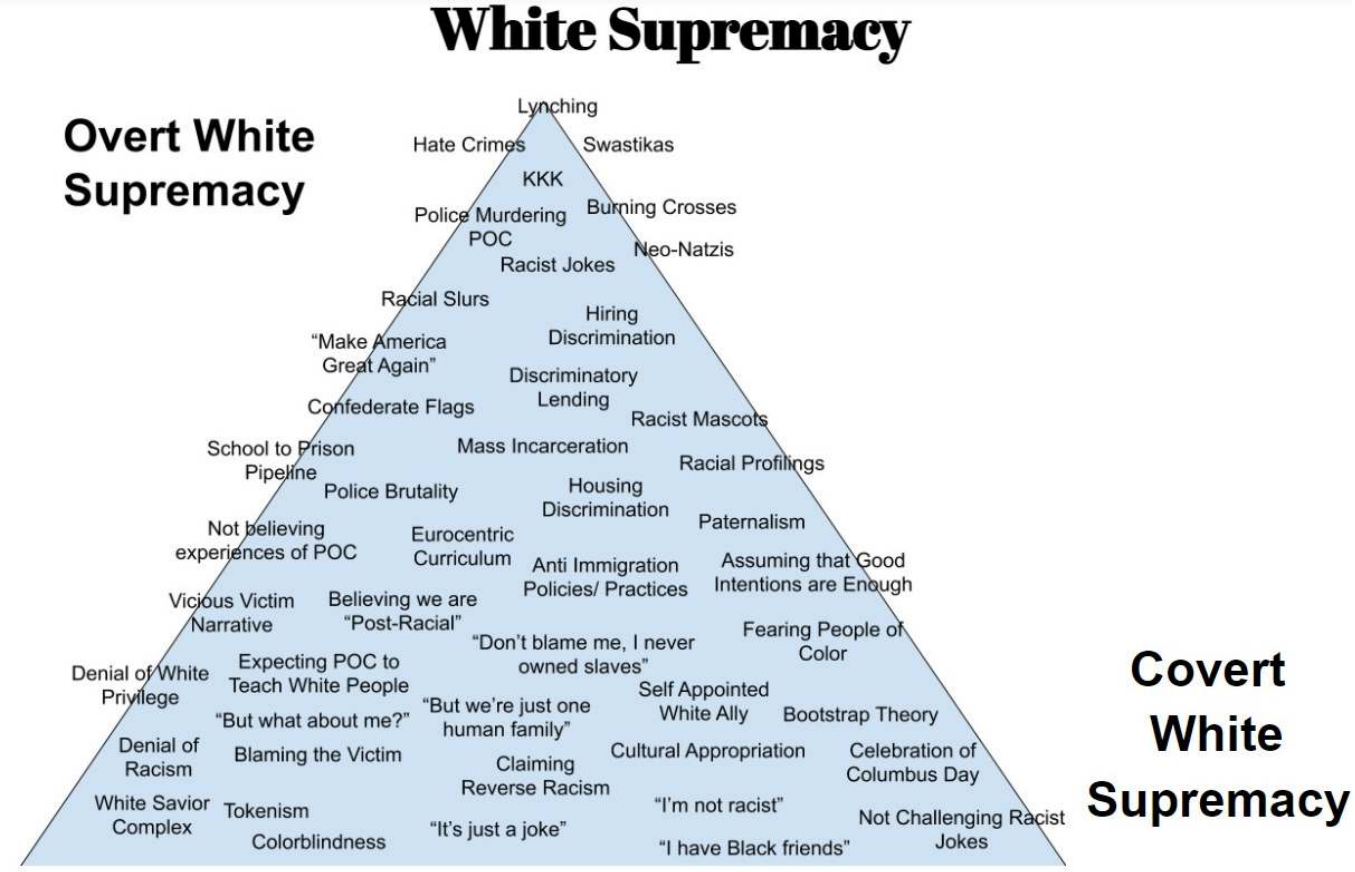


Figure **6.3.4**: White Supremacy. (Chart adapted by Jonas Oware and LBCC SOCIO 11 Honors from the Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence)

As shown in the figure below, Strmic-Pawl visualized white supremacy in the form of a flower: the roots or foundation of racism in the U.S. (e.g., slavery or Native American genocide), the stem or historical events and processes (e.g., Chinese Exclusion Act or Jim Crow Laws), and the bloom or contemporary U.S. (anti-Asian hate crimes or police brutality such as the killing of George Floyd). Each petal represents a different form of racial inequality. Though petals may fall off, this loss does not kill the plant (of

white supremacy). This is akin to the replacement of slavery with Jim Crow and then the prison industrial complex as a way to control Black men, so eloquently explained in Michelle Alexander's The New Jim Crow.

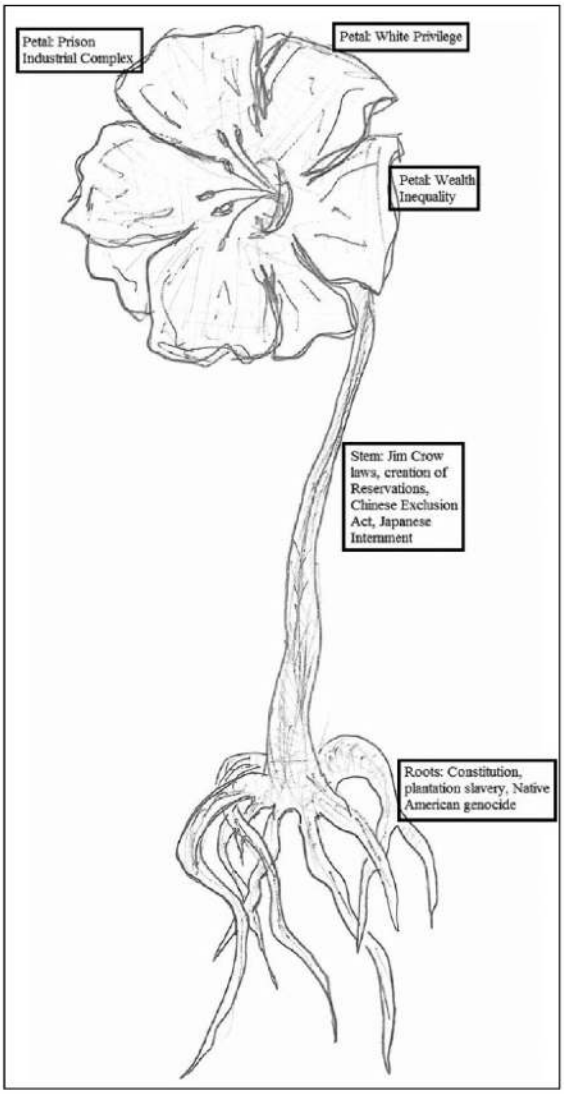


Figure 6.3.5: The White Supremacy Flower. (Reprinted with the kind permission of Hephzibah V. Strmic-Pawl; Artist: Ali Cohen; From Hephzibah V. Strmic-Pawl; More Than a Knapsack: The White Supremacy Flower as a New Model for Teaching Racism)

White Fragility

In her introduction of White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People To Talk About Racism, Robin DiAngelo (2018) writes:

> We consider a challenge to our racial world views as a challenge to our very identities as good, moral people. Thus, we perceive any attempt to connect us to the system of racism as an unsettling and unfair moral offense. The smallest amount of racial stress is intolerable. The mere suggestion that being white has meaning often triggers a range of defensive responses. These include emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and withdrawal from the stress-inducing situation. These responses work to reinstate white equilibrium as they repel the challenge, return our racial confit, and maintain our dominance within the racial hierarchy. I conceptualize this process as white fragility. The white fragility is triggered by discomfort and anxiety. It is born of superiority and entitlement. White fragility is not weakness per se. In fact, it is a powerful means of white racial control and the protection of white advantage.

Now, the concept of **white fragility**, an outcome of white people's socialization into white supremacy and a means to protect, maintain, and reproduce white supremacy, has been injected into both our sociological and societal discussion. According to DiAngelo, society is structured in a way to prevent whites from experiencing racial discomfort, which generally results in whites

not having difficult conversations about race - which is exactly the behavior that produces and reproduces white supremacy. DiAngelo posits that "white progressives cause the most daily damage to people of color." Ultimately, DiAngelo explains that white individuals must develop their racial stamina to have difficult conversations about race, actually listen to the voices of people of color, and refuse to remain silent when white supremacy is exposed.



Figure **6.3.6**: white Silence = Death has been a rallying phrase amidst the anti-police brutality protests following George Floyd's murder in 2020. (CC PDM 1.0; Kat Jayne via Pexels)

Key Takeaways

- Whiteness is considered normal, transparent, and invisible - in addition to conferring dominance.
- Due to color blindness and a lack of class consciousness, many (white) Americans lack an understanding of whiteness and racial inequality.
- White privilege is something that white Americans benefit from though many are oblivious to the daily effects of white privilege.
- In both covert and overt ways, white supremacy is systemically and systematically impact the racial order, benefiting those deemed white and operatomg to oppress people of color.
- Many whites experience white fragility, an outcome of white people's socialization into white supremacy and a means to protect, maintain, and reproduce white supremacy.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- A Career in Sociology (Kennedy) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* New York, NY: New Press.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2007). *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America.* 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- DiAngelo, R. (2018). *white Fragility: Why It's So Hard for white People to Talk about Racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. (1977). [1935]. *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. Atheneum, NY.
- Fenton, J. (2009, August 20). White supremacist held without bail in Tuesday's attack. *The Baltimore Sun.*
- Griffin, J.H. (1961). *Black Like Me*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Ignatiev, N. (1995). *How the Irish Became white.* London, UK: Routledge.
- Konradi, A. & Schmidt, M. (2004). *Reading Between the Lines: Toward an Understanding of Current Social Problems*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Linton, R. (1936). *The Study of Man: An Introduction.* New York, NY: Appleton-Century.

- McIntosh, P. (1988). *white Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies.* Working Paper 189.
- McIntosh, P. 2007. White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondence through work in women's studies. In M. L. Andersen & P. H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology.* 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Southern Poverty Law Center. (n.d.). *White Nationalism.* Southern Poverty Law Center.
- Strmic-Pawl, H.V. (2015, January). More than a knapsack: The white supremacy flower as a new model for teaching Racism. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity.* Volume 1, Issue 1, pp. 192–197.
- Takaki, R. (2008). *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America.* New York, NY: Back Bay Books/Little Brown & Company.
- Terry, R.W. (1981). The negative impact on white values. In B. P. Bowser & R. G. Hunt (Eds.), *Impacts of Racism on white Americans* (pp. 119–151). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Wilkerson, I. 2020. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents.* London, UK: Random House.
- Whiteness - Sociology of Race - iResearchNet. (2020). *Sociology.*

This page titled 6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

6.4: Intersectionality

Intersectionality is an analytic tool that gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves (Collins & Bilge, 2020). This section provides a more nuanced understanding of whiteness in the context of the intersecting structures and identities of race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and sexuality. Using an intersectional lens, the reader unfolds the multifaceted layers of whiteness, unpacking how our social location and different placement in systems of racism, sexism, classism and heterosexism differently shape our experiences and our frames. Hence, while all white people benefit from white privilege and white supremacy, they certainly do not all benefit equally or in all social locations.

Immigrant Women

As explained by Joseph Healey, Andi Stepnick, and Eileen O'Brien, immigrant women from Western Europe were among the most exploited segments of labor in earlier U.S. history, and they were involved in some of the most significant events in labor history. For example, consider 1909, New York City. One of the first victories of the union movement, the uprising of 20,000 people was a massive strike of mostly Jewish and Italian women (many in their teens) against the garment industry. The strike lasted 4 months despite attacks by thugs hired by the bosses and abuses experienced at the hands of police and the courts. The strikers eventually won recognition of their union, a reversal of a wage decrease, and a reduction in the 56- to 59-hour week they were expected to work (Goren, 1980, p. 584).

One of the great tragedies of labor history in the United States also involved European immigrant women. In New York City in 1911, a fire swept through the Triangle Shirtwaist Company, a garment industry shop located on the 10th floor of a building. The fire spread rapidly, with little chances for escape. About 140 young immigrant girls died, while many others chose to leap to their deaths rather than be annihilated by the flames. The disaster outraged the public, and a quarter of a million people attended the funerals of the victims. The incident fueled a drive for reform and improvement of work conditions and safety regulations (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 114–116).

European immigrant women also filled leadership roles in the labor movement, although usually in female-dominated unions. One of the most memorable union activists was Mother Jones, an Irish immigrant who worked tirelessly to organize miners. An activist until she was nearly 100 years old, Mother Jones went where the danger was greatest— crossing militia lines, spending weeks in damp prisons, incurring the wrath of governors, presidents, and coal operators; she helped to organize the United Mine Workers with "convictions and a voice," the only tools she felt she needed (Forner, 1980, p. 281).

Many immigrant women came from cultures with strong patriarchal traditions in Europe, and they had much less access to education, high-paying occupations, and leadership roles. As is the case with women of virtually all marginalized groups, the voices of immigrant women have not often been listened to or even heard. However, the research does show that immigrant women played multiple roles both during immigration and during the assimilation to Americanization process. As would be expected in patriarchal societies, the roles of wife and mother were central, but immigrant women have always occupied multiple roles in their communities. In general, male immigrants tended to migrate prior to women, and it was common for the males to send for the women to migrate only after they had secured some degree of stability, lodging, and jobs. Female immigrants' experiences varied, often depending on the economic situation and cultural traditions of their homeland. During the 19th century, a high percentage of Irish immigrants were young single women who came to the U.S. seeking jobs and often wound up employed in domestic work, a role that allowed them to live in a respectable, family setting. In 1850, about 75% of all employed Irish immigrant women in New York City worked as servants, and the rest were employed in textile mills and factories (Healey et. al, 2019). As late as 1920, 81% of employed Irish-born women in the United States worked as domestics (Healey et. al, 2019). Factory work was the second most prevalent form of employment (Blessing, 1980). Because the economic situation of immigrant families was typically challenging, it was common for women to be involved in low paid, wage labor. The type and location of the work varied depending on the white ethnic group. Whereas Irish women were concentrated in domestic work and factories and mills, this was rarely the case for Italian women. Italian culture had strong norms of patriarchy, and "one of the culture's strongest prohibitions was directed against contact between women and male strangers" (Alba, 1985, p. 53). Thus, acceptable work situations for Italian women were likely to involve tasks that could be done at home (e.g. cleaning laundry, boarding others, and doing piecework for the garment industry). Italian women who worked outside the home were likely to find themselves in women-only settings among other immigrant women. Thus, women immigrants from Italy tended to be far less assimilated and integrated than those from Ireland.

As refugees, Eastern European Jewish women and their families sought relief from religious persecution. According to Steinberg (1981), “Few were independent bread-winners, and when they did work, they usually found employment in the garment industry; often they worked in small shops as family members” (p. 161). Generally, immigrant women, like most working-class women, worked until they married, after which time it was expected that their husbands would support the family. In many cases, however, immigrant men could not earn enough to support their families, and their wives and children were required by necessity to also work to support the family budget. Immigrant wives sometimes continued to work outside the home, or otherwise found ways to earn a small income (e.g. gardening, sewing, cleaning laundry, etc.), jobs which all allowed them to perform their roles as caretakers in their own homes. A 1911 report on Southern and Eastern European households found that about half kept lodgers and that the income from this activity amounted to about 25% of the husbands’ wages (Healey et. al, 2019). Women were seen as working only to supplement the family income, a reality which was used to justify their lower wages. Evans (1989) reports that in the late 1800's, “whether in factories, offices, or private homes . . . women’s wages were about half of those of men” (p. 135).



Figure **6.4.1**: Immigrant women t-shirt. (Design by Jakobi Oware)

White Male Privileges

Acclaimed author of Speaking Treason Fluently: Anti-Racist Reflections From an Angry white Male and White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son, Tim Wise explains the privileges associated with the status of being a white male in the U.S., yet he also exposes the societal myth that is passed to white people that their race makes them superior to all other racial groups. He explains that rich white men have convinced poor white men that all of their problems are the result of Black and Brown people. Rather than poor white men aligning their interests with poor people of color, they instead align themselves with the elite white men who control the country. His mantra is that white men particularly have engrained racial superiority, white supremacy, and white privilege, yet he also projects that this racism can be unlearned in pursuit of anti-racism which is discussed in the final section of this chapter.

The elite white men that Wise examines find themselves over-represented in the upper echelons of society: Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), technology sector, and Congress. Approximately 70% of all Fortune 500 CEOs are white men (Jones, 2017). The technology sector employs white males more than any other group, with nearly 50% of Google's leadership positions held by white men (Levitsky, 2020). Of all full-time college professors, more than 50% are white men (NCES, 2017). While the current U.S. Congress (House and Senate) is the most diverse ever, Congress is still 78% white with the majority being white men.

Though it has narrowed over the past few decades, the wage gap has been a persistent measure of gender inequality and male privilege throughout U.S. history. As shown earlier in Chapter 1.5, men of all race-ethnic groups on average fare better than women of all of these groups with Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) men as the highest income earners followed by white men. Due to their high education levels on average, AAPI men and women outperform all other race-ethnic, gender groups. Still, the wages of white men are generally the yardstick by which all others are measured.

White males and LGBTQIA+

Yet, not all white men experience privilege the same. Harvey Milk, a white, gay San Francisco politician spoke freely and openly about transcending racism; yet, his life was taken by a bullet at the beginning of his career. His sexuality served as a barrier for his life. Similarly, the murder of gay college student Matthew Shephard in 1998 resulted in federal hate crime legislation.



Figure **6.4.2**: Harvey Milk. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Chris via Flickr)

Still white men, in general, enjoy the experience of sitting at the top of the racial-gender hierarchy in the U.S. DiAngelo (2018) identifies that white men's experience of fragility shows up as "very informed, of dominance and intimidation." In their control of conversations, speaking first, last and most often, white men tend to push race off the table which ends up helping them to retain control of discussions. In their effort to reassert their dominance, they tend to stop challenges to their positions.

White male privilege shows up in the LGBTQIA+ community. Let's consider the history of the LGBTQIA+ movement. The people who were working within the system to fight for LGBTQIA+ rights were predominantly gay, white males - yet trans activists spearheaded the Stonewall Riot in New York City, kicking off the LGBTQIA+ movement. Still, white gay men used their privilege to primarily frame the agenda as LGBT, but mainly focused on the G (gay experience). As Kittu Pannu, an Indian-Malaysian, Southern, Sikh, gay male, explains:

As a result, many milestones reached during this time were central to this subsection’s own focus. I say this neither commending nor condemning it – there are many positives that came out of this, but there were many causes ignored. Due to this privilege, much of the conversation regarding the LGBT Rights movement is still controlled by this prominent group. As a result, even the celebrations of Pride and gayness cater predominantly to this group. That’s not to say lesbians or even people of color don’t have their own spaces – these more nuanced spaces exist in major cities like New York City and San Francisco. But, on average, the major events and those with the greatest reach and engagement tend to be spaces created for gay, affluent, and white males (2017).

White Women & Feminism

In her historical analysis of slavery, Stephanie Jones-Rogers points to the disposition of white women in upholding the peculiar institution of slavery. Rather than resisting this dehumanizing system, Jones-Rogers points out that white women were not only complicit but were active players in this caste economic system of slavery as many white women owned enslaved people. While many rights were denied to white women during this time, they could buy, sell and own slaves. Further, slave-holding parents and slave-holding family members "gave" their young daughters enslaved people as gifts — for Christmas or birthday. White female identity was tied to the home and also connected to ownership, control, and management of enslaved people.

Often stemming from their involvement in the abolition movement, suffragists began pushing for the women's vote even before the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. Suffragists such as Angelina and Sarah Grimke, Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, and Sojourner Truth had their roots of political activism in the abolition movement. Though, white suffragists were split on their support for Black women's vote. In essence, some white female suffragists such as Susan B. Anthony were willing to sacrifice Black women's right to vote in order for white women to achieve suffrage; many used racist tactics to convince white Southern men that the suffrage vote would offset the African American male vote, attributed to the 15th Amendment and passed in 1869. When the vote was achieved with the 19th amendment in 1920, it was won for all women; yet, due to Jim Crow laws, Black men and women faced tremendous challenges when even registering to vote.

This split between white and Black women has often played out in U.S. history. While widely accepted in mainstream society today, "the pill" was first used to control the births of poor women, particularly poor women of color as Margaret Sanger declared "more from the fit, less from the unfit." Angela Davis explains eugenics and this divisive U.S. history in Women, Race and Class., highlighting the forced sterilization of poor women, particularly women of color. While white women advocate for reproductive rights (e.g., abortion rights and contraception), women of color advocate for reproductive justice, the right to reproduce. This Bridge Called My Back, an anthology of women writers of color including Gloria Anzaldua, Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, and Cherrie Moraga, is largely directed towards the mainstream white feminist movement, exposing the affront women of color have experienced from white women when trying to lift their voices, share their experiences, and present their vision for gender equality.

On a similar note, in her book White Fragility, DiAngelo (2018) set aside an entire chapter for the self-indulgent tears of white women. These tears serve to redirect any discussion of racism and what people of color experience to white women's feelings about the legacy of racism. To encourage white women to de-center themselves, DiAngelo cautions white women to judiciously regulate their crying so as to not divert important, challenging discussions about race and racism onto white women and their emotions.

White Trash

It must be emphasized again that not all white people experience white privilege the same. Poor white people, the largest group of U.S. adults and children living in poverty, are sometimes racialized as "**white trash**." An oxymoron, the term white trash is built upon the notion of white supremacy; it contradicts the very stereotype of whiteness being associated with purity and cleanliness vs. dirty and poor. In fact, poor whites living and schooling in a low income community of color may be stigmatized because of their very existence in this community, as it simply doesn't match the "white" stereotype. Yet, this is part of the fallacy of whiteness. As Michael Eric Dyson and Tim Wise have explained, the success, the trickery, the manipulation of "whiteness" as a category has been achieved at the expense of building solidarity between poor people - across racial lines. Instead, poor whites, convinced that their skin is of greater importance than their class, find themselves aligning with elite whites rather than challenging the very (economic) forces that serve to oppress them.

✔ Redneck, Multiple Meanings

- Patrick Huber, in his monograph A Short History of Redneck: The Fashioning of a Southern White Masculine Identity, emphasized the theme of masculinity in the 20th-century expansion of the term, noting, "The redneck has been stereotyped in the media and popular culture as a poor, dirty, uneducated, and racist Southern white man."
- Also, the term "redneck" in the early 20th century was occasionally used in reference to American coal miner union members who wore red bandanas for solidarity.
- By 1910, the political supporters of the Mississippi Democratic Party politician James K. Vardaman—chiefly poor white farmers—began to describe themselves proudly as "rednecks", even to the point of wearing red neckerchiefs to political rallies and picnics.
- The term redneck characterized farmers having a red neck caused by sunburn from hours working in the fields.
- Similarly to Earth First!'s use of "rednecks for wilderness," the self-described "anti-racist, pro-gun, pro-labor" group Redneck Revolt have used the term to signal its roots in the rural white working-class and celebration of what member Max Neely described as "redneck culture"
- This section licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: Redneck (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

The stigma associated with Appalachian whites promotes the stereotype of the ignorant hillbilly, similar to white trash (Scott, 2009). Appalachian whites are regarded in a binary fashion: simple and pious or backwards and ignorant, Scott further explains. Ruth Frankenberg (1993) identified Appalachian whiteness as "marked" whiteness, referencing them as "white but also something more - or is it something less?" (p. 198). Poor whites, Appalachian whites, and white trash are marginalized white people. Considering these marginalized white Americans helps to further deconstruct whiteness, yet it may also serve to uphold whiteness - as these groups all seemingly diverge from the social construct of white. By the very nature of analyzing such marginality, white hegemony is also upheld. Whiteness is recentered without a deeper analysis of the psychological wages of whiteness, the privilege of whiteness that poor white folks experience versus the racial strife that poor people of color live day in and day out. The analysis of white trash has generally focused on the negative (trash) with little emphasis on the white (Scott, 2009). Intersectional analysis

would remind us to consider the interplay of race, social class, gender, sexuality and an assortment of other structural categories which would help to illuminate the human condition and its complexity - as well as the possibility for social change.

Thinking Sociologically

On the one hand, whiteness confers dominance. On the other hand, white people who are called white trash, rednecks, or hillbillies are the opposite of dominant, the opposite of white supremacy. The trickery of whiteness, as noted above, prevents the coalescence of solidarity movements between poor people. Yet, the video below illustrates the great potential, and sometimes historical, realization of this solidarity.



Video **6.4.3**: 'Rednecks' and 'Hillbillies' Defend Black Lives. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; NowThis News via YouTube)

What do you think would need to happen for poor people of all race-ethnic groups to unite in solidarity to challenge the concentration of wealth and power in just a few hands, quite often only in a few white hands?

Key Takeaways

- Intersectionality explains the differing frames that are needed to more fully understand white experiences in the context of our social structures and social institutions, particularly with regards to race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and sexuality.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY other than Redneck, Multiple Meanings which is CC BY-SA.

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Redneck (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0) (Contributed to Redneck, Multiple Meanings)

Works Cited

- Alba, R. (1985). *Italian Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Amott, T. & Matthaei, J. (1991). *Race, Gender, and Work: A Multicultural History of Women in the United States.* Boston, MA: South End.
- Blessing, P. (1980). Irish. In S. Thernstrom, A. Orlov, and O. Handlin (Eds.). *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, Pp. 524–545. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Collins, P. (1990). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman.
- Collins, P. & Bilge, S. (2020). *Intersectionality (Key Concepts).* 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Polity Books.
- Davis, A. (1983). *Women, Race & Class.* New York, NY: First Vintage Books.
- DiAngelo, R. (2018). W*hite Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Evans, S.M. (1989). *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America.* New York, NY: Free Press.

- Frankenberg, R. (1993, November 1). Growing up white: Feminism, racism, and the social geography of childhood. *Feminist Review*, 45, 1, pp. 51-84.
- Forner, P.S. (1980). *Women and the American Labor Movement: From World War I to the Present.* New York, NY: Free Press.
- Goren, A. (1980). Jews. In S. Thernstrom, A. Orlov, and O. Handlin (Eds.). *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, Pp. 571–598. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Healey, J.F., Stepnick, A. & O'Brien, E. (2019). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change.* 8th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Jones-Rogers, S. (2019). *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South.* London, UK: Yale University Press.
- Jones, S. (2017, June 9). White men account for 72% of corporate leadership at 16 of the fortune 500 companies. *Fortune.*
- Levitsky, A. (2020, May 5). For the first time, white men weren't the largest group of U.S. hires at google this year. *Silicon Valley Business Journal*.
- Moraga, C. & Anzaldua, G. (2015). *This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color. 4th ed.* New York, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Morawska, E. (1990). The sociology and historiography of immigration. In V. Yans-McLaughlin, (Ed). *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, Pp. 187–238. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- *National Center for Education Statistics.* (2017). Fast facts: race ethnicity of college faculty.
- Pannu, K. (2017, August 14). Privilege, power, and pride: Intersectionality within the LGBT community. *Impakter.*
- Scott, R. (2009, September). Appalachia and the construction of whiteness in the United States. *Sociology Compass*, 3, P. 83-810.
- Steinberg, S. (1981). *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in America.* New York, NY: Atheneum.
- Wise, T. (n.d.). Tim Wise on white privilege [Video]. *YouTube.*
- Wise, T. (2008). *Speaking Treason Fluently: Anti-Racist Reflections from an Angry white Male.* New York, NY: Soft Skull Press.
- Wise, T. (2011). *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son.* New York, NY: Soft Skull Press.

This page titled 6.4: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **6.4: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

6.5: Social Institutions

(White) Social Institutions

In his seminal work, Racism Without Racists, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva surmises that liberal social thought informs our (white) perspective on the world and justifies our (white) social, economic & political institutions. Bonilla-Silva's parenthesis of white is intentional in that liberal white social thought equates with colorblindness whereby we consider cultural differences as meaningless. As white is the default within our society, it has been made to seem normal. However, scholars of critical race theory seek to call attention to how whiteness has been structured into the fabric of society, particularly our social institutions. In their dissection of critical race theory, Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (2001) include one of the key elements of critical race theory is that "our system of white-over-color ascendancy serves important purposes, both psychic and material." A century before, W.E.B. DuBois had coined this as the wage of whiteness.

Research shows the distribution of resources and opportunities are not equal among racial and ethnic categories, and white groups do better than other groups (Konrad & Schmidt, 2004). Regardless of social perception, in reality, there are institutional and cultural differences in government, education, criminal justice, sports, the workplace, and mass media media and racial-ethnic groups have received subordinate roles and treatment in society. These social institutions are generally controlled by white Americans. Certainly, these institutions were created by white Americans. Though we may access these social institutions in our everyday lives to a greater or lesser degree, we certainly do not all have equal control over these institutions.

In White Fragility, Robin DiAngelo presents the following statistics which help to understand how our social institutions reflect white dominance:

Figure **6.5.1**: White Dominance in the U.S. (Chart by Jonas Oware with data from White Fragility)

Category	% white
10 Richest Americans	100%
U.S. Congress	90%
U.S. Governors	96%
Top Military Advisors	100%
Current U.S. President & Vice-President	100%
Current U.S. Presidential Cabinet	91%
People Who Decide Which TV Shows We See	93%
People Who Decide Which Books We Read	90%
People Who Decide Which News is Covered	85%
People Who Decide Which Music is Produced	95%
People Who Directed the 100 Top Grossing Films Worldwide	95%
Teachers	82%
Full-Time College Professors	84%
Owners of Men's Professional Football Teams	97%

White Americans on average have far greater wealth than other race-ethnic groups. All U.S. Presidents except Barack Obama have been white men. The U.S. Congress remains disproportionately white (men) as are Fortune 500 CEOs. Even the Oscars have been called out for being overwhelming white (#OscarsSowhite). This is significant considering not only the billion dollar media consumption in the U.S., but also the global consumption of U.S. mass media. All of this "business as usual" in our (white) social institutions adds up, to cumulative, systemic benefits for white Americans.



Figure **6.5.2**: The Hollywood Sign, not far from the Oscars Awards. (CC BY 2.0; raindog808 via Wikimedia)

Sports

Take professional sports as a first example. Based on data gathered by The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports, the following tables reveal the imbalance of who the players are versus who the coaches, owners, and/Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) are of the National Basketball Association (NBA) and National Football Association (NFL) (Lapchick, 2019). Clearly, the majority of players are of color whereas the majority of the owners or CEOs are white. The NBA has made more progress than the NFL with regards to hiring more head coaches of color, but clearly the majority of coaches in either sport remain white. It must be noted that during the 2020 protests against racial injustice, the NFL Commissioner has stated his verbal support for Black Lives Matter, which is a striking contrast from only a few years prior when quarterback Colin Kapernick was ostracized for taking a knee during the national anthem to call attention to racial injustice. In the summer of 2020, most NBA teams, including players, coaches, referees, and owners, have not only taken a knee during the national anthem, but many players were slogans on their jerseys supporting the movement (e.g. Black Lives Matter, Vote, Ally, Equality).

Table **6.5.3**: Diversity in the NBA. (Chart by Jonas Oware with data from the University of Central Florida)

	Players	Head Coaches	Majority Owners	League Office Staff
White	18.1%	66.7%	91.4%	62.4%
African-American	74.8%	26.7%	2.9%	15.9%
Latino	2.4%	3.3%	0%	6.7%
Asian	>1%	3.3%	2.9%	10,4%
Other	3.9%	0%	2.9%	4.6%

Table **6.5.4**: Diversity in the NFL. (Chart by Jonas Oware with data from the University of Central Florida)

	Players	Head Coaches	CEO/President	League Office Staff
White	26.8%	81.3%	95%	67.3%
African-American	58.9%	9.4%	0%	10.2%
Latino	.5%	3.1%	0%	6.6%
AAPI	1.6%	0%	4.9%	9.3%
AI/AN	0%	0%	0%	.1%
Two or more races	9.6%	0%	0%	1.7%
Not disclosed	3.1%			4.7%

Education

A second example is education. Gall-Peters Projection calls attention to the content of our K-12 education which favors a Eurocentric lens when presenting history and geography. **Eurocentrism** is a worldview that is centered on or favors Western, often white, civilization. For decades we have seen inequitable student outcomes both in K-12 and in higher education which can be in part attributed to the Eurocentric curriculum. Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate's (1995) seminal writing on critical race theory of education examined how school inequities emanate from a racialized society. Christine Stanley (2006) presented one of the key arguments in critical race theory, that the subtleties of institutional racism are rarely acknowledged publicly, particularly by the dominant Euro-American culture. Stanley (2006) further stated, "Many institutions value diversity, but they often do not look deep enough to ascertain how habitual policies and practices work to disadvantage certain social, racial or cultural groups" (p. 724).

Criminal Justice System

A third example is the criminal justice system. White Americans are underrepresented in our prisons, while African Americans are disproportionately incarcerated. Michelle Alexander writes in The New Jim Crow that the criminal justice system, especially prison, is specifically designed as a form of social control over African American men. Most recent U.S.Presidents beginning with Nixon have used the campaign phrase "law and order" which is ultimately a code word for the racial control of people of color, as presented convincingly in the documentary, 13th. The school-to-prison pipeline is used to explain the disheartening statistics for young people of color, particularly African American males, who are overrepresented in prison and underrepresented in higher education. Most of our schools and prisons are also run by white male or female principals, presidents, or wardens.

Workplace/Economy

Finally, let us consider how the the workplace, situated in the social institution of our economy, often fosters a climate of white supremacy, though we may be entirely unaware that it is at play. As Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun (2001) present, the following characteristics of **white supremacy culture** show up in organizations such as the workplace:

- perfectionism
- sense of urgency
- defensiveness
- quantity over quality
- worship of the written word
- only one right way
- paternalism
- either/or thinking
- power hoarding
- fear of open conflict
- individualism
- progress is bigger/more
- objectivity
- right to comfort those with power

The characteristics listed above are damaging because they are used as norms and standards without actually being selected by the group members. They are damaging because they promote hegemonic, white supremacist thinking. They are damaging to both people of color and to white people because they detract from our humanity and our capacity to value difference. These characteristics may be prevalent in a predominantly white institutions (PWI) or in organizations led by people of color.

By listing characteristics of white supremacy culture, we point out how organizations unconsciously use these characteristics as their norms and standards, thereby making it difficult, if not impossible, to open the door to other cultural norms, standards, practices, and ways of leading. These practices inhibit a truly multicultural organization; Section 6.6 considers antidotes to these practices.

Thinking Sociologically

Consider these questions posed by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun (2001) in Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups:

Which of these characteristics of white supremacy culture are at play in your workplace or other organizations in your community? How do they stand in the way of racial justice? What can you and your community do to shift the belief(s) and behavior(s) to ones that support racial justice and a multicultural organization?

Web of Institutional Racism

Previously discussed in Chapter 4.4, institutional racism can be understood simply as "business as usual." It is business as usual that people of color tend to be underrepresented in powerful positions in the aforementioned social institutions; conversely, it is business as usual that white Americans tend to be in positions of power in our major social institutions - though it is easier to point out exceptions to that rule in the past 30 years as opposed to the rest of U.S. history.

Institutional racism is the policies and practices within institutions that benefit white people to the disadvantage of people of color. An example of institutional racism is how children of color are treated within the U.S. education system. On average, children of color are disciplined more harshly than their white peers. They are also less likely to be identified as gifted and have less access to quality teachers. Racism in schools can and does have severe consequences for students and our future (National Museum of African American History and Culture).

Shirley Better explains the web of institutional racism which is rooted in housing inequality which in turn impacts educational, employment, health, and criminal justice outcomes. Housing patterns in the 20th century served to provide opportunities for mobility for white Americans, to the detriment of communities of color, particularly African African Americans. After WWII, the GI bill provided white veterans incentives to own their own homes in the suburbs. Communities which used restricted covenants offered only whites the opportunity to own homes and property in these restricted neighborhoods. This government-funded segregation cemented wealth for white Americans. On the other hand, African Americans experienced **redlining** (inability to get standard mortgages in African American neighborhoods), **steering** (swayed away from home ownership in white neighborhoods), substandard public housing, **white flight** (white mobility from neighborhoods in which African Americans were moving in) and **gentrification** (replacing poor neighborhoods with middle class individuals).



Figure 6.5.5: Protest on the wall, with message: "Stop Gentrification." (CC BY-SA 4.0; Prof.lumacorno via Wikimedia)

As home ownership is the traditional, tried and true key to accessing wealth in the U.S., it becomes easier to understand the web of institutional racism that Better describes. Where we live generally determines where our children attend school. The quality of schooling we receive impacts our potential for higher education, our entrance into the job market, and quite possible our interactions with police and the criminal justice system. Additionally, the type of job we work generally determines the type of health care we receive or do not receive.

Key Takeaways

- Social institutions such as sports, education, criminal justice system, and the workplace reflect white dominance.
- The web of institutional racism, rooted in housing inequality, negatively impacts educational, employment, health, and criminal justice outcomes for many communities of color, while simultaneously advantaging Euro Americans/white Americans.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* New York, NY: New Press.
- Better, S. (2007). *Institutional Racism: A Primer on Theory and Strategies for Social Change.* 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Delgado, S. & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical Race Theory.* New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2001). *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post Civil Rights Era*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers.
- DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for white People to Talk about Racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. (1977). [1935]. *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860 -880*. Atheneum, NY.
- Duvernay, A. & Moran, J. (2016). *13th*. [Motion picture]. Kandoo Films.
- *Gall-Peters Projection.* Wikipedia.
- Jones, K. & Okun, T. (2001). *Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups.* ChangeWork.
- Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, W. (1995, Fall). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, 97(1), 47-68.
- Konradi, A. & Schmidt, M. (2004). *Reading Between the Lines: Toward an Understanding of Current Social Problems.* 3rd ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Lapchick, R. (2019, October 30). The 2019 racial and gender report card: national football league. *The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.*
- Lapchick, R. (2019, June 18). The 2019 racial and gender report card: national basketball association. *The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.*
- *National Museum of African American History and Culture.* (n.d.). Talking about race: being anti-racist.
- Stanley, C.A. (2006). Coloring the academic landscape: Faculty of color breaking the silence in predominantly white colleges and universities. *American Educational Research Journal*, *43*(4), 701–736.

This page titled 6.5: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **6.5: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

6.6: Social Change and Resistance

"We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice," spoke Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in a 1968 speech. The U.S. past, and predictably the future, is characterized by a struggle over justice, perhaps to be understood as a pendulum swing between civil rights and white supremacy as shown in Figure 6.6.1. This section details the experiences of white Americans on both pendulum extremes, ending with the suggestion of anti-racism and antidotes to white supremacy potentially ushering in a future of justice.

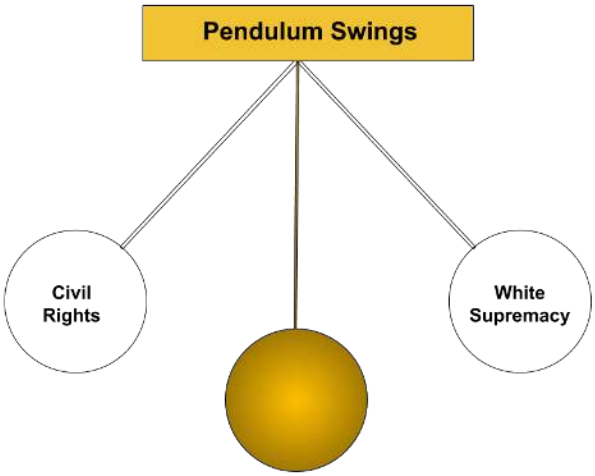


Figure 6.6.1: Pendulum swing in the U.S., ranging from Civil Rights to White Supremacy. (Diagram created by Jonas Oware)

Abolition of Slavery vs. Confederacy

Many white Americans joined the abolition movement to resist against and end slavery in the U.S.; thus, abolition was a reform movement to alter the entire society. Sisters Angelina and Sarah Grimke, who converted to the Quaker religion after growing up in a Southern slave-holding family, were amongst the first white women to join the cause, traveling on the anti-slavery lecture circuit. A founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Irish American journalist William Lloyd Garrison published the anti-slavery newspaper,The Liberator, beginning in 1831 and printed until the 13th Amendment was passed, abolishing slavery. Dissatisfied with mainstream pacifist abolition efforts, Kansan John Brown led radical, armed efforts to end slavery. Though he was hanged for his organizing of the liberation and rebellion of enslaved Blacks, his efforts ultimately inspired the Civil War.

Resisting the end of slavery, the confederate side of the Civil War was led by General Robert E. Lee who commanded the Virginia Army until it surrendered to the Union in 1865, ending the Civil War. Modern day displays of confederate flags, particularly in Southern states, began with segregationists such as South Carolinian politician Strom Thurmond who opposed the mainstream Civil Rights Movement. Many monuments memorializing the confederacy and ultimately supporting white supremacy have been removed following the nationwide protests against the killing of George Floyd in 2020; however, President Trump has resisted calls to change the names of confederate bases and the confederate flag in an apparent attempt to honor the confederacy. The decision to remove the statue of Robert E. Lee in Virginia is currently stalled in the courts.



Figure **6.6.2**: Confederate Battle Flag. (CC BY-NC 2.0; J. Stephen Conn via Flickr)

Civil Rights Movement vs. Segregationists

Viola Liuzu. Andrew Goodman. Michael Schwerner. Reverend James Reeb. These are the names of white individuals who responded to Southern calls to join the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, another reform movement with the intent to desegregate the nation and afford all Americans the right to vote, particularly African Americans. Italian American housewife, Viola Liuzu, participated in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March led by Dr. Martin Luther King, jr.; while traveling in a carpool following the successful march, she was shot and killed by Ku Klux Klan members in a pursuing car. Participating in the 1964 Freedom Summer campaign to register African American voters in Mississipi, Jewish American activists Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were abducted with Black activist James Cheney as they traveled in their car. Their buried bodies were discovered a few months later, and the local police department and Ku Klux Klan were involved in the incident. A member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, of which Dr. Martin Luther King, jr. was a leader, Universalist Unitarian Reverend James Reeb joined the Selma to Montgomery March in 1965 only to be beaten to death. Countless African Americans were involved in the Civil Rights Movement - as we were many unknown white Americans. Their efforts combined culminated in the 1965 Voting Rights Act signed into law by President Lyndon Baines Johnson; this legislation outlawed discrimination in voting which was one of the major goals of the movement during the 1960s.

"Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." Alabama Governor George Wallace uttered these words at his inauguration speech in 1963. Clearly his words conveyed his resistance to a changing America. Similarly, the Commissioner of Public Safety in Birmingham, Alabama authorized unleashing police attack dogs and fire hoses on peaceful protestors; such scenes were projected on the nightly news and drew numbers of appalled northerners into the south to join the Civil Rights Movement. He also refused police protection of the Freedom Riders who were challenged racial segregation on interstate buses, and he allowed Ku Klux Klan members to beat and torment the Riders. Another segregationist, Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus in 1957 ordered the national guard to prevent the desegregation of schools following the 1954 Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision which outlawed segregated schools. President Eisenhower reversed this decision and ordered the Guard to support integration efforts in allowing the Little Rock Nine African American students to attend the public school, though they experienced brutal physical and emotional abuse during that tense year.

White Nationalism

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, **white nationalist groups** espouse white supremacist or white separatist ideologies, often focusing on the alleged inferiority of nonwhites. In an effort to preserve white supremacy and white power, white nationalist groups seek to stop immigration of people of color in the U.S. In their pursuit of white dominance, racism is a common

denominator of white nationalist groups as is anti-semitism. (Further discussion of the contemporary white nationalist movement is provided in Chapter 11.5).

By the 1920s and 1930s, anti-Semitism had become quite prominent among U.S. prejudices and was being preached by the Ku Klux Klan and other extreme racist groups. Also, because many of the political radicals and labor leaders of the time were Jewish immigrants, anti-Semitism became fused with a fear of Communism and other anti-capitalist doctrines. Some prominent Americans espoused anti-Semitic views, among them Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor Company; Charles Lindbergh, the aviator who was the first to fly solo across the Atlantic; and Father Charles Coughlin, a Catholic priest with a popular radio show (Selzer, 1972). Anti-Semitism reached a peak before World War II and tapered off in the decades following the war, but it remains part of U.S. society (Anti-Defamation League, 2000). Anti-Semitism also has a prominent place in the ideologies of a variety of extremist groups that have emerged in recent years, including “skinheads” and various contemporary incarnations of the Ku Klux Klan.

The white nationalist rhetoric in the U.S. is on the increase in 2020, and white nationalist groups range from the Ku Klux Klan to neo-Nazis to neo-Confederate to racist skinheads to Christian Identity. These groups use college campuses and the Internet as recruitment grounds. Two of the largest white supremacist organizations in 2020 have been the American Identity Movement and Patriot Front, though the former disbanded in November 2020 after it had just rebranded itself the previous year from the white nationalist group, Identity Evropa. Some white nationalist groups fear the "genocide" of the white race and pursue instead a white ethno-state and a return to a United States that pre-dated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Immigration Act of 1965 (Southern Poverty Law Center).

Many of President Trump's words and actions resonate with these white nationalists, including his mantra "Build the Wall," his sympathetic response with the violence that followed the 2017 Unite the Right rally, and his support for the U.S. military bases named after confederate leaders. When given a chance during the 2020 Presidential debates with Biden, Trump refused, when questioned by the debate moderator if he would tell the Proud Boys, a right-wing organization, to "stand down;" Biden did so unapologetically whereas Trump told them to "stand by and stand back." Though, Trump has also condemned racism, speaking after the violent white supremacist shooting in El Paso, Texas in 2019. It must be noted that previous presidents have expressed sympathy for white supremacy, including Woodrow Wilson who was quoted as defending the Ku Klux Klan in D.W. Griffith's film, Birth of a Nation. Led by the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, the January 6, 2021 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol (Washington, D.C.) represented the most dramatic display of white nationalism and domestic terrorism seen in modern times.



Figure **6.6.3**: "Proud Boys in Pittsboro, North Carolina (2019 Oct)" wearing hats which read: Make American Great Again. (CC BY 2.0; Anthony Crider via Flickr)

Population Changes

The changing U.S. race-ethnic demographics inspire factions in the U.S. differently. While white supremacists consider the declining U.S. White population as a threat to white dominance and white supremacy, pluralists are encouraged by the changing demographics as by the year 2050 when the U.S. will not have a dominant numerical group but will rather be a majority people of color nation (further data presented in Chapters 1.6 and 12.5). As Figure 6.6.4 illustrates, the percentage of white only population is projected to decline by 2060 while the multiracial population (two or more races) is expected to increase, especially for the under

18 age group. The largest increases of the multiracial population include individuals with one white parent, the largest group being biracial Black-white children.

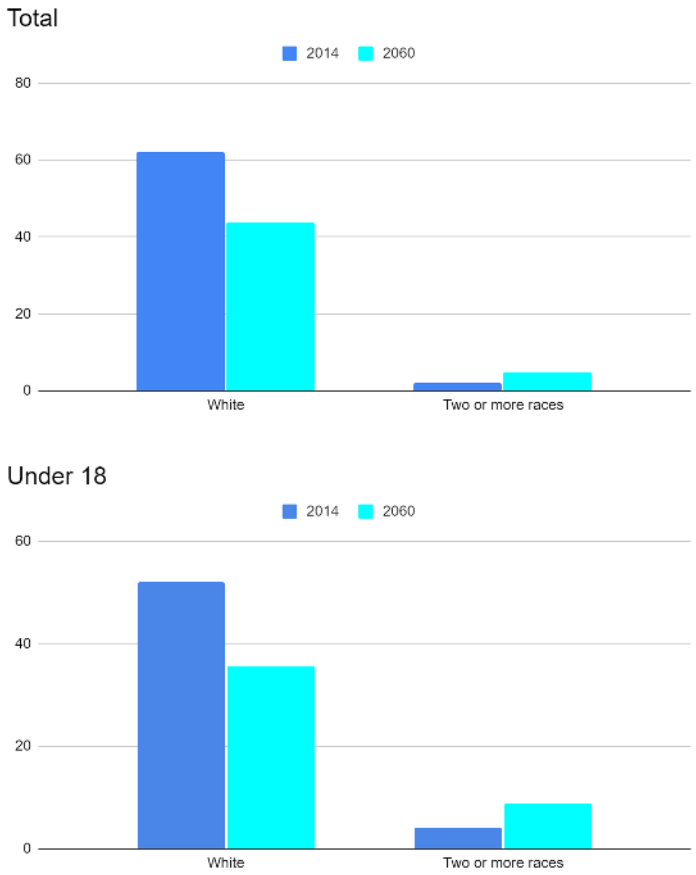


Figure **6.6.4**: Population Changes of white and Multiracial Population. (Charts by Jonas Oware with data from the U.S. Census Bureau)

Anti-Racism, Abolition of Whiteness, Antidotes to White Supremacy & Allyship

With the changing race-ethnic demographics in the U.S., another form of change has been expressed over the past decade: anti-racism and decentering whiteness.

“The task for whites is to develop a positive white identity based on reality not on assumed superiority. In order to do that each person must become aware of his or her whiteness, accept it as personally and socially significant, and learn to feel good about it. Not in the sense of Klan members 'white pride' but in the context of a commitment to a just society" (Tatum, 2017, p. 94).



Figure **6.6.5**: Lady Justice. (CC BY-SA 2.0; John via Flickr)

As Ibram Kendi (2020) writes, the opposite of a racist is not a non-racist but rather an **anti-racist**, an individual who supports policies and ideas that produce racial equity between race-ethnic groups. Thus, acknowledging racist policies, practices, and ideas one may be knowingly or unknowingly supporting or participating in is an important first step in becoming an anti-racist. The National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) posits that being anti-racist is different for white people than it is for people of color because for white people, being anti-racist evolves with their racial identity development. They must recognize and understand their privilege, work to change their internalized racism, and interrupt racism in their everyday life.

Responding to Interpersonal Racism

A commitment to being anti-racist manifests in our choices. When we encounter interpersonal racism, whether obvious or covert, there are ways to respond and interrupt it. Asking questions is a powerful tool to seek clarity or offer a new perspective. Below are some suggestions provided by NMAAHC to use in conversations when racist behavior occurs:

- Seek clarity: “Tell me more about _____.”
- Offer an alternative perspective: “Have you ever considered _____.”
- Speak your truth: “I don’t see it the way you do. I see it as _____.”
- Find common ground: “We don’t agree on _____ but we can agree on _____.”
- Give yourself the time and space you need: “Could we revisit the conversation about _____ tomorrow.”
- Set boundaries. “Please do not say _____ again to me or around me.

In a different vein, Noel Ignatiev suggests that white working class people would need to reject whiteness, to abolish whiteness altogether. Ignatiev professed that if working class whites were to break with their false white skin privilege, the working class would unite in pursuit of a more just society. In Ignatiev's words: Treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity. In agreement to this treasonness, anti-racist educator Tim Wise promotes white individuals becoming active, anti-racist white allies, called racial justice allies in other writings. Wise, Ignatiev, and other anti-racists generally agree on the following three ingredients of anti-racism: race is a social construct which means it can be deconstructed; whiteness is a socio-political project which has no redemptive value, and whites must disrupt racial oppression by challenging racism in their everyday lives (Cabrera, 2012). These anti-racists promote the idea of white individuals become active, anti-racist white allies, called racial justice allies in other writings. In refusing whiteness, the opportunity for praxis arises, which Paolo Freire presented in The Pedagogy of the Oppressed. To achieve praxis, lest they reproduce the exact oppression of white supremacy, it is paramount for white allies to work together with people of color to challenge racial oppression, likely following the lead of people of color who have had direct experience with oppression. With the

Black Lives Matter protests which have erupted in this country following George Floyd's killing in 2020, the large numbers of young, white Americans joining the cause to disrupt systemic racism in our criminal justice system reflects praxis and anti-racism. These participants have developed praxis (Freire, 2000), seeing themselves as potential agents of social change, joining forces with people of color against racial oppression.

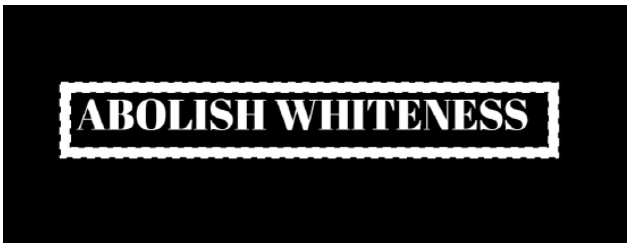


Figure **6.6.6**: Abolish whiteness. (Design created by Jakobi Oware)

In the previous Section 6.5, characteristics of white supremacy culture in our workplaces (or other organizations) were presented. As explained by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, antidotes to these characteristics may take the form of the following examples:

Table 6.6.7: Antidotes to white supremacy. Created by Janét Hund (Adapted from Jones & Okun).

Characteristics of white supremacy	Antidotes to white supremacy
perfectionism	always speak to the things that went well before offering constructive feedback
urgency	leadership which understands that things take longer than anyone expects
defensiveness	understand the link between defensiveness and fear
quantity over quality	learn to recognize those times when you need to get off the agenda in order to address people's underlying concerns
worship of the written word	take the time to analyze how people inside and outside the organization get and share information
only one right way	work on developing the ability to notice when people do things differently and how those different ways might improve your approach
paternalism	include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making
either/or thinking	notice when people are simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made
power hoarding	understand that change is inevitable and challenges to your leadership can be healthy and productive
fear of open conflict	don't require those who raise hard issues to raise them in acceptable ways, especially if you are using the ways in which issues are raised as an excuse not to address the issues being raised
individualism	evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team to accomplish shared goals
progress is bigger/more	create Seventh Generation thinking by asking how the actions of the group now will affect people seven generations from now
objectivity	assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is
right to comfort those with power	understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning

In a move to interrupt the connection that whiteness has with dominance, perhaps whiteness could redeem itself by breaking decisively with that history of oppression. As asked in Whiteness - Sociology of Race - iResearchNet (2020), could whiteness not be reinvented by such means as practical measures of redistribution and thoroughgoing racial democratization? After all, there have been many anti-racist whites. Since history has not ended, the final judgment on such questions has yet to be rendered.

Becoming an Ally

"An ally is any person that actively promotes and aspires to advance the culture of inclusion through intentional, positive and conscious efforts that benefit people as a whole" (Atcheson, 2018). Becoming an actionable ally is different than being a performative ally. The latter is for show, and the former is putting your words into action. Sheree Atcheson (2018) explains the following reflect an actionable ally:

- Lift others up by advocating,
- Share growth opportunities with others,
- Not view venting as a personal attack,
- Recognize systematic inequalities and realize impact of microaggressions,
- Believe underrepresented people's experiences, and
- Most importantly – listen, support, self-reflect & change.

In the Winter 2020 Black Minds Matter webinar, the speakers suggested that to become a true ally is akin to committing social or professional suicide, as allyship means one is willing to put the interests of others above one's self-interests. Pause and reflect on that.

Thinking Sociologically

Layla F. Saad penned the Me & White Supremacy Workbook (2018) to provide a 28-day self-reflection for individuals holding white privilege to consider their involvement and complicity with white supremacy. Saad writes, "I often ask myself, 'What would the world look like without white supremacy?' We may not live long enough to know. However, if the rise and fall of empires is any clue, white supremacy doesn't have much time left" (2018, p. 2). The book is intended to make the reader uncomfortable as they discover and dismantle their "inner white supremacy and internalised racism" (Saad, 2018, p. 22).

Would you consider taking Saad's 28-day challenge of self-reflection to consider your complicity with white supremacy? Why or why not?

Saad suggests the premise for this reflection is to ultimately become a better ancestor for those who come after us. Do you agree or disagree with Saad that this type of self-reflection can potentially improve our future?

Key Takeaways

- U.S. history has been characterized by pendulum swings between civil rights and white supremacy.
- Historically and in our contemporary society, white nationalism has existed to support and maintain white supremacy and white power.
- The declining white population conjures up different meanings for white supremacists versus for pluralists.
- The final point of this chapter is to consider the role of anti-racism, abolition of whiteness, antidotes to white supremacy, and allyship as ways to transcend white privilege and white supremacy.

Contributors and Attributions

- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- *Anti-Defamation League.* (2000). Anti-Semitism in the United States.
- Cabrera, N.L. (2012, Spring). Working through whiteness: white, male college students challenging racism. *The Review of Higher Education*, Vol. 35, Iss. 3,: 375-401.

- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* 30th anniversary ed. New York, NY: Herder and Herder.
- Healey, J.F., Stepnick, A. & O'Brien, E. 2019. *Diversity in Society: Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class.* 8th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ignatiev, N. (1995). *How the Irish Became White.* London, UK: Routledge.
- Jones, K. & Okun, T. (2001). *Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups.* ChangeWork.
- Kendi, I. (2020). *How to Be an Anti-Racist.* New York, NY: Random House.
- *National Museum of African American History and Culture.* (n.d.). Talking about race: being anti-racist.
- Saad, L.F. (2018). *Me & Whtie Supremacy.* Layla F. Saad.
- Selzer, M. (1972). *"Kike:" Anti-semitism in America.* New York, NY: Meridian.
- *Southern Poverty Law Center.* (n.d.). White Nationalist.
- Tatum, B. (2017). *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* 2nd ed. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Wallace, G. *George Wallace 1963 Inauguration Speech.* (n.d.). YouTube [Video].
- Whiteness - Sociology of Race - iResearchNet. (2020). *Sociology.*

This page titled 6.6: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **6.6: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

7: African-Americans

7.1: History and Demographics

7.2: Intergroup Relations

7.3: Intersectionality

7.4: Social Institutions

7.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 7: African-Americans is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

7.1: History and Demographics

African Americans: How and Why They Came

The term African American can be a misnomer for many individuals. African Americans (also referred to as Black Americans) are a race-ethnic group of Americans with total or partial ancestry from any of the Black racial groups of Africa. The term African American generally denotes descendants of enslaved Black people who are from the United States, while some recent Black immigrants or their children may also come to identify as African-American or may identify differently.

African Americans are the largest race-ethnic group behind Euro Americans (whites) and Latinx. Most African Americans are descendants of enslaved peoples within the boundaries of the present United States. On average, African Americans are of West/Central African and European descent, and some also have Native American ancestry. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, African immigrants generally do not self-identify as African American. The overwhelming majority of African immigrants identify instead with their own respective ethnicities. This section will focus on the experience of Africans who were captured, enslaved and transported from Africa to the United States, and their offspring.

If Native Americans are the only minoritized group whose subordinate status occurred by conquest, African Americans are the exemplar minority group in the United States whose ancestors did not come here by choice. A Dutch sea captain brought the first Africans to the Virginia colony of Jamestown in 1619 and sold them as indentured servants. This was not an uncommon practice for either Blacks or whites, and indentured servants were in high demand. For the next century, Black and white indentured servants worked side by side. But the growing agricultural economy demanded greater and cheaper labor, and by 1705, Virginia passed the slave codes declaring that any foreign-born non-Christian could be a slave, and that slaves were considered property.

The next 150 years saw the rise of U.S. slavery, with Black Africans being kidnapped from their own lands and shipped to the New World on the trans-Atlantic journey known as the Middle Passage. Once in the Americas, the Black population grew until U.S.-born Blacks outnumbered those born in Africa. But colonial (and later, U.S.) slave codes declared that the child of a slave was a slave, so the slave class was created.

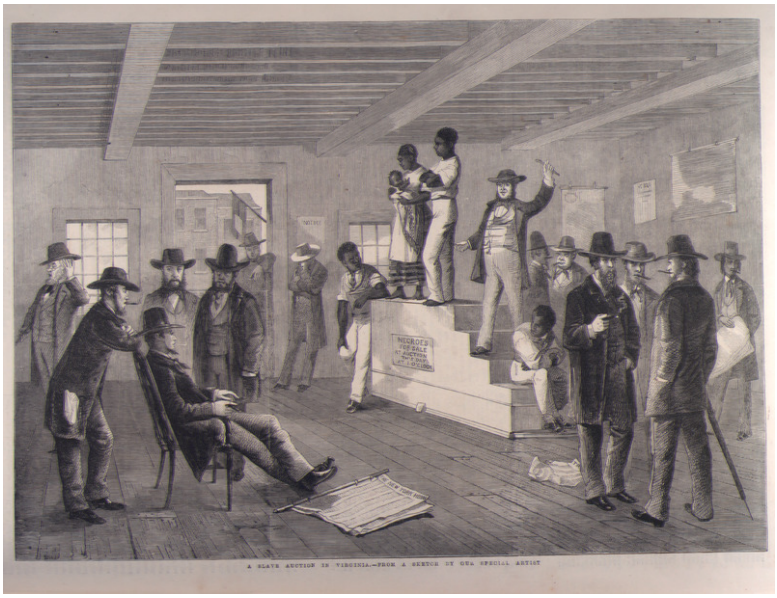


Figure **7.1.1**: Slave Auction, Richmond, Virginia. (CC PDM 1.0; via George Henry Andrews)

Justification for African Slavery

Skin color was an instrument of justifying slavery in the Americas. The Portuguese and the Spanish were among the first to bring African slaves to the Americas. In 1542, the enslaving of Indigenous peoples in its New World territories was made illegal by the government of Spain, an action that greatly expanded and facilitated the primary use of Africans in the trans-Atlantic slave trade in North America. As David Brion Davis (2008) stated, “It was not until the seventeenth century that...New

World slavery began to be overwhelmingly associated with people of Black African descent." According to Nathan Rutstein (1997), "In all of the original 13 colonies, there was the prevailing belief among whites that the Caucasian race was not only superior to the African races, but that Africans were part of a lower species, something between the ape and the human."

It is perhaps difficult to comprehend how the United States, founded on the principles of liberty, democracy and Christian values, could establish a system as inhumane as slavery. It becomes more understandable with the historical context that Black skin and slavery were considered to be a curse from God. Although slavery was driven by economic need, race and theology were used to justify it. According to Goldenberg (2017), the Bible was used as justification for slavery: "...the Bible...consigned Blacks to everlasting servitude...[and] provided biblical validation for sustaining the slave system." David Brion Davis (2008)has written extensively about the impact of the Curse of Ham on slavery and attitudes toward African Americans in the antebellum era. He stated that "the 'Curse of Ham' was repeatedly used as the most authoritative justification for 'Negro slavery' by nineteenth-century Southern Christians, by many Northern Christians, and even by a few Jews" (Davis, 2008).

This section licensed CC BY-NC. Attribution: Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0)

The Curse of Ham

Perhaps the most significant influence on universal attitudes and negative perceptions of people of color is the biblical story of the "Curse of Ham" found in the King James Version (1611) of the Bible in Genesis 9:18-27. The event occurs after Noah and his three sons and their families have left the ark after the Great Flood. Noah's three sons were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. One day, Noah became drunk from wine made from grapes grown in his vineyard. He fell asleep nude on the floor in his tent. Ham's two brothers, Shem and Japheth, turned away and did not view their father's naked body. Ham refused to turn away and saw Noah drunk and naked. Shem and Japheth took a garment, put it on their shoulders, and backed into the tent. They covered Noah with the garment without looking at their father's nude body. After Noah later awoke and became aware of what Ham had done, he pronounced the biblical curse, "Cursed be Canaan; the lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers."

Historically called "The Curse of Ham," Noah's curse was actually directed at Canaan, who was the son of Ham. Noah then blessed Ham's two brothers, Shem and Japheth. It was after this event that the three sons of Noah went with their families to populate the entire earth. Canaan and his family traveled to settle in the area of the world that is now the continent of Africa. One of Ham's brothers (Japheth) went to settle in the area that is now Europe, and the other brother (Shem) went to settle with his family in the area known as Asia.

Noah's statement that Canaan would be the "lowest of slaves" to his two brothers became universally interpreted as an eternal affliction of servitude by God. The Curse of Ham was widespread throughout Europe and eventually spread to America. The Christian Bible does not mention skin color in the story of Noah's curse, but the conflating of Black skin color with the punishment of eternal servitude later became combined with the original biblical interpretation of the Curse of Ham. The text of the biblical story was translated over centuries by Muslim, Jewish, and Christian writers.

Black Identity

Findings from Pew Research Center surveys conducted in recent years show that most Black adults feel that they are part of a broader Black community in the United States and see their race as important to how they think of themselves. As conveyed in Figure 7.1.2, about three-quarters of Black adults say that being Black is extremely (52%) or very (22%) important to how they think about themselves, according to a 2019 Pew Research Center survey.

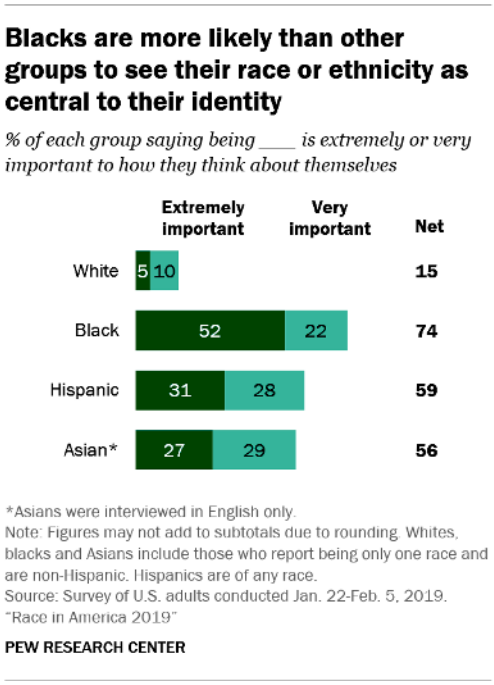


Figure **7.1.2**: Black adults are more likely than other groups to see their race or ethnicity as central to their identity. (Used with permission; Race in America 2019. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2019))

In addition, a Pew Research Center survey conducted in 2016 reveals that most Black adults (81%) said they felt at least somewhat connected to a broader Black community in the U.S., including 36% who said they felt very connected to a Black community, as shown in Figure 7.1.3

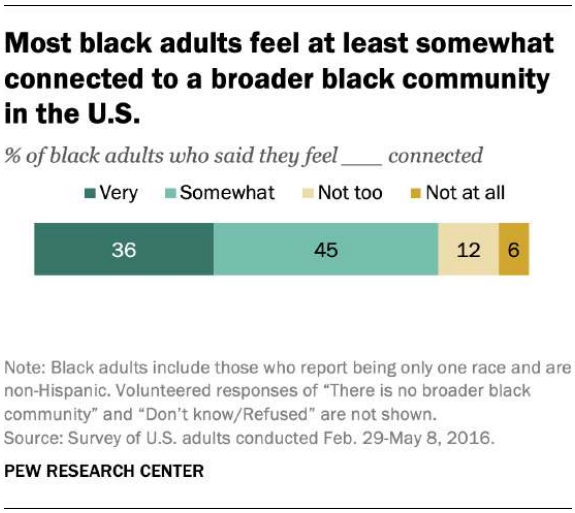


Figure **7.1.3**: Most Black adults feel at least somewhat connected to a broader Black community in the U.S.. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequity, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016))

As presented in Figure 7.1.4, Black adults who said they feel strongly connected to a broader Black community are more likely (than those who don't have such connections) to have engaged with organizations such as the NAACP, Urban League, Black Lives Matter and Black Greek Fraternities/Sororities dedicated to improving the lives of Black Americans by donating money, attending events or volunteering their time.

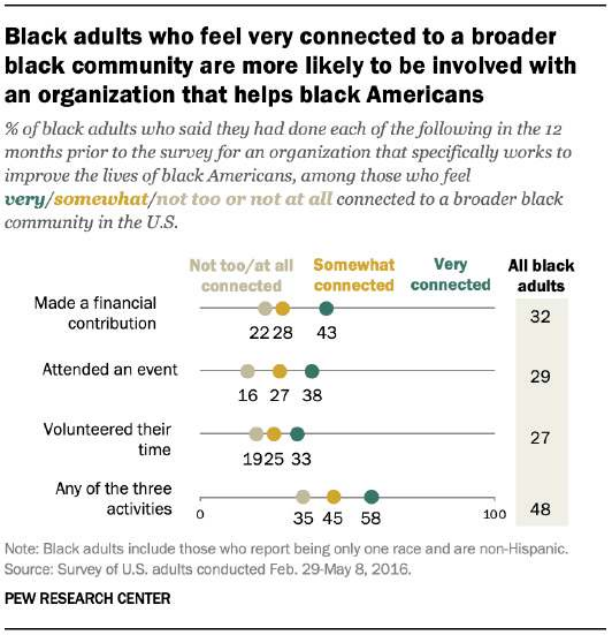


Figure 7.1.4: Black adults who feel very connected to a broader Black community are more likely to be involved with an organization that helps Black Americans. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequity, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016))

Black Demographics

Between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the Great Depression, nearly two million African Americans fled the rural South to seek new opportunities elsewhere. While some moved west, the vast majority of this Great Migration, as the large exodus of African Americans leaving the South in the early twentieth century was called, traveled to the Northeast and Upper Midwest. The following cities were the primary destinations for these African Americans: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Indianapolis. These eight cities accounted for over two-thirds of the total population of the African American migration.

A combination of both “push” and “pull” factors played a role in this movement. Despite the end of the Civil War and the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution (ensuring freedom, the right to vote regardless of race, and equal protection under the law, respectively), African Americans were still subjected to intense racial hatred. The rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War led to increased death threats, violence, and a wave of lynchings. Even after the formal dismantling of the Klan in the late 1870s, racially motivated violence continued. According to researchers at the Tuskegee Institute, there were thirty-five hundred racially motivated lynchings and other murders committed in the South between 1865 and 1900. For African Americans fleeing this culture of violence, northern and midwestern cities offered an opportunity to escape the dangers of the South.

In addition to this “push” out of the South, African Americans were also “pulled” to the cities by factors that attracted them, including job opportunities, where they could earn a wage rather than be tied to a landlord, and the chance to vote (for men, at least), supposedly free from the threat of violence. Although many lacked the funds to move themselves north, factory owners and other businesses that sought cheap labor assisted the migration. Often, the men moved first then sent for their families once they were ensconced in their new city life. Racism and a lack of formal education relegated these African American workers to many of the lower-paying unskilled or semi-skilled occupations. More than 80 percent of African American men worked menial jobs in steel mills, mines, construction, and meat packing. In the railroad industry, they were often employed as porters or servants (Figure 7.1.5). In other businesses, they worked as janitors, waiters, or cooks. African American women, who faced discrimination due to both their race and gender, found a few job opportunities in the garment industry or laundries, but were more often employed as maids and domestic servants. Regardless of the status of their jobs, however, African Americans earned higher wages in the North than they did for the same occupations in the South, and typically found housing to be more available.

However, such economic gains were offset by the higher cost of living in the North, especially in terms of rent, food costs, and other essentials. As a result, African Americans often found themselves living in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions, much like the tenement slums in which European immigrants lived in the cities. For newly arrived African Americans, even those who sought out the cities for the opportunities they provided, life in these urban centers was exceedingly difficult. They quickly learned that racial discrimination did not end at the Mason-Dixon Line, but continued to flourish in the North as well as the South. European immigrants, also seeking a better life in the cities of the United States, resented the arrival of the African Americans, whom they feared would compete for the same jobs or offer to work at lower wages. Landlords frequently discriminated against them; their rapid influx into the cities created severe housing shortages and even more overcrowded tenements. Homeowners in traditionally white neighborhoods later entered into covenants in which they agreed not to sell to African American buyers; they also often fled neighborhoods into which African Americans had gained successful entry. In addition, some bankers practiced mortgage discrimination, later known as "redlining," in order to deny home loans to qualified buyers. Such pervasive discrimination led to a concentration of African Americans in some of the worst slum areas of most major metropolitan cities, a problem that remained ongoing throughout most of the twentieth century.

So why move to the North, given that the economic challenges they faced were similar to those that African Americans encountered in the South? The answer lies in noneconomic gains. Greater educational opportunities and more expansive personal freedoms mattered greatly to the African Americans who made the trek northward during the Great Migration. State legislatures and local school districts allocated more funds for the education of both Blacks and whites in the North, and also enforced compulsory school attendance laws more rigorously. Similarly, unlike the South where a simple gesture (or lack of a deferential one) could result in physical harm to the African American who committed it, life in larger, crowded northern urban centers permitted a degree of anonymity—and with it, personal freedom—that enabled African Americans to move, work, and speak without deferring to every white person with whom they crossed paths. Psychologically, these gains more than offset the continued economic challenges that Black migrants faced.



(a) (b)

Figure **7.1.5**: Black men who moved north during the Great Migration often performed menial employment, including porters on the railways (a), including Pullman dining and sleeping cars (b). (CC PDM 1.0; OER Commons)

The Migrating U.S. Black Population

Although, the Black share of the total U.S. population has not changed substantially over the last two decades, the number of majority Black counties in the U.S. grew from 65 to 72 between 2000 and 2018. One contributing factor may be migration of Black Americans from the North to the South and from cities into suburbs. According to Pew Research, there are now 15 majority Black counties that were not majority Black in 2000. Among them, Rockdale County, Georgia, located about half an hour outside Atlanta, had the largest percentage point increase in the share of Black residents (from 18% in 2000 to 55% in 2018). With about 930,000 residents, Shelby County, Tennessee, which contains Memphis, was the county with the largest population to become majority Black.

Meanwhile, eight counties that were majority Black in 2000 are no longer. Three of these are large U.S. cities that the Census Bureau includes in its county estimates: Washington, D.C.; Richmond, Virginia; and St. Louis, Missouri. Washington (home to

roughly 702,000 residents in 2018) saw a 19% increase in total population during that period, while its Black population decreased by 9%. The city's share of Black residents declined by 15 percentage points, from 60% to 45%.

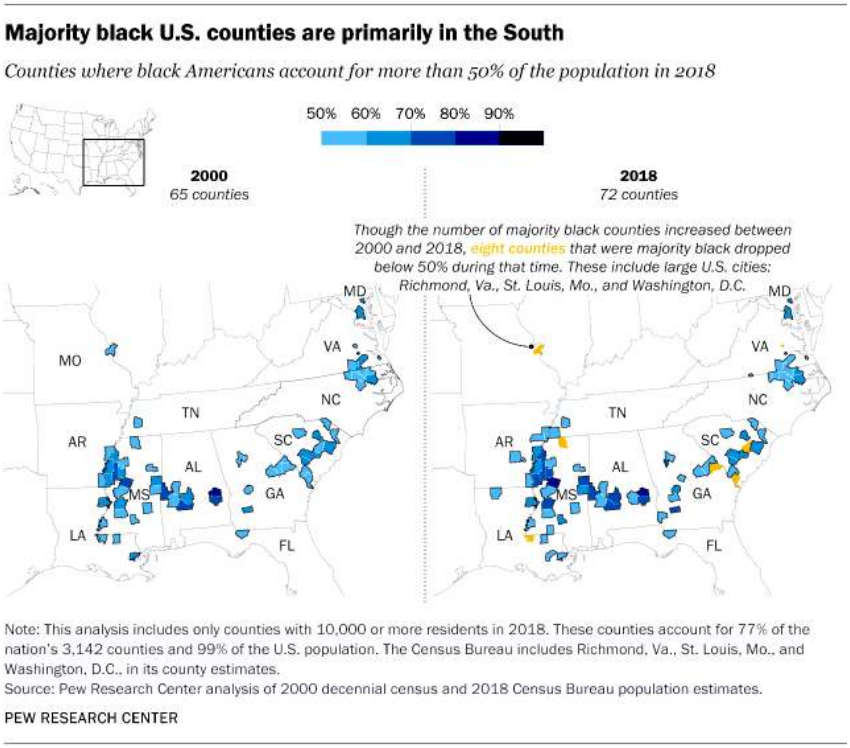


Figure **7.1.6**: Majority Black U.S. counties are primarily in the South. (Used with permission; In a rising number of U.S. counties, Hispanic and Black Americans are the majority. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2019))

Black immigrant population has increased fivefold since 1980**.** Immigrants are making up a growing number of the overall U.S. population – but the Black immigrant population is growing twice as fast. As prestented in Figure 7.1.7, there were 4.2 million Black immigrants living in the U.S. in 2016, up from 816,000 in 1980, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census data. Since 2000 alone, the number of Black immigrants in the U.S. has risen 71%.

According to the Pew Research Center, much of the recent growth in the Black immigrant population has been fueled by African migration. Africans made up 39% of the overall Black immigrant population in 2016, up from 24% in 2000. Still, about half of all foreign-born Blacks (49%) living in the U.S. in 2016 were from the Caribbean.

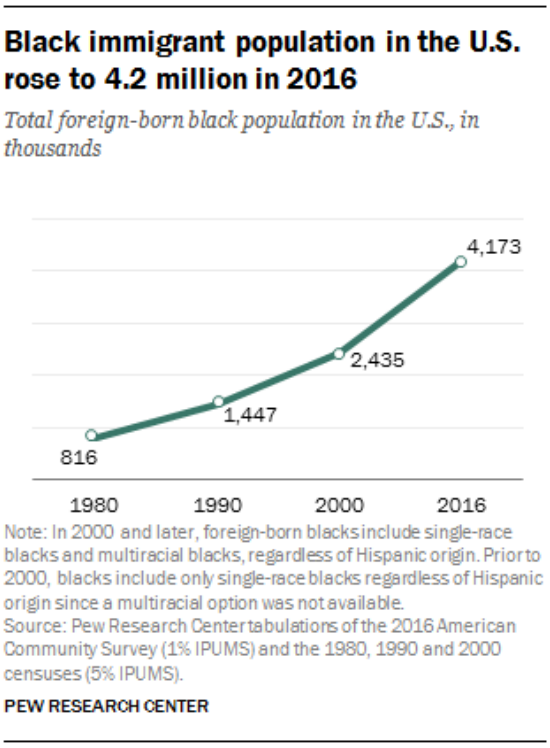


Figure **7.1.7**: Black immigrant population in the U.S. rose to 4.2 million in 2016. (Used with permission; Facts on U.S. Immigrants, 2018. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2018)

Did You Know?

- 47.8 million The Black population, either alone or in combination with one or more races, in the United States in 2018.
- 87.9% The percentage of African-Americans age 25 and older with a high school diploma or higher in 2018.
- 29.9% The percentage of the employed Black population age 16 and older working in management, business, science and arts occupations in 2018.
- 121,466 The number of Black-owned employer businesses in the United States in 2016.
- 2.2 million The number of Black military veterans in the United States nationwide in 2018.

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2019.

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-SA other than Justification for African Slavery which is CC BY-NC.

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0) (Contributed to Justification for African Slavery)
- The African American "Great Migration" and New European Immigration (OER Commons) (CC BY-SA 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- African Americans (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- American FactFinder. (2011 June). United States - QT-P4. race, combinations of two races, and not Hispanic or Latino: 2000. *United States Census.*
- Davis, D.B. (2008). *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World.* London, UK: Oxford University Press.

- Forson, T.S. (2018, February 21). Who is an 'African American'? definition evolves as USA does. *USA Today*.
- Goldenberg, D.M. (2017). *Black and Slave: The Origins and History of the Curse of Ham.* Berlin/Boston, MA: De Gruyter.
- Gomez, M.A. (1998). *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina.
- Locke, D.C., Bailey, D.F. (2013). *Increasing Multicultural Understanding.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Marable, M., Frazier, N., & McMillian, J.C. (2003). *Freedom on My Mind: The Columbia Documentary History of the African American Experience.* Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Martin C.L., & Fabes, R. (2008). *Discovering Child Development.* Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- *Pew Research Center.* (2014). Religious tradition by race/ethnicity.
- *Pew Research Center.* (2019). The role of race and ethnicity in Americans' personal lives.
- Rutstein, N. (1997). *Racism: Unraveling the Fear.* Washington, DC: Global Classroom.
- *United States Census Bureau.* (2019, December). American community survey demographic and housing estimates.
- *United States Census Bureau.* (2020 January). Facts for features: national African-American (Black) history month: February 2020.
- *United States Census Bureau.* (2011 September). The Black population: 2010.
- *U.S. Legal.* (2021). African Americans law & legal definition.
- West, C. (1985). The paradox of afro-american rebellion. In S. Sayres (Ed), *The 60s Without Apology.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 44-58.

This page titled 7.1: History and Demographics is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **7.1: History and Demographics** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

7.2: Intergroup Relations

History of Intergroup Relations

Intergroup relations (relationships between different groups of people) range along a spectrum between tolerance and intolerance. The most tolerant form of intergroup relations is pluralism, in which no distinction is made between marginalized groups and dominant groups, but instead there's equal standing. At the other end of the continuum are genocide, expulsion, and segreation—stark examples of intolerant intergroup relations.

Patterns of Intergroup Relations: African Americans

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g. TransAtlantic Slave Trade, lynching).
- **Expulsion/ Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. Trans Atlantic Slave Trade).
- **Internal Colonialism:** The dominant group exploits the marginalized group (e.g. slavery, sharecropping).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Jim Crow Law).
- **Sepratism:** The marginalized group desires physical separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Black Nationalists).
- **Fusion/ Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. intermarriage, biracial/bicultural children).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. working and schooling in predominantly white institutions).
- **Pluralism/ Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. Caribbean & African immigrant enclaves).

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

The trans-Atlantic slave trade was the largest long-distance coerced movement of people in history and, prior to the mid-nineteenth century, formed the major demographic well-spring for the re-peopling of the Americas following the collapse of the American Indian population. Cumulatively, as late as 1820, nearly four Africans had crossed the Atlantic for every European, and, given the differences in the sex ratios between European and African migrant streams, about four out of every five females that traversed the Atlantic were from Africa. From the late fifteenth century, the Atlantic Ocean, once a formidable barrier that prevented regular interaction between those peoples inhabiting the four continents it touched, became a commercial highway that integrated the histories of Africa, Europe, and the Americas for the first time. As Figure 7.2.1 suggests, slavery and the slave trade were the linchpins of this process, illustrating intergroup consequences of genocide, expulsion, and internal colonialism. With the decline of the Native American population, labor from Africa formed the basis of the exploitation of the gold and agricultural resources of the export sectors of the Americas, with sugar plantations absorbing well over two thirds of slaves carried across the Atlantic by the major European and Euro-American powers.

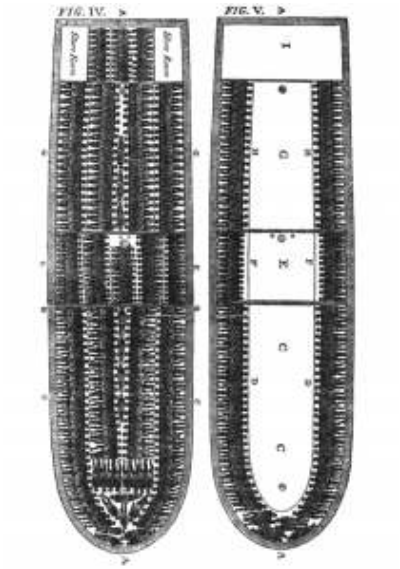


Figure **7.2.1**: Diagram of a slave ship from the trans Atlantic slave trade. (CC PDM 1.0; via Wikimedia)

The Middle Passage

Whatever the route taken, conditions on board reflected the outsider status of those held below deck. No European, whether convict, indentured servant, or destitute free migrant, was ever subjected to the environment which greeted the typical African slave upon embarkation. The sexes were separated, kept naked, packed close together, and the men were chained for long periods. No less than 26% of those on board were classed as children, a ratio that no other pre-twentieth century migration could come close to matching. Except for the illegal period of the trade when conditions at times became even worse, slave traders typically packed two slaves per ton. While a few voyages sailing from Upper Guinea could make a passage to the Americas in three weeks, the average duration from all regions of Africa was just over two months.



Figure **7.2.2**: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade by Country, with millions of Africans uprooted to South America, the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe. (CC BY-ND; Statistia via statista.com)

Most of the space on a slave ship was absorbed by casks of water. Crowded vessels sailing to the Caribbean from West Africa first had to sail south before turning north-west and passing through the doldrums. In the nineteenth century, improvements in sailing technology eventually cut the time in half, but mortality remained high in this period because of the illegal nature of the business. Throughout the slave trade era, filthy conditions ensured endemic gastro-intestinal diseases, and a range of epidemic pathogens that, together with periodic breakouts of violent resistance, meant that between 12 and 13 percent of those embarked did not

survive the voyage, which is why it is important to connect the trans-Atlantic slave trade to **genocide**, the systematic killing of an entire people. Modal mortality fell well below mean mortality as catastrophes on a relatively few voyages drove up average shipboard deaths. Crew mortality as a percentage of those going on board, matched slave mortality over the course of the voyage, but as slaves were there for a shorter period of time than the crew, mortality rates for slaves (over time) were the more severe. The eighteenth-century world was violent and life-expectancy was short everywhere given that the global mortality revolution was still over the horizon, but the human misery quotient generated by the **expulsion** or forced movement, forced migration, of millions of people in slave ships cannot have been matched by any other human activity.

Slavery

There is no starker illustration of the dominant-subordinate group relationship than that of slavery, which further connects to **internal colonialism**, an inhumane exploitation of Black Americans by the dominant group, slave-holding white Americans. In order to justify their severely discriminatory behavior, slave-holders and their supporters had to view Blacks as innately inferior, thus from a racist ideology lens as explained in Chapter 1.2. Slaves were denied even the most basic rights of citizenship, a crucial factor for slave-holders and their supporters. Slavery poses an extreme example of conflict theory's perspective on race relations; the dominant group needed complete control over the subordinate group in order to maintain its power. Whippings, executions, rapes, denial of schooling, and health care were all permissible and widely practiced.

Slavery eventually became an issue over which the nation divided into geographically and ideologically distinct factions, leading to the Civil War. And while the abolition of slavery on moral grounds was certainly a catalyst for war, it was not the only driving force. Students of U.S. history will know that the institution of slavery was crucial to the Southern economy, whose production of crops like rice, cotton, and tobacco relied on the virtually limitless and cheap labor that slavery provided. In contrast, the North didn't benefit economically from slavery, resulting in an economic disparity tied to racial and political issues.

Slave Revolts

Slaves resisted their enslavement in small ways every day, but this resistance did not usually translate into mass uprisings. Slaves understood that the chances of ending slavery through rebellion were slim and would likely result in massive retaliation; many also feared the risk that participating in such actions would pose to themselves and their families. White slave-holders, however, constantly feared uprisings and took drastic steps, including torture and mutilation, whenever they believed that rebellions might be simmering. Gripped by the fear of insurrection, whites often imagined revolts to be in the works even when no uprising actually happened.

At least two major slave uprisings did occur in the antebellum South. In 1811, a major rebellion broke out in the sugar parishes of the booming territory of Louisiana. Inspired by the successful overthrow of the white planter class in Haiti, Louisiana slaves took up arms against planters. Perhaps as many five hundred slaves joined the rebellion, led by Charles Deslondes, a mixed-race slave driver on a sugar plantation owned by Manuel Andry.

The revolt began in January 1811 on Andry's plantation. Deslondes and other slaves attacked the Andry household, where they killed the slave master's son (although Andry himself escaped). The rebels then began traveling toward New Orleans, armed with weapons gathered at Andry's plantation. Whites mobilized to stop the rebellion, but not before Deslondes and the other rebelling slaves set fire to three plantations and killed numerous whites. A small white force led by Andry ultimately captured Deslondes, whose body was mutilated and burned following his execution. Other slave rebels were beheaded, and their heads placed on pikes along the Mississippi River.

The second rebellion, led by the slave Nat Turner, occurred in 1831 in Southampton County, Virginia. Turner had suffered not only from personal enslavement, but also from the additional trauma of having his wife sold away from him. Bolstered by Christianity, Turner became convinced that like Christ, he should lay down his life to end slavery. Mustering his relatives and friends, he began the rebellion August 22, killing scores of whites in the county. Whites mobilized quickly and within forty-eight hours had brought the rebellion to an end. Shocked by Nat Turner's Rebellion, Virginia's state legislature considered ending slavery in the state in order to provide greater security. In the end, legislators decided slavery would remain and that their state would continue to play a key role in the domestic slave trade.

Sharecropping

The 13th Amendment to the constitution marked the end of slavery and led to the transition to wage labor. However, this conversion to sharecropping did not entail a new era of economic independence for former slaves but rather a continuation of internal colonialism. While they no longer faced relentless toil under the lash, freed people emerged from slavery without any money and needed farm implements, food, and other basic necessities to start their new lives. Under the sharecropping system, store owners extended credit to farmers under the agreement that the debtors would pay with a portion of their future harvest. However, the creditors charged high interest rates, making it even harder for freed people to gain economic independence.

Throughout the South, sharecropping took root, a crop-lien system that worked to the advantage of landowners. Under the system, freed people rented the land they worked, often on the same plantations where they had been slaves. Some landless whites also became sharecroppers. Sharecroppers paid their landlords with the crops they grew, often as much as half their harvest. Sharecropping favored the landlords and ensured that freed people could not attain independent livelihoods.The year-to-year leases meant no incentive existed to substantially improve the land, and high interest payments siphoned additional money away from the farmers. Sharecroppers often became trapped in a never-ending cycle of debt, unable to buy their own land and unable to stop working for their creditor because of what they owed. The consequences of sharecropping affected the entire South for many generations, severely limiting economic development and ensuring that the South remained an agricultural backwater.

Table **7.2.3**: As shown in the Table(s) below, a sharecropper, Polly, barely made enough to pay his debts to his landowner, Presley George. (Table created by Jonas Oware from Takaki (2008))

Items bought by Polly from Presley George	Amount due to Presley George from Polly
4 3/4 Cuts of wool	$3.50
22 yds. Cloth	$11.00
5 yds. Thread	$2.50
Boarding for one child	$12.00
40 bushels of corn	$40.00
Total Payment	$69.00

Amount of work and by whom	Presley George's payment for Polly and her family's work
3 months of work by Polly	$12.00
4 months of work by Peter (son)	$32.00
4 months of work by Burrell (son	$16.00
4 months of work by Siller (daughter)	$9.00
Total Payment	$69.00

The excerpt below, extracted from The Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans as Told by Themselves further conveys the blurred line of distinction between slavery and sharecropping, "freedom," further conveying the parallel exploitation in either system:

> Slabery an' freedom (Slavery and freedom)
> Dey's mos' de same (They're mostly the same)
> No difference hahdly (No difference hardly)
> Cep' in de name. (Except in the name).

Jim Crow Segregation and African American Life

Jim Crow **segregation** was a way of life that combined a system of anti-Black laws and race-prejudiced cultural practices. The term **Jim Crow** is often used as a synonym for racial segregation, particularly in the American South. The Jim Crow South was the era during which local and state laws enforced the legal segregation of white and Black citizens from the 1870s into the 1960s. In the

Jim Crow South, it was illegal for Black Americans to ride in the front of public buses, eat at a “whites only” restaurant, or attend a “white” public school.

The term Jim Crow originated from the name of a Black character from early- and mid- nineteenth century American theater. Crows are Black birds, and Crow was the last name of a stock fictional Black character, who was almost always played onstage by a white man in wearing Blackface makeup. Due to the prevalence of this character, "Jim Crow" became a derogatory term for people of African descent.



Figure 7.2.4: Thomas Rice playing Jim Crow in Blackface, Bowery Theatre, New York City, 1833. (CC PDM 1.0; via Black Past)

In the South, electoral politics remained a parade of electoral fraud, voter intimidation, and race-baiting. Democratic Party candidates stirred southern whites into frenzies with warnings of “Negro domination” and of Black men violating white women. The region’s culture of racial violence and the rise of lynching as a mass public spectacle accelerated. And as the remaining African American voters threatened the dominance of Democratic leadership in the South, southern Democrats turned to what many white southerners understood as a series of progressive electoral and social reforms—disenfranchisement and segregation. Just as reformers would clean up politics by taming city political machines, white southerners would “purify” the ballot box by restricting Black voting and they would prevent racial strife by legislating the social separation of the races. The strongest supporters of such measures in the South movement were progressive Democrats and former Populists, both of whom saw in these reforms a way to eliminate the racial demagoguery that conservative Democratic party leaders had so effectively wielded. Leaders in both the North and South embraced and proclaimed the reunion of the sections on the basis of a shared Anglo-Saxon, white supremacy. As the nation took up the “white man’s burden” to uplift the world’s racially inferior peoples, the North looked to the South as an example of how to manage non-white populations. The South had become the nation’s racial vanguard.

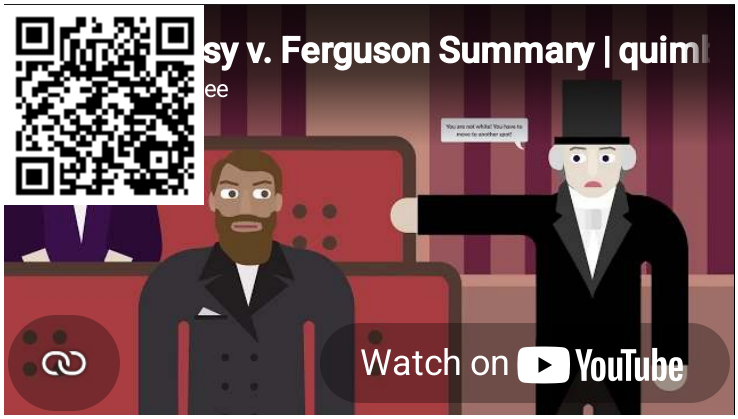
The question was how to accomplish disfranchisement. The 15th Amendment clearly prohibited states from denying any citizen the right to vote on the basis of race. In 1890 the state of Mississippi took on this legal challenge. A state newspaper called on politicians to devise “some legal defensible substitute for the abhorrent and evil methods on which white supremacy lies.” The state’s Democratic Party responded with a new state constitution designed to purge corruption at the ballot box through disenfranchisement. Those hoping to vote in Mississippi would have to jump through a series of hurdles designed with the explicit purpose of excluding the state’s African American population from political power. The state first established a poll tax, which required voters to pay for the privilege of voting. Second, it stripped the suffrage from those convicted of petty crimes most common among the state’s African Americans. Next, the state required voters to pass a literacy test. Local voting election officials, who were themselves part of the local party machine, were responsible for judging whether voters were able to read and understand a section of the Constitution. In order to protect illiterate whites from exclusion, the so called “understanding clause” allowed a voter to qualify if they could adequately explain the meaning of a section that was read to them. In practice these rules were systematically abused to the point where local election officials effectively wielded the power to permit and deny suffrage at will. The disenfranchisement laws effectively moved electoral conflict from the ballot box, where public attention was greatest, to the voting registrar, where supposedly color-blind laws allowed local party officials to deny the ballot without the appearance of fraud.

Between 1895 and 1908 the rest of the states in the South approved new constitutions including these disenfranchisement tools. Six southern states also added a grandfather clause, which bestowed the suffrage on anyone whose grandfather was eligible to vote in 1867. This ensured that whites who would have been otherwise excluded would still be eligible, at least until it was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1915. Finally, each southern state adopted an all-white primary, excluded Blacks from the Democratic primary, the only political contests that mattered across much of the South.

At the same time that the South's Democratic leaders were adopting the tools to disenfranchise the region's Black voters, these same legislatures were constructing a system of racial segregation even more pernicious. While it built on earlier practice, segregation was primarily a modern and urban system of enforcing racial subordination and deference. In rural areas, white and Black southerners negotiated the meaning of racial difference within the context of personal relationships of kinship and patronage. An African American who broke the local community's racial norms could expect swift personal sanctions that often included violence. The crop lien and convict lease systems were the most important legal tools of racial control in the rural South. Maintaining white supremacy there did not require segregation. Maintaining white supremacy within the city, however, was a different matter altogether. As the region's railroad networks and cities expanded, so too did the anonymity and therefore freedom of southern Blacks. Southern cities were becoming a center of Black middle class life that was an implicit threat to racial hierarchies. White southerners created the system of segregation as a way to maintain white supremacy in restaurants, theaters, public restrooms, schools, water fountains, train cars, and hospitals. Segregation inscribed the superiority of whites and the deference of Blacks into the very geography of public spaces.

As with disenfranchisement, segregation violated a plain reading of the constitution—in this case the Fourteenth Amendment. Here the Supreme Court intervened, ruling in the Civil Rights Cases (1883) that the Fourteenth Amendment only prevented discrimination directly by states. It did not prevent discrimination by individuals, businesses, or other entities. Southern states exploited this interpretation with the first legal segregation of railroad cars in 1888. In a case that reached the Supreme Court in 1896, New Orleans resident Homer Plessy challenged the constitutionality of Louisiana's segregation of streetcars. The court ruled against Plessy and, in the process, established the legal principle of separate but equal. Racially segregated facilities were legal provided they were equivalent. In practice this was rarely the case. The court's majority defended its position with logic that reflected the racial assumptions of the day. "If one race be inferior to the other socially," the court explained, "the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane." Justice John Harlan, the lone dissenter, countered, "our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law" Harlan went on to warn that the court's decision would "permit the seeds of race hatred to be planted under the sanction of law." In their rush to fulfill Harlan's prophecy, southern whites codified and enforced the segregation of public spaces.

Segregation was built on a fiction—that there could be a white South socially and culturally distinct from African Americans. Its legal basis rested on the constitutional fallacy of "separate but equal" as declared by Plessy v. Ferguson (1896). Southern whites erected a bulwark of white supremacy that would last for nearly sixty years. Segregation and disenfranchisement in the South rejected Black citizenship and relegated Black social and cultural life to segregated spaces. African Americans lived divided lives, acting the part whites demanded of them in public, while maintaining their own world apart from whites. This segregated world provided a measure of independence for the region's growing Black middle class, yet at the cost of poisoning the relationship between Black and white. Segregation and disenfranchisement created entrenched structures of racism that completed the total rejection of the promises of Reconstruction.



Video 7.2.5: "Plessy v. Ferguson Summary - Quimbee.com." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Quimbee via YouTube)

And yet, many Black Americans of the Progressive Era fought back. Just as activists such as Ida B Wells worked against southern lynching, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois vied for leadership among African American activists, resulting in years of intense rivalry and debated strategies for the uplifting of Black Americans.

Born into the world of bondage in Virginia in 1856, Booker Taliaferro Washington was subjected to the degradation and exploitation of slavery early in life. But Washington also developed an insatiable thirst to learn. Working against tremendous odds, Washington matriculated into Hampton University in Virginia and thereafter established a southern institution that would educate many Black Americans, the Tuskegee Institute. Located in Alabama, Washington envisioned Tuskegee's contribution to Black life to come through industrial education and vocational training. He believed that such skills would help African Americans to accomplish economic independence while developing a sense of self-worth and pride of accomplishment, even while living within the putrid confines of Jim Crow. Washington poured his life into Tuskegee, and thereby connected with leading white philanthropic interests. Individuals such as Andrew Carnegie, for instance, financially assisted Washington and his educational ventures.



Figure 7.2.6: "Portrait of Booker T. Washington. The strategies of Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois differed, but their desire remained the same: better lives for African Americans." (CC PDM 1.0; Harris & Ewing via Library of Congress)

As a leading spokesperson for Black Americans at the turn of the twentieth century, particularly after Frederick Douglass's exit from the historical stage in early 1895, Washington's famous Atlanta Compromise speech from that same year encouraged Black Americans to "cast your bucket down" to improve life's lot under segregation. In the same speech, delivered one year before the Supreme Court's Plessy decision that legalized segregation under the "separate but equal" doctrine, Washington said to white Americans, "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Both praised as a race leader and pilloried as an accommodationist to America's unjust racial hierarchy, Washington's public advocacy of a conciliatory posture towards white supremacy concealed the efforts to which Washington went to assist African Americans in the legal and economic quest for racial justice. In addition to founding Tuskegee, Washington also published a handful of influential books, including the autobiography Up from Slavery (1901). Like Du Bois, Washington was also active in Black journalism, working to fund and support Black newspaper publications, most of which sought to counter Du Bois's growing influence. Washington died in 1915, during World War I, of ill health in Tuskegee, Alabama.

Speaking decades later, W.E.B. DuBois, referenced at the beginning of this book in Chapter 1.1, claimed Washington had, in his 1895 Compromise speech, "implicitly abandoned all political and social rights. . . I never thought Washington was a bad man ... I believed him to be sincere, though wrong." Du Bois would directly attack Washington in his classic (1903) The Souls of Black Folk, but at the turn of the century he could never escape the shadow of his longtime rival. "I admired much about him," Du Bois admitted, "Washington . . . died in 1915. A lot of people think I died at the same time."



Video **7.2.7**: "An Introduction to W.E.B Du Bois' The Souls of Black Folk- Macat Sociology Analysis." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Macat via YouTube)



Figure **7.2.8**: Portrait of W.E.B. (William Edward Burghardt) Du Bois, 1919. (CC PDM 1.0; C. M. (Cornelius Marion) Battey via Library of Congress)

Du Bois's criticism reveals the politicized context of the Black freedom struggle and exposes the many positions available to Black activists. Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1868, W. E. B. Du Bois entered the world as a free person of color three years after the Civil War ended. Raised by a hardworking and independent mother, Du Bois's New England childhood alerted him to the reality of race even as it invested the emerging thinker with an abiding faith in the power of education. Du Bois graduated at the top of his high school class and attended Fisk University. Du Bois's sojourn to the South in 1880s left a distinct impression that would guide his life's work to study what he called the "Negro problem," the systemic racial and economic discrimination that Du Bois prophetically pronounced would be the problem of the twentieth century. After Fisk, Du Bois's educational path trended back North, and he attended Harvard, earned his second degree, crossed the Atlantic for graduate work in Germany, and circulated back to Harvard and in 1895—the same year as Washington's famous Atlanta address—became the first Black American to receive a Ph.D. there. Du Bois ultimately repatriated to Ghana, Africa in 1961, heeding the call of Ghana's first president after independence, Kwame Nkrumah, to edit the Encyclopedia Africana, which he worked on until his death in 1963.



Video **7.2.9**: "How Does It Feel to Be a Problem?" (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; The Atlantic via YouTube)

Tulsa Race Massacre

Tulsa's long history as an important town and later as a city in Oklahoma began with the removal of the Fives Civilized Tribes from the Southeastern United States in the 1830s into Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). One of the Five Tribes, the Muscogee (Creek) settled in the area. In the 1870s, the Perryman family based their sizable cattle ranch in what would become south Tulsa. The town grew slowly, with a rail line arriving in the 1880s. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the discovery of huge oil fields nearby convinced city leaders to market Tulsa as a convenient and enjoyable place to conduct the business and financial sides of the oil industry. Several oil industry companies agreed and established their headquarters there. This spurred economic development in the city as executives built further accommodations for the industry and funded building construction, oil infrastructure, and a growing hospitality industry. The rapid growth of the oil industry resulted in Tulsa earning the nickname "the Oil Capital of the World." By 1920, Tulsa served as the base for over 400 petroleum companies.

Within this thriving environment, a neighborhood born of both **Jim Crow segregation** and the booming wealth of Tulsa existed near downtown. The Greenwood District existed because of a smart business transaction on the part of O. W. Gurley, a wealthy and well-connected African American landowner who came to Oklahoma because of the Land Run of 1889. After moving to Tulsa in 1906, he purchased 40 acres of land along the Frisco rail tracks in north Tulsa. As he built a rooming house and several other buildings on this land, Oklahoma officially became a state. The first legislative action, Senate Bill One, established segregation between African Americans and whites throughout the state. Oklahoma implemented a sweeping system of segregation, limiting where African Americans could live and shop in addition to how they traveled and existed in public spaces.

At the same time, the economic success of Tulsa attracted African Americans from within Oklahoma and throughout the US. With few options outside of Greenwood and with entrepreneurs actively developing the district into a self-sustaining economic district, the area increased in both population and variety of goods and services. By 1920 the population in Greenwood reached 11,000. Manual laborers and hospitality workers made up the majority and the foundation of the neighborhood who faced challenging work conditions but relatively livable wages.

Because of Jim Crow laws and a wish to support their community, residents spent their money within Greenwood, feeding the growth of the economy. A wide variety of professionals, entrepreneurs, and workers shared quality school and hospital systems, a public library, hotels, parks, and theaters in Greenwood. During this time, African Americans struggled to gain access to these features of city life because of segregation. The homes in the densely populated district ranged from thrown-together shanties to luxurious multi-story homes on “Professor’s Row.” Greenwood attracted nationally renowned African American leaders and activists such as Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois. In fact, Booker T. Washington gave Greenwood its nickname: Black Wall Street.

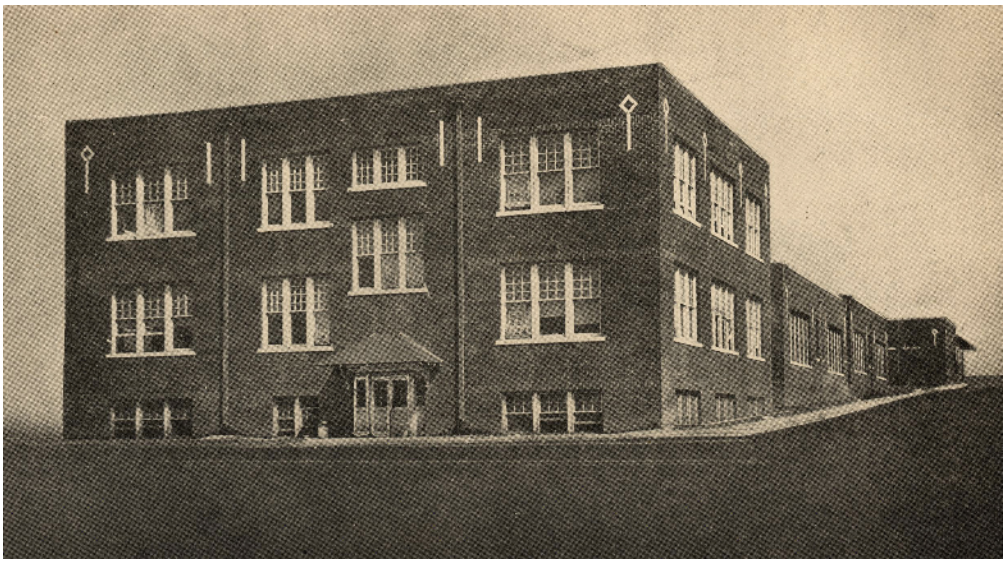


Figure **7.2.10**: Booker T. Washington High School in the Greenwood District, 1920. (CC PDM 1.0; Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection, OHS)

On May 31, hundreds of white Tulsans gathered outside of the Tulsa County Courthouse as the afternoon turned into evening. They sent in a group of men demanding the deputies hand over Dick Rowland, an African American teenage shoe shiner, arrested early on "alleged assault" charge. The sheriff had taken measures to prevent anyone from taking custody of Rowland. At 9 p.m., an armed group of 25 African American men, many of whom were recent World War I veterans, came to the courthouse to offer their assistance in protecting Rowland. The sheriff declined their help and assured the men that the situation remained under control. The group returned to Greenwood. The arrival of the men angered the white mob, which continued to grow in size. It now stood at approximately two thousand. The sheriff took additional precautions and pleaded with the crowd to disperse.

Shortly after 10 p.m., a group of 75 African American men, returned to the courthouse and were once again told to leave. As they departed in a single-file line, a white man attempted to disarm one of the African American men. The man resisted. In the scuffle, the weapon discharged. Both sides exchanged fire.

The African American men engaged in a fighting retreat back to Greenwood as armed whites attacked them. The local police force expanded as the chief deputized 500 white men and boys. Those who did not have weapons went to local pawnshops, hardware stores, and sporting goods stores, breaking in and stealing guns. The targets of the mob evolved from the original armed group to any African American person. Indiscriminate killing began. As both sides reached Greenwood, deadly battles erupted, particularly along the Frisco railroad tracks. In other parts of Greenwood, whites drove into the neighborhood and killed residents from their cars. Some whites began setting fires to property in Greenwood at around 1 a.m. White rioters prevented the fire department from extinguishing the flames.

Some rioters demanded the weapons at the National Guard armory. The guardsmen on duty refused to hand out the weapons. Later, after the authorities officially asked for the assistance of the National Guard, their primary responsibility lay in arresting all of the African Americans in Greenwood and holding them at various locations throughout the city. Another group of guardsmen assisted other whites in attacking groups of remaining African American men who were still defending their property, families, and community.

As dawn approached, approximately 10,000 whites hovered around the edges of Greenwood. Many African Americans remained in their homes, hoping to avoid the conflict and protect their families and property. White men had hauled a machine gun to the top of a grain elevator. At 5:08 a.m., a signal pierced the air. In response to the signal, the machine gunners began firing into Greenwood. The rest of the mob began marching and driving into the neighborhood. Moving from house to house, white rioters broke into homes and businesses and forced the occupants out for internment. Then, they looted the properties.



Figure **7.2.11**: Tulsa Race Massacre, 1921. (CC PDM 1.0; 1619126 Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection (OHS) via OKHistory)

Deployed at 10 p.m. the night before, one hundred Oklahoma City National Guard troops made their way to Tulsa. Upon their arrival at 9 a.m., their commander secured a declaration of martial law. As more National Guard members entered Greenwood, most of the rioters headed home. The National Guard took custody of the camps and declared order restored at 8 p.m. that evening.



Figure **7.2.12**: National Guard machine gun crew during the Tulsa Race Massacre, June 1, 1921. (CC PDM 1.0; Smithsonian via Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture)

The Tulsa Race Massacre Aftermath

The Internment

By the end of the day, the internment camps held 6,000 African American residents. The next day, authorities moved them to the fairgrounds. The National Guard forced these prisoners, both men and women, to labor. The mayor threatened to arrest anyone refusing work for vagrancy. Authorities required them to clean up the destruction caused by the white rioters. The length of stay varied for most of those imprisoned. Release depended on white employers vouching for their African American workers. After that

the city issued passes, called green cards, for them to carry to show their employment. By the middle of June, no one remained in these camps.



Figure 7.2.13: Internment at Convention Hall in the Aftermath of the Tulsa Race Massacre. (CC PDM 1.0; OSU Digital Collections)



Figure 7.2.14: Entrance to internment camp on the fair grounds, after the race riot of June 1, 1921. (CC PDM 1.0; American Red Cross via Library of Congress)

The Uprising Narrative

Within a week the leaders of the major institutions in Tulsa began promoting a narrative that blamed the residents of Greenwood themselves for the violence. The Tulsa Tribune, the state's attorney general, many ministers, and the mayor advanced this argument. The attorney general, in a speech in Tulsa on June 17, said:

> *The cause of this riot was not Tulsa. It might have happened anywhere for the Negro is not the same man he was thirty years ago when he was content to plod along his own road accepting the white man as his benefactor. But the years have passed and the Negro has been educated and the race papers have spread the thought of race equality.*

The grand jury convened to investigate, followed the attorney general's lead and concluded in its report:

> *The crowd assembled about the courthouse being purely spectators and curiosity seekers…There was no mob spirit among the whites, no talk of lynching and no arms. The assembly was quiet until the arrival of armed negroes, which precipitated and was the direct cause of the riot.*

The lead attorney for the state used her power to give immunity to any whites who looted homes or murdered African Americans. This remained the dominant narrative until attention to the massacre began to fade outside the African American community in Oklahoma.

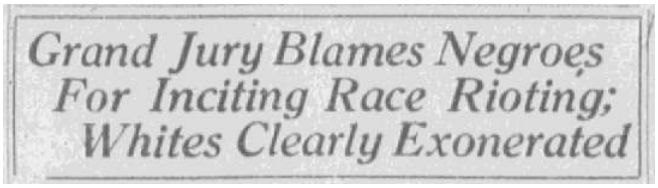

Grand Jury Blames Negroes
For Inciting Race Rioting;
Whites Clearly Exonerated

Figure **7.2.15**: Tulsa World, June 26, 1921, p. 1. (CC PDM 1.0; Oklahoma Historical Society)

Land Issues

In early June, some city officials promised to rebuild and began setting up structures to assist the residents of Greenwood. The city directed donations from across the country to the relief efforts of the Red Cross. They actively refused support for reconstruction from other cities, announcing that restoring the city was strictly a "Tulsa affair," and the residents of Tulsa would take care of it. By June 3, a trade organization called the Real Estate Exchange floated the idea of not rebuilding, but instead rezoning the neighborhood for industrial purposes. Realtors attempted to get African American landowners to sell but wanted the land at discounted rates. Maurice Willows used his influence to convince African American property owners to keep their land. The city responded by applying a fire code to the area that would make rebuilding too expensive for most individual property owners. Well known attorney and activist, B. C. Franklin, along with I. H. Spears and T. O. Chapelle, encouraged residents to start the rebuilding process even though they faced arrest by doing so. Their lawyers vowed to secure the release of anyone arrested for rebuilding. They filed a suit against the city for taking property without due process. They won the lawsuit, providing the neighborhood a chance to survive.

Another challenge facing residents in their attempt to rebuild lay in the insurance companies' refusal to pay on claim for damages related to the massacre. Insurance policies contained exemptions from paying for damages related to riots.

The residents of Greenwood rebuilt the neighborhood with very little outside investment or support.



Figure **7.2.16**: After the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, attorney B. C. Franklin (right) set up his law office in a tent. On the left is I. H. Spears, Franklin's law partner. These men worked to prevent dispossession of Greenwood residents. (CC PDM 1.0; Tulsa Historical Society via Oklahoma Historical Society)

School Segregation

Older battles over racial exclusion also confronted postwar American society. One long-simmering struggle targeted segregated schooling. Since the Supreme Court's decision in Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), Black Americans, particularly in the American South, had fully felt the deleterious effects of segregated education. Their battle against Plessy for inclusion in American education stretched across half a century when the Supreme Court again took up the merits of "separate but equal."

On May 17, 1954, after two years of argument, re-argument, and deliberation, Chief Justice Earl Warren announced the Supreme Court's decision on segregated schooling in Oliver Brown, et al v. Board of Education of Topeka, et al. The court found by a unanimous 9-0 vote that racial segregation violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The court's decision declared, "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." "Separate but equal" was made unconstitutional.

Decades of African American-led litigation, local agitation against racial inequality, and liberal Supreme Court justices made Brown v. Board possible. In the early 1930s, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began a concerted effort to erode the legal underpinnings of segregation in the American South. **De jure segregation** (legal segregation) subjected racial minorities to discriminatory laws and policies. Law and custom in the South hardened anti-Black restrictions. But through a series of carefully chosen and contested court cases concerning education, disfranchisement, and jury selection, NAACP lawyers such as Charles Hamilton Houston, Robert L. Clark, and future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall undermined Jim Crow's constitutional underpinnings. Initially seeking to demonstrate that states systematically failed to provide African American students "equal" resources and facilities, and thus failed to live up to Plessy, by the late 1940s activists began to more forcefully challenge the assumptions that "separate" was constitutional at all.

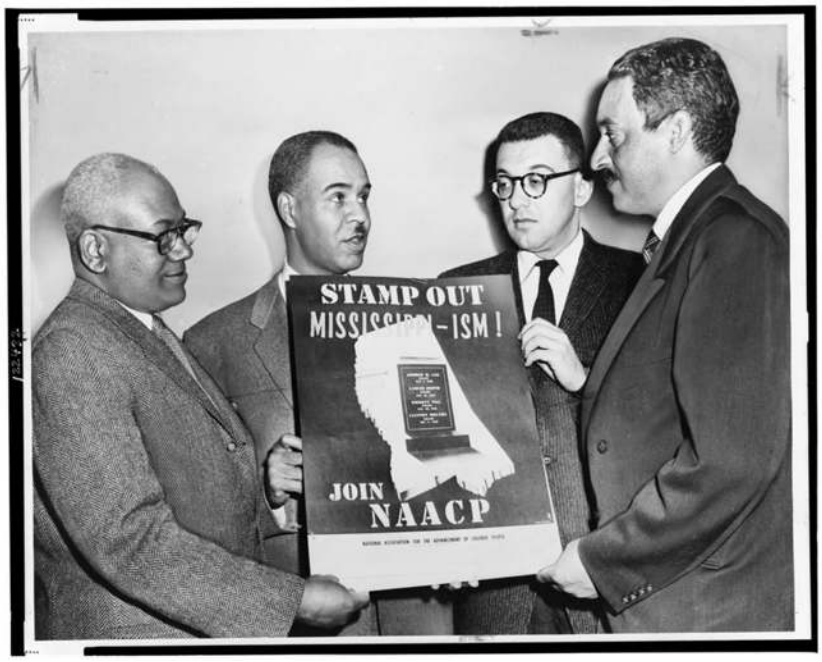


Figure **7.2.17**: The NAACP was a central organization in the fight to end segregation, discrimination, and injustice based on race. NAACP leaders, including Thurgood Marshall (who would become the first African American Supreme Court Justice), hold a poster decrying racial bias in Mississippi in 1956. (CC PDM 1.0; Al. Ravenna via Library of Congress)

Though remembered as just one lawsuit, Brown consolidated five separate cases that had originated in the southeastern United States: Briggs v. Elliott (South Carolina), Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County (Virginia), Beulah v. Belton (Delaware), Boiling v. Sharpe(Washington, D. C.), and Brown v. Board of Education (Kansas). Working with local activists already involved in desegregation fights, the NAACP purposely chose cases with a diverse set of local backgrounds to show that segregation was not just an issue in the Deep South, and that a sweeping judgment on the fundamental constitutionality of Plessy was needed.

Briggs v. Elliott had illustrated, on the one hand, the extreme deficiencies in segregated Black schools. The first case accepted by the NAACP, Briggs originated in rural Clarendon County, South Carolina, where taxpayers in 1950 spent $179 to educate each white student while spending $43 for each Black student. The district's twelve white schools were cumulatively worth $637,850; the value of its sixty-one Black schools (mostly dilapidated, over-crowded shacks), was $194,575. While Briggs underscored the South's failure to follow Plessy, the Brown v. Board suit focused less on material disparities between Black and white schools (which were significantly less than in places like Clarendon County) and more on the social and spiritual degradation that accompanied legal segregation. This case cut to the basic question of whether or not "separate" was itself inherently unequal. The NAACP said the two notions were incompatible. As one witness before the U. S. District Court of Kansas said, "the entire colored race is craving light, and the only way to reach the light is to start [Black and white] children together in their infancy and they come up together."

To make its case, the NAACP marshaled historical and social scientific evidence. The Court found the historical evidence inconclusive and drew their ruling more heavily from the NAACP's argument that segregation psychologically damaged Black children. To make this argument, association lawyers relied upon social scientific evidence, such as the famous doll experiments of Kenneth and Mamie Clark. The Clarks demonstrated that while young white girls would naturally choose to play with white dolls, young Black girls would, too. The Clarks argued that Black children's aesthetic and moral preference for white dolls demonstrated the pernicious effects and self-loathing produced by segregation. The doll experiments illustrated one psychological effect of segregation on communities of color - **internalized racism,** an acceptance of the racial hierarchy that places whites consistently above people of color.

Identifying and denouncing injustice, though, is different from rectifying it. Though Brown repudiated Plessy, the Court's orders did not extend to segregation in places other than public schools and, even then, while recognizing the historical importance of the decision, the justices set aside the divisive yet essential question of remediation and enforcement to preserve a unanimous decision.

Their infamously ambiguous order in 1955 (what came to be known as Brown II) that school districts desegregate “with all deliberate speed” was so vague and ineffectual that it left the actual business of desegregation in the hands of those who opposed it.

In most of the South, as well as the rest of the country, school integration did not occur on a wide scale until well after Brown. Only in the 1964 Civil Rights Act did the federal government finally implement some enforcement of the Brown decision by threatening to withhold funding from recalcitrant school districts, financially compelling desegregation, but even then southern districts found loopholes. Court decisions such as Green v. New Kent County (1968) and Alexander v. Holmes (1969) finally closed some of those loopholes, such as “freedom of choice” plans, to compel some measure of actual integration.



Figure **7.2.19**: African American students who desegregated white schools, the “Little Rock Nine” (Arkansas), were escorted by, the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army. (CC BY 2.0; U.S. Army via Wikimedia/Flickr)

When Brown finally was enforced in the South, the quantitative impact was staggering. In the early 1950s, virtually no southern Black students attended white schools. By 1968, fourteen years after Brown, some eighty percent of Black southerners remained in schools that were ninety- to one-hundred-percent nonwhite. By 1972, though, just twenty-five percent were in such schools, and fifty-five percent remained in schools with a simple nonwhite minority. By many measures, the public schools of the South ironically became the most integrated in the nation.

As a landmark moment in American history, Brown’s significance perhaps lies less in what immediate tangible changes it wrought in African American life—which were slow, partial, and inseparable from a much longer chain of events—than in the idealism it expressed and the momentum it created. The nation’s highest court had attacked one of the fundamental supports of Jim Crow segregation and offered constitutional cover for the creation of one of the greatest social movements in American history.

Black Nationalism

Origins of Black Nationalism

Inspired by the writings of Booker T. Washington, Jamaican-born Marcus Garvey became the most prominent Black Nationalist in the United States. He championed the Back-to-Africa movement, advocated for Black-owned businesses—he founded the Black Star Line, a transnational shipping company—and founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Thousands of UNIA chapters formed all across the world. In 1921, Garvey recorded a message in a New York studio

explaining the object of the UNIA, which can be understood as **separatism**, an effort to create an African American community in Africa - free from whites.

This section is licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: United States History 2 (Lumen) (CC BY-SA 4.0)



Video **7.2.20**: "The Story of Marcus Garvey: A Documentary." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; IBW21st via YouTube)

Marcus Garvey, Explanation of the Objects of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (1921)

Fellow citizens of Africa, I greet you in the name of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League of the World. You may ask, “what organization is that?” It is for me to inform you that the Universal Negro Improvement Association is an organization that seeks to unite, into one solid body, the four hundred million Negroes in the world. To link up the fifty million Negroes in the United States of America, with the twenty million Negroes of the West Indies, the forty million Negroes of South and Central America, with the two hundred and eighty million Negroes of Africa, for the purpose of bettering our industrial, commercial, educational, social, and political conditions.

As you are aware, the world in which we live today is divided into separate race groups and distinct nationalities. Each race and each nationality is endeavoring to work out its own destiny, to the exclusion of other races and other nationalities. We hear the cry of “England for the Englishman,” of “France for the Frenchman,” of “Germany for the German,” of “Ireland for the Irish,” of “Palestine for the Jew,” of “Japan for the Japanese,” of “China for the Chinese.”

We of the Universal Negro Improvement Association are raising the cry of “Africa for the Africans,” those at home and those abroad. There are 400 million Africans in the world who have Negro blood coursing through their veins, and we believe that the time has come to unite these 400 million people toward the one common purpose of bettering their condition.

The great problem of the Negro for the last 500 years has been that of disunity. No one or no organization ever succeeded in uniting the Negro race. But within the last four years, the Universal Negro Improvement Association has worked wonders. It is bringing together in one fold four million organized Negroes who are scattered in all parts of the world. Here in the 48 States of the American Union, all the West Indies islands, and the countries of South and Central America and Africa. These four million people are working to convert the rest of the four hundred million that are all over the world, and it is for this purpose, that we are asking you to join our land and to do the best you can to help us to bring about an emancipated race.

If anything praiseworthy is to be done, it must be done through unity, and it is for that reason that the Universal Negro Improvement Association calls upon every Negro in the United States to rally to this standard. We want to unite the Negro race in this country. We want every Negro to work for one common object, that of building a nation of his own on the great continent of Africa. That all Negroes all over the world are working for the establishment of a government in Africa means that it will be realized in another few years.

We want the moral and financial support of every Negro to make this dream a possibility. Our race, this organization, has established itself in Nigeria, West Africa, and it endeavors to do all possible to develop that Negro country to become a great industrial and commercial commonwealth.

Pioneers have been sent by this organization to Nigeria, and they are now laying the foundations upon which the four hundred million Negroes of the world will build. If you believe that the Negro has a soul, if you believe that the Negro is a man, if you believe the Negro was endowed with the senses commonly given to other men by the Creator, then you must acknowledge that what other men have done, Negroes can do. We want to build up cities, nations, governments, industries of our own in Africa, so that we will be able to have a chance to rise from the lowest to the highest position in the African Commonwealth.

The Nation of Islam and Malcolm X

Though most African Americans did not heed Garvey's call to return to Africa, his speeches did result in a positive impact on Black identity, lasting for decades. As tension continued to mount in cities through the 1950s and 1960s, the tone of the Civil Rights Movement (discussed in more depth in Chapter 7.5) changed yet again. Activists became less conciliatory in their calls for civil rights progress, embracing the more militant message of the burgeoning Black Power Movement and the late Malcolm X, a Nation of Islam (NOI) minister who had encouraged African Americans to pursue freedom, equality, and justice by "any means necessary." Prior to his death, Malcolm X and the NOI emerged as the radical alternative to the racially integrated, largely Protestant approach of the Martin Luther King, Jr.-led civil rights movement. Malcolm advocated armed resistance in defense for the safety and well being of Black Americans, stating, "I don't call it violence when it's self-defense, I call it intelligence." For his part, King and leaders from more mainstream organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League criticized both Malcolm X and the NOI for what they perceived to be racial demagoguery. King believed Malcolm's speeches were a "great disservice" to Black Americans, claiming that X's speeches lamented the problems of African Americans without offering solutions. The differences between Dr. King and Malcolm X represented a core ideological tension that would inhabit Black political thought throughout the 1960s and 1970s.



Figure **7.2.22**: Waiting for a press conference, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X represent different styles of reaching the goal of ending racial discrimination, March 26, 1964. (CC PDM 1.0; Marion S. Trikosko via Library of Congress)

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-SA other than Origins of Black Nationalism which is CC BY-SA.

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- An Overview of the Trans-Atlantic (Dr. David Eltis) (CC BY-NC 3.0 US)
- United States History 1 (Lumen) (CC BY 4.0)

- United States History 2 (Lumen) (CC BY-SA 4.0) (Contributed to Origins of Black Nationalism)
- Jim Crow Laws/Segregation Introduction (OER Commons) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)
- The Tulsa Race Massacre (Oklahoma Historical Society/OER Commons) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Garvey, M. (1921). Explanation of the objects of the universal negro improvement association. *Marcus Garvey and the UNIA Papers Project at the University of California, Los Angeles.*
- Holt, Hamilton. (1906). *The Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans as Told by Themselves.* Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- IBW21. (2017). *The Story of Marcus Garvey: A Documentary.* [Video]. YouTube.
- Lott, E. (1993). *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class.* New York,NY: Oxford University Press.
- Macat. (2015). *An Introduction to W.E.B. Du Bois' The Souls of Black Folk-Macat Sociology Analysis.* [Video].
- Merenda, C. (2015). *Kenneth and Mamie Clark: A Biographic Video.* [Video]. YouTube.
- Niagara Movement. (n.d.). *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
- Quimbee. (2017). *Plessy v. Ferguson Summary.* [Video]. YouTube.
- Takaki, R. (2008). *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. New York, NY: Back Bay Books.
- The Atlantic. (2018). *How Does It Feel to Be a Problem?* [Video]. YouTube.
- TRT World. (2020). *Who was Malcolm X?* [Video]. YouTube.
- Woodward, V.C. (1955). *The Strange Career of Jim Crow.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

This page titled 7.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **7.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

7.3: Intersectionality

Origins of Intersectionality

This body of work, not to mention other contributions by Black feminists such as Patricia Hill Collins, Kimberlé Crenshaw, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Barbara Smith, and others, engages in critical and important conversations about Black sexuality. Black feminists, for example, provided a theoretical lens to examine oppression referred to as intersectionality. This tool continues to be a major contribution as it examines how individuals experience oppression differently based on their social location in terms of their sexuality, gender, class, race, ability, and religion, among other identities.

Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1990) developed the matrix of domination/oppression, a sociological paradigm that explains issues of oppression that deal with race, class, and gender. Other forms of classification such as sexual orientation, religion, or age apply to this theory as well. In Collins' Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment, she first describes the concept of matrix thinking within the context of how Black women in America encounter institutional discrimination based upon their race and gender. A prominent example of this in the 1990s was racial segregation, especially as it related to housing, education, and employment. At the time, there was very little encouraged interaction between whites and Blacks in these common sectors of society. Collins argues that this demonstrates how being Black and female in America continues to perpetuate certain common experiences for African-American women. As such, African-American women live in a different world than those who are not Black and female. Collins notes how this shared social struggle can actually result in the formation of a group-based collective effort, citing how the high concentration of African-American women in the domestic labor sector in combination with racial segregation in housing and schooling contributed directly to the organization of the Black feminist movement. The collective wisdom shared by Black women that held these specific experiences constituted a distinct viewpoint for African-American women concerning correlations between their race and gender and the resulting economic consequences.

Kimberlé Crenshaw, the founder of the term intersectionality, brought national and scholarly credential to the term through the paper Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics in The University of Chicago Legal Forum. In the paper, she uses intersectionality to reveal how feminist movements and anti-racist movements exclude women of color. Focusing on the experiences of Black women, she dissects several court cases, influential pieces of literature, personal experiences, and doctrinal manifestations as evidence for the way Black women are oppressed through many different experiences, systems, and groups.



Figure **7.3.1**: Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (CC BY-SA 4.0; Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung via Wikipedia).

Though the specifics differ, the basic argument is the same: Black women are oppressed in a multitude of situations because people are unable to see how their identities intersect and influence each other. Feminism has been crafted for white middle-class women, hence only considering problems that affect this group of people. Unfortunately, this only captures a small facet of the oppression

women face. By catering to the most privileged women and addressing only the problems they face, feminism alienates women of color and lower-class women by refusing to accept the way other forms of oppression feed into the sexism they face. Not only does feminism completely disregard the experiences of women of color, it also solidifies the connection between womanhood and whiteness when feminists speak for "all women" (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 154) Oppression cannot be detangled or separated easily in the same way identities cannot be separated easily. It is impossible to address the problem of sexism without addressing racism, as many women experience both racism and sexism. This theory can also be applied to the anti-racist movement, which rarely addresses the problem of sexism, even though it is thoroughly intertwined with the problem of racism. Feminism remains white, and antiracism remains male. In essence, any theory that tries to measure the extent and manner of oppression Black women face will be wholly incorrect without using intersectionality.

Both intersectionality and the matrix of domination help sociologists understand power relationships and systems of oppression in society. The matrix of domination looks at the overall organization of power in society while intersectionality is used to understand a specific social location of an identity using mutually constructing features of oppression. The concept of intersectionality today is used to move away from one dimensional thinking in the matrix of domination approach by allowing for different power dynamics of different identity categories at the same time. Researchers in public health are using Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis (IBPA) Framework to show how social categories intersect to identify health disparities that evolve from factors beyond an individual's personal health.

Intersectionality can also be used to correct for the over-attribution of traits to groups and be used to emphasize unique experiences within a group. As a result, the field of social work is introducing intersectional approaches in their research and client interactions. At the University of Arkansas, the curriculum for a Master of Social Work (MSW) is being amended to include the Multi-Systems Life Course (MSLC) approach. Christy and Valandra apply an MSLC approach to intimate partner violence and economic abuse against poor women of color to explain that symbols of safety (such as police) in one population can be symbols of oppression in another. By teaching this approach to future social workers, the default recommendation for these women to file a police report is amended and an intervention rooted in the individual case can emerge.

Black Sexuality and Origins of Discrimination

✔ Black Sexuality and Origins of Discrimination

Twinet Parmer and James Gordon (2007) describe Black sexuality as “a collective cultural expression of the multiple identities as sexual beings of a group of Africans in America, who share a slave history that over time has strongly shaped the Black experiences in white America.” There has been a more pronounced focus on Black sexuality than on the sexuality of other ethnic groups. Sharon Rachel and Christian Thrasher (2015) note that “[t]here is no discourse on ‘white’ sexuality, ‘Jewish’ sexuality, ‘Native American’ sexuality, etc.” Even though there is not much work to speak of that focuses on “white” heterosexuality per se in the ways in which the discourse on Black sexuality has been created, it is safe to say that the dominant discourse about sexuality centers and normalizes white sexuality in general and is grounded in dominant cultural terms. It is also important to note that there has been pushback to de-center whiteness. Counternarratives, a component of Critical Race Theory as discussed in Chapter 2.3, question and interrogate the backdrop of whiteness (see also Chapter 6.3) that has been used to normalize white hegemonic sexuality on the one hand and at the same time degrade Black sexuality on the other hand. Black sexuality has historically been negatively judged against a particular kind of white sexual norms: “[t]he pathologizing of Black sexuality continued as means of affirming the superior status of Europeans while restricting the social movement of Black people by characterizing egalitarian interaction with them as undesirable”(McCruder, 2010, p. 104)

Perhaps one of the most poignant and foundational examples of debasing the female Black body with a particular emphasis on big breasts, buttocks, and other sexual body parts occurred in the early nineteenth century with the European obsession with a woman named Saartjie Baartman (1789-1815). Also known as “The Hottentot Venus,” Baartman was a Khoikhoi woman originally from southwest Africa. Essentially, Baartman was taken from her homeland in Africa to Europe, where she was put on exhibit for public viewings in England and France from 1810 until her death. Such a display of Baartman’s body was certainly a way of “Othering” her Black body, especially compared with white European women. Exhibiting Baartman was both a way of showing various aspects of Black sexuality as well as making her a spectacle. Her years on exhibition constituted more of an ongoing “freak show” than honoring Baartman or her body in any way. Magdalena Barrera (2002) has noted that “When the [public] paid to see her ‘perform’—she was held in a cage and made to dance half-naked in order to receive any

food...People were so perplexed upon seeing her that they debated whether she was even human." Following her death in 1815, Baartman's image remained on display in the form of a plaster cast of her body at the Muֹee de l'Homme in Paris, France, and her sexual body parts were preserved and kept on display until the 1970s. It was not until 2002 that Saartjie Baartman's bodily remains were returned to her homeland in South Africa for a proper, respectful, and humane burial based on an arrangement made by South African President Nelson Mandela with the French government. Baartman's story illustrates the exoticization of the Black female body, which reified and perpetuated the Western notion of Blackness and linked it to being less than human, lascivious, and non-normative.

This section is licensed CC BY-NC. Attribution: Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0)



Figure **7.3.2**: A female Hottentot with steatopygy (CC BY 4.0; Wellcome Collection via Creative Commons)

Setting the Stage for Negative Attitudes About Black Sexuality

While the Baartman story provides a single example of the characterization of Black sexuality, it fits with a larger picture of the social construction of race, discussed in Chapter 1.2, that pre-dates Baartman being put on display in Europe. Europeans formed their views of Black people as far back as the sixteenth century. When Europeans came into contact with Africans and witnessed how they interacted sexually with other Africans and non-African individuals as well as the degree to which Africans were clothed, negative attitudes were formed about African sexuality. Historian Kevin McGruder (2010) further states that "[t]he limited apparel worn by most Africans was interpreted by Europeans as a sign of lasciviousness or lack of modesty rather than a concession to the tropical climate. Linked to this impression was a perception that the sex drives of Africans were uncontrollable." Even more insidious was the suggestion that African people were less than human, even to the extent of their being animalized. This portrayal of African people by Europeans continued for the duration not only of chattel slavery in the American South from 1619 to 1863, but also long after slavery ended into the Jim Crow Era and beyond. Another factor that influenced and perpetuated racist ideologies that concerned both sexual and non-sexual aspects of Black people involved scientific racism that was prominent from the 1600s until the end of World War II (now regarded as pseudo-science or racialized science and thoroughly disregarded as nonsense). Among the academic and professional fields that practiced scientific racism were anthropology, biological sciences, medicine, and so on, in Europe and the United States. A description of Black people from this perspective was written by the nineteenth-century French naturalist and zoologist Georges Cuvier, the same individual who dissected and preserved Baartman's sexual body parts, appeared in his book The Animal Kingdom: Arranged in Conformity with Its Organization. Among many other topics, Cuvier covered the varieties of the human species. In part, he wrote, "The Negro race is confined to the south of mount Atlas; it is marked by a Black complexion; crisp or woolly hair, compressed cranium, and a flat nose. The projection of the lower parts of the face, and the thick lips, evidently appropriate it to the monkey tribe; the hordes of which it consists have always remained in the most complete state of barbarism" (Cuvier, 1817). Such a description is not only generally dehumanizing but the likening of people of African descent to animals extends to attitudes about their sexuality. Such attitudes deriving from the observations of African people by Europeans when they first visited Africa in the sixteenth century coupled with the racist pseudo-

science that was characterized by Cuvier's claims above, in part, provided a rationale for enslaving people of African descent in North America, in particularly what would become the Southern states of the U.S.

Countering the Negativity About Black Sexuality

While it is important to mark the systemic racism (defined in Chapter 4.4) that has pointed to mainstream society's discomfort and fear of Black sexuality, it is equally as important to discuss actions that have fought against such injustices. It is absolutely true that Black people and their communities have been maltreated by hundreds of years of racism that have caused both symbolic and material harm. The injustices done by castigating Black individuals for their sexuality have been unconscionable. Such abuses in the forms of microaggressions and macroaggressions have had significant detrimental impacts. There is no question about how profoundly Black individuals and their communities have suffered from racism and how that translated, in part, into demonizing their sexuality. That history is real and needs to be respected and in no way covered up or misrepresented. At the same time, it is also important to point out how Black people and their allies responded and fought back in response to the prejudice and discrimination regarding Black sexual matters.

In a number of ways, resistance to fight against racism has been both realized and effective. One such example is the NAACP's response to Birth of a Nation (introduced earlier in Chapter 1.4). While it is true that many of the goals of the NAACP including censoring the film did not take hold, a number of other benefits for the NAACP and civil rights came as a result of organizing against the film. In the very early years of its existence, the NAACP focused predominantly on problematic issues that occurred almost exclusively in the South such as housing segregation and lynchings. However, once a Birth of a Nation was released, protests occurred all over the United States, as this film was a national phenomenon and relevant to more than one specific geographical area. Historian Stephen Weinberger (2011) put it best by asserting, "What is perhaps most interesting and important about the campaign against Birth is that while it did not achieve its goals, it transformed the NAACP in ways no one could have anticipated."

The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s constituted many African American writers, artists, and social critics who questioned and challenged the pervasive stereotypes, racism, discrimination, and prejudice that haunted Black people from the slavery era well into the Jim Crow period in American history. Besides the overarching cultural work that the Harlem Renaissance achieved, it showed progress in the area of Black sexuality, as "we now know that many of the most significant participants within the Renaissance were... [gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer people] who found unprecedented amounts of social and intellectual freedom in 1920s New York, not to mention places like Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta." Such writers as Langston Hughes and Richard Bruce Nugent included queer themes in their writings, and Blues singer Gladys Bentley often performed in drag. Additionally, drag balls held during this period included hundreds of individuals who were cross-dressed. These are merely a few of the numerous individuals who contributed to this rich historical period. The cultural work that resulted certainly challenged the hegemonic narrative that long haunted Black Americans generally and more specifically about their sexuality.

Long before the successes of striking down the miscegenation laws nationally with the Supreme Court ruling on the Loving v. Virginia case (see also Chapter 1.4), fearless Black activists existed. A prime example of such courage in the face of savage and deadly racism were Black feminists. One such activist was Ida B. Wells (1862-1931), a journalist, "who not only exploded the myth of bestial, white-female-obsessed Black brute but who also established remarkably sophisticated ways of thinking of lynching as a means of controlling newly emancipated—and partially enfranchised—Black American populations." A number of other Black activists spoke out against anti-Black sentiment connected to Black sexuality. Black icons W.E.B. Dubois (1868-1963), Mary Church Terrell (1863-1954), and Walter Francis white (1893-1955) were champions who specifically challenged the stereotype of the uncivilized Black male who sexually preyed on white women.

Another positive turn occurred when miscegenation laws nationwide were overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. The last vestige of segregation laws was ruled unconstitutional in the famous court case of Loving v. Virginia in June of 1967. As a result of this Supreme Court ruling, all laws that banned marriages between individuals of mixed racial heritage were null and void. This finding freed individuals to marry whom they wished irrespective of the racial makeup of both people in the relationship. The case was a major victory considering the entrenched widespread belief and legal backing that white and Black individuals could not have interracial sex.

Issues of Black sexuality have surfaced in many other ways through popular culture. It has been a "mixed bag" in terms of perpetuating old, harmful stereotypes on the one hand or being liberatory on the other hand. Yet, some representations cannot be so

neatly categorized in one camp or the other. Hollywood movies have portrayed Black sexuality in various ways, and music icons such as Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Janet Jackson, Marvin Gaye, Prince, and others have lyrics in their songs that get at the heart of sex and relationships. How about rap and hip-hop artists and their messages about (Black) sexuality? How have they contributed to the discourse on Black sexuality? How about incidents that have spurred discussion such as when Magic Johnson was diagnosed with HIV, or the Congressional hearings that ensued when Clarence Thomas was being nominated to be an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and Anita Hill brought charges of sexual harassment? How about popular television programs that feature African Americans? How about the notion of the "Down Low" that was originally discussed as an African American male phenomenon in which presumably otherwise straight men would have sexual contact with other men in a clandestine fashion? While space constraints do not allow for fuller details, descriptions, and analyses of these various popular cultural representations of Black sexuality, they are certainly worthy of detailed analysis in terms of how they have influenced our views and discourses about Black sexuality in U.S. society.

African-American LGBTQ Community

The African-American LGBTQ community is part of the overall LGBTQ culture. LGBTQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. The LGBTQ community did not receive societal recognition until the historical marking of the Stonewall Riots in 1969 in New York at Stonewall Inn. The Stonewall riots brought domestic and global attention to the lesbian and gay community. During the first night of the Stonewall riots, LGBTQ African Americans and Latinos likely were the largest percentage of the protestors, because those groups heavily frequented the bar.

During the Harlem Renaissance, a subculture of LGBTQ African-American artists and entertainers emerged, including people like Alain Locke, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, Wallace Thurman, Richard Bruce Nugent, Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Moms Mabley, Mabel Hampton, Alberta Hunter, and Gladys Bentley. Places like Savoy Ballroom and the Rockland Palace hosted drag-ball extravaganzas with prizes awarded for the best costumes. Langston Hughes depicted the balls as "spectacles of color." George Chauncey, author of Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940, wrote that during this period "perhaps nowhere were more men willing to venture out in public in drag than in Harlem."

Black Lesbian Identity

There has historically been a lot of racism and racial segregation in lesbian spaces. Racial and class divisions sometimes made it difficult for Black and white women to see themselves as on the same side in the feminist movement. Black women faced misogyny from within the black community even during the fight for Black liberation. Homophobia was also pervasive in the black community during the Black Arts Movement because "feminine" homosexuality was seen as undermining Black power. Black lesbians especially struggled with the stigma they faced within their own community. With unique experiences and often very different struggles, Black lesbians have developed an identity that is more than the sum of its parts – Black, lesbian, and woman. Some individuals may rank their identities separately, seeing themselves as Black first, woman second, lesbian third, or some other permutation of the three; others see their identities as inextricably interwoven.

Black Transgender People

Black transgender individuals face higher rates of discrimination than black LGB individuals. While policies have been implemented to inhibit discrimination based on gender identity, transgender individuals of color lack legal support. Transgender individuals are still not supported by legislation and policies like the LGBTQ community. New reports show vast discrimination in the black transgender community. Reports show in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey that black transgender individuals, along with non-conforming individuals, have high rates of poverty. Statistics shows a 34% rate of households receiving an income less than $10,000 a year. According to the data, that is twice the rate when looking at transgender individuals of all races and four times higher than the general Black population. Many face poverty due to discrimination and bias when trying to purchase a home or apartment. Thirty-eight percent of black trans individuals report in the Discrimination Survey being turned down property due to their gender identity, while 31% of the Black individuals were evicted due to their identity.

Black transgender individuals also face disparities in education, employment, and health. In education, Black transgender and non-conforming persons face brutish environments while attending school. Reporting rates show 49% of black transgender individuals being harassed from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Physical assault rates are at 27% percent, and sexual assault is at 15%. These drastically high rates have an effect on the mental health of black transgender individuals. As a result of high assault/harassment

and discrimination, suicide rates are at the same rate (49%) as harassment to Black transgender individuals. Employment discrimination rates are similarly higher. Statistics show a 26% rate of unemployed black transgender and non-conforming persons. Many Black trans people have lost their jobs or have been denied jobs due to gender identity: 32% are unemployed, and 48% were denied jobs.



Figure **7.3.3**: "Black and Brown Transgender Lives Matter- www.peoplespower.net" (CC BY-ND 2.0; @iamsdawson via Flickr)

Black Gay Pride Movement

The Black Gay Pride movement is a movement within the United States for African American members of the LGBTQ community. Started in the 1990s, Black Gay Pride movements began as a way to provide Black LGBTQ people an alternative to the largely white mainstream LGBTQ movement. White gay prides enforce, both consciously and unconsciously, the long history of ignoring the people of color who share in the experiences. The history of segregation seen in other organizations such as nursing associations, journalism associations, and fraternities is carried on into the black gay prides seen today. The exclusion of people of color in gay pride events plays into the existing undertones of white superiority and racist political movements. In response, the movement serves as a way for black LGBT people to discuss specific issues that are more unique to the black LGBT community and celebrate the progress of the black LGBTQ community. While the mainstream gay pride movement, often perceived as overwhelmingly white, has focused much of its energy on same-sex marriage, the Black Gay Pride movement has focused on issues such as racism, homophobia, and lack of proper health and mental care in Black communities.



Figure **7.3.4**: The flag of gay and trans pride in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Emercado2020 via Wikimedia)

Today, there are about 20 Black Gay Pride events all over the United States. The largest of these events have historically been D.C. Black Pride and Atlanta Black Pride. While black pride events started as early as 1988, D.C. Black Pride, which began in 1991, has been cited as one of the earliest celebrations. The D.C. Black Pride celebration started out of a tradition called the Children's Hour 15 years prior.

Economic Disparities within the African-American LGBTQ Community

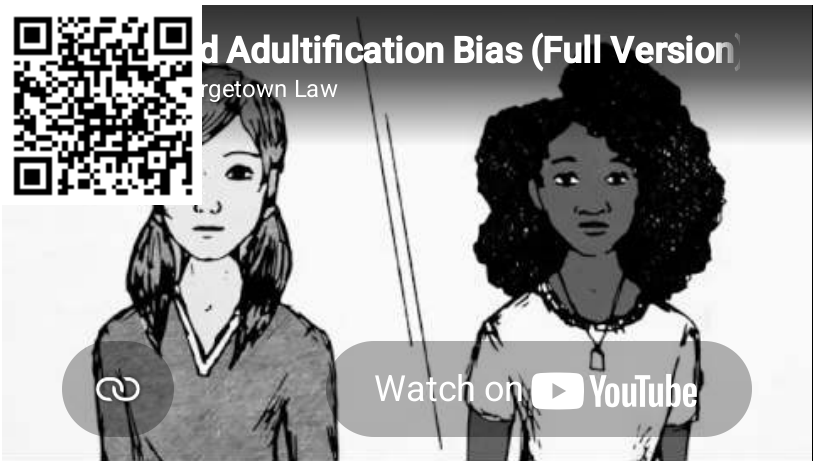
Within the Black LGBTQ community many face economic disparities and discrimination. Statistically Black LGBTQ individuals are more likely to be unemployed than their non-Black counterparts. According to the Williams Institute, the vast difference lies in the survey responses of “not in workforce” from different populations geographically. Black LGBTQ individuals, nonetheless, face the dilemma of marginalization in the job market. As of 2013, same-sex couples' income is lower than those in heterosexual relationships with an average of $25,000 income. For opposite-sex couples, statistics show a $1,700 increase. Analyzing economic disparities on an intersectional level (gender and race), the Black man is likely to receive a higher income than a woman. For men, statistics shows approximately a $3,000 increase from the average income for all Black LGBTQ identified individuals, and a $6,000 increase in salary for same-sex male couples. Female same-sex couples receive $3,000 less than the average income for all Black LGBTQ individuals and approximately $6,000 less than their male counterparts. The income disparity amongst black LGBTQ families affects the lives of their dependents, contributing to poverty rates. Children growing up in low-income households are more likely to remain in the poverty cycle. Due to economic disparities in the black LGBTQ community, 32% of children raised by gay Black men are in poverty. However, only 13% of children raised by heterosexual Black parents are in poverty and only 7% for white heterosexual parents.

Comparatively looking at gender, race, and sexual orientation, Black women same-sex couples are likely to face more economic disparities than Black women in an opposite sex relationship. Black women in same-sex couples earn $42,000 compared to Black women in opposite-sex relationships who earn $51,000, a twenty-one percent increase in income. Economically, Black women same-sex couples are also less likely to be able to afford housing. Approximately fifty percent of black women same-sex couples can afford to buy housing compared to white women same-sex couples who have a seventy-two percent rate in home ownership.

Adultification Bias of Black Girls

Adultification bias is a form of racial prejudice where children of people of colors, such as African American girls, are treated as being more mature than they actually are by a reasonable social standard of development. As such, African American girls have reported to be treated unfairly such as their true ages were disbelieved when they told authority figures like police officers, and facing consequences in school for misbehaviors while white girls doing the same acts would have their young ages taken into account.

This video explains 'adultification bias' and highlights some of the stories discussed by Black women and girls during focus-group research conducted by the Georgetown Law Center on Poverty's Initiative on Gender Justice and Opportunity.



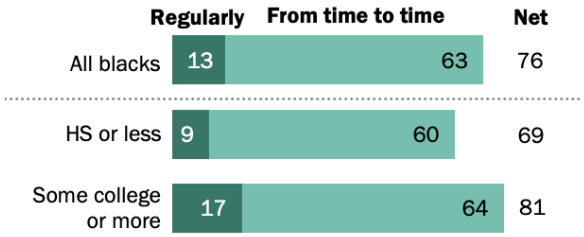
Video **7.3.5**: End Adultification Bias (Full Version).(Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Georgetown Law via YouTube)

Black American Experiences of Racial Discrimination Vary by Education Level and Gender

Personal experiences with racial discrimination are common for Black Americans. But certain segments within this group – most notably, those who are college educated or male – are more likely to say they’ve faced certain situations because of their race, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

Majorities of blacks say they've faced discrimination, but those with college experience are more likely to say this

% of blacks, by educational attainment, who say they have personally experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity

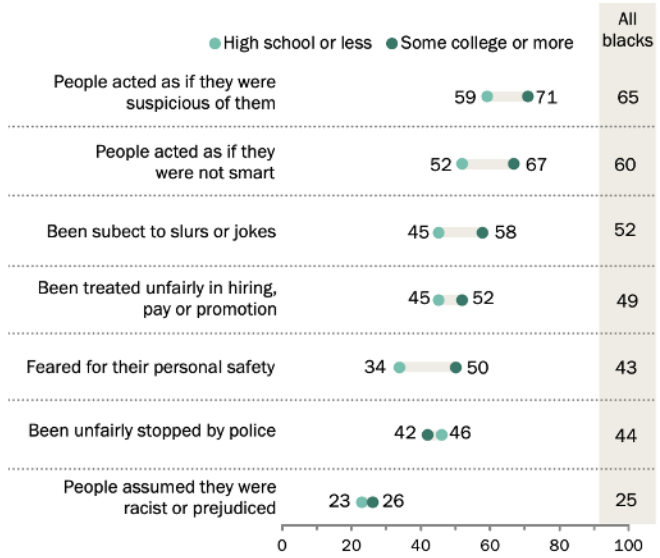


Note: Blacks include those who only report being one race and are non-Hispanic. "Some college or more" includes those who have an associate's, bachelor's or advanced degree and those who have attended college but did not obtain a degree. "High school or less" refers to those who have a high school diploma or its equivalent and those who did not complete high school.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-Feb. 5, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Blacks who have attended college are more likely than those who haven't to say they've faced certain situations because of their race

% of black adults, by educational attainment, who say each of the following has happened to them because of their race or ethnicity



Note: Blacks include those who only report being one race and are non-Hispanic. "Some college or more" includes those who have an associate's, bachelor's or advanced degree and those who have attended college but did not obtain a degree. "High school or less" refers to those who have a high school diploma or its equivalent and those who did not complete high school.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-Feb. 5, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

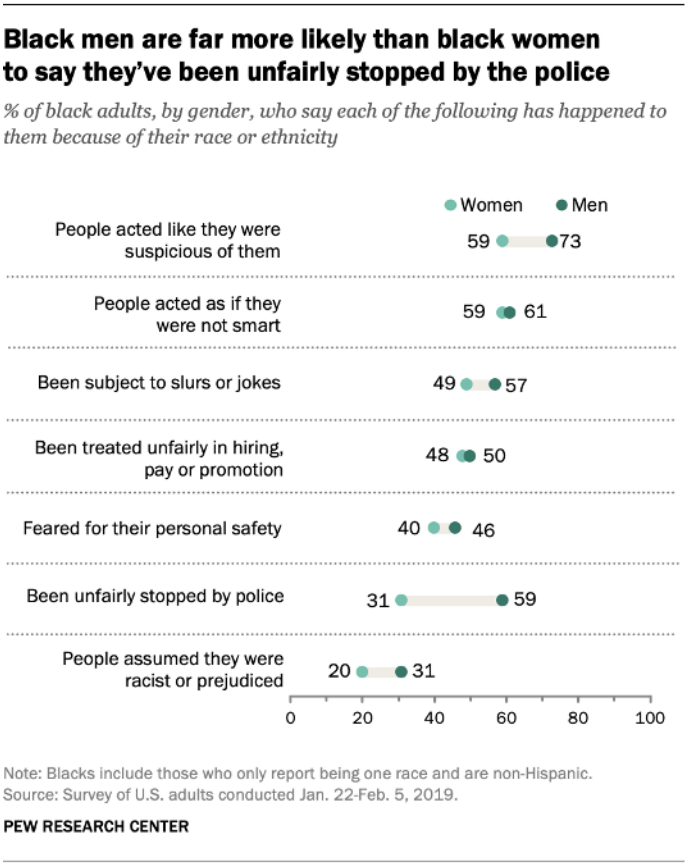


Figure 7.3.6: Most Black adults feel at least somewhat connected to a broader Black community in the U.S. (Used with permission; Views on Race in America 2019. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2019))

A study led by researchers at Stanford, Harvard and the Census Bureau, found in 99% of neighborhoods in the United States, Black boys earn less in adulthood than white boys who grow up in families with comparable income. According to this study (Chetty, Hendren, Jones, & Porter, (2020),

one of the most prominent theories for why Black and white children have different outcomes is that Black children grow up in different neighborhoods than whites. But, we find large gaps even between Black and white men who grow up in families with comparable income in the same Census tract (small geographic areas that contain about 4,250 people on average). Indeed, the disparities persist even among children who grow up on the same block. These results reveal that differences in neighborhood-level resources, such as the quality of schools, cannot explain the intergenerational gaps between Black and white boys by themselves.

The study also states,

Black-white disparities exist in virtually all regions and neighborhoods. Some of the best metro areas for economic mobility for low-income Black boys are comparable to the worst metro areas for low-income white boys, as shown in the maps below. And Black boys have lower rates of upward mobility than white boys in 99 percent of Census tracts in the country (Chetty et. al, 2020).

This study also found that the Black-white income gap is entirely driven by differences in men's, not women's, outcomes. The findings show that among those who grow up in families with comparable incomes, Black men grow up to earn substantially less than the white men. In contrast, Black women earn slightly more than white women, which is found to be conditional on parent income. The study also found little or no gap in wages or work hours between Black and white women.

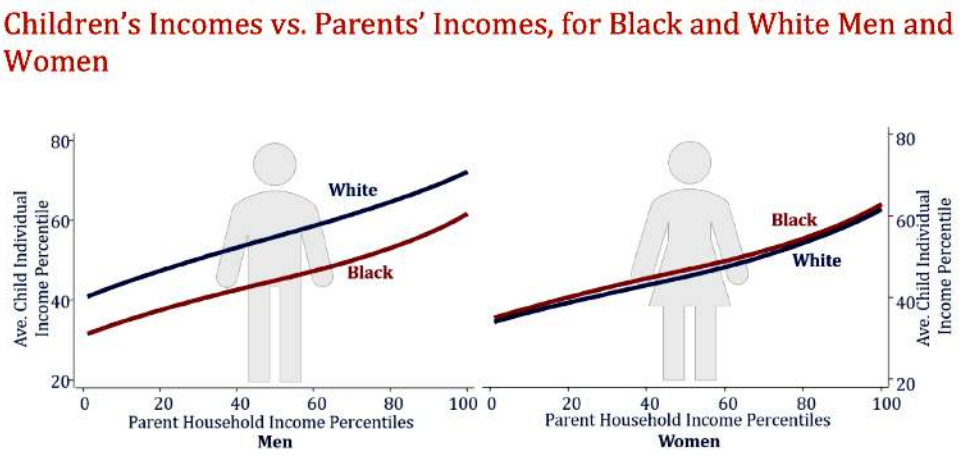


Figure **7.3.7**: Racial Disparities | Opportunity Insights. (CC BY-SA; via The Equity of Opportunity Project)

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-SA other than Black Sexuality and Origins of Discrimination which is CC BY-NC.

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0) (Contributed to Black Sexuality and Origins of Discrimination)
- Adultification Bias (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Black Gay Pride Movement (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Matrix of Domination (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- African-American LGBTQ Community (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Barrera, M. (2002). Hottentot 2000: Jennifer Lopez and her butt. In K. Phillips & B. Reay (Eds), *Sexualities in History: A Reader*, 411-417. London, UK:Routledge.
- Bowleg, Lisa (2008). "When Black + Lesbian + Woman [Not Equal To] Black Lesbian Woman: The Methodological Challenges of Qualitative and Quantitative Intersectionality Research". *Sex Roles*. **59** (5–6): 312–325. doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9400-z. S2CID 49303030 – via ProQuest.
- Chetty, R., Hendren, N., Jones, M.R., & Porter, S.R. (2020). Race and economic opportunity in the United States: An intergenerational perspective. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *135*(2), 711-783.
- Christy, Kameri; Valandra, Dr. (2017, September). A multi-systems life course perspective of economic abuse. *Advances in Social Work. 18* (1): 80–102.
- Collins, P.H. (2000) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum 13.*
- Cuvier G.. (n.d.). *The Animal Kingdom: Arranged in Conformity with its Organization.* (New York, NY: G. & C. & H. Carvill).
- Dang, Alain; Frazer, Somjen (December 2005). "Black Same-Sex Households in the United States" (PDF). *National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute National Black Justice Coalition*. Retrieved 30 October 2016.
- McGruder, K. (2010). Pathologizing Black sexuality: The us experience. In J. Battle & S. Barnes (Eds), *Black Sexualities: Probing Powers, Passions, Practices, and Policies*, 101-118. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Moore, Mignon (2008). "Gendered Power Relations among Women". *American Sociological Review*. **73** (2): 335–356. doi:10.1177/000312240807300208. S2CID 143591010 – via ProQuest.

- Moore, Mignon R. (2006). "Lipstick or Timberlands? Meanings of Gender Presentation in Black Lesbian Communities". *Signs*. **32** (1): 113–139. doi:10.1086/505269. JSTOR 10.1086/505269. S2CID 146712513 – via JSTOR.
- *Lewis, Cristopher S. (2012). "Cultivating Black Lesbian Shamelessness: Alice Walker's 'The Color Purple'". Rocky Mountain Review. **66** (2): 158–175. doi:10.1353/rmr.2012.0027. JSTOR 41763555. S2CID 145014258 – via JSTOR.*
- Parmer, T. & Gordon, J.J. (2007). Cultural influences on African American sexuality: the role of multiple identities on kinship, power and ideology. *Sexual Health: Moral and Cultural Foundations, 3*, 173-201. Retrieved from psycnet.apa.org/record/2007-01235-000
- Rachel, S. & Thrasher, C. (2015). *A History of 'Black' Sexuality in the United States: From Preslavery to the Era of HIV/AIDS to a Vision of HOPE for the Future*. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.
- Reid-Pharr, R. (2009) "Sexuality," in *Encyclopedia of African American History: 1899 to the Present—From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century (Volume 4*), ed. Paul Finkelman (Ed), New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Wallenstein, P. (1995). The right to marry: Loving v. Virginia. *OAH Magazine of History, 9*, no. 2, 41.
- Weinberger, S. (2011). "The birth of a nation" and the making of the naacp. *Journal of American Studies*, 77-93.

This page titled 7.3: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **7.3: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

7.4: Social Institutions

The social institutions of our culture also inform our socialization. Formal institutions—like schools, workplaces, religion and the government—teach people how to behave in and navigate these systems. Other institutions, like the media, contribute to socialization by inundating us with messages about norms and expectations. Chapter 4.3 discussed **institutional discrimination**, or discrimination that pervades the practices of whole institutions, such as housing, medical care, law enforcement, employment, and education. This section will dive deeper into the social institution of family, criminal justice system, religion, healthcare, education, economics, politics and the impact these institutions have on the lives of African Americans.

African American Family

Sociologist and author, Andrew Billingsley's (1992)**,** research on the African-American nuclear family has been divided into four parts that is used to show the differences in the family structure based on “gender, marital status, and the presence or absence of children, other relatives or non-relatives." These family sub-structures are divided up into three major structures: nuclear families, extended families, and augmented families.



Figure **7.4.1**: "An African American family reading together." (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; pennstatenews via Flickr)

The nuclear family structure has been defined as a married couple with children. This is the traditional norm for the composition of African-American families. Yet, in 1992, Billingsley documents that 25% of African-American families were nuclear families in comparison to 36% of all U.S. families. Almost 70 percent of Black children are born to unmarried parents.

The African-American segmented nuclear I (unmarried mother and children) and II (unmarried father and children) family structures are defined as a parent–child relationship. In 1992, 94% of African-American segmented nuclear families were composed of an unmarried mother and children. Glick's research found that single parent families are twice as prevalent in African-American families as they are in other races, and this gap continues to widen.

Billingsley's research continued with the African-American extended family structure, which is composed of primary members plus other relatives. Extended families have the same sub-structures as nuclear families, with the addition of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and additional family members. In 1992, 47% of all African-American extended families were segmented extended family structures, compared to 12% of all other races combined. Billingsley's research shows that in the African-American family the extended relative is often the grandparents.

Billingsley's research revealed another type of African-American family, called the augmented family structure, which is a family composed of the primary members, plus non-relatives. Billingsley's case study found that this family structure accounted for 8% of Black families in 1990. This family structure is different from the traditional nuclear family discussed earlier, as it combines the nuclear and extended family units with non-relatives.

Billingsley introduced a new family structure that branches from the augmented family structure. The African-American population is starting to see a new structure known as a non-family household. This non-family household contains no relatives. According to Glick in 1992, 37% of all households in the United States were a non-family household, with more than half of this percentage being African-Americans.

Rise in Divorce Rates

For African Americans who do marry, the rate of divorce is higher than white Americans. While the trend is the same for both African Americans and white Americans, with at least half of marriages for the two groups ending in divorce, the rate of divorce tends to be consistently higher for African Americans. African Americans also tend to spend less time married than white Americans. Overall, African Americans are married at a later age, spend less time married, and are more likely to be divorced than white Americans.

The decline and low success rate of Black marriages is crucial for study because many African Americans achieve a middle-class status through marriage and the likelihood of children growing up in poverty is tripled for those in single-parent rather than two-parent homes. Some researchers suggest that the reason for the rise in divorce rates is the increasing acceptability of divorces. The decline in social stigma of divorce has led to a decrease in the number of legal barriers of getting a divorce, thus making it easier for couples to divorce.

Breakdown of the Black Family

According to data extracted from 1910 U.S. Census manuscripts, compared to white women, Black women were more likely to become teenage mothers, stay single and have marriage instability, and were thus much more likely to live in female-headed single-parent homes. This pattern has been known as Black matriarchy because of the observance of many households headed by women.

The breakdown of the Black family was first brought to national attention in 1965 by sociologist and later Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in the groundbreaking Moynihan Report (also known as The Negro Family: The Case For National Action). Moynihan's report made the argument that the relative absence of nuclear families (those having both a married father and mother present) in Black America would greatly hinder further Black socio-economic progress.

The African American single parent family structure has historical roots dating back to 1880. A study of 1880 family structures in Philadelphia showed that three-quarters of Black families were nuclear families, composed of two parents and children. Data from U.S. Census reports reveal that between 1880 and 1960, married households consisting of two-parent homes were the most widespread form of African-American family structures. Although the most common, married households decreased over this time period. Single-parent homes, on the other hand, remained relatively stable until 1960, after which time they rose dramatically.

In the Harlem neighborhood of New York City in 1925, 85% of kin-related Black households had two parents. When Moynihan warned in his 1965 report on the coming destruction of the Black family, however, the out-of-wedlock birthrate had increased to 25% among the Black population. This figure continued to rise over time and in 1991, 68% of Black children were born outside of marriage. U.S. Census data from 2010 reveal that more African-American families consisted of single mothers than married households with both parents. In 2011, it was reported that 72% of Black babies were born to unmarried mothers. As of 2015, at 77.3 percent, Black Americans have the highest rate of non-marital births among native-born Americans.

In 2016, only 29% of African Americans were married, while 48% of all Americans were. Also, 50% of African Americans have never been married in contrast to 33% of all Americans. In 2016 just under half (48%) of Black women had never been married which is an increase from 44% in 2008 and 42.7% in 2005. Also in 2016, 15% percent of Black men were married to non-Black women which is up from 11% in 2010. Black women were the least likely to marry non-Black men at only 7% in 2017.

Non-marital births are far more common among Blacks than whites. In 2014, roughly seven-in-ten (71%) births to Black women occurred outside of marriage, compared with 29% of births to white women (Figure **7.4.1*a***).

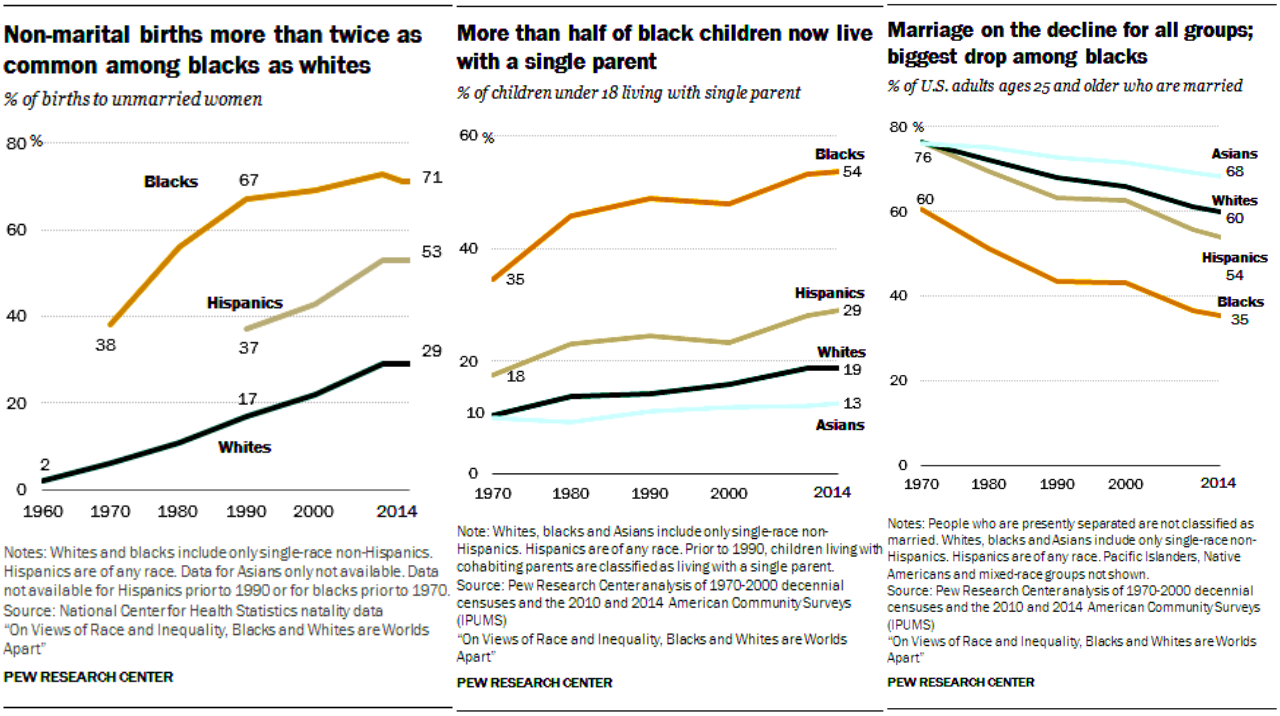


Figure 7.4.2: (a) Non-marital births more than twice as common among Blacks as whites. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016)) (b) More than half of Black children now live with a single parent. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016)) (c) Marriage on the decline for all groups; biggest drop among Blacks. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016))

Black children are more than twice as likely as white children to be living with just one parent. More than half (54%) of Black children did so in 2014, compared with 19% of whites. This 35-percentage point difference marks a widening of the racial gap in children's living arrangements. In 1970, 35% of Black children were living with only one parent, compared with 10% of white children (Figure 7.4.2b).

The marriage rate has declined across racial and ethnic groups, but the drop has been particularly dramatic among Blacks. In 2014, some 35% of Black adults ages 25 and older were married, compared with 60% of whites. In 1970, this gap was considerably smaller: fully 60% of Blacks and 76% of whites were married at that time (Figure 7.4.2c).

Structural barriers are often listed as the reason for the current trends in the African American family structure, specifically the decline in marriage rates. Imbalanced sex ratios have been cited as one of these barriers since the late nineteenth century, where Census data shows that in 1984, there were 99 Black males for every 100 Black females within the population. 2003 census data shows there are 91 Black males for every 100 females.

Criminal Justice System: Black Male Incarceration and Mortality

Let's also consider the link between the social institutions of family and the criminal justice system. Black male incarceration is often considered as one important explanation for the imbalanced sex ratios discussed earlier. Although Black males make up 6% of the population, they make up 50% of those who are incarcerated. This incarceration rate for Black males increased by a rate of more than four between the years of 1980 and 2003. The incarceration rate for African American males is 3,045 out of 100,000 compared to 465 per 100,000 white American males. In many areas around the country, the chance that Black males will be arrested and jailed at least once in their lifetime is extremely high. For Washington, D.C., this probability is between 80 and 90%.

Because Black males are incarcerated at six times the rate of white males, the skewed incarceration rates harm these Black males as well as their families and communities. Incarceration can affect former inmates and their future in society long after they leave prison. Those that have been incarcerated lose masculinity, as incarceration can affect a man's confirmation of his identity as a father and a breadwinner for the family. After being released from prison, efforts to reestablish or sustain connections and be active

within the family are often unsuccessful. Incarceration can be damaging to familial ties and can have a negative effect on family relations and a man's sense of masculinity.

The New Jim Crow

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness is a book by Michelle Alexander, a civil rights litigator and legal scholar. Though the conventional point of view holds that systemic racial discrimination mostly ended with the civil rights movement reforms of the 1960s, Alexander posits that the U.S. criminal justice system uses the War on Drugs as a primary tool for enforcing traditional, as well as new modes of discrimination and oppression. These new modes of racism have led to not only the highest rate of incarceration in the world, but also a disproportionately large rate of imprisonment for African American men.



Figure 7.4.3: The future of race in America: Michelle Alexander. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; TEDx Talks via YouTube)

Alexander points out that mass incarceration is "a stunningly comprehensive and well-disguised system of racialized social control that functions in a manner strikingly similar to Jim Crow." The culmination of this social control is what Alexander calls a "racial caste system," a type of stratification wherein people of color are kept in an inferior position. Its emergence, she believes, is a direct response to the Civil Rights Movement. It is because of this that Alexander argues for issues with mass incarceration to be addressed as issues of racial justice and civil rights. To approach these matters as anything but would be to fortify this new racial caste. Thus, Alexander aims to mobilize the civil rights community to move the incarceration issue to the forefront of its agenda and to provide factual information, data, arguments and a point of reference for those interested in pursuing the issue. Her broader goal is the revamping of the prevailing mentality regarding human rights, equality and equal opportunities in America, to prevent future cyclical recurrence of what she sees as “racial control under changing disguise”. According to the author, what has been altered since the collapse of Jim Crow is not so much the basic structure of US society, as the language used to justify its affairs. She argues that when people of color are disproportionately labeled as “criminals”, this allows the unleashing of a whole range of legal discrimination measures in employment, housing, education, public benefits, voting rights, jury duty, and so on.

Alexander argues that the War on Drugs has a devastating impact on inner city African American communities, on a scale entirely out of proportion to the actual dimensions of criminal activity taking place within these communities. During the past three decades, the US prison population exploded from 300,000 to more than two million, with the majority of the increase due to drug convictions. This led to the US having the world's highest incarceration rate. The US incarceration rate is eight times that of Germany, a comparatively developed large democracy. Alexander claims that the US is unparalleled in the world in focusing enforcement of federal drug laws on racial and ethnic minorities. In the capital city of Washington, D.C. three out of four young African American males are expected to serve time in prison. While studies show that quantitatively Americans of different races consume illegal drugs at similar rates, in some states Black men have been sent to prison on drug charges at rates twenty to fifty times those of white men. The proportion of African American men with some sort of criminal record approaches 80% in some major US cities, and they become marginalized, part of what Alexander calls "a growing and permanent "undercaste".

Religion

The range of descriptions of African American religious experiences has traditionally fallen between the sacred and the profane. Particularly, for African American religious experiences the Black Church has been viewed as the most sacred aspect of Black religious communities. Subsequently, the Black Church has been described as the driving force behind the agenda of Black leaders during the Civil Rights Movement. However, it was not the Black Church that was the defining attribute of African American religious experiences during the middle of the twentieth century; rather, it was a particular idea that many held most sacred. The way African Americans testified to their own experience can be described as a **prophetic testimony**: the notion of prophecy was the force that inspired many leaders to use their day-to-day experiences as testimonies to start a movement that went beyond accommodation with the goal of transformation. In this context, prophetic testimony must be examined through the lens of political theology alongside history. The category of political theology helps to emphasize the deep connection between faith (a theological claim) and the exercise of faith (a political claim). In other words, political theology combines pragmatic functions of faith with the way it is practiced.



Figure **7.4.4**: Cornel West, Author of Race Matters as well as Black Prophetic Fire. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Thompson Rivers University via Flickr)

Paradox in the Black Church

✔ Paradox in the Black Church

Black Church institutions have been acknowledged as the center for social justice movements within Black communities. Yet whether it is through examining the classical period of the Civil Rights Movement or a look at modern day religious leaders, there has not been one specific way that Black communities have sought to liberate their identities from a world that has not often recognized their humanity. Past examples include the crusades of organizations such as the Nation of Islam and the Pan-African Movement, while the Black Lives Matter Movement is a current example. This has led to numerous paradoxical responses to both civil rights and social movements from Black religious organizations. The paradox that occurs across the spectrum of Black Church institutions is deeply rooted in the historical context from which the traditions have developed.

During the period of enslavement in the United States slave masters recognized that religion could be used as a form of social control, especially in Southern states. Slave owners allowed slaves to hear biblical scripture, but only in so far as it reinforced the narrative that required their subordination to their masters. Many slave owners realized that controlled religion could be used to make their slaves docile and subordinate. Slaves were typically allowed to have their own services where either a white overseer or another slave gave a sermon based on the guidance of the master. In other words, officially sanctioned Black churches were under the supervision of white pastors who used religion as a way to reinforce their social and political agenda. To further limit any form of autonomy in Black churches, laws were created that prevented slaves from assembling together for “worship” or for any other purpose between sunrises and sunsets, even with a white master present in many Southern states. The only exception to these rules occurred when the slave masters took their slaves to an ordained white minister who regularly conducted services. Furthermore, the influence of white masters on many Black Churches created a religious benevolence between slave and slave master that helped to keep intact the moral order that served to justify both the institution of slavery and the treatment of slaves. Slaveholders had a religious imperative to make money and to have a comfortable living, as long as they were faithful to God. Masters were supposed to take great interest in the slave’s security because it would benefit both the slave and the owner. They also had the responsibility of teaching the enslaved Black Americans good behavior and morality.

They believed that religious instruction of the Black slaves would promote both their morality and their religion. Black churches became the ideal institution to realize the creation of a Christian interracial community. In these communities, slave owners would benevolently rule over their slaves, who were presumed to be satisfied with their positions in life. This form of social control had some success with slaves. Most did not subscribe to the benevolent master motif that was impressed upon them, but the combination of various methods of oppression left many slaves in desperate need of hope from some source. Many who chose to challenge the dominant narrative had hope in a political freedom that was possible only in the afterlife. The language of the slave spirituals makes proclamations such as: “I'm gonna wait upon the Lord till my change comes.” This

represents one polarity in which the Black Church was pulled. Indeed, this ideology continued well beyond the period of African enslavement and into the Civil Rights Movement era.

Health

Health Inequality

A deep connection between the field of medicine and the overall treatment and perception of African American extends back to the founding of this country. Proponents used pseudo-scientific (discussed in Chapter 1.2 as racialized science) ideas about the "natural" inferiority of Blacks to justify racism and slavery. In turn, these same forces led to a health inequality—with poor care from the medical field and higher rates of serious health issues—that persist in the present. African Americans have also faced lasting barriers in gaining employment and professional recognition in the healthcare field.

From the origins and continuation of health inequality to the fight to gain access to professional medical treatment, African American health and healthcare in U.S. history are interrelated issues. African American physicians, dentists, and nurses along with Black medical schools and hospitals have done pioneering work. While traditionally receiving less attention than issues like voting, housing, and education, the African American fight for healthcare is an important component of the Black freedom struggle, and a key aspect for understanding the current state of Black Americans.

This section is licensed CC BY-NC. Attribution: Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0)

African American Health in Early U.S. History

African American health is inextricably linked to slavery. Physician and scholar Rodney G. Hood argues that health disparities can be traced back to the period of slavery and the origins of racism, an effect he calls the "slave health deficit." The enslavement of millions of African Americans had severe and lasting health impacts, both during the period of slavery and after. The initial period of enslavement may have been the most lethal. Historians estimate that as many as 50% of Africans died before leaving the continent during capture, the forced march to slave holding areas, or waiting in pens. Somewhere between 15-20% died during the Middle Passage across the Atlantic from the fifteenth through the nineteenth century. The mortality rate varied by place of origin, conditions in captivity and on the ship, and the point of destination. As many as 675,000 died during capture, captivity, or transportation to this country. Of the 450,000 Africans who made it to the U.S., an additional 4.3% died in the period between arrival and sale, and as many as 25% perished during the "acclimation period" of their first eighteen months as they adjusted to new locations, climates, and diseases.

Enslaved individuals suffered from significant health problems. The Black infant and childhood mortality rate was double the rate for whites. Over half of all Black children were born severely underweight due to the poor treatment and lack of nutrition for pregnant slaves; many women miscarried or gave birth to stillborn babies. On average, Black mothers could nurse for only four months, compared to eight months for white babies. Early weaning, horrid living conditions, and lack of nutrition led to more than 50% of Black infants dying before the age of one.

The field of medicine both justified the poor treatment of African Americans and contributed to their health problems. Building on the writings of white intellectuals going back to at least the Greeks, leading American scientists and physicians categorized African Americans as biologically inferior and less intelligent, or even sub-human. By the early 1800s, proponents of slavery used this pseudo-scientific argument to justify slavery. Defenders of slavery further argued that Africans were more genetically predisposed to work in the fields than whites. Thomas Jefferson advocated this position in his influential Notes on the State of Virginia (1805). While he concluded that enslaved Africans were "inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind," Jefferson argued that they possessed some qualities that made them genetically designed to labor, notably that they "seem to require less sleep" and were "more tolerant of heat." Physicians perpetuated the belief that Africans also had resistance or immunity to diseases like yellow fever.

The inequality in access to healthcare and the poor treatment by physicians in this period marked the beginning of a healthcare system based on racial discrimination. The view of African Americans as inferior and "less worthy" meant that few received proper medical care for curable afflictions. In some ways, free Blacks faced worse healthcare, with little access due to high rates of

poverty and physicians who refused to treat Black patients. A two-tiered healthcare system—with greater access and treatment for whites—persisted for much of American history.

Medical Exploitation

Despite gains due to legislation, many African Americans remained distrustful of the government's involvement in healthcare. In the early twentieth century, the government funded forced sterilization programs in 32 states for tens of thousands of women, primarily people of color. Originating in the late nineteenth century, the **eugenics** movement spread in the U.S. starting in the 1900s. Eugenics was based on the concept that selective breeding should be encouraged, with government involvement, to improve society. Supported by funding from leading organizations like the Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations, scientists from top universities carried out pseudo-scientific research that demonstrated supposed negative genetic traits of certain groups that should not be allowed to reproduce: the mentally ill or disabled, those deemed sexually deviant, criminals, immigrants, the indigent, and minorities. Some doctors actively engaged in **eugenicide**, killing patients or willfully neglecting them—often newborns—until they died.

Forced sterilization became the most mainstream manifestation of eugenics, with states adopting forced sterilization laws in the first decade of the twentieth century. Although masked as progressive reform (to produce the most superior citizens and to reduce government spending on providing for the "unworthy") and supported by public health advocates, scientists, physicians, and politicians, forced sterilization was a product of racism and xenophobia (xenophobia was discussed earlier in Chapter 3.5). In many ways, proponents promoted forced sterilization similar to the ways they advocated residential segregation (i.e., African Americans should be kept out of white neighborhoods to prevent the spread of disease) or anti-miscegenation (i.e., interracial marriage and children would produce "inferior," mixed race children, damaging to white purity). The Nazis partially modeled their own policies of sterilization and eugenicide in the 1930s and 1940s on American practices.

Eighteen Southern states adopted sterilization laws and often used them to target African American women. In 1964, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party leader and voting rights advocate Fannie Lou Hamer spoke of her own experience. In 1961, Hamer underwent surgery in Mississippi for a uterine tumor. During surgery, and without her consent, the operating physician performed an unnecessary hysterectomy. Hamer highlighted the commonality of the procedure, which she dubbed a "Mississippi appendectomy," and estimated that physicians at the hospital, without consent and with no medical need, sterilized approximately 60% of Black female patients.



Figure **7.4.5**: Examination, Tuskeegee study. (CC PDM 1.0; National Archives and Records Administration via Wikipedia)

The Black Panther Party's health program further reflected the distrust of medical institutions. As detailed earlier, physicians used enslaved African Americans for medical experiments. Hospitals and prisons continued this practice after slavery ended, and medical colleges stole African American cadavers for student training. Perhaps the most famous example of medical exploitation was the **Tuskegee Experiment**, started by the U.S. Public Health Service in 1932. The program recruited 600 Black men—399 with syphilis, and 201 not infected—for a study on the effects of the disease. Administrators promised free medical treatment for participants. However, physicians did not inform the men of the purpose of the study and did not treat the individuals who had syphilis, even after penicillin was discovered as a cure in 1947. In 1972, the Associated Press reported on the story, leading to a public outcry and investigations. Recent research has demonstrated that the history of medical exploitation, particularly the Tuskegee Experiment, has led African Americans to be more distrustful of doctors and less likely to use healthcare services, contributing to the higher mortality rare.

Continuing Health Inequality

While the immediate years after integration saw some health gains for African Americans, particularly for those who previously had no access at all, improvements largely stagnated after 1975. Starting in the 1980s, Black mortality began to increase again, and African American life expectancy declined. With white flight to the suburbs, Black residents were increasingly concentrated in urban cores with underfunded and lower-quality healthcare.

In the face of continued health disparity, African American groups again provided their own medical services. Leonidas H. Berry founded an organization named the Flying Black Medics. Sponsored by the Methodist Episcopal Church and local community groups, the group began flights in 1970 from Chicago to Cairo, Illinois, providing free medical care and supplies to poor African Americans. In the late 1960s, the Black Panther Party became involved in healthcare. The national organization required all chapters to provide health clinics due to continued health discrimination and inequality. The Panthers also launched a sickle cell anemia awareness campaign, providing education and free screening for the disease, which the organization felt was understudied and underfunded as it disproportionately affected African Americans.

In the 1980s, the increase in the Black mortality rate also corresponded with the decreased funding for hospitals that predominantly served the African American community. State aid declined dramatically, particularly with the economic recession. The number of Black hospitals rapidly plummeted as a result. From 1961 to 1988, forty-nine Black hospitals closed, including Chicago's Provident Hospital, the first Black-operated hospital in the country.

Contemporary Health Disparities Experienced by African Americans

Health inequality persists in the U.S. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention found that African Americans have a significantly shorter life expectancy (75.1 years) than whites (78.7). African Americans suffer from higher rates of illness and health problems; the CDC estimates that 13.6% of African Americans are in poor health compared to 9.5% of whites. The overall mortality rate has dropped for all races in the past two decades, driven by declining deaths from cancer, heart attacks, and strokes. However, African Americans still have a mortality rate 16% higher than whites (down from 33% in 1999), and are more likely to die at every age. The discrepancy is particularly notable in infant mortality—a rate of 10.93 per 1,000 for Blacks and 4.89 per 1,000 for whites—and in maternal deaths with a rate of 43.5 Black deaths per 100,000 live births compared to 12.7 white deaths per 100,000 live births. The mortality rates for African American males are also typically higher than they are for African American females. This is another explanation for the imbalanced sex ratios mentioned earlier in the discussion on the African American Family. Between 1980 and 2003, 4,744 to 27,141 more African American males died annually than African American females. This higher mortality rate helps to explain the low marriage rates for many African American females who cannot find Black partners.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the following were the leading causes of death of Black men in 2017:

Table **7.4.6**: The leading causes of death among Black men in 2017. (Data from the Disease Control and Prevention (CDC))

Non-Hispanic Black, Male, All ages	Percent
1) Heart disease	23.7%
2) Cancer	20.2%
3) Unintentional injuries	7.9%
4) Homicide	5.0%
5) Stroke	4.9%
6) Diabetes	4.3%
7) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	3.2%
8) Kidney disease	2.6%
9) Septicemia	1.7%
10) Hypertension	1.6%

For young Black men between the ages of 15 and 44, the number one cause of death in 2017 was homicide. Strikingly, the number six cause of death for Black men in this age range is police violence.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the following were the leading causes of death of Black women in 2016:

Table **7.4.7**: The leading causes of death among Black women in 2016. (Data from the Disease Control and Prevention (CDC))

Non-Hispanic Black, Female, All ages	Percent
1) Heart disease	23.1%
2) Cancer	21.8%
3) Stroke	6.4%
4) Diabetes	4.5%
5) Alzheimer's disease	3.9%
6) Unintentional injuries	3.6%
7) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	3.4%
8) Kidney disease	3.1%
9) Septicemia	2.3%
10) Hypertension	2.0%

Health inequality reflects multiple factors: higher rates of unemployment, obesity, and poverty as well as lower rates of home ownership, education, and wealth. African Americans also continue to have less access to healthcare: 11.2% under the age of 65 do not have healthcare, compared to 7.5% of whites. Researchers have also demonstrated that racial discrimination, including from the healthcare system itself, also negatively impacts health. Inequality continues in the medical profession, too. While making up 12% of the overall population, less than 6% of physicians and surgeons are Black.

The roots of health inequality date back to the beginning of this country. Treated as racially inferior, neglected or excluded by white healthcare systems and as the victims of systematic and institutionalized racism and segregation, African Americans have suffered higher rates of disease and mortality than white Americans throughout this country's history. African Americans have fought for increased access; provided care for themselves in various forms, from enslaved midwives to Black hospitals; and made important contributions to the medical field. However, the historical vestiges of a two-tiered healthcare system remain as deeply entrenched as other aspects of structural/system racism (defined in Chapter 4.4).

Education

Increasingly, a college degree is the key to financial well-being, while the value of a high school diploma has diminished markedly over time. Since the 1960s, rates of college graduation have increased significantly for all major racial and ethnic groups, though large gaps persist as Blacks still trail whites in college completion, according to the 2016 Pew Research Center report (Figure **7.4.8**).

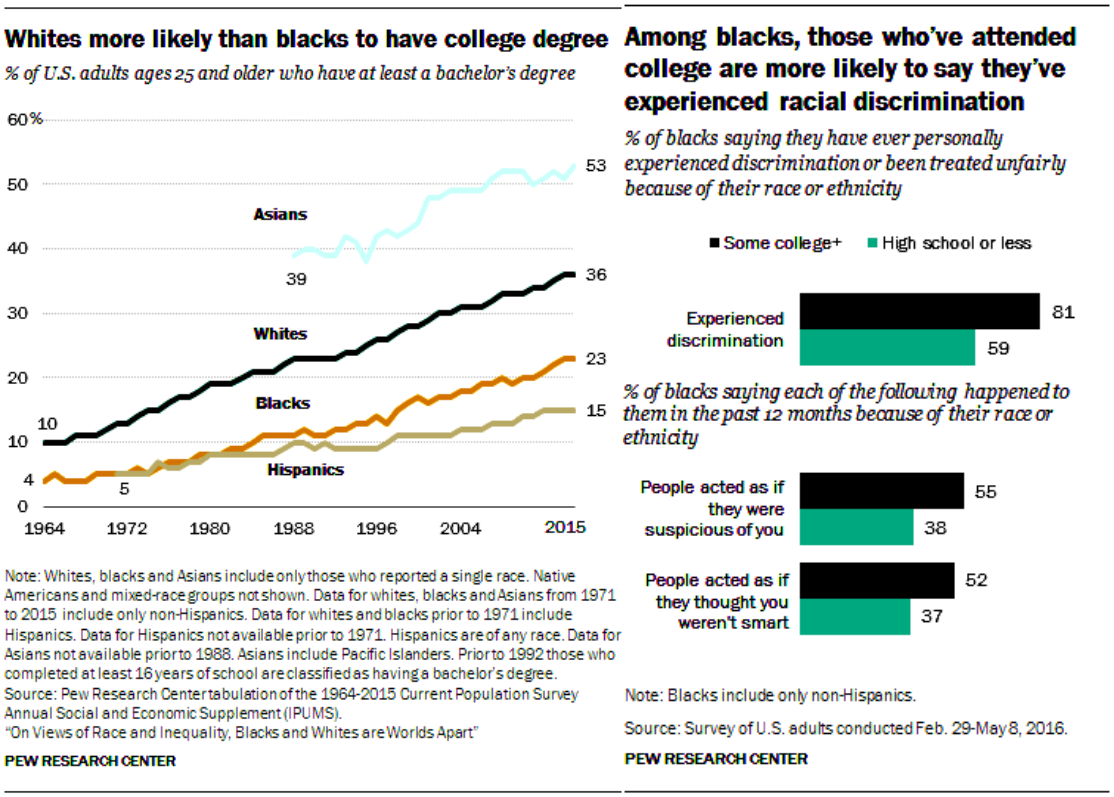


Figure **7.4.8**: (a) whites more likely than Blacks to have a college degree. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016)) (b) Among Blacks, those who've attended college are more likely to say they've experienced racial discrimination. (Used with permission; Blacks With College Experience More Likely to Say They Faced Discrimination. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2019))

The 2016 Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data shows that while the income gap between Black and white college-degree earners is narrower than those with less education, it still remains significant. The median adjusted household income among Black householders with at least a bachelor's degree was $82,300 in 2014, compared with $106,600 among white householders with the same level of education. Put another way, among households whose head is college-educated, Black households earn 77% what white households do (Figure **7.4.9**).

Education alone also does not close unemployment gaps between Blacks and whites. The unemployment rate for Blacks in 2015 was roughly double that of whites across all educational categories, according to the 2016 Pew Research Center's analysis of Census Bureau data.

Figure **7.4.9**: White-Black income gap persists across all education levels. U.S. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and Whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016))

Economics

Black households have only 10 cents in wealth for every dollar held by white households (Pew Research Center, 2017). In 2016, the median wealth of non-Hispanic white households was $171,000. That's 10 times the wealth of Black households ($17,100) – which reflects a larger gap than in 2007. The Great Recession of 2007-2009 triggered a stark decline in wealth for U.S. families and further widened the already large wealth gap between white and Black households. Yet the Black-to-white wealth gap has evolved differently for families at different income levels, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of Federal Reserve data. The wealth gap increased between middle-income Black and white families, but shrank between lower-income Black and white families from 2007 to 2016. Much of the reduction in the wealth gap among lower-income families was driven by a sharp decrease in wealth for whites Figure **7.4.10**.

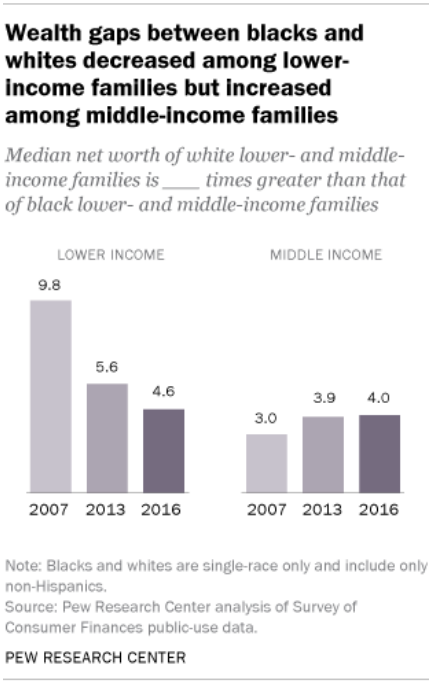


Figure **7.4.10**: The wealth gap between Blacks and Whites decreased among lower-income families but increased among middle-income families. (Used with permission; How Wealth Inequality Has Changed in the U.S. Since the Great Recession, By Race, Ethnicity and Income. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2017))

Blacks are more than twice as likely as whites to live in poverty (Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014). In 2014, about a quarter (26%) of Blacks were poor, compared with 10% of whites. The Black-white poverty gap has narrowed somewhat since the mid-1970s, when 30% of Blacks were living below the poverty line – a proportion nearly four times the share of whites living in poverty (8%).

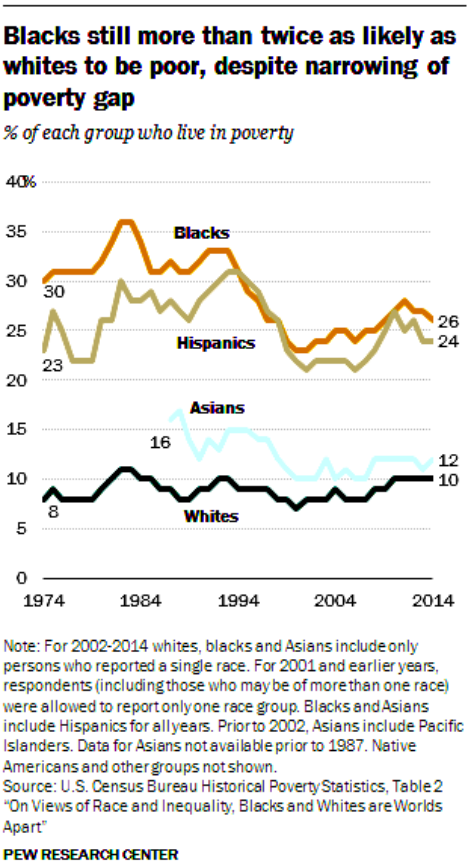


Figure 7.4.11: Blacks are still more than twice as likely as Whites to be poor, despite narrowing of poverty gap. (Used with permission; On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and whites Are Worlds Apart. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2016))

Politics

Many Blacks view political representation as a potential catalyst for increased racial equality, according to a 2016 Pew Research Center survey. Roughly four-in-ten Black adults (38%) said that working to get more Black people elected to office would be a very effective tactic for groups striving to help Blacks achieve equality.

Following Reconstruction till 1900, large numbers of Black Americans were elected to political office at the local, state and national levels. These elected officials included: Hiram Revels, first Black U.S. Senator (who was also a member of the Lumbee Nation) and Frederick Douglass, appointed President of the Freedman's Saving Bank and diplomat to the Dominican Republic. As discussed in Chapter 7.2, the Jim Crow era and backlash against the Black middle class all but contributed to the absence of Black elected officials for the better part of the 20th century. Only 11 Black senators have been elected in all of U.S. history, with the most recent being Reverand Raphael Warnock, who won a highly contested runoff in Georgia in 2021. Barack Obama, the most famous of these was elected as the first Black President. Shirley Chisholm was the first African American to run for President in 1972; in her bid to run on the Democratic Party ticket, she announced, "I am not the candidate of Black America, although I am Black and proud. I am not the candidate of the women's movement in this country, although I am a woman, and equally proud of that... I am the candidate of the people of America."

Voting

In 1870, the 15th Amendment was ratified, guaranteeing African American (men) the right to vote; however, challenges to this right included the poll tax, the grandfather clause, and literacy tests which disenfranchised countless Black voters during the Jim Crow era encompassing most of the 20th century. The 19th Amendment was passed in 1920, guaranteeing suffrage for all women, including Black women. Yet, the struggle to vote continued. The Civil Rights Movement championed voting rights in campaigns

such Freedom Summer (Mississippi) and the Selma to Montgomery (Alabama) March, registering thousands of Black voters. Fannie Lou Hamer, an organizer of Freedom Summer and co-founder of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, went to the 1964 Democratic Party Convention, attempting to be part of the official delegation, gave a blistering speech with details about voter registration suppression - which was later televised nationally and gained further support for the voting rights for Black Americans. President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965, prohibiting racial discrimination in voting. While Congress amended the Act to extend its enforcement, in the last decade, significant challenges to the enforcement have been granted by the U.S. Supreme Court, thereby negating the strength of the Voting Rights Act. Additionally, Southern states, such as Florida, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Virginia, deny convicted felons the right to ever vote - even after they have served their sentence, a policy which disproportionately impacts the Black population which has higher incarceration rates than other race-ethnic groups. According to the Sentencing Project (2016), one in 13 African Americans of voting age is disenfranchised, which is four times greater than non-African Americans voters. Further, over 7.4 percent of the adult African American population is disenfranchised compared to 1.8 percent of the non-African American population (Sentencing Project, 2016). In Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, more than 1 in 5 African Ameicans is a disenfranchised voter due to a felony conviction. With so many disenfrancised voters, the struggle for voting rights for Black voters is far from over. Yet, through the efforts of voting rights activists such as Stacey Abrams, who co-founded the New Georgia Project in 2014 and registered more than 500,000 new voters, the state of Georgia shifted to a predominantly Democratic state in 2020, helping the Biden-Harris ticket to clench the 2020 Presidential election.



Figure **7.4.12**: Georgia State Representative Stacey Abrams speaking at the Barbara Jordan Forum 2012. (CC BY-SA 2.0; LBJ School via Wikimedia)

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-SA other than Paradox in the Black Church and Health Inequality which are CC BY-NC.

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0) (Contributed to: Paradox in the Black Church and Health Inequality)
- African-American Family Structure (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- The New Jim Crow (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Anderson, M. (2016, July 16). Blacks with college experience more likely to say they faced discrimination. *Pew Research Center*.
- Billingsley, A. (1992). *Climbing Jacob's Ladder*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Brown, T. & Patterson, E. (2019). Wounds from incarceration that never heal. *The New Republic*.
- Byrd, W. M. & Clayton, L.A. (1992). An American health dilemma: a history of Blacks in the health system. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, *84*(2), 189.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *LastStats - Health of Black or African American population*.
- Daniel P.M. (1965). *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, Washington, D.C., Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor.
- Digital History. (2016). What was life like under slavery. *Digital History.*
- Dixon, P. (2009). Marriage among African Americans: What does the research reveal? *Journal of African American Studies*. *13*(1): 29–46.
- Dyer, W.M. (2005). Prison fathers, and identity: A theory of how incarceration affects men's paternal identity. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice About Men as Fathers*. *3*(3): 201–219.
- Fogel, R.W. (1994). *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery.* New York, NY: WW Norton & Company.
- Gates, Jr., H.L. (2014). How many slaves landed in the U.S. *The Root.*
- Paul C. Glick, ed. by Harriette Pipes McAdoo (1997). *Black families* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif. [u.a.]: Sage. p. 119.
- Herbert C.C. (2007). *African American Slave Medicine: Herbal and Non-Herbal Treatments.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Heron, M. (2018). Deaths: leading causes for 2016. *National Vital Statistics Report, US Department of Health and Human Services.*
- Hershberg, T. (1971). Free Blacks in antebellum Philadelphia: A study of ex-slaves, freeborn, and socioeconomic decline. *Journal of Social History*, 183-209.
- Hood, R.G. (2001). The" slave health deficit:" The case for reparations to bring health parity to African Americans. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, *93*(1),
- Klein, H.S., Engerman, S.L., Haines, R., & Shlomowitz, R. (2001). Transoceanic mortality: The slave trade in comparative perspective. *The William and Mary Quarterly*, *58*(1), 93-118.
- Kochhar, R. & Cilluffo. A. (2017). How wealth inequality has changed in the U.S. since the great recession, by race, ethnicity and income. *Pew Research Center*.
- McAdoo, P. (1997). *Black Families.* 3rd ed.. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Mintz, S. (2013). Childhood and transatlantic slavery. *Children & Youth in History.*
- Moynihan, Daniel P. *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, Washington, D.C., Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor, 1965.
- Morgan, S.,McDaniel, A., Miller, A.T., & Preston, S.H. (1993). Racial differences in household and family structure at the turn of the century. *American Journal of Sociology. 98*(4): 799–828.
- *Pew Research Center.* (2016). On views of race and inequality, Blacks and whites are worlds apart.

This page titled 7.4: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **7.4: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

7.5: Social Change and Resistance

Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

Education was but one aspect of the nation's Jim Crow machinery. African Americans had been fighting against systemic racism, a variety of racist policies, cultures and beliefs in all aspects of American life. And while the struggle for Black inclusion had few victories before World War II, the war and the **Double V campaign** as well as the postwar economic boom led to rising expectations for many African Americans. The Double V campaign was a slogan and drive to promote the fight for democracy in overseas campaigns and at the home front in the United States for African Americans during World War II. The Double V refers to the "V for victory" sign prominently displayed by countries fighting "for victory over aggression, slavery, and tyranny," but adopts a second "V" to represent the double victory for African Americans fighting for freedom overseas and at home. When persistent racism and racial segregation undercut the promise of economic and social mobility, African Americans began mobilizing on an unprecedented scale against the various discriminatory social and legal structures.



Figure **7.5.1**: Members of an artillery unit stand by and check their equipment while the convoy takes a break. Photograph shows African American artillery troops on march in Belgium. (CC PDM 1.0; U.S. Army via Wikipedia)

While many of the Civil Rights Movement's most memorable and important moments, such as the sit-ins, freedom rides and especially the March on Washington, occurred in the 1960s, the 1950s and 1940s were a significant decade in the sometimes-tragic, sometimes-triumphant march of civil rights in the United States - resistance which ultimately began with the antebellum movement to abolish slavery in the 1800s. Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Henry Box Brown, Nat Turner and Marcus Garvery are among those who set the stage for the Civil Rights Movement. In 1941, A. Phillip Randolf planned a massive march on Washington to protest against the exclusion that Black Americans faced when applying for defense jobs and access to the New Deal opportunities. In 1953, years before Rosa Parks' iconic confrontation on a Montgomery city bus, an African American woman named Sarah Keys publicly challenged segregated public transportation. Keys, then serving in the Women's Army Corps, traveled from her army base in New Jersey back to North Carolina to visit her family. When the bus stopped in North Carolina, the driver asked her to give up her seat for a white customer. Her refusal to do so landed her in jail in 1953 and led to a landmark 1955 decision, Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company, in which the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled that "separate but equal" violated the Interstate Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Poorly enforced, it nevertheless gave legal coverage for the freedom riders years later. Moreover, it was a morale-building decision. Six days after the decision was announced, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in Montgomery.

But if some events encouraged civil rights workers with the promise of progress, others were so savage they convinced activists that they could do nothing but resist. In the summer of 1955, two white men in Mississippi kidnapped and brutally murdered a fourteen-year-old boy, Emmett Till. Till, visiting from Chicago and perhaps unfamiliar with the etiquette of Jim Crow, allegedly whistled at a white woman named Carolyn Bryant. Her husband, Roy Bryant, and another man, J.W. Milam, abducted Till from his relatives' home, beat him, mutilated him, shot him, and threw his body in the Tallahatchie River. But, the body was found. Emmett's mother held an open-casket funeral so that Till's disfigured body could make national news. The men were brought to trial. The evidence was damning, but an all-white jury found the two not guilty. Only months after the decision the two boasted of their crime in Look magazine. For young Black men and women soon to propel the Civil Rights Movement, the Till case was an

indelible lesson. Bryant later recanted the story in an interview 60 years later; nonetheless, a trail of white women weaponizing lies against Black men still persists today and can be understood in the "Karen's of 2020."



Figure **7.5.2**: Emmett Till, 13-years-old, on Christmas Day, 1954. Photograph taken by Mamie Till Bradley. (Fair use; Mamie Till Bradley via Wikipedia)

Four months after Till's death, Rosa Parks refused to surrender her seat on a Montgomery city bus. Her arrest launched the Montgomery bus boycott, a foundational moment in the civil rights crusade. Montgomery's public transportation system had longstanding rules that required African American passengers to sit in the back of the bus and give up their seats to white passengers when the buses filled. Parks refused to move on December 1, 1955 and was arrested. She was not the first to protest against the policy by staying seated on a Montgomery bus, but she was the woman around whom Montgomery activists rallied a boycott.

Soon after Parks' arrest, Montgomery's Black population, organized behind the recently arrived Baptist minister, Martin Luther King, Jr., and formed the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) to coordinate a widespread boycott. During December 1955 and all of 1956, King's leadership sustained the boycott and thrust him into the national spotlight. The Supreme Court ruled against Montgomery and on December 20, 1956 King brought the boycott to a successful conclusion, ending segregation on Montgomery's public transportation and establishing his reputation as a national leader in African American efforts for equal rights.

Motivated by the success of the Montgomery boycott, King and other African American leaders looked for ways to continue the fight. In 1957, King helped create the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Unlike the MIA, which targeted one specific policy in one specific city, the SCLC was a coordinating council to helping civil rights groups across the South plan and sustain boycotts, protests, and assaults on southern Jim Crow laws and practices.

As pressure built, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first such measure passed since Reconstruction. Although the act was nearly compromised away to nothing, although it achieved some gains, such as creating the Civil Rights Commission in the Department of Justice to investigate claims of racial discrimination, it nevertheless signaled that pressure was finally mounting for Americans to finally confront the racial legacy of slavery and discrimination.

Despite successes at both the local and national level, the Civil Rights Movement faced bitter opposition. Those opposed to the movement often used violent tactics to scare and intimidate African Americans and subvert legal rulings and court orders. For example, a year into the Montgomery Bus Boycott, angry white southerners bombed four African American churches as well as the homes of King and fellow civil rights leader E. D. Nixon. Though King, Nixon and the MIA persevered in the face of such violence, it was only a taste of things to come. Such unremitting hostility and violence left the outcome of the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement in doubt. Despite its successes, civil rights activists looked back on the 1950s as a decade of at-best mixed results and incomplete accomplishments. While the bus boycott, Supreme Court rulings and other civil rights activities signaled progress, church bombings, death threats, and stubborn legislators demonstrated the distance that still needed to be traveled.

The Civil Rights Movement (1960s)

So much of the energy and character of "the sixties" emerged from the Civil Rights Movement, which won its greatest victories in the early years of the decade. The movement itself was changing. Many of the civil rights activists pushing for school

desegregation in the 1950s were middle-class and middle-aged. In the 1960s, a new student movement arose whose members wanted swifter changes in the segregated South. Confrontational protests, marches, boycotts, and sit-ins accelerated.

The tone of the modern U.S. Civil Rights Movement changed at a Greensboro, North Carolina department store in 1960, when four African American students participated in a “sit-in” at a whites-only Woolworth's lunch counter. The 1960 Greensboro sit-ins were an instrumental action and also the best-known sit-ins of the civil rights movement. They are considered a catalyst to the subsequent sit-in movement, in which 70,000 people participated. Activists sat at segregated lunch counters in an act of defiance, refusing to leave until being served and willing to be ridiculed, attacked, and arrested. It drew resistance, but it forced the desegregation of Woolworth's department stores. It prompted copycat demonstrations across the South. The protests offered evidence that student-led direct action could enact social change and established the civil rights movement’s direction in the forthcoming years.

The following year, civil rights advocates attempted a bolder variation of a “sit-in” when they participated in the Freedom Rides. Activists organized interstate bus rides following a Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation on public buses and trains. The rides intended to test the court’s ruling, which many Southern states had ignored. An interracial group of Freedom Riders boarded buses in Washington D.C. with the intention of sitting in integrated patterns on the buses as they traveled through the Deep South. On the initial rides in May 1961, the riders encountered fierce resistance in Alabama. Angry mobs composed of KKK members attacked riders in Birmingham, burning one of the buses and beating the activists who escaped. Despite the fact that the first riders abandoned their trip and decided to fly to their destination, New Orleans, civil rights activists remained vigilant. Additional Freedom Rides launched through the summer and generated national attention amid additional violent resistance. Ultimately, the Interstate Commerce Commission enforced integrated interstate buses and trains in November 1961.

In the fall of 1961, civil rights activists descended on Albany, a small city in southwest Georgia. A place known for entrenched segregation and racial violence, Albany seemed an unlikely place for Black Americans to rally and demand civil rights gains. The activists there, however, formed the Albany Movement, a coalition of civil rights organizers that included members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, or, “snick”), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the NAACP. But in Albany the movement was stymied by Police Chief Laurie Pritchett, who launched mass arrests but refused to engage in police brutality and bailed out leading officials to avoid negative media attention. It was a peculiar scene, and a lesson for Southern activists.

Despite its defeat, Albany captured much of the energy of the civil rights movement. The Albany Movement included elements of the Christian commitment to social justice in its platform, with activists stating that all people were “of equal worth” in God’s family and that “no man may discriminate against or exploit another.” In many instances in the 1960s, Black Christianity propelled civil rights advocates to action and demonstrated the significance of religion to the broader civil rights movement. King’s rise to prominence underscored the role that African American religious figures played in the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Protestors sang hymns and spirituals as they marched. Preachers rallied the people with messages of justice and hope. Churches hosted meetings, prayer vigils, and conferences on nonviolent resistance. The moral thrust of the movement strengthened African American activists while also confronting white society by framing segregation as a moral evil.

As the Civil Rights Movement garnered more followers and more attention, white resistance stiffened. In October 1962, James Meredith became the first African American student to enroll at the University of Mississippi. Meredith’s enrollment sparked riots on the Oxford campus, prompting President John F. Kennedy to send in U.S. Marshals and National Guardsmen to maintain order. On an evening known infamously as the Battle of Ole Miss, segregationists clashed with troops in the middle of campus, resulting in two deaths and hundreds of injuries. Violence despite federal intervention served as a reminder of the strength of white resistance to the Civil Rights Movement, particularly in the realm of education.



Figure **7.5.3**: The first African American student admitted to segregated Ole Miss, James Meredith, accompanied by U.S. Marshals, walks to class at the University of Mississippi in 1962. (CC PDM 1.0; Marion S. Trikosko via Library of Congress)

The following year, 1963, was perhaps the decade's most eventful year for civil rights. In April and May, the SCLC organized the Birmingham Campaign, a broad campaign of direct action aiming to topple segregation in Alabama's largest city. Activists used business boycotts, sit-ins, and peaceful marches as part of the campaign. SCLC leader Martin Luther King Jr. was jailed, prompting his famous handwritten Letter from Birmingham Jail urging not only his nonviolent approach but active confrontation to directly challenge injustice. The campaign further added to King's national reputation and featured powerful photographs and video footage of white police officers using fire hoses and attack dogs on young African American protesters. It also yielded an agreement to desegregate public accommodations in the city; activists in Birmingham scored a victory for civil rights and drew international praise for the nonviolent approach in the face of police-sanctioned violence and bombings.



Figure **7.5.4**: Images of police brutality against peaceful Civil Rights demonstrators shocked many Americans and helped increase support for the movement. (CC BY-SA; via LibreText)

White resistance magnified. In June, Alabama Governor George Wallace famously stood in the door of a classroom building in a symbolic attempt to halt integration at the University of Alabama. President Kennedy addressed the nation that evening, criticizing Wallace and calling for a comprehensive civil rights bill. A day later, civil rights leader Medgar Evers was assassinated at his home in Jackson, Mississippi. Civil rights leaders gathered in August 1963 for the March on Washington. The March called for, among other things, civil rights legislation, school integration, an end to discrimination by public and private employers, job training for the unemployed, and a raise in the minimum wage. On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, an internationally renowned call for civil rights and against racism that raised the movement's profile to unprecedented heights. The year would end on a somber note with the assassination of President Kennedy, a public figure considered an important ally of civil rights, but it did not halt the civil rights movement.



Figure **7.5.5**: White activists, including Jewish leaders, increasingly joined African Americans, including Dr. King, in the Civil Rights Movement.
(CC PDM 1.0; National Archives via Wikimedia)

President Lyndon Johnson embraced the Civil Rights Movement, though somewhat reluctantly as he navigated between white Southern segregationists and activists such as Dr. King. The following summer, Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, widely considered to be among the most important pieces of civil rights legislation in American history. The comprehensive act barred segregation in public accommodations and outlawed discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, and national or religious origin.



Figure **7.5.6**: Lyndon B. Johnson sits with civil rights leaders in the White House (1964). One of Johnson's greatest legacies would be his staunch support of civil rights legislation. (CC PDM 1.0; National Archives (Yoichi Okamoto) via Wikimedia)

Direct action continued through the summer, as student-run organizations like SNCC and CORE (The Congress of Racial Equality) helped with the Freedom Summer in Mississippi, a drive to register African American voters in a state with an ugly history of discrimination. Freedom Summer campaigners set up schools for African American children and endured intimidation tactics. Even with progress, violent resistance against civil rights continued, particularly in regions with longstanding traditions of segregation.

Direct action and resistance to such action continued in March 1965, when activists attempted to march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, with the support of prominent civil rights leaders on behalf of local African American voting rights. In a narrative that had become familiar, "Bloody Sunday" featured peaceful protesters attacked by white law enforcement with batons and tear gas. After they were turned away violently a second time, marchers finally made the 70-mile trek to the state capitol later in the month. Coverage of the first march prompted President Johnson to present the bill that became the Voting Rights Act of 1965, an act that abolished voting discrimination in federal, state, and local elections with an eye on African American enfranchisement in the South. In two consecutive years, landmark pieces of legislation had helped to weaken de jure segregation and disenfranchisement in America.



Figure **7.5.7**: Five leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. From left: Bayard Rustin, Andrew Young, N.Y. Congressman William Ryan, James Farmer, and John Lewis in 1965. (CC PDM 1.0; Stanley Wolfson via Library of Congress)

And then things began to stall. Days after the ratification of the Voting Rights Act, race riots broke out in the Watts District of Los Angeles. Rioting in Watts stemmed from local African American frustrations with residential segregation, police brutality, and racial profiling. Waves of riots would rock American cities every summer thereafter. Particularly destructive riots occurred in 1967—two summers later—in Newark and Detroit. Each resulted in deaths, injuries, arrests, and millions of dollars in property damage. In spite of Black achievements, inner-city problems persisted for many African Americans. The phenomenon of **white flight**—when whites in metropolitan areas fled city centers for the suburbs—often resulted in "re-segregated" residential patterns. Limited access to economic and social opportunities in urban areas bred discord. In addition to reminding the nation that the Civil Rights Movement was a complex, ongoing event without a concrete endpoint, the unrest in northern cities reinforced the notion that the struggle did not occur solely in the South. Many Americans also viewed the riots as an indictment of the Great Society, President Johnson's sweeping agenda of domestic programs that sought to remedy inner-city ills by offering better access to education, jobs, medical care, housing, and other forms of social welfare. This would mark the decline of the Civil Rights Movement.

Black Power Movement

By the late 1960s, SNCC, led by figures such as Stokely Carmichael who later changed his name to Kwame Ture, had expelled its white members and shunned the interracial effort in the rural South, focusing instead on injustices in northern urban areas. After President Johnson refused to take up the cause of the Black delegates in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention, SNCC activists became frustrated with institutional tactics and turned away from the organization's founding principle of nonviolence over the course of the next year. This evolving, more aggressive movement called for African Americans to play a dominant role in cultivating Black institutions and articulating Black interests rather than relying on interracial, moderate approaches. At a June 1966 civil rights march, Carmichael told the crowd, "What we gonna start saying now is Black power!" The slogan not only resonated with audiences, it also stood in direct contrast to King's "Freedom Now!" campaign. The political slogan of **Black power** could encompass many meanings, but at its core stood for the self-determination of Blacks in political, economic, and social organizations.



Figure 7.5.8: Like Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois before them, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X represented two styles of racial uplift while maintaining the same general goal of ending racial discrimination. How they would get to that goal is where the men diverged. Marion S. Trikosko, "[Martin Luther King and Malcolm X waiting for press conference]," March 26, 1964. (CC PDM 1.0; Marion S. Trikosko via Library of Congress)

While Carmichael asserted that "Black power meant Black people coming together to form a political force," to others it meant violence. In 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale formed the **Black Panther Party** in Oakland, California. The Black Panthers became the standard-bearers for direct action and self-defense, using the concept of decolonization in their drive to liberate Black communities from white power structures. The revolutionary organization also sought reparations and exemptions for Black men from the military draft. Citing police brutality and racist governmental policies, the Panthers aligned themselves with the "other people of color in the world" against whom America was fighting abroad. Although it was perhaps most well-known for its open display of weapons, military-style dress, and Black nationalist beliefs, the Party's 10-Point Plan also included employment, housing, and education. The Black Panthers worked in local communities to run "survival programs" that provided food, clothing, medical treatment, and drug rehabilitation. They focused on modes of resistance that empowered Black activists on their own terms.

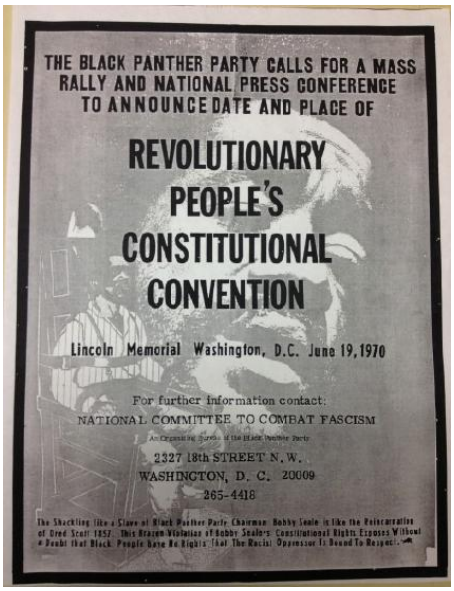


Figure 7.5.9: The Black Panther Party used radical tactics like the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention to bring attention to the oppression of Blacks in America. (CC PDM 1.0; Gelman Library, George Washington University via Wikimedia)

By 1968, the Civil Rights Movement looked quite different from the one that had emerged out of the 1960 Greensboro sit-ins. The movement had never been monolithic, but prominent, competing ideologies had now fractured it significantly. King's assassination on a Memphis hotel room balcony in April sparked another wave of riots in over 100 American cities and brought an abrupt, tragic end to the life of the movement's most famous figure. Only a week after his assassination, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, another significant piece of federal legislation that outlawed housing discrimination. Two months later, on June

6, Robert Kennedy was gunned down in a Los Angeles hotel while campaigning to be the Democratic candidate for President. The assassinations of both national leaders in succession created a sense of national anger and dissolution.

The frustration prompted dozens of national protest organizations to converge on the Democratic National Convention in Chicago at the end of August. A bitterly fractured Democratic Party gathered to assemble a passable platform and nominate a broadly acceptable presidential candidate. Outside the convention hall, numerous student and radical groups—the most prominent being Students for a Democratic Society and the Youth International Party—identified the conference as an ideal venue for demonstrations against the Vietnam War and planned massive protests in Chicago's public spaces. Initial protests were peaceful, but the situation quickly soured as police issued stern threats, and young people began to taunt and goad officials. Many of the assembled students had protest and sit-in experiences only in the relative safe havens of college campuses, and were unaccustomed to the heavily armed, big-city police force, accompanied by National Guard troops in full riot gear. Attendees recounted vicious beatings at the hands of police and Guardsmen, but many young people—convinced that much public sympathy could be won via images of brutality against unarmed protesters—continued stoking the violence. Clashes spilled from the parks into city streets, and eventually the smell of tear gas penetrated upper floors of the opulent hotels hosting Democratic delegates.

The ongoing police brutality against the protesters overshadowed the convention and culminated in an internationally televised standoff in front of the Hilton Hotel, where policeman beat protestors chanting, "the whole world is watching!" For many on both sides, the Chicago riots engendered a growing sense of the chaos rocking American life. The disparity in force between students and police frightened some radicals out of advocacy for revolutionary violence, while some officers began questioning the war and those who waged it. Many more, though, saw disorder and chaos where once they had seen idealism and progress. Ultimately, the violence of 1968 was not the death knell of a struggle simply for the end of Black-white segregation, but rather a moment of transition that pointed to the continuation of past oppression and foreshadowed many of the challenges of the future. At decade's end, civil rights advocates could take pride in significant gains while acknowledging that many of the nation's racial issues remained unresolved.

Black Lives Matter Movement

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a decentralized political and social movement advocating for non-violent civil disobedience in protest against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against Black people. The broader movement and its related organizations typically advocate against police violence towards Black people as well as for various other policy changes considered to be related to Black liberation.



Figure **7.5.10**: The morning of November 15, 2015, Jamar Clark was shot by Minneapolis Police. (CC BY 2.0; Fibonacci Blue via Wikimedia)

In July 2013, the movement began with the use of the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter on social media after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of African-American teen Trayvon Martin 17 months earlier in February 2012. The movement became nationally recognized for street demonstrations following the 2014 deaths of two African Americans, that of Michael Brown—resulting in protests and unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, a city near St. Louis—and Eric Garner in New York City. Since the Ferguson protests, participants in the movement have demonstrated against the deaths of numerous other

African Americans by police actions or while in police custody. In the summer of 2015, Black Lives Matter activists became involved in the 2016 United States presidential election. The originators of the hashtag and call to action, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, expanded their project into a national network of over 30 local chapters between 2014 and 2016. The overall Black Lives Matter movement is a decentralized network of activists with no formal hierarchy.

The movement returned to national headlines and gained further international attention during the global George Floyd protests in 2020 following the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin. An estimated 15 million to 26 million people, although not all are members or part of the organization, participated in the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests in the United States, making Black Lives Matter one of the largest movements in United States history. The movement has advocated to defund the police and invest directly into Black communities and alternative emergency response models.

The popularity of Black Lives Matter has rapidly shifted over time. Whereas public opinion on Black Lives Matter was net negative in 2018, it grew increasingly popular through 2019 and 2020. A June 2020 Pew Research Center poll found that the majority of Americans, across all racial and ethnic groups, have expressed support for the Black Lives Matter movement.

Black Social Media: A New Age Revolution

A new age Black revolution is currently waging on YouTube and Black Twitter by passionate African American social media personalities determined to help Black people defeat and rise above white supremacy's boundaries. In recent years, social media sites like Facebook,Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, BlogTalkRadio, and YouTube have reformatted Black radicalism in the United States by providing zealous African American activists with an online platform to boldly express their concerns and gain a following by using the Internet. As a result, significant shifts in Black revolutionary thought or consciousness and new protest methods have developed in combination with the rapid growth in human dependency on computer capabilities. The new virtual home for Black resistance to white-led racial oppression is rooted inside the Black radical tradition of remaining committed to an idealized, Black liberationist goal of securing self-regulating social, political, cultural, and economic freedom for people of African descent worldwide.

Black Twitter is an online subculture largely consisting of Black users on the social network Twitter focused on issues of interest to the Black community, particularly in the United States. Black Twitter has been describe as "a collective of active, primarily African-American Twitter users who have created a virtual community ... [and are] proving adept at bringing about a wide range of sociopolitical changes" (Jones, 2013). Although Black Twitter has a strong Black American user base, other people and groups are able to be a part of this social media circle through commonalities in shared experiences and reactions to such online. Calling out cultural appropriation was a chief focus of the space in the early 2010s.



Figure **7.5.11**: The aftermath of the death of Trayvon Martin brought Black Twitter to wider public attention. (CC BY 2.0; ann harkness via Flickr)

The thought leaders of Black social media are both eagerly and often hesitantly referred to as spearheads of the Black Conscious Community. The Black Conscious Community is a conglomerate of sporadically allied African Americans who advocate replacing mainstream Black philosophies and institutions with Afrocentric and Black Nationalist ideas and action. The YouTubers of focus were chosen due to their loose connections and because they are among the most influential and thought-provoking in their justifications for the complete transformation of the psyche and physical reality of all people of

African descent. Many of the Black YouTube radicals are often offended by the term and categorization of “YouTube Revolutionary” or “Web-Oblutionary” because they believe such titles diminish the importance of their online and in-person work. Yet, the label is appropriate and reflects unique characteristics that make the online Black militants’ important voices in the current political and social media landscape. The new virtual presence in Black radical thinking and action amassed by these YouTube radicals are worthy of serious scholarly study because they represent a critical stage of development in Black revolutionary history and consciousness.

This section is licensed CC BY-NC. Attribution: Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0)

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-SA other than Black Social Media: A New Age Revolution which is CC BY-NC.

- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Black Lives Matter (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Black Panther Party (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Black Power (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Black Twitter (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Double V Campaign (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- United States History 2 (Lumen) (CC BY-SA 4.0)
- Greensboro Sit-Ins (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Nation of Islam (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience (Encompass) (CC BY-NC 4.0) (Contributed to: Black Social Media: A New Age Revolution)
- Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Students for a Democratic Society (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Ten-Point Program (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Youth International Party (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

This page titled 7.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **7.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

8: Latinx

8.1: History and Demographics

8.2: Intergroup Relations

8.3: Intersectionality

8.4: Social Institutions

8.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 8: Latinx is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

8.1: History and Demographics

Latinx Subgroups

Mexican Americans form the largest subgroup and also the oldest of Latinx subgroups. Prior to the annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War, the Southwest portion of the United States was Mexican and Spanish territory. As the United States began to expand westward under the guise of "Manifest Destiny" and the conquest of Indigenous ancestral lands, there were political, economic, and ideological pressures to acquire Mexican territories. With the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836, the Mexican-American War of 1846 and the Gadsen Purchase of 1853, the U.S. succeeded in acquiring most of the Southwest from Mexico. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed at the end of the war between Mexico and the U.S., guaranteed specific rights to all people of Mexican origin living in the U.S. including full American citizenship, retention of Spanish as a legitimate language, political rights, and the retention of land ownership. These rights were not honored by the U.S. and the Mexicans subsequently experienced a significant loss of land, social status, culture and language. They were treated as second-class citizens and a source of expendable labor.

Mexican migration to the United States increased in the early 1900s in response to the need for agricultural labor. Mexican migration during this period was often circular; workers would stay for a few years and then go back to Mexico with more money than they could have made in their country of origin. The length of Mexico's shared border with the United States has made immigration easier than for many other immigrant groups. There were also periods of anti-immigrant sentiment culminating in deportations and repatriations, such as during the Great Depression in the 1930's and Operation Wetback during the 1950's. After the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which removed national-origins quotas and allowed for family reunification, the percentage of immigrants from Mexico grew considerably.

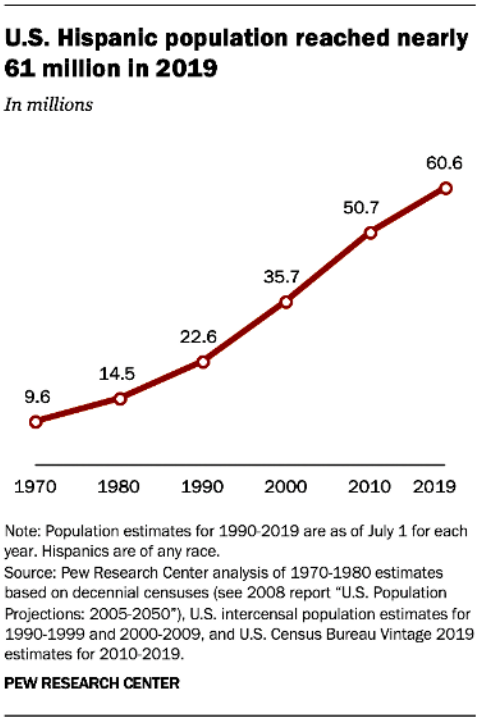


Figure **8.1.1**: U.S. Hispanic population reached nearly 61 million in 2019. (Used with permission; U.S. Hispanic population surpassed 60 million in 2019, but growth has slowed. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2020))

The socio-historical forces that forged the Puerto Rican population in the United States are different than those that created the Mexican-American community but were also influenced by U.S. imperialism and expansion. The end of the Spanish-American War of 1898 brought U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans and the Jones Act of 1917 allowed them open access to the U.S. mainland prior to the island becoming a commonwealth in 1952. These changes in concert with neo-liberal policies such as Operation Bootstrap created economic conditions that pushed Puerto Ricans onto the mainland. By the 1940s, 70,000 Puerto Ricans had settled on the mainland and by the 1950s, nearly 20 percent of the Puerto Rican population now resided on the mainland. By 1970, the number had grown to 800,000 and to 2.4 million in the early 1990's. Today, there approximately 5.1 million Latinx of Puerto

Rican descent living in the United States, representing the second-largest Latinx subgroup. About 30% of them were born in Puerto Rico. More recently, there has been an increase in migration to the state of Florida. According to the Pew Research Center, since the aftermath of Hurricane María, the Puerto Rican population in Florida has increased to one million, and 29% of mainland Puerto Ricans now live in Florida.

Cuban Americans are the third-largest Latinx subgroup, and their history is quite different from that of Mexican Americans. The main wave of Cuban immigration to the United States started after Fidel Castro came to power in 1959 and reached its crest with the Mariel boatlift in 1980. Castro's Cuban Revolution ushered in an era of communism that continues to this day. To avoid having their assets seized by the government, many wealthy and educated Cubans migrated north, generally to the Miami area. Prior to the revolution, fewer than 50,000 Cubans lived in the United States. By 1973, the numbers grew to 500,000 and 1 million by 1993. Today, there are approximately 2.3 million Latinx of Cuban origin in the United States and mostly concentrated in Florida (66%). There are important factors that have differentiated the Cuban experience from that of other Latinx groups. For instance, most Cubans came to the U.S. as political refugees and have received a positive reception from the U.S. government with the passage of the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966 and the "Wet-foot, dry-foot" policy modification passed in the 1990s (later rescinded by President Obama in 2017). Second, the majority of first wave Cuban refugees were from the middle and upper classes, displaced by the Cuban revolution. With the support and aid provided by the U.S. government, many were able to apply their business skills and educational training in the United States. In Southern Florida, a much larger percentage of businesses and banks are owned by Cubans compared to other Latinx communities.

The Latinx population reached 60.6 million in 2019, up from 50.7 million in 2010, accounting for 52% of the overall U.S. population growth over this period. However, the population growth rate of the Latinx population has slowed consistently over time. For example, between 1995 and 2000, the population growth was 4.8% while between 2015-2019 the population growth was 1.9%.

The Latinx population also has the lowest median age among the four major racial/ethnic groups. The median age is 30 while median age for whites is 44, 38 for Asian Americans, and 35 for African Americans. The younger age composition has important sociological ramifications such as representation in the educational system, the composition and percentage of new voters, and future demographic growth.

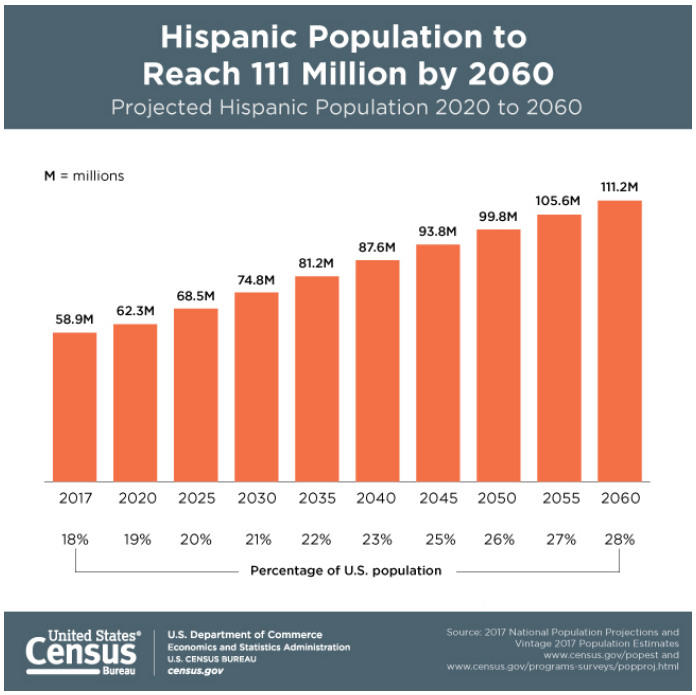


Figure **8.1.2**: Projected Hispanic Population Growth in the United States. (CC PDM 1.0; via U.S. Census Bureau)

Country of Origin

According to the Pew Research Center, figure 8.1.3 shows that in 2018 the Mexican-origin population accounted for 62% of the overall Latinx population in the United States. The second largest group, Puerto Ricans, has seen an increase in migration from the island to the mainland in the last few years and made up 9.7% of the U.S. Latinx population. The third-largest group is the Cuban-origin population, made up 4% of the U.S. Latinx population and the Salvadoran-origin population is close behind with 3.9%. The South American subgroup with the highest percentage is Colombian, making up 2.1% of the total Latinx population. The remainder of Central and South Americans countries on the list each make up less than 2 percent of the total population but represent a wide array of rich regional traditions and cultures.

Figure **8.1.3**: Hispanic origin groups in the U.S., 2018. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2020))

Hispanic origin groups in the U.S., 2018

Origin	U.S. population	% among all U.S. Hispanics
Mexican	36,964,000	61.9%
Puerto Rican	5,772,000	9.7
Cuban	2,362,000	4.0
Salvadoran	2,325,000	3.9
All other Latino	2,287,000	3.8
Dominican	2,075,000	3.5
Guatemalan	1,513,000	2.5
Colombian	1,241,000	2.1
Honduran	980,000	1.6
Spaniard	814,000	1.4
Ecuadorian	708,000	1.2
Peruvian	675,000	1.1
Venezuelan	492,000	0.8
Nicaraguan	438,000	0.7
Argentine	287,000	0.5
Panamanian	211,000	0.4
Chilean	174,000	0.3
Costa Rican	150,000	0.3
Bolivian	116,000	0.2
Uruguayan	61,000	0.1
Other Central American	48,000	0.1
Paraguayan	24,000	<0.05
Other South American	22,000	<0.05
Total	**59,740,000**	**100.0**

Notes: Hispanic populations rounded to nearest thousand; listed in descending order of population size. Hispanic origin is based on self-described ancestry, lineage, heritage, nationality group or country of birth.
Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Immigration Status and Citizenship

Overall, in 2018 approximately 80% of the Latinx population are U.S. citizens, including those living in Puerto Rico. Due to their unique historical colonial experience, virtually all Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens. Panamanians (89%) and Mexicans (80%) have among the highest citizenship rates, which Hondurans (53%) and Venezuelans (51%) have the lowest citizenship rates. According to Figure 8.1.4, the overall share of Latinx immigrants has dropped since 2007 and immigrants now make up 33% of the total Latinx population. As the largest group by far, the Mexican population is close to the mean and approximately 30% of its population are immigrants. Similarly, all other groups have experienced a drop in percentage of foreign-born in their respective

groups. Cubans, Salvadorans, and Dominicans have a similar percentage of foreign-born with 56%, 56%, and 54%, respectively. Guatemalans, Colombians, and Hondurans all have a foreign-born rate of 61%.

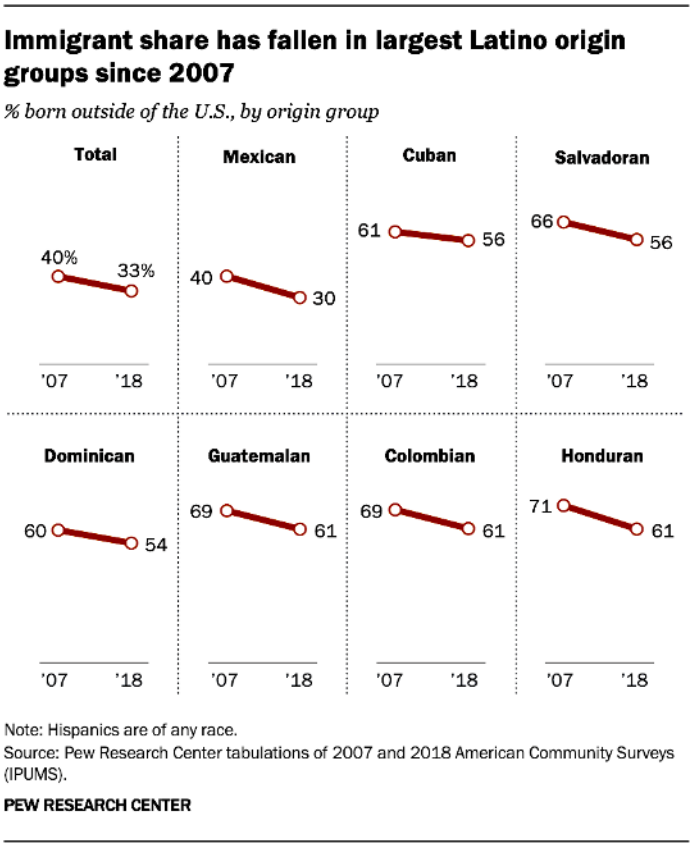


Figure **8.1.4**: Immigration share has fallen in larges Latino origin groups since 2007. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2020))

Identity and labels

The labels that people of Latinx heritage use depends on the historical, regional, cultural, and political context. Labels can also be self-imposed, such as Chicano or Chicana, or imposed from without, such as Hispanic. Some ethnic labels, such as Californio, are specific to a region (California) and historical context (1800's). For example, Pío Pico was the last Mexican Governor of California and was part of the Californios, a term referring to the political, economic, and cultural elites of Mexican heritage living in California in the 19th century.

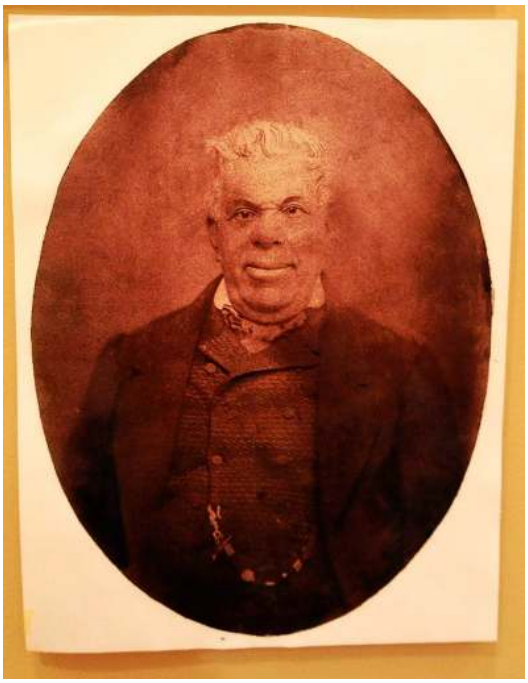


Figure 8.1.5: Pío Pico (1801 - 1894): The last Mexican Governor of California. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Joe Mud via Flickr)

The term Chicano (or Chicana) gained popularity among people of Mexican origin during the 1960s in the midst of what is called the **Chicano Movement**. Young, radicalized Mexican Americans began to question the attempt of previous Latinx movements to assimilate into the Anglo-dominant America and became critical of the institutional discrimination and racism experienced by their community. There is some dispute among historians regarding the origins of the term Chicano, as it was commonly used as a slur in the early 1900s against recently arrived Mexican and working poor immigrants. The terms Chicano (and Xicano) may have been derived from the original pronunciation of the term for the Aztecs (Mexica). Regardless of its origin, the term **Chicano** (or **Chicana**) was reclaimed and embraced by politicize youth as a way to embrace their **Indigenous** heritage and roots ("Indigenismo"), reject Anglo-assimilation, recognize Mexicans as a twice colonized people, and take part in a larger social movement ("el movimiento") to challenge institutional discrimination and racism.



Video 8.1.6: Chicano! Struggle in the Fields. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; CaliforniaMexicoCtr via YouTube)

The Chicano Movement addressed different social problems and issues, a "movement of movements", as described by Chicano and Latino Studies Professor Jimmy Patino. As presented in Video 8.1.6 above, Chicano! Struggle in the Fields, the first was the fight for farm worker's rights, led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta through the United Farm Workers (UFW). This became the heart of the Chicano Movement and sought to improve the working conditions of farm workers but eventually extended and their efforts led to everyone having more labor and educational rights.

The second part of the movement was related to land rights of Mexican people and the reclamation of lands, led by the lawyer and activist Reies Lopez Tijerina. Tijerina challenged the unlawful transfer of land that took place after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 through formal court challenges, protests, and even staged an armed raid to reclaim territory in New Mexico.



Video **8.1.7**: Chicano! Taking Back the Schools. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; CaliforniaMexicoCtr via YouTube)

The third branch of the Chicano Movement was the rise of student activism and self-empowerment, as conveyed in Video 8.1.7 above, Chicano! Taking Back the Schools. For example, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, an activist and former boxer, organized the National Youth and Liberation Conference in Denver, Colorado in 1969. This became a powerful organizing effort and brought in Chicanos from around the country to meet, take part in cultural workshops and events, and politicize and organize their own schools and communities. They drafted El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán (Spiritual Plan of Aztlán), to acknowledge the Indigenous ancestry and homeland of the Aztec people and also to map out a plan for Chicano nationalism and self-determination. In 1969, Chicano and Chicana students met at an historic conference at UC Santa Barbara to draft El Plan de Santa Barbara based on the identity and philosophy of **Chicanismo** to propose a larger plan to advocate for self-determination and empowerment, Chicano nationalism, and the central role of higher education in achieving liberation at the community level. The result of the conference was the establishment of the student organization, M.E.Ch.A (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán), and became the blueprint for the establishment of Chicano and Chicana Studies programs and departments throughout the UC System. Featured in the Chicano! Taking Back the Schools video above, another example of the student movement was the East Los Angeles Walkouts that took place in 1968, where thousands of Chicano students took part in non-violent protests by walking out of their schools to protest unequal educational opportunities, a lack of Chicano-themed course and curriculum, and a lack of Chicano and bilingual teachers. (Noriega et al, 2010)



Figure 8.1.8: Chicano Park/Parque Chicano in Barrio Logan, San Diego, California founded in 1970. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Nathan Gibbs via Flickr)

Panethnic Terms

A **panethnic** label is used as an "umbrella" term to categorize a set of ethnic subgroups with a shared culture, language, and history. The following are panethnic terms that are used to describe, generally, people of Latin American descent.

According to the UCLA sociologist G. Cristina Mora, the term **Hispanic** first officially appeared in the 1980 Census to categorize people from Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries, but excluding Brazilians. Prior to this census, those of Latin American descent were referred to as "Spanish-speaking", "having Spanish origin" or "white" which was frustrating to advocates and activists at the time, including the National Council of La Raza, who were lobbying for more resources and programs in Mexican and Puerto Rican communities. Although the term Hispanic emerged as an more official term and adopted by many, the term has its detractors because it tends to emphasize Spanish culture at the expense of Indigenous culture, it is an English word, perceived as an imposed label, and associated with the more assimilated who are hoping to de-emphasize their Latinx culture. According to Mora (2019):

"Resistance to the idea of Hispanic emerged at a time when academics and started applying a much more critical lens to colonial history. There was a pushback and a sense that words matter - that by elevating "Hispanic" one is obscuring a history of colonialism, slavery, genocide, the Spanish legacy across the Americas. So "Latino" developed as an alternative, albeit an imperfect one" (Schelenz and Freeling, 2019, p. 1).

According to historian Ramon Gutierrez, the term **Latino or Latina** has its roots in the abbreviated version of Latino Americano that emerged after the independence movements of several countries in the early 1800s. It re-emerged in the late 1900s and can be found in memoirs and political literature in the 1970s. In the 1980s and 1990s, it was promulgated as a preferred substitute for the more official term Hispanic. It is considered a more inclusive term and has also been used to "center" the experiences of other subgroups such as Afro Latinos and Muslim Latinos, whose experiences are oftentimes left out of the discourse and research (Gutierrez and Almaguer, 2016). According to a 2013 Pew Center survey, only about 20% of respondents described themselves as either Hispanic or Latino. Slightly more than half of respondents (54%) prefer to use their family's country of origin (such as Mexican, Cuban, Guatemalan) to identify themselves and just over 20% used "American" to describe themselves (Lopez, 2013).

The term **Latinx** has been used since the early 2000s and is meant to replace Latino and Latina as a gender-neutral alternative and to also acknowledge the experiences of LGBTQ people who are of Latin American descent. Although a recent Pew Center (2020) study found that only a quarter have heard of the term and only 3% use it in their daily lives, the label is growing in popularity and usage, especially among young, college educated women (Noe-Bustamante, Mora, & Lopez, 2020).



Video 8.1.9: What is Latinx? (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; NBC News via YouTube)

Race and Racial Identity

Gutierrez and Almaguer (2016) point out that that Lainx populations have a very long history of racial classification that goes back to the Spanish colonial period, which lasted hundreds of years in Latin America. The racial mixing (referred to as **mestizaje**) that occurred included Spanish troops, indigenous populations, and imported African slaves and led to the development of a color and class stratification system, sometimes referred to as a racial caste system. In those societies where indigenous people were used as the primary colonial labor force, indigenous ancestry was devalued and stigmatized, mostly in Mexico, Central America, and Peru. In those societies where the indigenous population was decimated and replaced by African slaves, such as the Caribbean islands, blackness was devalued. Terms such as mestizo, moreno, mulato and trigueño began to be used in the 16th century and are still used today. What resulted was a system where "either white and black, or white and Indian, were at opposite ends of this racial hierarchy, and a large set of intermediate brown categories that complexly stratified the population were deemed to occupy the middle" (Gutierrez & Almaguer, 2016, p. 154). It is evident that people who have migrated to the United States bring with them this complicated history of racial classification and identity. (See also Chapter 1.4 for an earlier discussion of multiracial individuals, including mestizo, mulatto, etc.).



Figure 8.1.10: This is an example of a "casta" painting, popular during the Spanish Colonial period depicting the many different racial groups. The middle painting is titled "De Español y Negra, Mulato" or "From Spanish and Black, a mulatto". The scenes also depicted the racial hierarchy and racialized stereotypes of racial groups and mixed populations. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Steven Zucker via Flickr)

This long history of racial classification has also resulted in a form of **colorism** within the Latinx population, defined by Chavez-Dueñas, Adames, & Organista (2014) as "a form of discrimination imposed upon Latinos/as by members of their own ethnic group." (Chavez-Dueñas et al., p. 4). This internalized hierarchy that devalues indigenous and African ancestry and a preference for whiteness or traditionally European features is reflected at the institutional level in terms of people in power, socioeconomic status,

and depictions of people in media (i.e. movies, news broadcasters, telenovelas, etc.). At the micro level, Chavez-Dueñas (2014) found the following comments frequently used by Latinx family members to describe friends or relatives to be a clear reflection of colorism and an internalized racial hierarchy :

- Hay que mejorar la raza o cásate con un blanco. [We need to improve the race by marrying a white person.]

- Ahi que bonita es su niña, as tan güerita/blanquita! [Oh! How pretty your daughter is, she is so white/light skinned!]

- Oh, nació negrito/prietito pero aun asi lo queremos. [Oh, he was born black/dark but we still love him all the same.]

- Pobrecito, tiene el cabello tan malo. [Poor little thing, her hair is so bad/coarse.]

- Eres tan Indio. [You are so Indian. (connoting negative stereotypes about indigenous people)] (Chavez-Dueñas et al., 2014, p. 17).

In the United States, Latinx people are not designated on the U.S. Census as a "racial group" but instead are considered an ethnic group with a shared cultural backgrounds, who can be of any "race". The 2010 Census form first asks respondents if the person in question is of Hispanics, Latin or Spanish origin and asks to specific a Latinx subgroup is the answer is "yes" to this question. Then, the following question asks for the person's race but only provides the following potential responses:

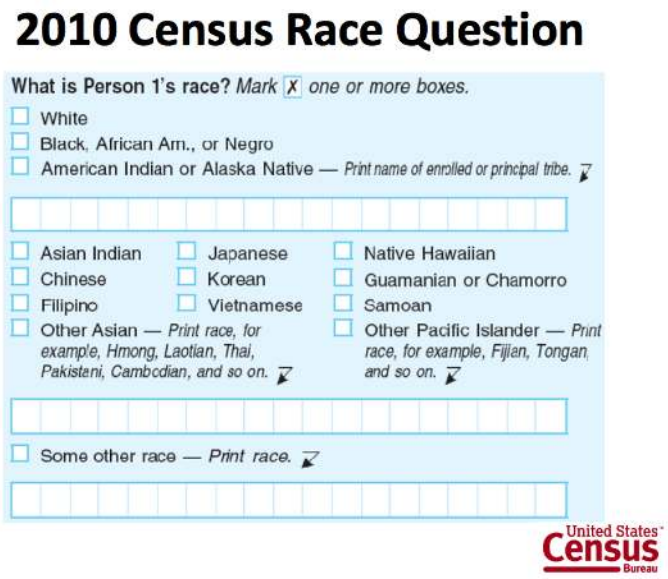


Figure 8.1.11: 2010 Census Race Question. (CC PDM 1.0; via U.S. Census Bureau)

Given the limited responses to the race question, it is not surprising that in 2010 more than half (53%) of the Latinx respondents selected the "White" racial category on the Census form. Interestingly, there were differences across the subgroups. Cubans (85.4%) and South Americans (65.9%) were among the highest and Guatemalans (38.5%) and Salvadorans (40.2%) were among the lowest to select the "White" racial category. Approximately 53% of both Mexicans and Puerto Ricans selected the "White" racial category. Some 37% of Latinx respondents selected "some other race" and a majority in this group selected their nationality as their specified "race." A small percentage of Latinx respondents (6%) identified themselves as multiracial and even smaller percentages as American Indian (1.4%) or Black (2.5%) (Gutierrez & Almaguer, 2016). After the results of the 2010 Census were published, news organizations such as the New York Times wrote stories with headlines that read "More Hispanics Declaring Themselves White" and concluded that the results provided evidence that the Latinx population may "assimilate as white Americans, like the Italians or Irish, who were not universally considered to be white" (Cohn, 2014). So, is this the end of the story? Are Latinx people simply the next "Italians" and are assimilating into white America?

Other research actually reflects a more complex Latinx racial and ethnic identity. For example, in their survey of Latinx adults, Parker, Horowitz, Morin, & Lopez (2015) found that 67% of respondents considered their "Hispanic" background to be both a racial and ethnic background, contrary to the assumption made in the Census question and other standard race survey questions. In this same survey, a much higher percentage of Latinx adults described themselves as being of mixed race (34%), Indigenous (25%), and Afro-Latino (24%) then was captured in the 2010 Census. Part of this was the contextualization of the questions in the current survey. For example, respondents were asked if they consider themselves "Afro-Latino or Afro-Caribbean or, for example, Afro-

Mexican." Respondents were also asked if they had ancestry that included specific indigenous peoples of the Americas, such as Mayan, Taino, Quechua, etc. As for being of mixed race ancestry, more culturally relevant terms such as mestizo or mulatto were utilized in this survey. The results provide a rich and more complex picture regarding the self-identity and racial classification of the Latinx population.

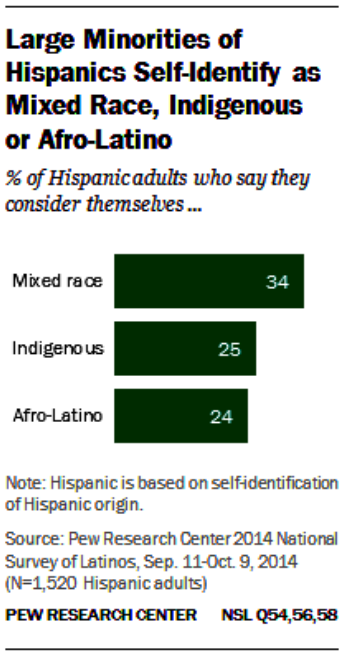


Figure 8.1.12: Large Minorities of Hispanics Self-Identify as Mixed Race, Indigenous or Afro-Latino. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C.)

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Cohn, N. (2014, May 21). More Hispanics declaring themselves White. *NY Times*.
- Chavez-Dueñas, N.Y., Adames, H.Y., & Organista, K.C. (2014). Skin-Color Prejudice and Within-Group Racial Discrimination: Historical and Current Impact on Latino/a Populations. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*. Vol. 36(1), pp. 3-26.
- Gonzalez-Barrera, A. & Krogstad, J.M. (2019 June, 2019). What we know about [undocumented] immigration from Mexico. *Pew Research Center.*
- Gutierrez, R. & Almaguer, T. (2016). Race, racializations, and Latino popuations in the United States in Gutierrez, R. and Almaguer, T. (Eds.) *The New Latino Studies Reader: A 21st Century Perspective*. Oakland, Ca: UC Press
- Lopez, M. (2013). Hispanic Identity. *Pew Research Center*. October 22, 2013
- Noriega, C., Avila, E., Davalos, K., Sandoval, C., & Perez-Torres, R. (2010). *The Chicano Studies Reader: An Anthology of Aztlan, 1970 - 2000*. Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press
- Schelenz, R. & Freeling, N. (2019, October 10). What's in a name? How the concepts of Hispanic and Latino identity emerged. *UC News.*
- Noe-Bustamante, L., Lopez, M.H., & Krogstad, J.M. (2020, July 27) U.S. Hispanic population surpassed 60 million in 2019, but growth has slowed. *Pew Research Center.*
- Noe-Bustamane, L., Mora, L, & Lopez, M. (2020). About One-in-Four U.S. Hispanics Have Heard of Latinx, but Just 3% use it. *Pew Research Center,* August 11, 2020

- Parker, K., Horowitz, J., Morin, R. & Lopez, M. (2015) Chapter 7: The Many Dimensions of Hispanic Racial Identity. *Pew Research Center: Multiracial in America*, June 11, 2015.
- Schelenz, R. (2019, October). What's in a name? how the concepts of hispanic and latino identity emerged. interview of sociologist dr. g. cristina mora. *University of California News*.

This page titled 8.1: History and Demographics is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **8.1: History and Demographics** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

8.2: Intergroup Relations

Patterns of Intergroup Relations: Latinx

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g. lynching).
- **Expulsion/ Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. deportation).
- **Internal Colonialism:** The dominant group exploits the marginalized group (e.g. farm workers).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. schools).
- **Seperatism:** The marginalized group desires physical separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Federal Land Grant Alliance).
- **Fusion/ Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. intermarriage, biracial/bicultural children).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. English language only).
- **Pluralism/ Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. bilingualism).

Genocide

As a significant segment of the Latinx population has Indigenous ancestry, the historical genocide against groups native to the Americas, including the United States, is relevant to their experience. In addition, although the lynchings of African Americans in American history have been better documented, there is also the lesser known history of extrajudicial and unlawful killings of Mexicans and Mexican Americans, especially in the Southern part of the United States. For instance, historians William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb (2003) documented and analyzed hundreds of such extrajudicial killings that occurred between 1848 and 1928. In their research titled "The Lynching of Persons of Mexican Origin or Descent in the United States, 1848 to 1928", they cataloged 597 lynchings of persons of Mexican origin in the United States, which they consider a conservative estimate. The lynchings were concentrated in Texas, California, Arizona, and New Mexico and were mostly carried out in the 30-year period immediately after the end of the Mexican-American War, which they described as a period of "unparalleled danger from mob violence" for people of Mexican origin.

Expulsion/Population Transfer

According to the Aguirre & Turner (2007), in the period after the Mexican-American war, the Mexican population in the United States experienced a significant loss of social, political, and economic status and was thus relegated to a source of cheap and expendable labor for the growing labor-intensive industries - agriculture, mining, and railroads -especially in the Southwestern part of the United States. One consequence of this increase demand for Mexican labor is that immigration policies were not restrictive between 1870 and 1930, allowing Mexican workers to enter the United States to freely. However, this changed during the Great Depression in the 1930s and there was a rising tension and an increase in anti-Mexican sentiment. As a result, a repatriation movement began to expel Mexican nationals (as well as U.S. citizens of Mexican descent) from the United States, and over 500,000 people were repatriated between 1929 and 1935 (Aguirre & Turner, 2007).

During the **Bracero Program**, which was a labor contract between the United States and Mexico that operated from 1942-1964, Congress gave authorization for the Border Patrol to initiate "Operation Wetback." This gave the U.S. Border Patrol wide discretion to stop and search people who "looked Mexican" and who deport anyone who did not have the proper paperwork identifying themselves as participants in the Bracero Program. Between 1954 and 1959, approximately 3.8 million people were returned to Mexico (Aguirre & Turner, 2007).



Figure **8.2.1**: Braceros in Oregon. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Oregon State University via Flickr)

More recently, there have been deportation regimes and ballot efforts to target and deport undocumented Latinx immigrants, such as Proposition 187 (California - 1994), Senate Bill 1070 (Arizona - 2010), House Bill 56 (Alabama - 2011), and the Trump administration's Executive Order 13767 ("Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements"). Sociologist Douglas Massey (2006) suggests that although historically the average standard of living in Mexico may be lower than in the United States, it is not so low as to make permanent migration the goal of most Mexicans. However, the strengthening of the border that began with the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act and more recent policies has made one-way migration the rule for most Mexicans. Massey argues that the rise of undocumented one-way immigration of Mexicans is a direct outcome of the laws and policies that were intended to reduce it.

Internal Colonialism

One historical example of internal colonialism is the Bracero Program. Mentioned in the previous section, the Bracero Program was an official agreement between the United States and Mexico to bring Mexican laborers to work in specified industries presumably to meet the labor shortage during World War II. Approximately 5 million Mexican workers were granted temporary work visas throughout the course of the program, which operated from 1942-1964. Employers were required to pay prevailing local wages and provide workers with minimal worker protections and conditions. However, the program was fraught with problems including terrible work conditions, abuse, and many workers were not paid for their work. (Aguirre and Turner, 2007)

According the USDA, in 2016 over 70% of the farmworker labor force in the United States was foreign-born, mostly from Latin America. Approximately 21% of the farm worker labor force were authorized immigrants with permanent residency or green cards and 48% of the farm worker labor force was made up of unauthorized immigrant workers. As we know from other research studies, such as Milkman et al (2010), undocumented workers are more susceptible to workplace violations, low wages, and threats from employers.



Figure 8.2.2: "Farm workers picking cucumbers." (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Bread for the World via Flickr)

Segregation

An example of de jure segregation relates to the education of Mexican American children in California in the early 1900s. Moll & Ruiz (2002) argue that two methods of social control were employed at this time to undermine the educational attainment and social mobility of the Mexican population: 1) exclusion from schooling, and 2) control over the content and purpose of schooling. The latter was done mainly through the official segregation of schooling by playing Mexican kids into "Mexican schools". In the important court case Mendez v. Westminster (1947), Sylvia Mendez was denied entry in to the neighborhood school in Orange County, California and was instead assigned to the "Mexican school" by school officials. Her parents sued the school district, organized with other parents and filed a class action law suit against several districts, and the case made its way to the U.S. District Court. The District Court judge agreed with the Mendez family and ordered that the school districts to cease their discriminatory practices against students of Mexican origin in their public schools. Several organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), filed amicus briefs (friends of the court briefs) in support of the Mendez family. Eight years later, its author Thurgood Marshall would present to the Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954), a case that would help to end school segregation throughout the United States.

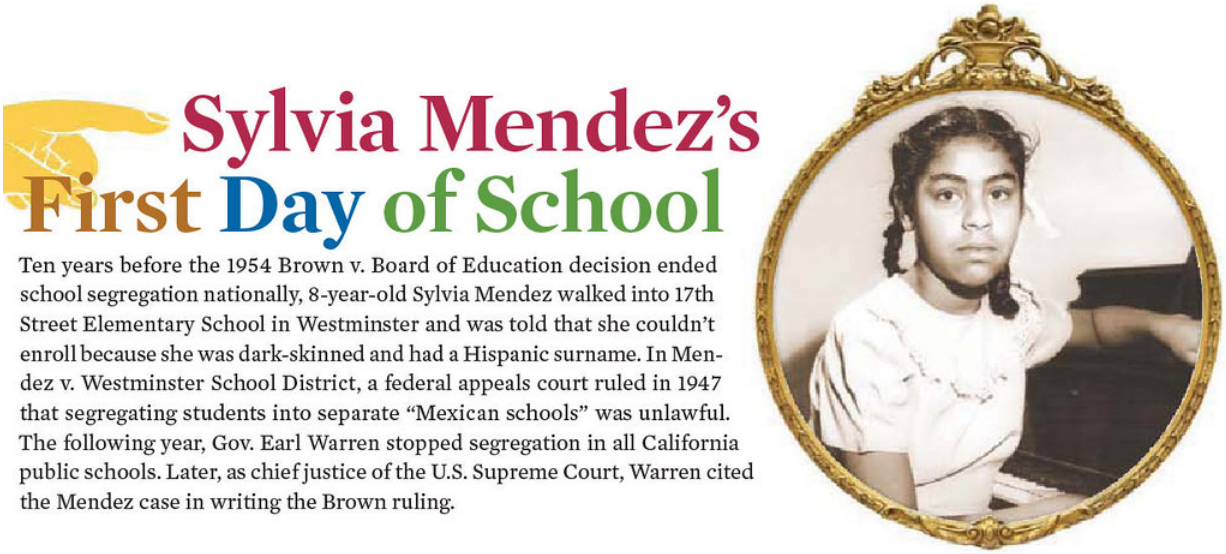


Figure **8.2.3**: "Sylvia Mendez's First Day of School." (CC BY 2.0; YoTuT via Flickr)

More recently, demographers have found that Latinx-white residential segregation, as measure by the dissimilarity index, has remained constant over the decades. Furthermore, De la Roca et al (2018) found clear quantitative evidence that residential segregation in metropolitan areas has a strong, negative association with the educational outcomes and labor market attainment of native-born Latinx people and Black Americans. Among the Latinx groups, they found residential segregation has a more significant negative outcomes for young adults of Puerto Rican and Dominican ancestry.

Separatism

During the Chicano Movement, there were some groups and organizations who planned to separate themselves from mainstream society, promoting a type of Chicano Nationalism that advocated for a self-contained and insular community. For example, the Brown Berets were created during the Chicano Movement to address the issues of police brutality, institutional racism, educational inequality, and land rights.

Fusion/Amalgamation

With regard to racial and ethnic intermarriage, in 2015 approximately 27% of Latinx newlyweds were intermarried, the second highest rate among the four major racial and ethnic groups. This has also led to an increase in the percentage of multiracial babies in the United States. In 2015, 14% of all babies under the age of 1 living with two parents were multiracial or multiethnic. Among the 14%, a large percentage (42%) were babies with one Latinx parent and one white parent and 22% had multiracial or multiethnic parents. A lower percentage of multiracial babies had one Latinx parent and one Black parent (5%) and one Latinx parent and one Asian parent (4%).

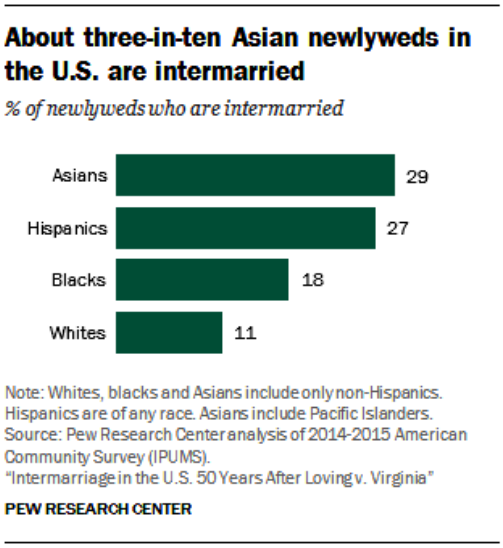


Figure 8.2.4: About three-in-ten Asian newlyweds in the U.S are intermarried. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C.)

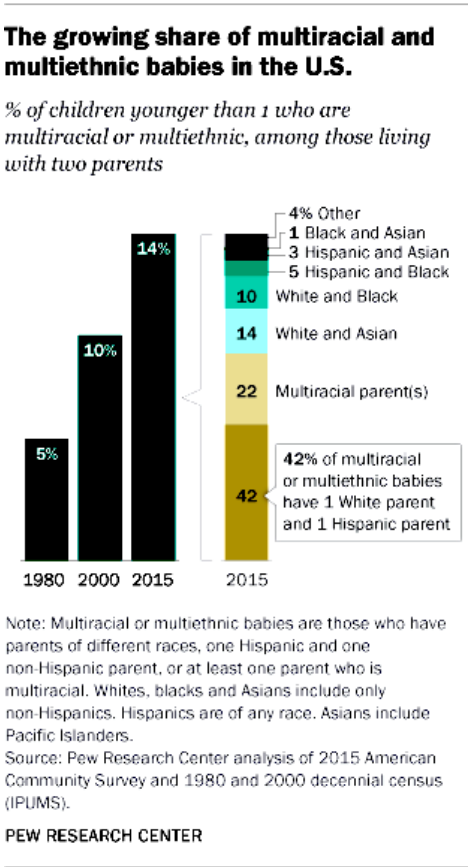


Figure 8.2.5: The growing share of multiracial and multiethnic babies in the U.S. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C.)

Assimilation Patterns

While white ethnics, Cubans, Asians, and Middle Easterners tend to follow the traditional assimilation pattern, three significantly large Latinx minorities have not followed this more traditional pattern: Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban Americans. The assimilation patterns for these groups differ due to propinquity, method of migration, and let us not mince words, racism. A relatively smaller percentage of all Mexican immigrants to the United States do not follow the traditional assimilation pattern. This

is partly due to the propinquity of the mother country, the nearly continuous new migration stream, a relatively high rate of return migration, racism, and in some cases, involuntary immigration in that parts of Mexico have been annexed by the United States so that some people's native land quite literally changed overnight—they went to bed Mexican and woke up American.

Puerto Ricans, following the treaty that concluded the Spanish American War, became citizens of the United States, albeit citizens without suffrage. Therefore, Puerto Ricans, who are already citizens, have little incentive to assimilate and, like their Mexican counterparts, are physically close to their homeland, maintain a nearly continuous migration stream onto the mainland, and have a relatively high rate of return migration. Puerto Rico is a historically poor colony of the United States populated primarily by Spanish-speaking, Hispanic-surnamed descendants of African slaves. Thus, entrenched intergenerational poverty, coupled with language difficulties and racism, have prevented assimilation. Most Puerto Ricans who live on the mainland live in poor, inner city neighborhoods in New York and Chicago. Neighborhoods that are not ethnic enclaves but are rather huge concentrations of the poor, undereducated, and Black underclass.

Cuban Americans, perhaps because of their relative wealth and education level at the time of immigration, have fared better than many immigrants. Further, because they were fleeing a Communist country, they were given refugee status and offered protection and social services. The Cuban Migration Agreement of 1995 has curtailed legal immigration from Cuba, leading many Cubans to try to immigrate illegally by boat. According to a 2009 report from the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. government applies a "wet foot/dry foot" policy toward Cuban immigrants; Cubans who are intercepted while still at sea will be returned to Cuba, while those who reach the shore will be permitted to stay in the United States.

Pluralism/Multiculturalism

There has undoubtedly been in increase in the incorporation of some aspects Latinx culture in mainstream America, especially with regard to food (e.g. eating tacos), music (e.g. listening to Spanish language crossover pop songs), symbolic traditions (e.g. using piñatas at birthday parties) and celebrations (e.g. celebrating Día de los Muertos). However, as we know from the previous experiences of other communities of color, partaking in aspects of culture does not necessarily translate into better racial and ethnic relations. For example, as white Americans were listening to the music of Louis Armstrong in the 1930s and 1940s, most African Americans were suffering from the effects of Jim Crow era racism and segregation. Similarly, as Ritchie Valens' "La Bamba", a rock and roll remake of a traditional Mexican song, became a rare Spanish language crossover hit in the 1950s, Mexican-Americans were being subjected de facto segregation, deportation regimes such a Operation Wetback, and discrimination. There is also the tendency of American mainstream society to "whitewash" Latinx culture and for corporations to appropriate culture for economic gain, such as the celebration of Cinco de Mayo and more recently, the Disney corporation's attempt to trademark "Day of the Dead" (Flores, 2013).

After the 2020 election, Latinx representatives now make up approximately 12% of the U.S. House of Representatives (up from 10% from the previous election). Although the increase represents progress, they are still underrepresented as they make up 18.5% of the total population. There are currently 6 Latinx Senators. Five were elected and one was appointed by the Governor of California. Three of the Senators are Democrats and 2 are Republicans, reflecting the diversity of political affiliation within the Latinx electorate. In terms of economic power, according to a Latino USA publication, while Latinx workers make up 17% of the U.S. labor force, they only make up 4% of company executives (Swerzenski, Tomaskovic, & Hoyt, 2020). They also found difference across metropolitan areas. Miami had the highest percentage of Latinx executives (25%) and New York had the lowest (4.5%). Houston (10%) and Los Angeles (8%) were in between but closer to New York than Miami. The authors recommend increasing the the percentage of Latinx workers in mid-level management positions and also "acknowledging blindspots that often exclude [Latinx] workers, such as non-Latinx employers recognizing unconscious biases in their communication styles and providing opportunities to professionally use their cultural competencies" (Ibid, p. 1).

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Minority Studies (Dunn) (CC BY 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Aguirre, A. & Turner, J. (2007). *American Ethnicity: The Dynamics and Consequences of Discrimination*. 5th Edition. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Carrigan, W. & Webb, C. (2003). The lynchings of persons of Mexican origin or descent in the United States, 1848 to 1928. *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Winter) Oxford University Press.
- Castillo, M. & Simnitt, S. (2020). Size and composition of the U.S. agricultural workforce. *USDA Reports*.
- Cisneros, H., Morales, S., Racho, S., Galán, H., Moreno, M., Cozens, R., Beasley, B., ... NLCC Educational Media. (1996). *Taking Back the Schools.* In *Chicano!: History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement.* [Video]. Los Angeles, CA: National Latino Communications Center.
- De la Roca, J., Ellen, I., & Steil, J. (2018). Does segregation matter for Latinos?. *Journal of Housing Economics*. Vol. 40, p. 129-141.
- Flores, A. (2013, May 8). Disney withdraws trademark filing for 'Dia de los Muertos'. *Los Angeles Times.*
- Massey, D. S. (2006, August). Seeing Mexican immigration clearly. *CATO Unbound: A Journal of Debate.*
- Moll, L. & Ruiz, R. (2002). The Schooling of Latino Children in Suarez-Orozco, M. and Paez, M. (Eds.). (2002) *Latinos: Remaking America*. Berkeley: UC Press
- Swerzenski, J.D., Tomaskovic, D.T., & Hoyt, E. (2020, January 27). Where are the Hispanic executives? Latino USA. *The Conversation.*

This page titled 8.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-NC license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **8.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

8.3: Intersectionality

As you might recall, the intersectional approach in sociology focuses on the intersection of race, social class, gender and sexuality - all of which are embedded in the institutional structure of society. According to this framework of analysis, there is a **matrix of domination** which implies that there are several types of social categories that create an overlap of oppression and discrimination. Therefore, our binary thinking and analysis, such as only focusing on gender or race when looking at the distribution of important societal resources misses the complexity of social reality.

The following are examples of intersectionality experienced by Latinx communities that highlight the unique forms of discrimination and stratification experienced by those who have overlapping of social characteristics.

The Persistence of Racialized Gender Wage Gaps

According to the Eileen Patten (2016), despite some progress over time, the racial and gender wage gaps persist today. For example, Patten found that Latinx men make 69% of the earnings compared to their white counterparts. However, Latinx women experience an even greater disparity, earning only 58% of the median earnings of white men. Even after controlling for education, white men with college degrees earned a median hourly wage of $32, compared to $26 for Latinx man and $22 for Latinx women. Although some of the differences can be explained by labor force experience and types of industries, the unexplained variance may be attributed to discrimination. Black and Latinx workers are much more likely to report unfair treatment and that their race and gender have made it more difficult to succeed in survey data than their white counterparts.

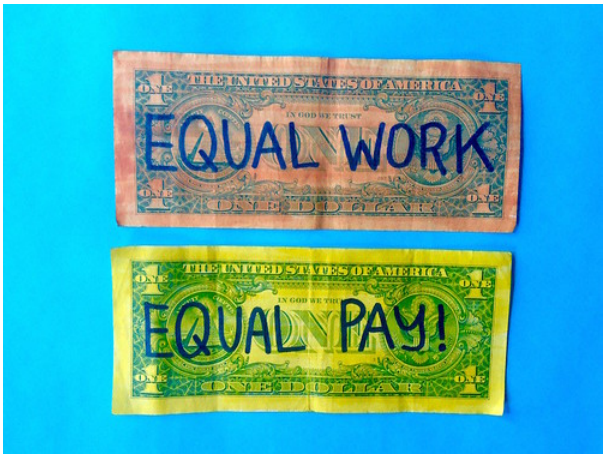


Figure 8.3.1: "Equal Pay for Equal Work" (CC BY-NC 2.0; Sarah Mirk via Flickr)

Driven by lower pre-pandemic wages, income, and wealth combined with the disproportionate lack of health care, Latinx workers have suffered greater economic distress than their white counterparts through the COVID-19 crisis. As the pandemic has spread, another symptom of this labor market disempowerment—inadequate workplace safety—has loomed particularly large for the Latinx population. Latinas have experienced the highest unemployment rates during COVID-19, as they are disproportionately employed in service occupations which have been hard hit by the pandemic (Gould, Perez, & Wilson, 2020).

Latinx, Undocumented, and LGBTQ

Carrie Hart (2015) explores the identity and work of Undocuqueer Artivist, Julio Salgado. By embracing both a queer and undocumented identity, Salgado creates "an anti-assimilationist, radical way that critiques the oppression of people on the basis of race, ethnicity, and citizenship as well as gender and sexuality" (Hart, 2015, *p.* 3) He also rejects the term 'illegal' because it "suggests a fixed identity, employs racist overtones, and shares a history with racially exclusionary policy and ideology, such as its origin in 1882 with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act" (Hart, 2015). Salgado considers this term to be inherently dehumanizing and instead prefers to be undocumented, which can be more "strategic... and/or resistant" (Hart, 2015).

In combining both terms and embracing the **Undocuqueer** identity, Salgado expresses a unwillingness to separate his undocumented and queer experiences and identities. His goal as an artist and activist is to give visibility to people who are both

undocumented and part of the LGBTQ community. Both of these communities have experienced systematic discrimination and oppression in U.S. society.



Figure **8.3.2**: "Queer Butterfly" by Julio Salgado. (With the kind permission of the Artist)



Video **8.3.3**: How Julio Salgado Utilizes Art to Express Life As a Queer, Undocumented Man | SEEN | NowThis. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; NowThis Entertainment via YouTube)

As an Undocuqueer Artivist, Salgado is building upon the tradition of other Latinx artivists such as Judy Baca who use the combination of art and activism to think outside the bounds of dominant modes of representation in the interests of liberation for themselves and their communities (Hart, 2015). Similarly, self-proclaimed chicana dyke-feminist, tejana patlache, poet, writer, and cultural theorist, Gloria Anzaldúa (1942 –2004) was best known for her book, Borderlands/La Frontera, loosely-based on her life growing up on the Mexico–Texas border, incorporating her lifelong experiences of social and cultural marginalization. This excerpt from Borderlands/La Frontera captures her spiritual activism:

The struggle is inner: Chicano, indio, American Indian, mojado, mexicano, immigrant Latino, Anglo in power, working class Anglo, Black, Asian--our psyches resemble the bordertowns and are populated by the same people. The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in outer terrains. Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the "real" world unless it first happens in the images in our heads.

Latinx, Gender, and Undocumented Status

In their study on workplace violations among low-wage workers in Los Angeles County, Milkman, Gonzalez, & Narro (2010) found significant evidence of labor law violations such as minimum wage mandates, overtime pay requirements, working off-the-clock or during breaks. They also found instances of delayed payments, tip stealing, and employer retaliation. Among the 1,815 workers surveyed and interviewed for this study, 73% were Latinx, 52% were woman, and 56% were undocumented. They also found that the intersectionality of workers either increased or decreased the likelihood of experiencing workplace violations. For

example, minimum wage violations were greater for women than men and greater for immigrants than their U.S.-born counterparts. However, women who were unauthorized immigrants (the majority of whom were Latinx) experienced the highest rate of minimum wage violations among all subgroups. Well over half of this group reported a minimum wage violation in the previous week.



Figure **8.3.4**: Immigration Reform Action in Burbank. (CC BY-NC 2.0; SEIU Local 99 Education Workers United via Flickr)

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Gloria E. Anzaldua (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Anzaldua, G. (1999). *Borderlands/La Frontera.* 2nd ed. San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.
- Gould, E., Perez, D., & Wilson, V. (2020, August 20). Latinx workers—particularly women—face devastating job losses in the covid-19 recession. *Economic Policy Institute.*
- Hart, C. (2015, August). The artivism of julio salgado's i am undocuqueer! series. *Working Papers on Language and Diversity in Education*. *1*(1).
- Milkman, R., Gonzalez, A.L., & Narro, V. (2010). Workplace violations in Los Angeles: The failure of employment and labor law for low-wage workers. *UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment*.
- Patten, E. (2016, July). Racial, gender wage gaps persist in U.S. despite some progress. *Pew Research Center*.

This page titled 8.3: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **8.3: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

8.4: Social Institutions

Immigration Policy and Status

Mexican Americans, especially those who are undocumented, are at the center of a national debate about immigration. Myers (2007) observes that no other people of color (except the Chinese) has immigrated to the United States in such an environment of illegality. He notes that in some years, three times as many Mexican immigrants may have entered the United States illegally as those who arrived legally. It should be noted that this is due to enormous disparity of economic opportunity on two sides of an open border, not because of any inherent inclination to break laws. In his report, “Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in the United States,” Jacob Vigdor (2008) states that Mexican immigrants experience relatively low rates of economic and civil assimilation. He further suggests that “the slow rates of economic and civic assimilation set Mexicans apart from other immigrants, and may reflect the fact that the large numbers of Mexican immigrants residing in the United States illegally have few opportunities to advance themselves along these dimensions.”

By contrast, Cuban Americans are often seen as a model people of color within the larger Hispanic group. Many Cubans had higher socioeconomic status when they arrived in this country, and their anti-Communist agenda has made them welcome refugees to this country. In south Florida, especially, Cuban Americans are active in local politics and professional life. As with Asian Americans, however, being a model minority can mask the issue of powerlessness that these people of colors face in U.S. society.

Despite the rhetoric of anti-immigrant politicians and commentators, Light, He, & Robey (2020) did not find empirical evidence that undocumented criminality has increased in recent years. Using comprehensive arrest data in Texas between 2012 and 2018, they found that "undocumented immigrants have substantially lower crime rates than native-born citizens and legal immigrants across a range of felony offenses."

Economy and Household Income

Figure **8.4.1** shows that the disparity between the real median household income (adjusted to 2016 dollars) of Latinx families and white families has actually increased since 1970. In 1970, the disparity was about $12,000 and by 2016 the disparity had increased to over $17,000. Human Capital theorists would attribute this income disparity to lower average levels of educational attainment and job skills that translates into lower occupational status and income. Beyond human capital, the differences in income may also be explained by immigrant background, concentration in certain low-paying industries, and also gender and racial discrimination. More recently, Krogstad (2020) found that Latinx families are among the most impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic in terms of reductions in pay and also job losses.

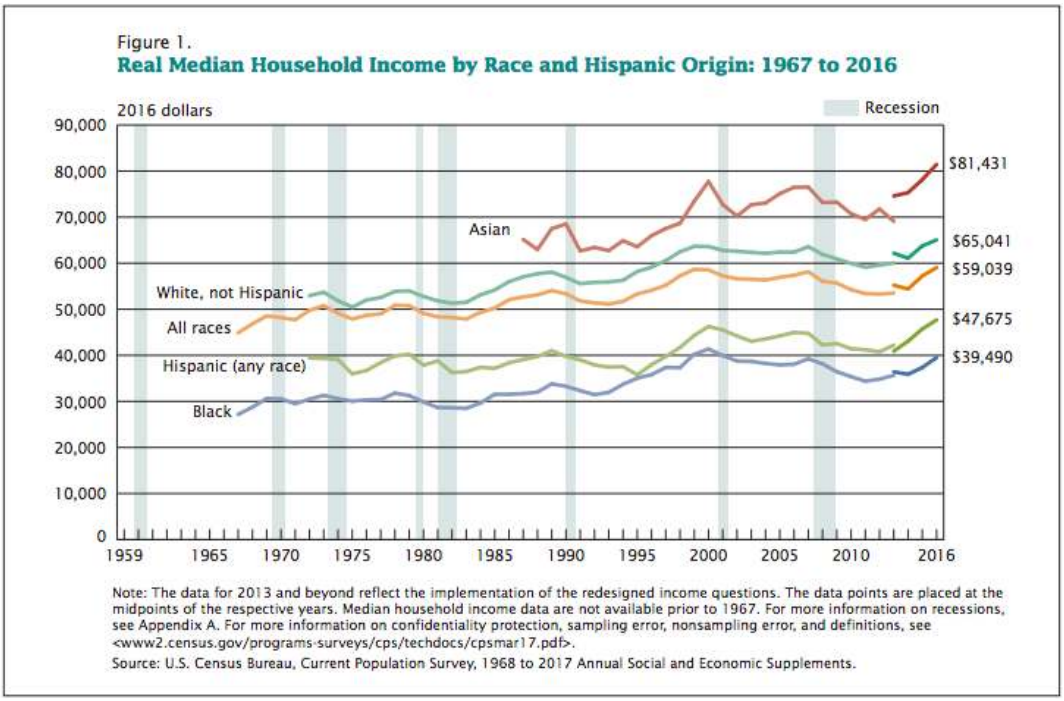


Figure **8.4.1**: Real median household income by race and Hispanic origin: 1967 to 2016. (CC PDM 1.0; via U.S. Census Bureau)

Education

According the Pew Center (Figure **8.4.2**), approximately 60% of the entire adult Latinx population attained a high school degree or less, significantly higher than the rate of the American population at 40%. The percentage of those who earned a two-year degree or some college was 4 percentage points lower and the 4-year college degree attainment rate was half (16%) of the rate of the entire American population. However, some of the educational attainment gaps are reduced or disappear when comparing only the U.S. born Latinx adult population to the entire American adult population. The high school or less gap is reduced to 8 percentage point and the 4-year college degree attainment gap is reduced to 12 percentage points. The U.S. born Latinx adult population actually has a higher percentage of people who have attained a 2-year degree or some college. Demographers and social scientists such as Dowell Myers and David Hayes-Bautista have commented on the social gap between the aging white baby boomer population in states like California and the growing, mostly Latinx population under the age of 18. They argue that it is in their best interest to ensure that the young, mostly Latinx youth have access to quality education and that the educational gaps are closed because, as tax-paying adults, they will contribute to medical, retirement, and social services and they will most likely purchase their homes when the retiring baby boomers decide to sell or downsize.

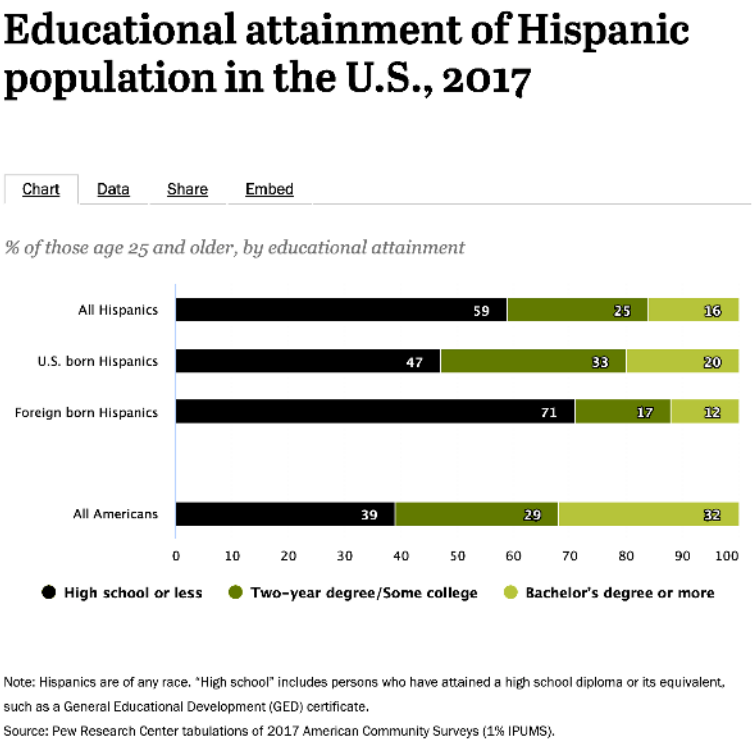


Figure **8.4.2**: Educational Attainment of Hispanic Population in the U.S., 2017. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center)

Health and Healthcare System

According to the Pew Center, in 2014 a quarter of the Latinx population did not have health insurance compared to 14% of the overall U.S. population. The disparity grows when you take into account immigration and citizenship status. For instance, for the U.S.-born Latinx population the health insurance gap with the overall U.S. population is reduced to 3 percentage points (17% to 14%, respectively) while this gap increases considerably for the foreign-born Latinx population (39% to 14%, respectively). Considering that most of the American population accesses health insurance through their employers, this gap is largely related to the occupational status of immigrant workers who are concentrated in occupations that do not provide work-related health insurance. The lack of access to healthcare is also associated with limited regular checkups, preventative medical practices, early detection of illness or disease, and overall worse health outcomes. This disparity is also evident among different age groups. For instance, 34% of the foreign-born Latinx population is uninsured compared to 12% of the U.S.-born Latinx population. These numbers show that the Latinx population, especially immigrant families, would benefit from health coverage mandates for employers or a universal health care system (Krogstad & Lopez, 2014).

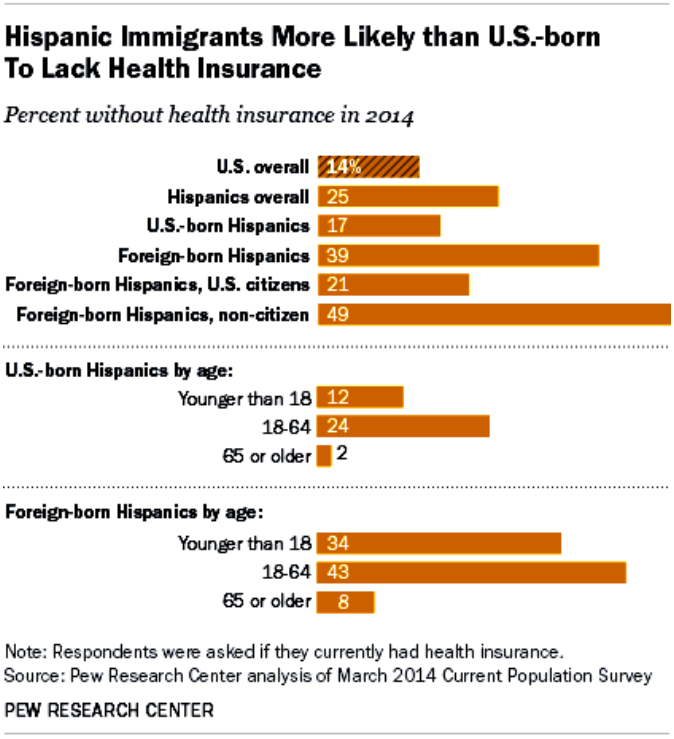


Figure **8.4.3**: Hispanic Immigrants More Likely than U.S.-born to Lack Health Insurance 2014. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center)

Political System

For decades, the Latinx population was referred to as "the sleeping giant" of politics in the United States because of its potential to significantly impact both local and national elections. In his book Harvest of Empire, Juan Gonzalez refers to the decade of the 1990s as a turning point for the Latinx population, when the organizing and voter registration efforts of Latinx political organizations such as the Southwest Voter Registration Project (SVREP) and the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) really began to move the needle on Latinx voter registration and turnout. He refers to the period after 1995 as the rise of the "Third Force" in American politics, breaking away from the Black/white dichotomy and assumptions of previous eras.

In terms of the eligible voter population, the Latinx population accounts for 39% of the increase between 2000 and 2018. In comparison, the white population accounts for 24%, African Americans account for 17%, and Asian-American account for 14%.

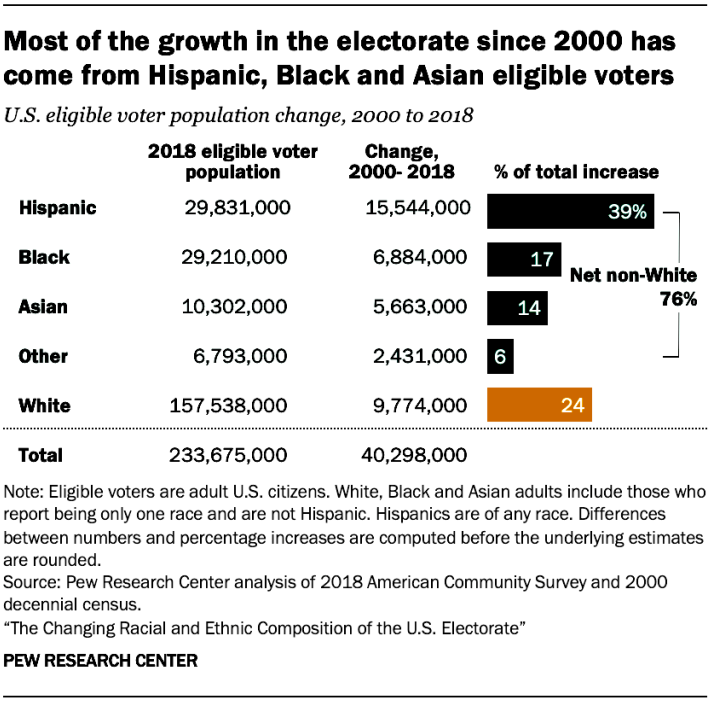


Figure 8.4.4:The Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of the U.S. Electorate. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center)

Figure 8.4.x shows that significant increase in Latinx voter turnout for a midterm election. While in 2014, 6.8 out of 25.1 million (27%) Latinx eligible voters turned out to voter, in 2018 this increased to 11.7 million out of 29 million (40%). This represents a 13% increase in voter turnout.

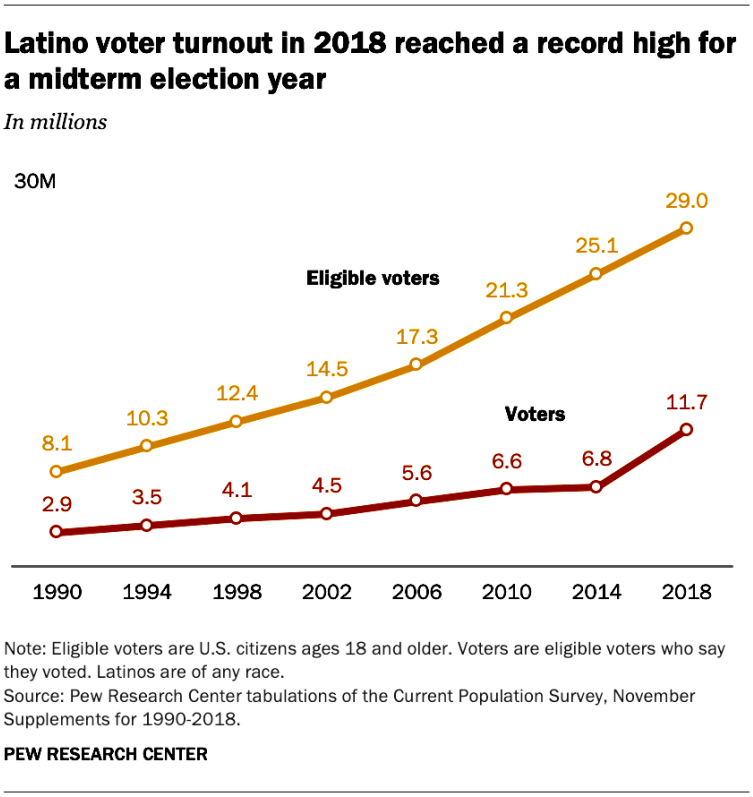


Figure 8.4.5: Latino Voter Turnout in 2018 reached a record high for a midterm election year. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center)

With regard to political affiliation, Cuban-American registered voters are much more likely to identify as Republicans. Figure 8.4.6 shows that 58% of Cubans identified as Republicans compared to only 32% of non-Cuban Latinx people. Conversely, only 38% of Cubans identified as Democrats compared to 65% of their non-Cuban counterparts.

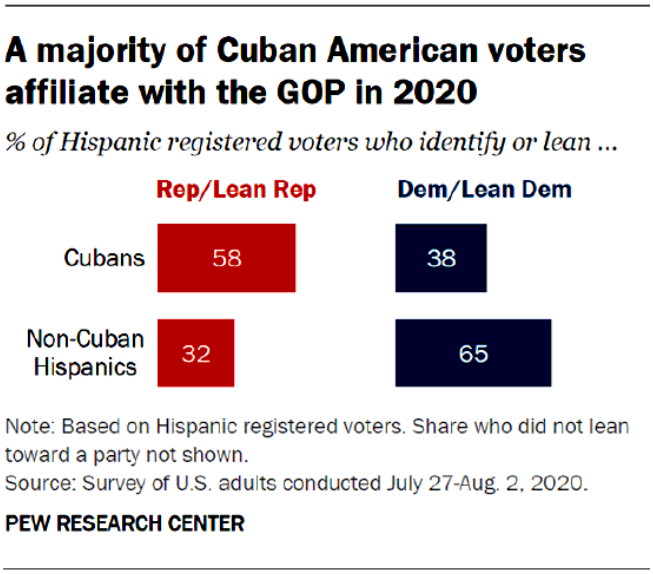


Figure 8.4.6: Most Cuban Americans voters identify as Republican in 2020. (Used with permission; Pew Research Center)

Family Dynamics

Familism refers a sense of closeness and obligation to the family unit and even placing the interests and needs of the family unit ahead of individual needs and desires. There may be positive and negative consequences of high rates of familism. One negative consequence with regard to educational attainments may include discouraging youths from pursuing a higher education in order to provide for the family unit. There are also positive consequences which include the availability of family networks, emotional support during times of crisis, financial assistance, caring for the young and the elderly, and cultural and linguistic maintenance. In their comprehensive study on Latinx family structure, Landale, Oropesa, & Bradatan (2006) found that Latinx families do have higher rates of variables associated with "familism" such as intact families, lower rates of divorce and cohabitation, and more likely to care for their elderly relatives compared to their white and African-American counterparts. However, they also found difference across Latinx subgroups and declining rates of "familism" across Latinx generations.

Machismo and **marianismo** are terms related to gender identity and expectations and commonly linked to gender and family dynamics in Latin American societies. In Latinx families, machismo is a form of traditional masculinity that, on the one hand, may include more positive aspects such as taking responsibility for the family, chivalry, and protector. Gill & Vasquez (1996) describe this side of machismo as el caballero ("the gentleman") often personified in film and television, who protects his wife and family from dangers and is chivalrous but still afflicted by machismo. On the other hand, machismo is also associated with negative and harmful aspects such as sexual domination, aggressiveness, and expectation of submissiveness for women and children (Gill and Vasquez, 1996). Marianismo is the complementary female role for Latinx women, who are expected to personify the ideals of true femininity, such as being modest, virtuous and abstain from sexual intercourse until marriage. The term derives from the paradoxical beliefs of the Virgin Mary and most likely originated during the Spanish Colonial Period in Latin America. Gill and Vasquez (2006) write that marianismo is about "dispensing care and pleasure, not receiving them", suffering the negative consequences of machismo and mariansmo in silence, and submission to patriarchical forces and family dynamics.



Figure 8.4.7: "El Machismo Mata.(Trans. "Machismo Kills") (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; lorena pajares via Flickr)

Despite the existence of evidence of cultural dynamics such as familism and machismo in Latinx families, it is important to not reduce the behaviors and experiences of ethnic groups entirely to culture. This is referred to as **cultural essentialism** and may lead to a "culture of deficiency" approach to defining and analyzing the social experiences of Latinx and other racial/ethnic groups. Also, cultural essentialism may also prevent one from considering the importance of other important social forces, such as social class or racial discrimination. Gonzalez-Lopez & Vidal-Ortiz (2008) remind researchers that such cultural paradigms are not used when studying non-Latinx groups but with Latinx groups they have become "uncritically accepted - and they have become shorthand to explain gender inequality from a culture-blaming perspective" (p. 312).

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Gill R. & Vasquez, C. (1996). *The Maria Paradox: How Latinas Can Merge Old World Traditions with New World Self-Esteem*. New York: Putnam.
- Gonzalez-Lopez, G. & Vidal-Ortiz, S. (2008). Latinas and Latinos, sexuality and society: A critical sociological perspective in Latinas/os in Rodriguez, H. et al (Eds.). 2008. *The United States: Changing the Face of America*. New York: Springer. p. 308-322.
- Krogstad J.M., Gonzalez-Barrera A., & Noe-Bustamante L. (2020). U.S. Latinos among hardest hit by pay cuts, job losses due to Coronavirus. *Pew Research Center.*
- Krogstad J.M. & Lopez M.H. (2014, September). Hispanic immigrants more likely to lack health insurance than U.S. born. *Pew Research Center.*
- Landale N., Oropesa R., & Bradatan C. (2006) Hispanic families in the US: Family structure and process in an era of family change. in Tienda, M. & Mitchell, F. (Eds.). 2006. *Hispanics and the Future of America*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press
- Light M., He J., & Robey J. (2020, December). Comparing crime rates between undocumented immigrants, legal immigrants, and native-born US citizens in Texas. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America.*
- Myers, D. (2007). *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America*. Russell Sage.
- Educational attainment of Hispanic population in the U.S. (2019). *Pew Research Center.*
- Vigdor, J. (2008). Measuring immigrant assimilation in the United States. *Manhattan Institute.*

This page titled 8.4: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **8.4: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

8.5: Social Change and Resistance

Demographic Change

The changing demographic composition of the United States will impact race relations and the experiences of the Latinx population. According the U.S. Census projections, by 2060 the Latinx population will increase to 29% (from 17% in 2014) of the U.S. population and the non-Hispanic white population is projected to drop to 44% (from 62% in 2014). Moreover, their share will be higher for children under the age of 18 (34%) will be nearly equal to the non-Hispanic white population - 36% (Colby and Ortman, 2015). On the one hand, the increase in the Latinx population will increase their political power and increase their influence as a major voting bloc at the local, state, and national levels. On the other hand, Aguirre and Turner would argue that an increase in the size of a racialized people of color may increase the sense of threat by the majority group and may lead to holding on to negative beliefs stereotypes, discrimination, and racial tension.

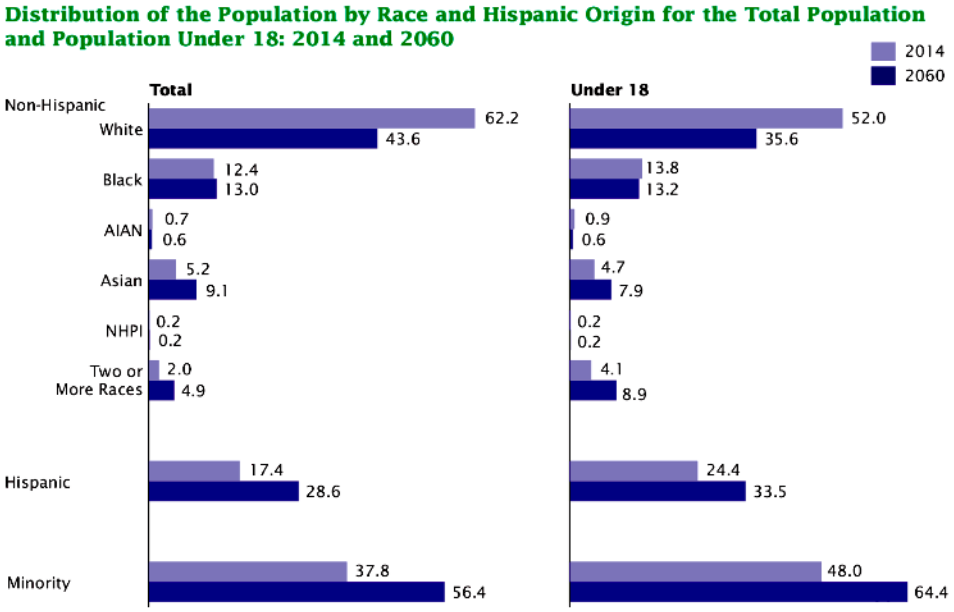


Figure **8.5.1**: Distribution of the Population by Race and Hispanic Origin for the Total Population and Population under 18: 2014-2060 (CC PDM 1.0; via U.S. Census Bureau (2015))

Multiracial families, Identity, and Racialization

Since the 1967 Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court Case (discussed earlier in Chapter 1.4), which overturned anti-miscegenation laws in the United States, intermarriage rates have steadily increased. Today, nearly 20% of all newlyweds are married to someone of a different race or ethnicity, up from 3% in 1967. Overall, about 11 million (about 10%) of all married people have a spouse of a different race or ethnicity. Asian-Americans have the highest rate of intermarriage among newlyweds (29%) and Latinx have the second highest rate (27%) while African-Americans have the third highest (18%) and white Americans have the lowest at 11%. Latinx newlywed men and women are just as likely to intermarry while African-Americans and Asian-Americans have significant gender disparities in intermarriage rates. With regard to educational attainment, Latinx with a bachelor's degree have the highest rate of intermarriage (46%) across the four major racial/ethnic groups. And lastly, about 42% of all intermarried couples involve one Latinx and one white spouse and an identical percentage of all multiracial or multiethnic babies have one Latinx parent and one white parent (Livingston & Brown, 2017).

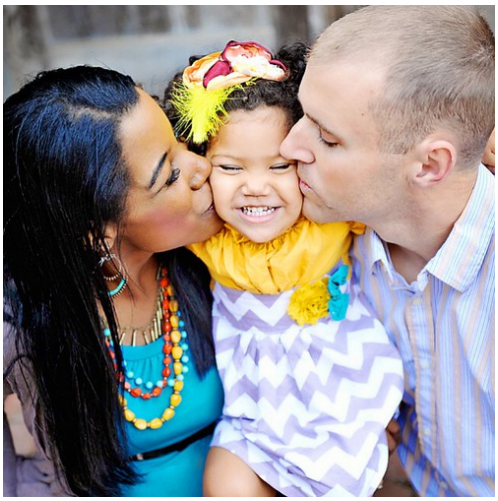


Figure 8.5.2: "Can you believe less than 50 years ago our interracial marriage would have been illegal in 16 states?" (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Jennifer Borget via Flickr)

What does this mean for the future of the Latinx population in the United States? According to the assimilation theories, the increase in intermarriage rates is a reflection of the integration of the Latinx population into the mainstream American society. Theorists like Park and Gordon predicted that this would occur over time, although perhaps at a slower pace for certain racialized groups. However, other social scientists would argue that the increase in intermarriage and interracial babies does not necessarily portend or guarantee racial equality in the United States. For example, Kimberly DaCosta is skeptical that intermarriage will address the larger structural issues of structural racism and racialization:

"While the possibility exists that the greater visibility of multiracial families will lead to more acceptability of all kinds or relations across racial boundaries - beginning with intimate and familial ones and corresponding with spatial and social ones - this does not mean, of course, that the problem that defined America in the twentieth century - the color line - has not followed us into the twenty-first" (Da Costa, 2005).

Also, in their study using multigenerational survey data, Ortiz & Telles (2012) found that the children of Mexican-white marriages continue to have a Mexican identification or identity. Further, they also found that more educated Mexican-Americans experienced more stereotyping and racial discrimination than their less-educated counterparts and those who reported having greater contact with whites experienced more stereotyping and racial discrimination. They concluded that these "results are indicative of the ways in which Mexican-Americans are racialized in the United States." Their findings also challenge the assumption that interracial marriages or contact with the white majority will lead to racial equality or a more multiracial or pluralistic America.

Latinx Social Movements: Historical Timeline

1900s

1903 In Oxnard, Calif., more than 1,200 Mexican and Japanese farm workers organize the first farm worker union, the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association (JMLA). Later, it will be the first union to win a strike against the California agricultural industry, which already has become a powerful force.



Figure 8.5.3: A Japanese-American farm worker. Nyssa, Oregon, July 1942. (CC PDM 1.0; Britt Fuller via Flickr)

1904 The U.S. establishes the first border patrol as a way to keep Asian laborers from entering the country by way of Mexico.

1905 Labor organizer Lucy Gonzales Parsons, from San Antonio, Texas, helps found the Wobblies, the Industrial Workers of the World.

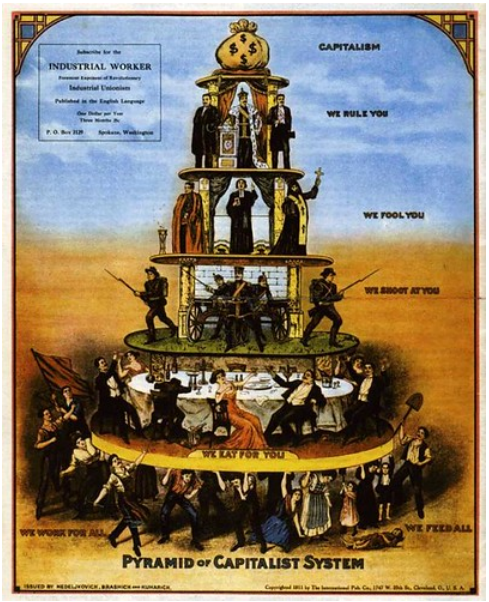


Figure 8.5.4: "iww-capitalist-pyramid_0" (CC BY-NC 2.0; Der_Hut_Geist via Flickr)

1910s

1910 The Mexican Revolution forces Mexicans to cross the border into the United States, in search of safety and employment.



Figure 8.5.5: The Taking of Zacatecas (1926-1993). (CC BY-SA 3.0; Ángel Boliver via Wikimedia)

1911 The first large convention of Mexicans to organize against social injustice, El Primer Congreso Mexicanista, meets in Laredo, Texas.

1912 New Mexico enters the union as an officially bilingual state, authorizing funds for voting in both Spanish and English, as well as for bilingual education. Article XII of the state constitution also prohibits segregation for children of "Spanish descent." At the state's constitutional convention six years earlier, Mexican American delegates mandated Spanish and English be used for all state business.

1914 The Colorado militia attacks striking coal miners in what becomes known as the Ludlow Massacre. More than 50 people are killed, mostly Mexican Americans, including 11 children and three women.

1917 Factories in war-related industries need more workers, as Americans leave for war. Latinos from the Southwest begin moving north in large numbers for the first time. They find ready employment as machinists, mechanics, furniture finishers, upholsterers, printing press workers, meat packers and steel mill workers.

1917 The U.S. Congress passes the Jones Act, granting citizenship to Puerto Ricans under U.S. military rule since the end of the Spanish-American War.

1920s

1921 San Antonio's Orden Hijos de América (Order of the Sons of America) organizes Latino workers to raise awareness of civil rights issues and fight for fair wages, education and housing.

1921 The Immigration Act of 1921 restricts the entry of southern and eastern Europeans. Agricultural businesses successfully oppose efforts to limit the immigration of Mexicans.

1927 In Los Angeles, the Confederación de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas (Federation of Mexican Workers Union-CUOM) becomes the first large-scale effort to organize and consolidate Mexican workers.

1928 Octaviano Larrazolo of New Mexico becomes the first Latino U.S. Senator.

1929 Several Latino service organizations merge to form the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). The group organizes against discrimination and segregation and promotes education among Latinos. It's the largest and longest-lasting Latino civil rights group in the country.

LULAC 2012 Excellence in Military Service Award

Figure 8.5.6: LULAC 2012 Excellence in Military Service Award. (CC BY 2.0; Army Medicine via Flickr)

1930s

1931 The country's first labor strike incited by a cultural conflict happens in Ybor City (Tampa), Fla., when the owners of cigar factories attempt to get rid of the lectores, people who read aloud from books and magazines as a way to help cigar rollers pass the time. The owners accuse the lectores of radicalizing the workers and replace them with radios. The workers walk out.

1932 Benjamin Nathan Cardozo, a Sephardic Jew, becomes the first Latino named to the U.S. Supreme Court.

1933 Latino unions in California lead the El Monte Strike, possibly the largest agricultural strike at that point in history, to protest the declining wage rate for strawberry pickers. By May 1933, wages dropped to nine cents an hour. In July, growers agreed to a settlement including a wage increase to 20 cents an hour, or $1.50 for a nine-hour day of work.



Figure **8.5.7**: Mexican Workers in the 1930's. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Jimmy Smith via Flickr)

1938 On December 4, El Congreso del Pueblo de Habla Española (The Spanish-Speaking Peoples Congress) holds its first conference in Los Angeles. Founded by Luisa Moreno and led by Josefina Fierro de Bright, it's the first national effort to bring together Latino workers from different ethnic backgrounds: Cubans and Spaniards from Florida, Puerto Ricans from New York, Mexicans and Mexican Americans from the Southwest.

1939 Novelist John Steinbeck publishes The Grapes of Wrath, calling attention to the plight of migrant workers in the California grape-growing industry.

1940s

1941 The U.S. government forms the Fair Employment Practices Committee to handle cases of employment discrimination. Latino workers file more than one-third of all complaints from the Southwest.

1942 The Bracero Program begins, allowing Mexican citizens to work temporarily in the United States. U.S. growers support the program as a source or low-cost labor. The program welcomes millions of Mexican workers into the U.S. until it ends in 1964.

1942 Hundreds of thousands of Latinos serve in the armed forces during World War II.

1943 Los Angeles erupts in the Zoot Suit Riots, the worst race riots in the city to date. For 10 nights, American sailors cruise Mexican American neighborhoods in search of "zoot-suiters" -- hip, young Mexican teens dressed in baggy pants and long-tailed coats. The military men drag kids -- some as young as 12 years old -- out of movie theaters and cafes, tearing their clothes off and viciously beating them.



Figure 8.5.8: "Zoot Suit Riots" (CC BY 2.0; Gareth Simpson via Flickr)

1944 Senator Dennis Chávez of New Mexico introduces the first Fair Employment Practices Bill, which prohibits discrimination because of race, creed or national origin. The bill fails, but is an important predecessor for the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

1945 Latino veterans return home with a new feeling of unity. Together, they seek equal rights in the country they defended. They use their G.I. benefits for personal advancement, college educations and buying homes. In 1948, they will organize the American G.I. Forum in Texas to combat discrimination and improve the status of Latinos; branches eventually form in 23 states.

1945 Mexican-American parents sue several California school districts, challenging the segregation of Latino students in separate schools. The California Supreme Court rules in the parents' favor in Mendez v. Westminster, arguing segregation violates children's constitutional rights. The case is an important precedent for Brown v. Board of Education in 1954.



Figure 8.5.9: Mendez vs. Westminster Commemorative Stamp issued by the U.S. Postal Service on September 13, 2007. (CC BY 2.0; USDAgov via Flickr)

1950s

1953 During "Operation Wetback" from 1953 and 1958, the U.S. Immigration Service arrests and deports more than 3.8 million Latin Americans. Many U.S. citizens are deported unfairly, including political activist Luisa Moreno and other community leaders.

1954 Hernandez v. Texas is the first post-WWII Latino civil rights case heard and decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. The Hernandez decision strikes down discrimination based on class and ethnic distinctions.

1960s

1962 Air flights between the U.S. and Cuba are suspended following the Cuban Missile Crisis. Prior to the Crisis, more than 200,000 of Cuba's wealthiest and most affluent professionals fled the country fearing reprisals from Fidel Castro's communist

regime. Many believed Castro would be overthrown and they would soon be able to return to Cuba.

1963 Miami's Coral Way Elementary School offers the nation's first bilingual education program in public schools, thanks to a grant from the Ford Foundation.

1965 Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta found the United Farm Workers association, in Delano, Calif., which becomes the largest and most important farm worker union in the nation. Huerta becomes the first woman to lead such a union. Under their leadership, the UFW joins a strike started by Filipino grape pickers in Delano. The Grape Boycott becomes one of the most significant social justice movements for farm workers in the United States.



Figure 8.5.10: San Jose Chicano Rights Marches California. (CC BY-SA 2.0; San José Public Library via Flickr)

1965 Luis Valdez founds the world-famous El Teatro Campesino, the first farm worker theatre, in Delano, Calif. Actors entertain and educate farm workers about their rights.

1966 Congress passes the Cuban American Adjustment Act allowing Cubans who lived in America for at least one year to become permanent residents. No other immigrant group has been offered this privilege before, or since.

1968 Latino high school students in Los Angeles stage citywide walkouts protesting unequal treatment by the school district. Prior to the walkouts, Latino students were routinely punished for speaking Spanish on school property, not allowed to use the bathroom during lunch, and actively discouraged from going to college. Walkout participants are subjected to police brutality and public ridicule; 13 are arrested on charges of disorderly conduct and conspiracy. However, the walkouts eventually result in school reform and an increased college enrollment among Latino youth.



Figure 8.5.11: Chicano Student Movement Walkout Feb 1969. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Andy Sternberg via Flickr)

1968 The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund opens its doors, becoming the first legal fund to pursue protection of the civil rights of Mexican Americans.

1969 Faced with slum housing, inadequate schools and rising unemployment, Puerto Rican youth in Chicago form the Young Lords Organization, inspired in part by the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. An outgrowth of the Young Lords street

gang, the YLO becomes a vibrant community organization, creating free breakfast programs for kids and community health clinics. Modeled after the Black Panthers, the YLO uses direct action and political education to bring public attention to issues affecting their community. The group later spreads to New York City.

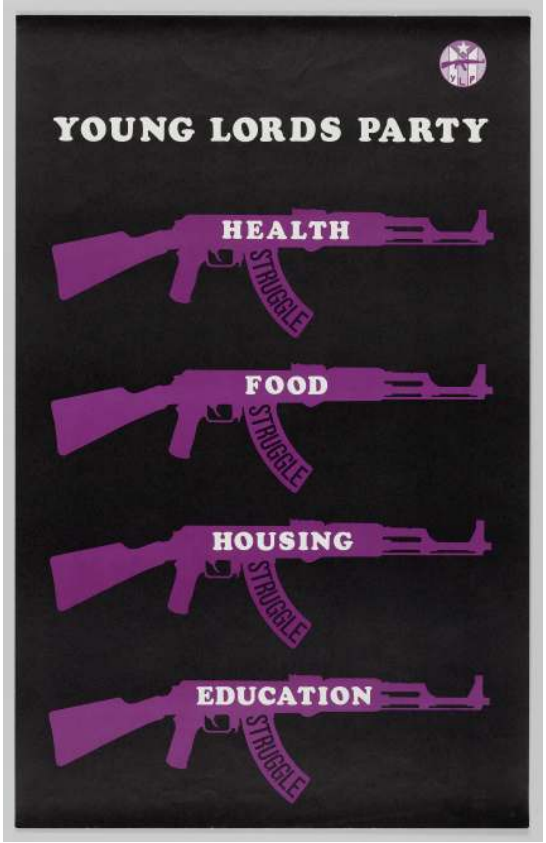


Figure **8.5.12**: Young Lords Party: Health, Food, Housing, Education. (CC PDM 1.0; via Smithsonian Institution)

1970s

Throughout the 1970s, progressive organizations based in Mexican, Filipino, Arab and other immigrant communities begin organizing documented and undocumented workers. Together, they work for legalization and union rights against INS raids and immigration law enforcement brutality.

1970 The U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare issues a memorandum saying students cannot be denied access to educational programs because of an inability to speak English.

1974 In the case Lau v. Nichols, the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirms the 1970 memorandum, ruling students' access to, or participation in, an educational program cannot be denied because of their inability to speak or understand English. The lawsuit began as a class action by Chinese-speaking students against the school district in San Francisco, although the decision benefited other immigrant groups, as well.

1974 Congress passes the Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1974 to make bilingual education more widely available in public schools.

1974 The first major Latino voter registration organization, the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project begins, registering more than two million Latino voters in the first 20 years.

1975 After non-English speakers testify about the discrimination they face at the polls, Congress votes to expand the U.S. Voting Rights Act to require language assistance at polling stations. Native Americans, Asian Americans, Alaska Natives and Latinos benefit most from this provision. The original Act, passed in 1965, applied only to Blacks and Puerto Ricans. The Voting Rights Act leads to the increasing political representation of Latinos in U.S. politics.

1980s

1985 National religious organizations provide support for the first "National Consultation on Immigrant Rights." Immediately the group calls for a National Day of Action for Justice for Immigrants and Refugees, "to call attention to issues and to dramatize the positive role of immigrants in shaping U.S. society." More than 20 cities participate in the event.

1986 On November 6, Congress approves the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), providing legalization for certain undocumented workers, including agricultural workers. The Act also sets employer sanctions in place, making it illegal for employers to hire undocumented workers.

1988 President Ronald Reagan appoints Dr. Lauro Cavazos as Secretary of Education. He becomes the first Latino appointed to a presidential cabinet.

1989 Miami's Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Cuban American, becomes the first Latino woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

1990s

1990 The California Delegation Against Hate Violence documents the increasing human rights abuses by INS agents and private citizens against migrants in the San Diego-Tijuana border area.

1992 The Los Angeles Police Department cracks down on Latino immigrants during the "Los Angeles rebellion," after the "not guilty" verdict in the Rodney King police brutality case.

1994-1995 The fight over California's Proposition 187 brings the debate over immigration --particularly undocumented immigration -- to the front pages of the national press. The ballot initiative galvanizes students across the state, who mount a widespread campaign in opposition. Voters approve the measure preventing undocumented immigrants from obtaining public services like education and health care.

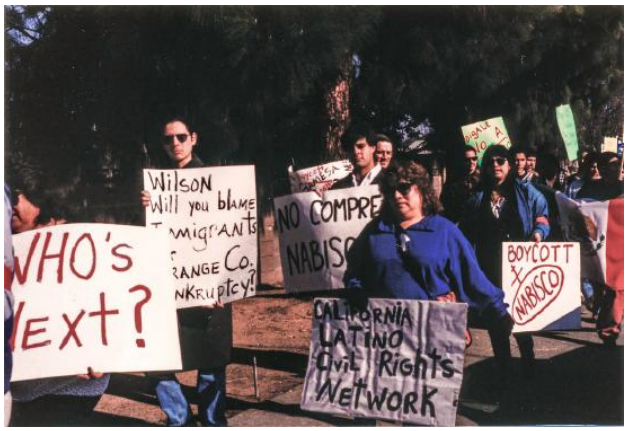


Figure **8.5.13**: March Against Prop 187 in Fresno California 1994. (CC BY-SA 2.0; David Prasad via Flickr)

1997 A U.S. District Court judge overturns California's Prop 187, ruling it unconstitutional.

1999 After sixty years of U.S. Navy exercise-bombings on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, civil rights leaders in both Puerto Rican and African American communities respond with a non-violent protest galvanizing the island's 9,300 residents. Triggered by the accidental death of a Puerto Rican naval base employee during live ammunition exercises, Puerto Ricans unite in outrage, protesting the proximity of the exercises to civilians, years of environmental destruction and resulting health problems. The Navy failed to honor historical agreements to treat the island and its people respectfully. The protests culminate in lawsuits and the arrest of more than 180 protesters, with some serving unnecessarily harsh sentences. The Navy promises to stop bombing the island by 2003.

1999 The Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Project coordinates nationwide activities on Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Public displays of crosses, representing those who died crossing the border, capture public and media attention.

2000s

2001 Following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Arab Americans and others of Middle Eastern descent experience a backlash in the United States, as hate crimes, harassment and police profiling sharply increase. Based in rising fears over "border security," the stigma spreads to other immigrant groups. Some politicians call for building a wall between the United States and Mexico. During the next five years, Latino immigrants face a surge in discrimination and bias.

2003 Latinos are pronounced the nation's largest people of color --- surpassing African Americans --- after new Census figures show the U.S. Latino population at 37.1 million. The number is expected to triple by the year 2050.

2004 The Minuteman Project begins to organize anti-immigrant activists at the U.S./Mexico border. The group considers itself a citizen's border patrol, but several known white supremacists are members. During the next two years, the Minuteman Project gains widespread press coverage. Immigrant rights supporters conduct counter-rallies in public opposition to the Minuteman Project's tactics and beliefs.

2005 Just as key provisions of the Voting Rights Act are about to expire, English-only conservatives oppose its renewal because of the expense of bilingual ballots. In August 2006, President George W. Bush will reauthorize the Act. The reauthorized Act will be named the "Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King, and Cesar Chavez Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006."

2006 Immigrants -- mostly Latinos -- and their allies launch massive demonstrations in cities and towns across the country in support of immigrant rights and to protest the growing resentment toward undocumented workers.

2006 High school students, mostly but not exclusively Latino, stage walkouts in Los Angeles, Houston and other cities, boycotting schools and businesses in support of immigrant rights and equality. Schools issue suspensions and truancy reports to students who participate, and several students are arrested.

2006 On May 1, hundreds of thousands of Latino immigrants and others participate in the Day Without Immigrants, boycotting work, school and shopping, to symbolize the important contributions immigrants make to the American economy.



Figure **8.5.14**: "11.Immigrant.March1.WDC.1may06" (CC BY 2.0; Elvert Barnes via Flickr)

2006 The U.S. Congress debates legislation that would criminalize undocumented immigrants. Immigrant rights organizations support alternative legislation offering a pathway to citizenship. The legislation stalls, and Congress decides instead to hold hearings across the country during the summer and fall of 2006, to gain public input on how to handle the immigration issue.

2010s

2012 After sustained protest and direct action, immigrant rights activists and supporters pressure Obama to pass DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). This executive order provides protection for undocumented young people who were brought to the United States as children. They were also able to apply for a driver's license, work permit, and relief from deportation proceedings.



Figure 8.5.15: UWD Leaders block an intersection in front of the White House. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; unitedwedream via Flickr)



Figure 8.5.16: Immigrant Rights. (CC BY 2.0; ep_jhu via Flickr)

Contributors and Attributions

- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)

Works Cited

- Colby S. & Ortman J. (2015). Projections of the size and composition of the U.S. population: 2014 - 2060. *U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Reports*. March 2015
- Da Costa, K. (2005). Redrawing the color line? The problems and possibilities of multiracial families and group making. In Gallagher C. (Ed.) *Rethinking the Color Line* (2018) 6th Edition. Sage.
- Livingston, G. & Brown, A. (2017). Intermarriage in the U.S. 50 years after Loving v. Virginia. *Pew Research Center.*
- Ortiz, V., & Telles, E. (2012). Racial identity and racial treatment of Mexican Americans. *Race and Social Problems*, *4*(1).
- Samora, Julian. (1993). *A History of the Mexican-American People.* University of Notre Dame Press.
- Southern Poverty Law Center. (2020). Teaching Tolerance. *Southern Poverty Law Center.*
- Terriquez, V. (2015 August). Intersectional mobilization, social movement spillover, and queer youth leadership in the immigrant rights movement. *Social Problems*, *62*(3), 343–362.

This page titled 8.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **8.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

9: Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders

9.1: History and Demographics

9.2: Intergroup Relations

9.3: Intersectionality

9.4: Social Institutions

9.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 9: Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

9.1: History and Demographics

Like many groups discussed in this module, Asian Americans represent a great diversity of cultures and backgrounds. The experience of a Japanese American whose family has been in the United States for three generations will be drastically different from a Laotian American who has only been in the United States for a few years.

How and Why They Came

The national and ethnic diversity of Asian American immigration history is reflected in the variety of their experiences in joining U.S. society. Asian immigrants have come to the United States primarily in the third wave (1880-1914) and fourth wave (1965-present), but also in the second wave (1820-1860). The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act removed national-origin quotas established in 1921, resulting in marked population growth during this period with 491,000 Asian immigrants in 1960 and 12.8 million Asian immigrants in 2014, which accounts from a 2,597% increase. As of 2014, the top five origin countries of Asian immigrants were India, China, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Korea.

The first Asian immigrants to come to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century were Chinese. These immigrants were primarily men whose intention was to work for several years in order to earn incomes to send back to their families in China. Their main destination was the American West, where the Gold Rush ('49 ers) was drawing people with its lure of abundant money. The construction of the Transcontinental Railroad was underway at this time, and the Central Pacific section hired thousands of migrant Chinese men to complete the laying of rails across the rugged Sierra Nevada mountain range. Chinese men also engaged in other manual labor like mining and agricultural work. This work was grueling and underpaid, but like many immigrants, they persevered.

Japanese immigration began in the 1880s, on the heels of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Many Japanese immigrants came to Hawaii to work in the sugar industry; others came to the mainland, especially to California. Unlike the Chinese, however, the Japanese had a strong government in their country of origin that negotiated with the U.S. government to ensure the well-being of their immigrants. Japanese men were able to bring their wives and families to the United States, and were thus able to produce second- and third-generation Japanese Americans more quickly than their Chinese counterparts.

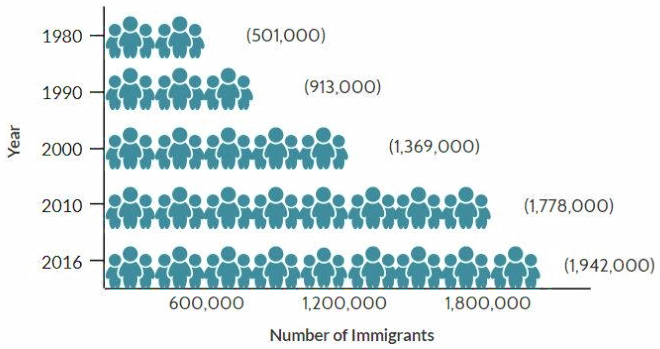


Figure **9.1.1**: Filipino Immigrant Population in the United States, 1980-2016. (Data from U.S. Census Bureau 2010 and 2016 American Community Surveys (ACS), and Campbell J. Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-born Population of the United States: 1850-2000" (Working Paper no. 81, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, February 2006) (CC BY 4.0; via Lumens)

Fourth wave Asian immigration included immigrants from India, Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines. As you can see in Figure 9.1.2, Indian immigration grew between 1980 and 2010 more than eleven-fold, roughly doubling every decade. It is composed primarily of English-speaking, highly educated immigrants, many of whom qualified for an H-1B (a temporary visa for highly skilled immigrants). In 2013, India and China supplanted Mexico as the top sources of newly arriving immigrants in the United States.

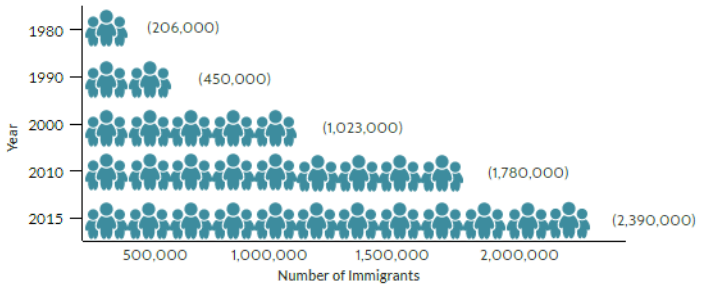


Figure **9.1.2**: Indian Immigrant Population in the United States, 1980-2015. (Data from U.S. Census Bureau 2010 and 2015 American Community Surveys (ACS), and 1980, 1990, and 2000 Decennial Census, www.migrationpolicy.org/arti...-united-states) (CC BY 4.0; via Lumens)

Wars in Korea and Vietnam led to increased immigration from those countries after 1965. While Korean immigration has been fairly gradual, Vietnamese immigration was more concentrated after 1975, when the formerly U.S.-backed city of Saigon fell and a restrictive communist government was established. Whereas many Asian immigrants came to the United States to seek better economic opportunities, Vietnamese immigrants came as political refugees, seeking asylum from repressive conditions in their homeland. The Refugee Act of 1980 helped them settle in the United States, with large numbers coming from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Many of these refugees settled in California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, forming ethnic enclaves in urban areas (ethnic enclaves defined in Chapter 1.3).



Figure **9.1.3**: Thirty-five Vietnamese refugees wait to be taken aboard the amphibious USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19). They are being rescued from a thirty-five-foot fishing boat 350 miles northeast of Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, after spending eight days at sea. (CC PDM 1.0; PH2 Phil Eggman (U.S. Navy) via Wikimedia) (CC BY 4.0; via Lumens)

Current Status

Asian Americans are a rapidly growing part of the population. The New York University (NYU) Center for the Study of Asian American Health examines growth in New York City. Researchers there found that New York City (NYC) is home to nearly 1.2 million documented and undocumented Asian Americans, representing more than 13% of the total NYC population. This diverse population (more than 20 countries of origin and 45 languages and dialects) grew by 110% from 1990 to 2010.

Immigrant and Emigrant Populations by Country of Origin and Destination

Click below on the Interactive map on immigrant and emigrant populations to examine where many of the world's 258 million international migrants moved. You can use the dropdown menu to select a country of origin to see where emigrants have settled.

Figure **9.1.4**: Immigrant and Emigrant Populations by Country of Origin and Destination. (CC BY 4.0; via Lumens)

Model Minority Myth

Asian Americans certainly have been subject to their share of racial prejudice, despite the seemingly positive stereotype as the model minority. The **model minority** stereotype is applied to a group that is seen as achieving significant educational, professional, and socioeconomic success without challenging the existing establishment. This stereotype is typically applied to Asian groups in the United States, and it can result in unrealistic expectations by putting a stigma on those who do not meet the presumed standard. Stereotyping all Asians as smart and capable can also limit much-needed government assistance, and can result in educational and professional discrimination.

According to the NYC Opportunity tabulations, 17.9% of people living in poverty in New York City were Asian Americans, and they had the highest poverty rate of any racial or ethnic group at 29%. Contradictorily, Asian American community organizations received only 1.4% of the city's social service contract dollars from the Department of Social Services.

Crazy Rich Asians

The trailer from the blockbuster hit Crazy Rich Asians (2018) is but one example, portrayal of Asian American immigrants. Then consider the questions that follow.

- Why do you think there is such a disconnect between numbers of Asian Americans in poverty and funding for Asian community organizations?
- What would be the unique challenges of obtaining survey data in Asian communities that might not pose the same challenges in other minority communities? How would you suggest addressing these sampling challenges?
- In what ways is the model minority an ideology to justify inequality and racism?
- Do you think dark-skinned Asian Americans might be subjected to more prejudice and discrimination than light-skinned Asian Americans?

Ethnic Communities & Enclaves

Immigration is a major component in the lives of many Asian Americans -- why they come, how many, and what happens to them after they arrive. Since the establishment of the first Asian American communities in the U.S., Asian American "enclaves" have become a significant part of virtually every major city in America. As more Asians immigrate to the U.S., traditional communities not only grow but also evolve as they absorb the new arrivals and adapt to the non-Asian environment around them. This section looks at the numbers of immigrants who come to the U.S., their ethnic communities, and the economic and cultural issues that affect these groups.

First, The Demographics

Before we explore the origins and dynamics of ethnic enclaves and communities, you may be wondering, considering that about two-thirds of all Asian Americans are immigrants, exactly how many Asians have immigrated to the U.S.? To answer that question, view Table 9.5 below (Immigration and Naturalization Service data). It shows the number of immigrants and refugees/asylees who have arrived in the U.S. for the six largest Asian origin countries, plus Hong Kong (remember, before 1997, Hong Kong was a colony of Great Britain) and all Asian countries combined, for each of the past three decades plus the latest year in which final numbers are available, 2000. Finally, it includes numbers from Europe, the Caribbean, Central and South America, and Mexico for comparison.

Table **9.1.5**: The number of immigrants, refugees, and asylees (1971-2004). (Data from the Department of Homeland Security)

	1971-1980	**1981-1990**	**1991-2000**	**2001-2004**
China	138,068	354,675	426,722	212,724
Hong Kong	116,935	100,131	110,390	30,336
India	164,175	250,786	365,604	267,081
Japan	49,831	47,195	67,966	31,628
Korea	267,703	333,866	164,192	74,055
Philippines	355,200	548,764	509,913	207,908
Viet Nam	323,086	605,235	493,002	144,494
All Asian Countries	1,798,861	3,450,249	3,147,019	1,332,264
All European Countries	872,226	917,062	1,786,302	738,898
Caribbean, Central & South America	1,424,865	1,924,312	2,236,032	971,635
Mexico	640,496	1,655,843	2,249,837	717,408

As you can see, the Asian ethnic country that has sent the most immigrants to the U.S. since 1971 is the Philippines (over 1.5 million since 1971), followed by India, Korea, and Viet Nam (all around 3/4 of a million). However, these numbers pale in comparison to the number of immigrants from Mexico, who total over 4.5 million since 1971 -- wow! The U.S. is truly the land of immigrants. Before we discuss the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics and impacts of Asian immigrants, let us examine how they've formed their own ethnic communities after arriving in the U.S.

Origins of Asian American Enclaves

The first Asian American enclave ("enclave" and "community" are used interchangeably) were not Chinatowns but were actually Manila Villages in Louisiana in the 1750s. But the Chinatowns that developed as increasing numbers of Chinese workers came to northern California and Hawai'i in the mid-1800s expanded the scale of such enclaves to a whole new level. As the Chinese population spread to other parts of the country, new Chinatowns spread to other major cities, such as New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

But after Chinese immigration was all but stopped in the 1880s, the Japanese then followed in the steps of the Chinese and "Little Tokyos" began cropping up, first in Hawai'i, San Francisco and then in Los Angeles. As the Japanese mainly worked in agriculture, they became drawn to the relatively undeveloped land and abundant farming opportunities in Southern California. Since this period in the early 1900s, a few small Asian American communities existed throughout the country but they were relatively unnoticed for the most part.



Figure **9.1.6**: Cambodian mother and daughter. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Gerd Eichmann via Wikimedia)

However, it was not until the 1965 Hart-Cellar Immigration Act that the structure of Asian American enclaves changed radically. With the influx of new immigrants from China, the Philippines, Korea, India/South Asia, and Viet Nam, almost overnight new ethnic enclaves became established and quickly grew in size, almost exponentially. New enclaves soon appeared in several major U.S. cities while existing ones expanded rapidly.

Soon there were Koreatowns in Los Angeles and New York, Little Manilas in Los Angeles and San Francisco, South Asian enclaves in New York, and Little Saigons in Orange County (CA), San Jose, and Houston. By the mid-1980s, the existing Chinatown in Manhattan grew so much that there wasn't any more land into which it could expand so new Chinatowns sprang up in Sunset Park, Brooklyn and Flushing, Queens.

Today, you could find an Asian American enclave in almost every major metropolitan area you go. Some may even be in place where you would never expect, such as a thriving Hmong community in Minneapolis/St. Paul. There are also expanding Asian communities in many Canadian cities, in particular Toronto and Vancouver. Each Asian community offers its own mix of traditional culture and cuisine along with new elements borrowed from its surrounding community.

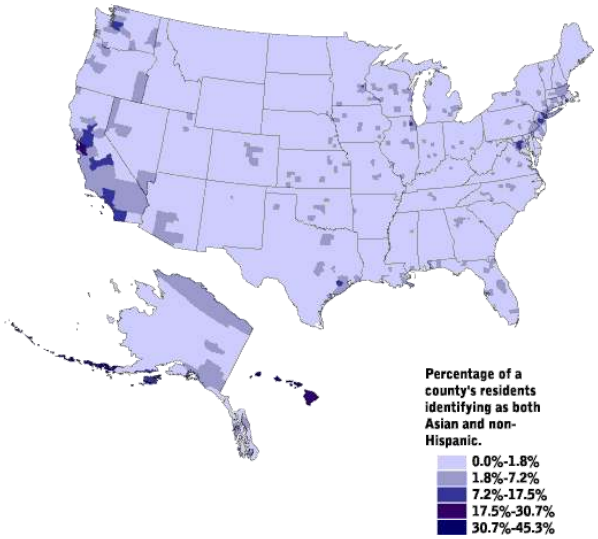


Figure **9.1.7**: Asian Americans as a Percentage of a County's Total Population. (Used with permission, CensusScope.org /Social Science Data Analysis Network) (CC BY 4.0; via Lumens)

The map above, Figure 1.1.7, is from CensusScope/Social Science Data Analysis Network and it shows Asian Americans as a percentage of a county's total population from the 2000 census. What it basically shows, not surprisingly, is that the counties that have the largest proportion of their population as Asian American are located in California, Washington, and along the mid-Atlantic and New England states. However, there is also a scattering of counties in the midwest and Texas that, while not huge, have a notable proportion of their population as Asian as well.

To look in more detail at perhaps the most dynamic county in the U.S. in terms of racial/ethnic diversity, the maps in Figure 1.1.8 are compiled by Michele Zonta and Paul Ong at the Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Analysis at UCLA. The maps illustrate different racial-ethnic distributions and concentrations in cities within Los Angeles (L.A.) County for 1980, 1990, and 2000. The results show that in 1980, the only cities that had an Asian Pacific Islander (API) majority were ones directly north of downtown and in east L.A. However, by 1990, more API majorities sprung up in east L.A. and west of Compton. Most recently in 2000, API majorities have expanded to include most of east L.A. and San Gabriel and much of the eastern part of the county.

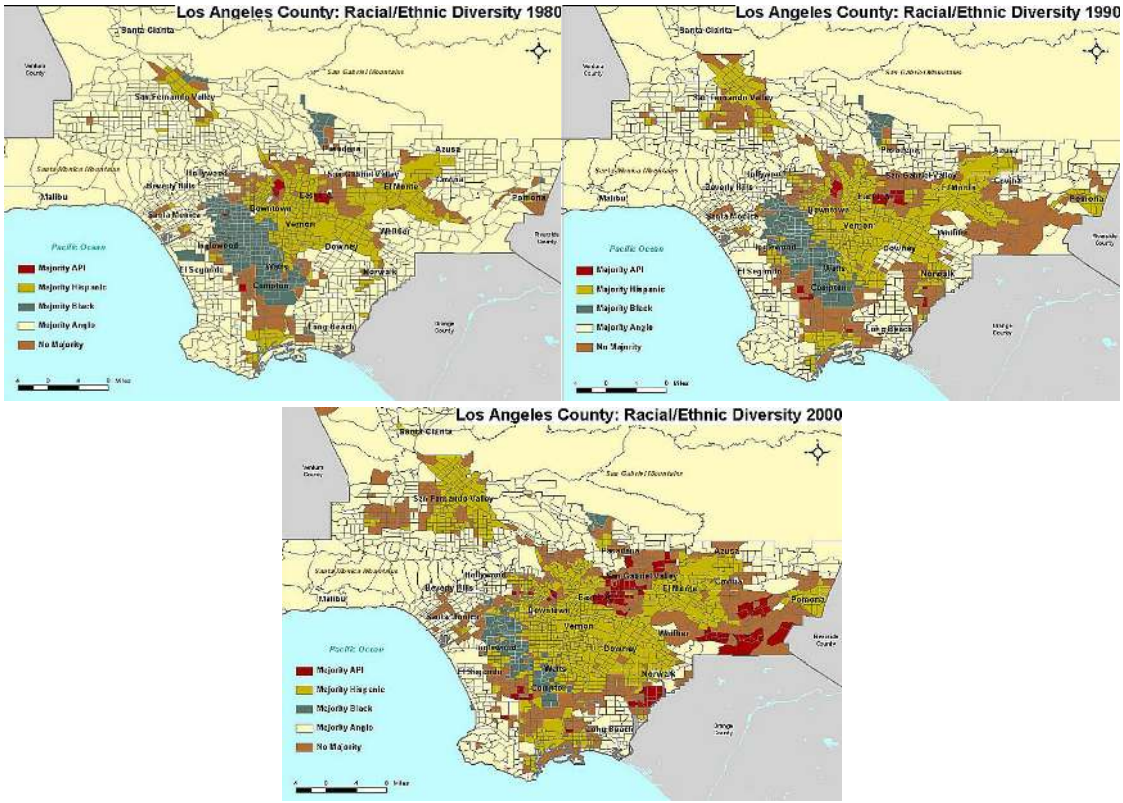


Figure \(\PageIndex{8}\): Growth of API in Southern California. (Courtesy of Asian-Nation.org)

Multiracial/Hapa Asian Americans

Asian Americans of mixed racial ancestry have been referred to as multiracial, mixed-race, biracial, "Hapa" (a native Hawaiian term that originally meant half Hawaiian), and Amerasian, among others. Their presence in not only the Asian American community but also in mainstream American society has a long history. However, the political, demographic, and cultural implications of their increasing numbers have only recently emerged for both Asian Americans and non-Asians alike.

Evolution of Racial Identity Among Asians

The origin of mixed-race or multiracial Asian Americans can be traced back to the early period of Asian immigration to the U.S. in the mid-1700s, with large scale migrations common by the mid-1800s. Because the vast majority of these early Asian immigrants were men (mostly from the Philippines or China), in many instances, if they wanted to be in the company of women, these early Asian immigrants had little choice but to socialize with non-Asian women. Eventually, the children from these interracial unions became the first multiracial Asian Americans, especially in Hawai'i where Chinese-Native Hawaiian intermarriages were common.

Eventually, as the numbers of immigrants from Asia began to swell in the mid- and late-1800s, the native white population increasingly began to view their presence in the U.S. with hostility. Objections were raised concerning perceived economic competition with native U.S. workers that Asian immigrants supposedly posed, along with doubts over whether Asians were cultural and racially compatible with mainstream American society.

This nativist and xenophobic backlash, popularly characterized as the "anti-Chinese movement," eventually led to several pieces of legislation at the local, state, and federal levels, culminating with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. These laws restricted the rights and activities of first, Chinese immigrants, then later broadened to include virtually all subsequent immigrants from Asia. Included in these restrictive laws were anti-miscegenation provisions that prevented Asians from marrying whites.

These anti-miscegenation laws were first passed in the 1600s to prevent freed Black slaves from marrying whites. Later versions added persons of Asian origin or ancestry to the list of groups forbidden to marry whites. While early examples of such anti-miscegenation laws singled out those of "Mongoloid" origin specifically, they were later amended to include Filipinos (who claimed that they were of "Malay" origin) and Asian Indians (who characterized themselves as "Aryan" in origin).



Figure **9.1.9**: The pursuit of Hapa-ness. (Thinkstock.com via Asian-Nation.org)

One noteworthy exception was the War Brides Act of 1945 that allowed American GIs to marry and bring over wives from Japan, China, the Philippines, and Korea. Several thousands of Asian women immigrated to the U.S. as war brides and their offspring became the first notable cohort of multiracial Asian Americans. Anti-miscegenation laws were finally declared unconstitutional in the 1967 U.S. Supreme Court Loving v. Virginia case.

Interracial marriages involving Asian Americans and their multiracial offspring started to increase significantly following the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965. This Act replaced the restrictive National Origins quota system that had been in place for the past four decades and which effectively limited the number of Asian immigrants to a token few each year.

In its place, the 1965 Immigration Act was structured around provisions that favored the immigration of family members, relatives, and professional workers. Eventually, these provisions substantially increased the numbers of Asian immigrants coming to the U.S., which in turn significantly increased the marriage pool, or the numbers of potential marriage partners, for Asians and non-Asians alike.

The end of the Viet Nam War also played an important role in increasing the numbers and visibility of multiracial Asian Americans, in this case "**Amerasians**" -- the children of Vietnamese mothers and American GIs who served in Viet Nam. After the fall of Saigon in and the reunification of Viet Nam in 1975, several thousand Amerasians were left behind as all remaining American personnel were evacuated. After enduring systematic discrimination and hostility back in Viet Nam as direct legacies of the U.S.'s involvement in the war, the Vietnamese Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1988 allowed approximately 25,000 Amerasians and their immediate relatives to immigrate to the U.S.

Characteristics and Demographics of Multiracials

Efforts to get an accurate national count of multiracial Asian Americans have been stymied in previous censuses since respondents could not choose more than one racial/ethnic identity. However, for the 2000 Census, the Census Bureau reversed its policy and allowed respondents to identify with more than one "race," finally allowing researchers to get a reliable count of the number of multiracial Asian Americans in the U.S.

According to the 2000 census, (The Asian Population: 2000), out of the 281,421,906 people living in the U.S., 10,242,998 of them identified themselves as entirely of Asian race (3.6%). Additionally, there were 1,655,830 people who identified themselves as being part Asian and part one or more other races (as noted in the Methodology explanation, the Census Bureau considers Hispanics/Latinos to be an ethnic, rather than a racial, group). The following table breaks down the distributions of Asian Americans who identify with more than one race.

Table **9.1.10**: Number of Multiracial Asians by Racial/Ethnic Combinations, 2000. (Data via U.S. Census Bureau)

	Number of Multiracial Asians by Racial/Ethnic Combinations, 2000		
of Mult…		**Number**	**% of all Multiracial Asians**
of Mult…	**Asian and Other Race(s)**	1,655,830	100%
of Mult…	**Asian and white**	868,395	52.4%
of Mult…	**Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**	138,802	8.4%
of Mult…	**Asian and Black/African American**	106,782	6.4%
of Mult…	**Asian and Some Other Race**	249,108	15.0%
of Mult…	**All Other Combinations, incl. Other Asian**	292,743	17.7%
of Mult…	**All Asians Alone or with Other Races**	11,898,828	4.2% of Total U.S. Population

As we can see, by far the largest group of multiracial Asians are those who are half Asian and half white. Historically, many of these mixed-race Asians have also been called "Amerasians." These include older multiracial Asian Americans who are the children of war brides and U.S. military personnel stationed in countries such as Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea, along with those who are the result of more recent non-military interracial marriages involving Asian Americans.

The Hapa Issues Forum quotes a recent Congressional Record report that indicated "between 1968 and 1989, children born to parents of different races increased from 1% of total births to 3.4%." The 2000 Census further shows that 30.7% of those who identify as at least part Japanese are multiracial, the highest proportion among the six largest Asian American ethnic groups. Next are Filipinos (21.8% of whom are multiracial), Chinese (15.4%), Korean (12.3%), Asian Indian (11.6%), and Vietnamese (8.3%).

Overall, the Census Bureau reports that there are about 1.8 million Americans who identify has half-Asian and half one or more other races. Of these, 52% are half -Asian and half-white. If we include all multiracial Asian Americans as their own "ethnic" group, they would be the fourth-largest group, comprising 8% of the entire Asian American population. Multiracial Asian Americans would also be the fastest-growing group as well.

In fact, demographers predict that by the year 2020 almost 20% of all Asian Americans will be multiracial and that figure will climb to 36% by the year 2050. In other words, as intermarriages involving Asians increase, multiracial Asians are becoming a more prominent group within the Asian American community, and within mainstream American society in general.

Pacific Islanders

Until 1980, "Hawaiian" was the only pacific islander group listed on the Census questionnaire; Guamanian and Samoan were added in 1990 and the census category today, reads "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander". There are an estimated 1.4 million people who identify with this category in the United States, 41% of which identify as Native Hawaiian, with the remainder identifying as Samoan (13%), Guamanian (10%), Tongan (5%), Fijian (3%), Marshallese (2%) or other Pacific Islander (26%) (Ramakrishnan & Ahmad, 2014). Scholars have argued that because these groups face a different struggles with Pacific Islanders contending with issues relating to sovereignty and decolonization, and Asian Americans dealing with immigration, they deserved a label distinct from "Asian American." Given these dynamics, it is argued that the experience of Pacific Islanders is much more akin to that of Native Americans (Ishisaka, 2020).

Native Hawaiians

In 1778, the year that Captain James Cook of England arrived, the estimated population of Hawaiians was between 400,000 and 800,000. In 1893 U.S. naval forces overthrew the monarchy originally founded in 1810 by King Kamehameha I, then in 1898 the Hawaiian islands were annexed by the United States as the Republic of Hawai'i. Much like the experience of Native Americans, European diseases introduced by colonization brought the population down to 29,800 Native Hawaiians and another 7,800 Hawaiians of mixed ancestry by 1900. Today, Native Hawaiians in Hawaii experience lower incomes, have the highest unemployment rate, and hold lower status jobs when compared to all ethnic groups in the islands. As is the case with other marginalized groups, this lower socioeconomic position leaves Native Hawaiians more vulnerable to health disparities such as lower mortality rates and higher rates of disease and cancer (Lai & Arguelles, 2003).

As an indigenous minority group, Native Hawaiians are recognized as having a "special trust relationship" with the U.S. government, similar to Native American Indians (along with Native Alaskans), entitling them to special programs and resources. However, in February 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed established policies of the U.S. Congress and ruled that the composition of the trustees who control Native Hawaiian rights and entitlements (the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, or OHA) was unconstitutional because they were based on racial identity qualifications. This decision basically throws into question the fundamental rights of Native Hawaiians.

In light of the ruling, Hawai'i's two Senators, Daniel Akaka and Daniel Inouye introduced the "Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act" (aka the "Akaka Bill") before Congress in 2000. The bill would formally extend the federal policy of self-determination to Native Hawaiians and put them on the same legal status as Native American Indians. Opponents of the bill argue that it promotes racial/ethnic separatism and that similar to debates about affirmative action, non-Hawaiians should not unfairly bear the consequences of reconciling events that occurred several generations ago.

Hawaiians have a saying, Aloha mai no, aloha aku -- When love is given, love should be returned. Sovereignty supporters believe that now is the time for aloha to be acknowledged and returned to the Native Hawaiian people and their descendents. The Akaka bill would provide an avenue for both the people of Hawai'i and the U.S. Congress to correct the historical injustices they have suffered collectively as a people, and enable them to exercise self-determination through self-governance, in order to heal as a people.

The House version of the bill (H.R. 505) passed on October 24, 2007 and the Senate version is still being considered.

Samoans & Guamanians

According to the United States Census Bureau, there are approximately 204,000 Samoan people including those with partial Samoan ancestry and about 160,000 Guamanians in the United States (United States Census Bureau, 2019).

Like the Native Hawaiians, they are considered Polynesians, and are theorized to have migrated from the west (the East Indies, the Malay peninsula or the Philippines) as far back ago as 1,000 B.C.E. Today, the islands are divided up into American Samoa and Samoa. The former is only 76 square miles, has a population of around 67,000, and sends a delegate to the U.S. Congress. Samoa, known as Western Samoa until 1997, is an independent nation with islands totaling 1,090 square miles, and a population of 179,058.

The economy of American Samoa remains undeveloped; nearly one-third of workers are employed in the fishing or canning industry. Tourism has not taken off. In recent years, one of American Samoa's main exports has been football players. There are more than 200 playing Division I college football, and 28 in the NFL, reported ESPN in 2002. Perhaps the most famous has been linebacker Tiaina "Junior" Seau.

After Samoans, the next-largest NHPI group are the natives of the island of Guam, also known as Chamorro. There are only about 157,000 people living on today's multicultural Guam, of whom about half are Chamorro. So like American Samoa, a larger number of Chamorro actually live abroad-in the U.S., there are nearly 93,000 people of pure or part-Chamorro descent.

Today the U.S. military maintains a large, albeit declining, presence in Guam, with 23,000 military personnel and their families living on the island. Though the government has lobbied to free Guam from its "unincorporated" U.S. territory status, the island has yet to be granted the Commonwealth recognition given

Puerto Rico. And although the people are given U.S. citizenship, they do not vote in U.S. presidential elections. Economically, the growing tourist industry catering to Japanese visitors has helped offset the military downsizing.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Asian Nation (Le) (CC BY-NC-ND) adapted with permission
- Introduction to Sociology (Lumen) (CC By 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited & Recommended for Further Reading

- Anderson, W., Johnson, M., & Brookes, B. (Eds.). (2018). *Pacific Futures: Past and Present*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Wang, C. (2013). *Transpacific Articulations: Student Migration and the Remaking of Asian America*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Aguilar-San Juan, K. (2009). *Little Saigons: Staying Vietnamese in America*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Chang, S.H. (2015). *Raising Mixed Race: Multiracial Asian Children in a Post-Racial World*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fojas, C., Rudy P. Guevarra Jr., R.P., & Tamar Sharma, N. (Eds.). (2019). *Beyond Ethnicity: New Politics of Race in Hawai'i*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Gates, P. (2019). *Criminalization/Assimilation: Chinese/Americans and Chinatowns in Classical Hollywood Film*. New Brunswick, CN: Rutgers University Press.
- Ho, J. (2015). *Racial Ambiguity in Asian American Culture*. New Brunswick, CN: Rutgers University Press.
- Hoskins, J.A., & Nguyen, V.T. (Eds.). (2014). *Transpacific Studies: Framing an Emerging Field*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Inouye, D.H. (2018). *Distant Islands: The Japanese American Community in New York City, 1876-1930s*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Irwin, K. & Umemoto, K. (2016). *Jacked Up and Unjust: Pacific Islander Teens Confront Violent Legacies*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Ishisaka, N. (2020, November 30). Why it's time to retire the term 'Asian Pacific Islander.' *Seattle Times*.
- Kang, M. (2010). *The Managed Hand: Race, Gender and the Body in Beauty Service Work*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kauanui, J.K. (2018). *Paradoxes of Hawaiian Sovereignty: Land, Sex, and the Colonial Politics of State Nationalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Khanna, N. (2011). *Biracial in America: Forming and Performing Racial Identity*. Washington, D.C: Lexington Books.
- Kim, J. (2019). *Postcolonial Grief: The Afterlives of the Pacific Wars in the Americas*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Kina, L. (2013). *War Baby / Love Child: Mixed Race Asian American Art*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Künnemann, V. & Mayer, R. (Eds.). (2011). *Chinatowns in a Transnational World: Myths and Realities of an Urban Phenomenon*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kurashige, L. (Ed.). (2017). *Pacific America: Histories of Transoceanic Crossings*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Lai, E.Y.P., & Arguelles, D. (2003). *The New Face of Asian Pacific America: Numbers, Diversity & Change in the 21st Century*. San Francisco, CA: AsianWeek, with UCLA's Asian American Studies Center Press, in cooperation with the Organization of Chinese Americans and the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development.
- Ling, H. (Ed.). (2009). *Asian America: Forming New Communities, Expanding Boundaries*. New Brunswick, CN: Rutgers University Press.
- Liu, B. (Ed.). (2017). *Solving the Mystery of the Model Minority: The Journey of Asian Americans in America*. New York, NY: Cognella Academic Publishing.
- Low, S. (2019). *Hawaiki Rising: Hokule'a, Nainoa Thompson, and the Hawaiian Renaissance*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Lung-Amam, W. (2017). *Trespassers?: Asian Americans and the Battle for Suburbia*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Murphy-Shigematsu, S. (2012). *When Half Is Whole: Multiethnic Asian American Identities*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Nguyen, P.T. (2017). *Becoming Refugee American: The Politics of Rescue in Little Saigon*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Nishime, L. (2014). *Undercover Asian: Multiracial Asian Americans in Visual Culture*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Parrenas, R. & Lok, S. (Eds.). (2007). *Asian Diasporas: New Formations, New Conceptions*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Ramakrishnan, K. & Ahmad, F.A. (2014). *State of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Series*. Center for American Progress. Washington: DC.
- Rondilla, J.L., Guevarra Jr., R.P., & Spickard, P (Eds.). (2017). *Red and Yellow, Black and Brown: Decentering Whiteness in Mixed Race Studies Paperback*. New Brunswick, CN: Rutgers University Press.
- Saranillio, D.I. (2018). *Unsustainable Empire: Alternative Histories of Hawai'i Statehood*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Schlund-Vials, C.J., Forbes, S.F. and Betts, T (Eds.). (2017). *The Beiging of America: Personal Narratives About Being Mixed Race in the 21st Century*. New York, NY: 2Leaf Press.
- Strmic-Pawl, H.V. (2016). *Multiracialism and Its Discontents: A Comparative Analysis of Asian-White and Black-White Multiracials*. Washington, D.C: Lexington Books.
- Tsui, B. (2009). *American Chinatown: A People's History of Five Neighborhoods*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- United States Census Bureau. (2019). American Community Survey.
- Warner Bros. Pictures. (2018). *Crazy Rich Asians - Official Trailer.* [Video]. YouTube.
- Washington, Myra S. (2019). *Blasian Invasion: Racial Mixing in the Celebrity Industrial Complex*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- Worrall, Brandy Lien. (2015). *Completely Mixed Up: Mixed Heritage Asian North American Writing and Art*. Vancouver, BC: Rabbit Fool Press.

This page titled 9.1: History and Demographics is shared under a CC BY-NC-ND license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **9.1: History and Demographics** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

9.2: Intergroup Relations

The experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are diverse and different groups have experienced different intergroup consequences. For example, the experiences for some groups is best explained by genocide, such as with Cambodian Americans, as the civil war in their home country in the 1970s led many to their migration to the United States as refugees, fleeing oppression and death. In contrast, to survive and thrive in U.S. society, many Asian Americans formed ethnic enclaves which is a form of separatism and others advocate for pan-Asianism to challenge oppressive and discriminatory practices.

Patterns of Intergroup Relations: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g. Cambodian genocide).
- **Expulsion/ Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. refugees from Viet Nam).
- **Internal Colonialism:** The dominant group exploits the marginalized group (e.g. Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. prison camps during WWII).
- **Sepratism:** The marginalized group desires physical separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. ethnic enclaves).
- **Fusion/ Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. Hapa).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. Asian immigrants changing names to sound more “American”).
- **Pluralism/ Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. pan-Asianism).

History of Intergroup Relations

Chinese immigration came to an abrupt end with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This act was a result of anti-Chinese sentiment burgeoned by a depressed economy and loss of jobs. White workers blamed Chinese migrants for taking jobs, and the passage of the Act meant the number of Chinese workers decreased. Chinese men did not have the funds to return to China or to bring their families to the United States, so they remained physically and culturally segregated in the Chinatowns of large cities. Later legislation, the Immigration Act of 1924, further curtailed Chinese immigration. The Act included the race-based National Origins Act, which was aimed at keeping U.S. ethnic stock as undiluted as possible by reducing “undesirable” immigrants. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 is an example of **internal colonialism** because the Chinese workers were economically exploited while in the United States. It was not until after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 that Chinese immigration again increased, and many Chinese families were reunited.

Chinese/Asian Exclusion

Many Chinese men had been recruited by the railroad companies to work on the Transcontinental Railroad—a vast, complex, engineering feat to span the continent and link the entire expanse of the middle of North America, from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean. By 1887, the project was completed and many of the Chinese workers, having saved the majority of their pay, returned home, or, conversely, began to send for their families —parents, siblings, wives and children, sweethearts, cousins—beginning a steady migration stream from China to the United States. Many of these former railroad workers settled along the West Coast and began to compete, economically, with the white population of the region. Feeling serious economic pressure from the Chinese immigrants, whites on the West Coast petitioned Congress to stop migration from China. Congress complied and passed a bill titled the “Asian Exclusionary Act.”



Figure 9.2.1: "First Transcontinental Railroad Historical Sign" (CC BY-NC 2.0; J. Stephen Conn via Flickr)

Expansion of Asian Exclusion

From the 15th century through the 19th century, Japan was a xenophobic, feudal society, ostensibly governed by a God-Emperor, but in reality ruled by ruthless, powerful Shoguns. Japan's society changed little during the four centuries of samurai culture, and it was cut off from the rest of the world in self-imposed isolation, trading only with the Portuguese, Spanish, English, and Chinese, and then not with all of them at once, often using one group as middlemen to another group. In the mid-19th century, (1854), the United States government became interested in trading directly with Japan in order to open up new export markets and to import Japanese goods at low prices uninflated by middleman add-ons. Commodore Matthew Perry was assigned to open trade between the United States and Japan. With a flotilla of war ships, Perry crossed the Pacific and berthed his ships off the coast of the Japanese capital. Perry sent letters to the emperor that were diplomatic but insistent. Perry had been ordered not to take no for an answer, and when the emperor sent Perry a negative response to the letters, Perry maneuvered his warships into positions that would allow them to fire upon the major cities of Japan. The Japanese had no armaments or ships that could compete with the Americans, and so, capitulated to Perry. Within thirty years, Japan was almost as modernized as its European counterparts. They went from feudalism to industrialism almost over night.

✔ Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907

Chinese immigration to California boomed during the Gold Rush of 1852, but the strict Japanese government practiced policies of isolation that thwarted Japanese emigration. It was not until 1868 that the Japanese government lessened restrictions and that Japanese immigration to the United States began. Anti-Chinese sentiment motivated American entrepreneurs to recruit Japanese laborers. In 1885, the first Japanese workers arrived in the Kingdom of Hawaii, which was then independent.



Figure **9.2.2**: "Japanese Immigrant 1940's" (CC BY-ND 2.0; chiyomaruko1 via Flickr)

Most Japanese immigrants wanted to reside in America permanently and came in family groups, in contrast to the Chinese immigration of young men, most of whom soon returned to China. They assimilated to American social norms, such as on clothing. Many joined Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

As the Japanese population in California grew, they were seen with suspicion as an entering wedge by Japan. By 1905, anti-Japanese rhetoric filled the pages of the San Francisco Chronicle, and Japanese Americans did not live only in Chinatown but throughout the city. In 1905, the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League was established and promoted four policies:

1. Extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act to include Japanese and Koreans
2. Exclusion by League members of Japanese employees and the hiring of firms that employ Japanese
3. Initiation of pressure the School Board to segregate Japanese from white children
4. Initiation of a propaganda campaign to inform Congress and the President of that "menace".

Tensions had been rising in San Francisco, and since the 1905 decisive Japanese victory against Russia, Japan demanded treatment as an equal. The result was a series of six notes communicated between Japan and the United States from late 1907 to early 1908. The immediate cause of the Agreement was anti-Japanese nativism in California. In 1906, the San Francisco Board of Education passed a regulation whereby children of Japanese descent would be required to attend separate, segregated schools. At the time, Japanese immigrants made up approximately 1% of the population of California, many of whom had immigrated under a treaty in 1894 that had assured free immigration from Japan.

In the Agreement, Japan agreed not to issue passports for Japanese citizens wishing to work in the Continental United States, thus effectively eliminating new Japanese immigration to the United States. In exchange, the United States agreed to accept the presence of Japanese immigrants already residing there; to permit the immigration of wives, children, and parents; and to avoid legal discrimination against Japanese American children in California schools. There was also a strong desire on the part of the Japanese government to resist being treated as inferiors. Japan did not want the United States to pass any such legislation as had happened to the Chinese under the Chinese Exclusion Act. US President Theodore Roosevelt, who had a positive opinion of Japan, accepted the Agreement as proposed by Japan to avoid more formal immigration restrictions.

This section licensed CC BY-SA. Attribution: The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

In 1924, anti-minority sentiment in the United States was so strong that the Ku Klux Klan had four million, proud, openly racist members thousands of whom were involved in a parade down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, that was watched by thousands of Klan supporters, and other Americans. Their definition of who should qualify as American was largely reflected the United States Supreme Court rulings on questions of naturalization, which largely excluded East and South Asian immigrants until the 1940s. For example, in 1922 the Supreme Court ruled in Ozawa v. United States that Takao Ozawa who was born in Japan but had live in the United States for 20 years, was not considered Caucasian which meant he did not fit the popular definition of a "free white person" as the Naturalization Act of 1906 specified. Within three months, Justice George Sutherland authored a similarly unfavorable ruling in a Supreme Court case concerning the petition for naturalization of a Sikh immigrant from the Punjab region in British India, who identified himself as "a high caste Hindu of full Indian blood" in his petition, United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind. The upshot of this ruling was that like the Japanese, "high-caste Hindus, of full Indian blood" were not "free white persons" and were racially ineligible

for naturalized citizenship. To support this conclusion, Justice Sutherland reiterated Ozawa's holding that the words "white person" in the naturalization act were "synonymous with the word 'Caucasian' only as that word is popularly understood".

World War II and Anti-Japanese Policies

On December 7, 1941, at 7:55 A.M. local time the Japanese fleet in the South Pacific launched 600 hundred aircraft in a surprise attack against U.S. Naval forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Within four hours, 2, 400 people, mostly military personnel had been killed, including the 1,100 men who will be entombed forever in the wreckage of the U.S.S. Arizona when it capsized during the attack. Although this was a military target, the United States was not at war when the attack occurred.

The U.S. response to the attack was **segregation** wherein the dominant group structures physical separation of two groups, in this case Japanese, German and Italian-descended Americans and everyone else. Within 3 months, on February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed and issue Executive Order 9066 which authorized the secretary of war to prescribe certain areas as military zones, clearing the way for the incarceration of these groups in U.S. concentration camps. As a result, approximately 112,000 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry were evicted from the West Coast of the United States and held in American concentration camps and other confinement sites across the country. Japanese Americans in Hawaii were not incarcerated in the same way, despite the attack on Pearl Harbor. Although the Japanese American population in Hawaii was nearly 40% of the population of Hawaii itself, only a few thousand people were detained there, supporting the eventual finding that their mass removal on the West Coast was motivated by reasons other than "military necessity" (U.S. Department of State). The fact is that the labor of Japanese Americans in Hawaii was crucial to the economic health of Hawaii which protected them from internment in the prison camps.

In less than six months after the attack, Congress passed the Japanese Relocation Act. Below, is reproduced the order that was posted in San Francisco.

The Japanese American Relocation Order

THE JAPANESE AMERICAN RELOCATION ORDER

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY

WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION

Presidio of San Francisco, California

May 3, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY

Living in the Following Area:

All of that portion of the City of Los Angeles, State of California, within that boundary beginning at the point at which North Figueroa Street meets a line following the middle of the Los Angeles River; thence southerly and following the said line to East First Street; thence westerly on East First Street to Alameda Street; thence southerly on Alameda Street to East Third Street; thence northwesterly on East Third Street to Main Street; thence northerly on Main Street to First Street; thence north-westerly on First Street to Figueroa Street; thence northeasterly on Figueroa Street to the point of beginning.

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 33, this Headquarters, dated May 3, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Saturday, May 9, 1942.

No Japanese person living in the above area will be permitted to change residence after 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Sunday, May 3, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the representative of the Commanding General, Southern California Sector, at the Civil Control Station located at

Japanese Union Church,

120 North San Pedro Street,

Los Angeles, California

SEE CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDER NO. 33

Such permits will only be granted for the purpose of uniting members of a family, or in cases of grave emergency.

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.

2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property, such as real estate, business and professional equipment, household goods, boats, automobiles and livestock.

3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.

4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residence.

The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Monday, May 4, 1942, or between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Tuesday, May 5, 1942.

2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Assembly Center, the following property:

(a) Bedding and linens (no mattress) for each member of the family;

(b) Toilet articles for each member of the family;

(c) Extra clothing for each member of the family;

(d) Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls and cups for each member of the family;

(e) Essential personal effects for each member of the family.

All items carried will be securely packaged, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.

3. No pets of any kind will be permitted.

4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.

5. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage, at the sole risk of the owner, of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted for storage if crated, packed and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.

6. Each family, and individual living alone will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center or will be authorized to travel by private automobile in a supervised group. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

Go to the Civil Control Station between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., Monday, May 4, 1942, or between the hours of

8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,

Tuesday, May 5, 1942, to receive further instructions.

Lieutenant General, U. S. Army

Commanding

This map shows the location of the American concentration camps where Japanese Americans were interned during WWII.

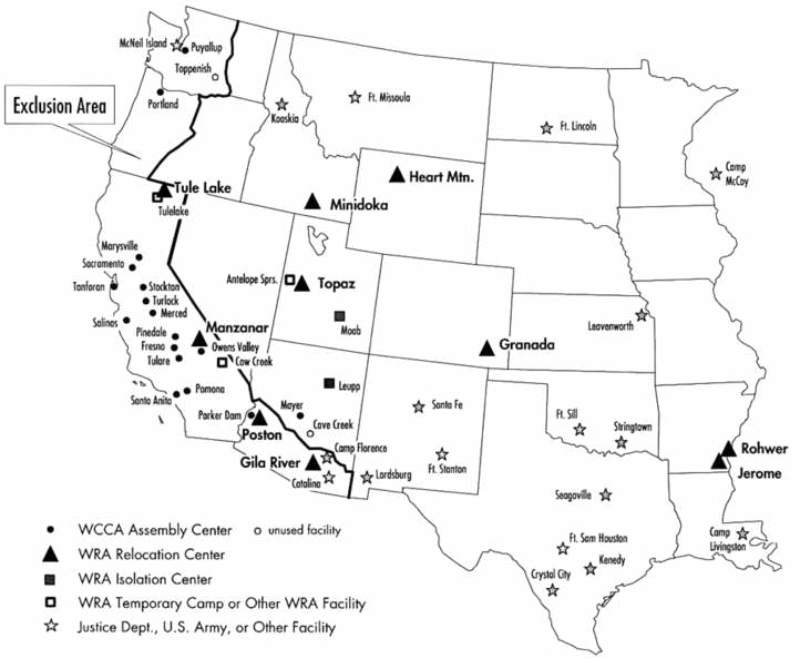


Figure 9.2.3: Map of World War II Japanese American prison camps. (CC PDM 1.0; National Park Service via Wikimedia)

In 1943, Fred Korematsu, with the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed suit in federal court arguing that it was unconstitutional to deprive American citizens of the their civil rights without due process of law. The Supreme Court of the United States decided that, in times of great national strife, it was Constitutional to deprive one specific segment of the population of their civil rights because of the potential for harm by that specific group. You might be interested to know that this decision has never been overturned, which means that it is still the law of the land. A similar case Hirabayashi v. United States, (1943), was a case in which the United States Supreme Court held that the application of curfews against members of a people of color were constitutional when the nation was at war with the country from which that group's ancestors originated.



Figure **9.2.4**: "Russell Lee: Japanese-American family waiting for relocation, Los Angeles, 1942" (CC BY 2.0; trialsanderrors via Flickr)

Although Japanese Americans have deep, long-reaching roots in the United States, their history here has not always been smooth. The California Alien Land Law of 1913 was aimed at them and other Asian immigrants, and it prohibited aliens from owning land. An even uglier action was the Japanese internment camps of World War II, discussed earlier as an illustration of **expulsion**.

Cambodian Genocide

One example of **extermination/genocide** is the period from 1975-1979 in Cambodia when the Khmer Rouge killed approximately 1.2-1.7 million people, or approximately 20% of the population (Williams, 2005). The political philosophy that drove these atrocities required a restructuring of the social and economic order of Cambodia and the "persecution and elimination" of those deemed a threat to the new political state (Ratner, S. & Abrams, J., 1997). After the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia in 1979 and ended the reign of terror of the Khmer Rouge, Cambodians fled to refugee camps and eventually resettled in Western countries such as Australia, Canada, France and the United States.

As a result, the largest population of Cambodians outside of southeast Asia resides in Long Beach, California. Though these refugees were eligible for a variety of welfare programs, they still often had to combine welfare with low wage and cash jobs to survive and raise children, not unlike other working class families and ethnic minorities, in addition to coping with the mental and physical health conditions that made it difficult for them to learn and work in English (Quintiliani, 2009). Cambodian Americans contend with "model minority" stereotypes while also being considered the "Black sheep" of the Asian community (Ly, 2003, p. 119). Under the Khmer Rouge, any sign of wealth or education meant death, contrasting that experience with immigration from Japan, China, and Korea which was largely driven by a desire for better standards of living and new opportunities, one can see how important it is to consider how these contexts shapes different behavior and outcomes of these groups in the United States. Unlike these other East Asian groups, Cambodian parents rarely pressure their children to pursue higher education, which in part explains why they have the lowest percentage of college and graduates and the highest percentage of high school dropouts (Ly, 2003). These realities expose the inaccuracy of one of the most persistent stereotypes about Asian Americans: That they are all the same. As exemplified by the experiences of Cambodian Americans, this stereotype can erase the different challenges some groups face and can also prevent those groups from receiving the specialized attention and supports they need.

Why Enclaves Are So Popular

On the continuum of intergroup relations, ethnic enclaves are an example of **separatism**. As Sociologists and other social scientists note many reasons why these ethnic enclaves are so popular with new immigrants and Asian Americans who have lived in the U.S. all their lives. They actually

have different definitions for an ethnic "community" versus an ethnic "enclave." Without getting into the academic details too much, enclaves are ethnic communities that have a well-developed economic structure that operates mainly through racial-ethnic dynamics.

At any rate, we will discuss the issue of Asian American small businesses in another section. For now, we'll focus on how these ethnic enclaves grew so quickly and why they continue to thrive. In one word, it's because of immigration. Immigrants from Asia keep coming to these ethnic communities and infuse them with new life.

There are many theories on why people immigrate to the U.S., especially from Asian countries. Again, without getting too academic, the usual scenario goes something like this: American multinational corporations set up businesses in foreign countries and soon begin to dominate that country's politics and economy. This "globalization of capital" disrupts and transforms the traditional way people in these Asian countries make a living as the fundamental structure of their national economy changes from one dominated by farming and agriculture to the beginnings of a modern capitalist economy that emphasizes manufacturing and export sectors.



Figure **9.2.5**: Asian businesses in the enclaves provide immigrants with jobs. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Nandoro via Wikimedia)

Many workers struggle to survive economically, to adapt to these rapid changes, and many become "displaced" (i.e., they lose their jobs or their land). Nonetheless, having already been exposed to U.S. culture, either through direct contact with those connected to the American businesses now operating in their country or through TV programs and U.S. media portrayals, many workers dream about working in the U.S. and earning lots of money. Their expectations for "the good life" become heightened but they also realize that they can't achieve these new goals in their current situation. They also see that by working in the U.S. and earning more money, they can help out other family members who have also been displaced.

In the meantime, companies in the U.S. are looking to hire immigrant workers who are frequently willing work for lower wages than U.S.-born workers. Many times, these companies actively recruit foreign workers to come to the U.S. Further, earlier immigrants from that country help in the immigration process by providing helpful information about jobs or assistance in the actual immigration and adjustment process. After this initial cycles, immigration becomes almost self-perpetuating through these established social networks as immigrant workers repeat the cycle of helping their family, relatives, and friends come to the U.S. to find work.

Once these Asian immigrants get to the U.S., they frequently end up living or working in these established Asian enclaves. This makes sense because these enclaves give them a sense of familiarity and emotional comfort, which makes it easier for them to adapt to life in the U.S. They also are more likely to get a job in the enclave, especially if they are not fluent enough in English to get a job outside the enclave. Being employed also helps them adjust to their new life in the U.S.

Finally, these new workers help these small ethnic businesses survive and even prosper, perhaps to the point where they can contribute to the local economy in the form of taxes and hiring more workers, Asian and non-Asian. In the meantime, non-Asians are able to learn about and enjoy the rich Asian culture and food of these enclaves. These new understandings and friendships can form the bridge that helps us to overcome the old suspicions of "us" versus "them" and that immigrants can be Americans too.

At the same time, many point out that not everything is always quite so rosy for these Asian immigrant workers. They argue that many Asian business owners are more than willing to exploit the relative powerlessness of these new immigrants and their willingness to accept lower wages and less-than-optimum working conditions. Specifically, many Asian-owned sweatshops, restaurants, and other small businesses have been accused of taking advantage of their own people in this manner for their own financial gain.



Figure 9.2.6: Vibrant Asian enclaves are everywhere. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Owen and Aki via Flickr)

In fact, many Asian American non-profit community organizations were established to protest against these exploitative conditions by picketing Asian small businesses and pressuring their owners to improve working conditions and wages, and by trying to unionize these immigrant workers. Academic research also shows that working within an ethnic enclave is frequently beneficial for Asian business owners but not for their workers who may be able to earn more and enjoy slightly better working conditions in jobs outside the ethnic enclave.

On the other hand, other scholars argue that while immigrant workers in ethnic enclaves may be slightly '"penalized" in terms of wages and working conditions, they benefit in other ways. Specifically, they enjoy the psychological familiarity and comfort of being surrounded by others like them as they adapt to a strange new society. They also learn the ins and outs of running a small business; in fact, many workers eventually go on to opening up their own small businesses, sometimes by buying the business from their former owners.

In short, while there are some disadvantages for workers in the ethnic enclave, the fact remains that Asian ethnic communities have the enormous potential to benefit everyone involved -- new immigrants, established Asian Americans, the local non-Asian community, and American society as a whole.

What's in a Name?

Like other communities of color, Asian Americans must contend with an Anglo-dominant society that views those with "foreign sounding" names as outsiders. Some **assimilate**, or take on the characteristics of the dominant group, by anglicizing their names, like many Chinese international students in the United States (Fang & Fine, 2019), while others endure microaggressions of having their names mispronounced or changed by educators and others in position of authority (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). On the one hand, as Kohli & Solórzano argue these practices can reinforce the idea of cultural and racial hierarchy of inferiority of non-Anglos and leave lasting impacts on the self-perceptions of children, especially, but in the case of taking on chosen names can also allow for self-expression and agency to select a name that projects an imagined self (Fang & Fine, 2019).



Figure 9.2.8: "Chinese Friendship Arch and Gallery Place Building 01 - Chinatown - DC" (CC BY-SA 2.0; Tim Evanson via Flickr)

Thinking Sociologically

Do you have a non-Anglo name? If you do, how do you feel about the idea of changing it in order to assimilate? If not, imagine that you did. Would you want to change your name or keep it? Why?

All Mixed Up?

An example of **fusion/amalgamation** which is where racial or ethnic groups combine to form a new group, is the case of "Hapas", or those that have one Asian parent and one non-Asian parent. Traditionally, multiracial Asian Americans, like many other multiracial individuals, have been looked upon with curiosity and/or suspicion by the both sides of their ancestry and the rest of society. In the past, the racist "one drop rule" dictated that anyone who even had any trace of non-white ancestry (i.e., a single drop of non-white blood) was "colored" and therefore non-white. To a certain extent today, many Americans still see multiracial Asian Americans as "half-breeds" and don't consider them to be truly white, Black, etc. or even truly American.

On the other hand, many in the conventional Asian American community also do not consider multiracial Asian Americans to be truly "Asian" and rather, see them as "whitewashed." Politically, many worry that the Asian American community will lose government funding if people who previously identified themselves as solely Asian now identify themselves as multiracial. In other words, many multiracial Asian Americans still face distrust and even hostility from both their Asian and non-Asian sides.

Sociologists argue that one of the defining characteristics of the U.S. racial/ethnic landscape is the tendency for Americans, white and non-white alike, to prefer a sense of clarity when it comes to racial/ethnic identity. In situations where the racial/ethnic background of a person cannot be immediately identified, many Americans become uncomfortable with this cultural ambiguity. This may help to explain the traditional emphasis on prohibiting the "mixing" of different races, a motivation that continues to drive many neo-Nazi or white supremacist ideologies.

As a result of these cultural dynamics, many (although certainly not all) multiracial Asian Americans encounter difficulties in establishing their own ethnic identity as they try to fit into both the Asian American community and mainstream American society. As many multiracial Asian American writers have described, as they grow up, they are frequently caught between both sides of their racial/ethnic background. Frequently this involves feeling alienated, marginalized, and that they do not legitimately belong in either community, Asian or non-Asian.

Moving Forward and Forging A New Identity

However, recent research suggests that, rather than trying to fit themselves into just an Asian identity or just a white identity, multiracial Asian Americans report the most happiness and the least stress when they create their own unique racial/ethnic identities that combine all of their ancestries. In other words, instead of trying to "pass" as a member of a single racial group, they may be better off when they actively create their own definition of fitting in that is based on synthesizing their unique and multiple characteristics. In doing so, multiracial Asian Americans develop a sense of ownership and pride in their new identity, rather than trying to seek acceptance into the preexisting racial groups.

As it turns out, monoethnic Asian Americans have been doing something like this for many generations, as they reconcile and negotiate their own identities as both Asian and American. In this sense, we might say that multiracial Americans are now going through the same process that Asian Americans have been going through for years. In other words, monoethnic Asian Americans and multiracial Americans share a common process of actively shaping their identities through combining elements from diverse cultures can help these communities connect with one other and bridge cultural differences.

As the incidence of interracial marriage and by implication, numbers of multiracial Asian Americans continues to increase, multiracial Asian Americans have the opportunity to both assert their own unique experiences and characteristics while also participating in the larger Asian American community and mainstream American society in general. In the process of doing so, multiracial Asian Americans are likely to play a central role in the demographic, political, and cultural evolution of a diversifying American society.

Anti-Asian Racism & Violence

Ever since the first Asians arrived in America, there has been anti-Asian racism. This includes prejudice and acts of discrimination. For more than 200 years, Asian Americans have been denied equal rights, subjected to harassment and hostility, had their rights revoked and imprisoned for no justifiable reason, physically attacked, and murdered.

Ethnic Competition Leads to Violence

As the section on Asian American history discussed, numerous acts of discrimination against Chinese immigrants culminated in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. For the first and so far only time in American history, an entire ethnic group was singled out and forbidden to step foot on American soil. Although this was not the first such anti-Asian incident, it symbolizes the legacy of racism directed against our community.

It was followed by numerous denials of justice against Chinese and Japanese immigrants seeking to claim equal treatment to land ownership, citizenship, and other rights in state and federal court in the early 1900s. Many times, Asians were not even allowed to testify in court. Perhaps the most infamous episode of anti-Asian racism was the unjustified imprisonment of Japanese Americans during World War II -- done solely on the basis of their ethnic ancestry.

One may think that as the Asian American population becomes larger and more integrated into the mainstream American social and political institutions that incidents of anti-Asian racism would occur less often. In fact, the opposite has been true. The last 20 years or so has seen Asian Americans become the fastest-growing targets for hate crimes and violence.

It seems that whenever there are problems in American society, political or economic, there always seems to be the need for a **scapegoat** -- someone or a group of people who is/are singled out, unjustifiably blamed, and targeted with severe hostility. Combined with the cultural stereotype of Asian Americans as quiet, weak, and powerless, more and more Asian Americans are victimized, solely on the basis of being an Asian American.



Figure **9.2.9**: "EM_ark13960t1ck18s1t_001" (CC PDM 1.0; jonathanhgrossman)

License to Commit Murder = $3,700

Perhaps the most graphic and shocking incident that illustrates this process was the murder of Vincent Chin in 1982. Vincent was beaten to death by two white men (Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz) who called him a "jap" (even though he was Chinese American) and blamed him and Japanese automakers for the current recession and the fact that they were about to lose their jobs. After a brief scuffle inside a local bar/night club, Vincent tried to run for his life until he was cornered nearby, held down by Nitz while Ebens repeatedly smashed his skull and bludgeoned him to death with a baseball bat.

The equally tragic part of this murder were how Vincent's murderers were handled by the criminal justice system. First, instead of being put on trial for second degree murder (intentionally killing someone but without premeditation), the prosecutor instead negotiated a plea bargain for reduced charges of manslaughter (accidentally killing someone). Second, the judge in the case sentenced each man to only two years probation and a $3,700 fine -- absolutely no jail time at all.

The judge defended these sentences by stating that his job was to fit the punishment not just to the crime, but also to the perpetrators. In this case, as he argued, both Ebens and Nitz had no prior criminal record and were both employed at the time of the incident. Therefore, the judge reasoned that neither man represented a threat to society. However, others had a different interpretation of the light sentences. They argued that what the judge was basically saying was that as long as you have no prior criminal record and have a job, you could buy a license to commit murder for $3,700.

This verdict and sentence outraged the entire Asian American community in the Detroit area and all around the country. Soon, several organizations formed a multi-racial coalition to demand justice for the murder of Vincent Chin. They persuaded the U.S. Justice Department to charge the two men with violating Vincent Chin's civil rights. They organized rallies and protests, circulated petitions, and kept the issue in the media spotlight. As one Asian American pointed out, "You can kill a dog and get 30 days in jail, 90 days for a traffic ticket."

In a second trial, the Justice Department convicted Ebens (the one who actually swung the bat) of violating Vincent's civil rights and he was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Nitz (the one who held Vincent down) was acquitted. However, these verdicts were thrown out on appeal due to a technicality and a new trial was ordered by a federal appeals court. However, because of "overwhelming publicity" about the case, the new trial was moved all the way to Cincinnati, Ohio.

At this retrial, whose jury consisted almost entirely of white blue-collar men, both men were acquitted of all charges. Mrs. Chin did manage to win a civil suit against Ebens and Nitz for $1.5 million but received very little of that money, since Ebens stopped making payments in 1989. Mrs. Chin eventually became so distraught over these incidents of injustice that she left the U.S. and moved back to China. To this day, neither man has served any jail time for murdering Vincent Chin and only recently has Ebens expressed regret for his actions.

> As many scholars argue, the events surrounding Vincent Chin's murder and the acquittal of his killer sadly represents another example of how Asian Americans are seen as not being "real" Americans and therefore worthy of the same rights and privileges that so many other Americans take for granted. Further, the lenient treatment that his killers received echoes similar incidents in the late 1800s in which Chinese miners were not allowed to testify against whites who attacked them or murdered their friends. In other words, Vincent's murder was another example of how the life of an Asian American is systematically devalued in relation to that of a "real" American.

The Formation of Solidarity

Although justice was not served in this case, Vincent's murder galvanized the entire Asian American community like no other incident before it. As an example of **pluralism/multiculturalism,** it resulted in the formation of numerous Asian American community organizations and coalitions whose purpose was to monitor how Asian Americans were treated and to mobilize any and all resources available to fight for justice. (See section 9.5 for more on the importance of **pan-Asianism**) Asian Americans saw firsthand how anti-Asian prejudice and hostility operated, both at the personal physical level and at the institutional level.

Since then, groups have documented numerous incidents of hate crimes committed against Asian Americans. NAPALC's 1999 Audit of Violence Against Asian Pacific Americans points out that there was a 13% increase of reported anti-Asian incidents between 1998 and 1999. It found that South Asians were the most targeted among Asian Americans and that vandalism was the most common form of anti-Asian discrimination. This is reinforced by recent anti-Asian vandalism at Stanford University that included such threats as "rape all oriental bitches," "kill all gooks," and "I'm a real white american."

Similar incidents and anti-Asian threats have also occurred and continue to occur at college campuses all around the country. What makes the situation worse are the apathetic, half-hearted, and even insensitive responses on the part of the authorities, in this case university officials. Even in rare instances when they admit that racial tensions are a problem on their campus, university leaders are slow to respond appropriately. Administrators consistently fight efforts to mandate classes on multiculturalism for all students even though research shows that these classes promote increased understanding and respect among students.

Secondly, they resist students' efforts to promote or even establish Asian American and other racial/ethnic studies programs. This is despite the fact that at almost all major universities around the country, it's common for Asian American students to comprise 15%, 25%, or even 50% of their students (i.e., U.C. Irvine). Students at Wellesley College, regarded as one of the elite women's colleges in the country, recently planned to go on a hunger strike to demand that their administration fulfill its earlier promises of strengthening its Asian Americans studies program. At the last minute, Wellesley officials gave into the students' demands.

Incidents of anti-Asian intimidation and physical attacks are sickening by themselves. They are often made worse when the authorities in charge don't take the appropriate actions to address them.

The Definition of Cruel and Unusual Punishment

The recent case of Wen Ho Lee further symbolizes not just how authorities can be not just insensitive to Asian Americans but also outright hostile to us as well. Dr. Lee was working as a research scientist at the Los Alamos Nuclear Laboratory on military missile systems. In the midst of national hysteria about nuclear secrets being passed onto China in 1999, Dr. Lee was arrested and charged with 59 counts of mishandling classified information.

His arrest was one thing. But again, the most outrageous part of the story was how he was subsequently treated by the "criminal justice" system. Dr. Lee was denied bail, kept in solitary confinement, and forced to wear leg shackles and chains for nine months. Keep in mind that he was never charge with espionage -- just mishandling classified documents. All the while, the U.S. Justice Department struggled to build a case against him.

Finally, in September 2000, just two days before they were forced to produce documents to support their case against him, the government dropped all but one of those 59 charges against him. This was also after everyone learned that an FBI agent provided false testimony about Dr. Lee in the initial investigation. Dr. Lee was finally released after pleading guilty to one count of mishandling computer data. At his release hearing, the presiding judge in the case took the unprecedented step of apologizing to Dr. Lee:

> *I sincerely apologize to you, Doctor Lee, for the unfair manner in which you were held in custody by the executive branch. They have embarrassed our entire nation and each of us who is a citizen of it.*

The world-renowned *New York Times* also issued an official apology to its readers regarding its coverage of Dr. Lee's situation. The *Times* admitted that they did not do the proper research and fact finding when they first investigated the story and that they were wrong in presuming Dr. Lee was guilty and wrong for helping to convict him in the court of media sensationalism and public opinion. Finally, in August 2001, the Justice Department released a report that criticized the Energy Department for providing inaccurate, incomplete, and misleading information to the FBI and the FBI for failing to investigate and verify that information in its case against Wen Ho Lee.

Dr. Lee's case is yet another example of government-sanctioned **scapegoating** and **racial profiling** -- singling out someone to take the blame for some overexagerated problem just because of their race or ethnicity. Sadly, it is a continuation of a pattern of anti-Asian racism that continues to target our community, based again on the two predominant stereotypes against us -- that we're all the same and that we're all foreigners and therefore, not American.

Anti-Asian Racism and Xenophobia Redux: The COVID-19 Situation

In early 2020, reports started circulating about a new infectious respiratory disease that seems to have originated in Wuhan, China. Similar in nature to previous "Severe acute respiratory syndromes," this strain eventually became known as COVID-19 (for "Coronavirus Disease 2019"), also referred to as the "Coronavirus." Eventually, COVID-19 became a pandemic that has spread around the world and as of June 2020, there has been almost 7 million cases reported acoss 188 countries, resulting in more than 400,000 deaths.



Figure **9.2.10**: Wuhan: huMan. (CC PDM 1.0; mockba1_1999 (William Sutherland) via ipernity)

The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in widespread racist and xenophobic rhetoric (such as using terms like "Chinese virus," "Wuhan virus," or "Kung-flu"), along with mis/disinformation, and conspiracy theories spread through various media outlets. In turn, these have led to suspicion, hostility, hate, and even violence against anyone perceived to be Chinese or more generally, Asian, Pacific Islander and/or Asian American. From March of 2020-March of 2021 there were over 3,000 self-reported instances of anti-Asian violence including stabbings, beatings, verbal harassment, bullying and being spit on. Of course being spit on is offensive enough, but during a global pandemic that spreads mostly through droplets, it can also be deadly (Lee and Huang, 2021). These hateful acts have forced Asian Americans into a constant state of hyper-awareness and vigilance when they are in public, taking a huge emotional toll. According to Jennifer Lee and Tiffany Huang (2021), the 2020 Asian American Voter Survey indicated that more than three out of four Asian Americans are concerned about harassment, discrimination, and hate crimes due to COVID-19.

Sadly, these forms of anti-Asian prejudice and discrimination are part of a longer history of racist and xenophobic "Yellow Peril" stereotypes that associate Asians, especially Chinese, and Asian Americans with disease and more generally, being economic, cultural, and/or physical threats to U.S. society. These forms of ignorance and bigotry have been targeted at people of Asian descent in the U.S. for over 150 years. They flare up whenever the U.S. faces any kind of crisis that involves China or some other Asian country, and are exacerbated by political leaders who seek to scapegoat Asians and/or Asian Americans as a way to misdirect anxiety during such times and whose actions implicitly or explicitly embolden acts of anti-Asian hate.

Of course, such incidents of anti-Asian hate are connected to all forms of structural racism and other examples of inequality and injustice. These incidents have also shattered the optimism that many Asian Americans had that U.S. society was making progress in reducing racism and moving toward greater inclusion and equity (optimistically symbolized by the growing popularity and success of such Asian- and Asian American-centered media/cultural products such as Crazy Rich Asians or K-Pop/BTS, etc.). Instead, these examples of anti-Asian discrimination have illuminated how Asian Americans are still considered as "perpetual foreigners" and that our fight for cultural citizenship (i.e. not just legal rights, but full and complete integration and equity into the fundamental fabric of U.S. society, from its social institutions down to everyday interpersonal interactions) continues. A recent video by Angela Nguyen posted on social media has called attention to this issue which mainstream U.S. press has largely ignore - which resulted in more recent coverage.

Video 9.2.11: Asian American Communities Organize Against Rise in Hate Crimes, Say More Policing is Not the Answer. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Democracy Now! via YouTube)

Contributors and Attributions

Content on this page has multiple licenses. Everything is CC BY-NC-ND other than Introduction to Sociology 2e, Relocation and Incarceration of Japanese Americans During World War II, and The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 which are CC BY-SA.

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Asian Nation (Le) (CC BY-NC-ND) adapted with permission
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Relocation and Incarceration of Japanese Americans During World War II (Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive (JARDA)/University of California) (CC BY 4.0)
- The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Works Cited & Recommended for Further Reading

- Chou, R.S., Lee, K. & Ho, S. (2015). *Asian Americans on Campus: Racialized Space and White Power*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fang, J. & Fine, G.A. (2019). What's in a Name?: English Names, Transnational Identities, and Self-Presentation among Chinese Students in American Universities. *Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association*, 1–31.
- Feagin, J.R. (2020). *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing (3rd Ed.).* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Jung, Moon-Kie. (2015). *Beneath the Surface of White Supremacy: Denaturalizing U.S. Racisms Past and Present.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Kohli, R., & Solórzano, D.G. (2012). Teachers, please learn our names!: racial microagressions and the K-12 classroom. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, *15*(4), 441–462.
- Kurashige, L. (2016). *Two Faces of Exclusion: The Untold History of Anti-Asian Racism in the United States*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Lew-Williams, B. (2018). *The Chinese Must Go: Violence, Exclusion, and the Making of the Alien in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ling, H. (2009). *Emerging Voices: Experiences of Underrepresented Asian Americans*. New York, NY: Rutgers University Press.
- Liu, M. & Lai, T. (2008). *The Snake Dance of Asian American Activism: Community, Vision, and Power*. Washington, D.C.: Lexington Books.
- Love, E. (2017). *Islamophobia and Racism in America*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Ly, K.C. (2003). "Asian": Just a simple word. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, *2*(2), 116–121.
- National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium. (1999). *Audit of Violence Against Asian Pacific Americans: Challenging the Invisibility of hate, Seventh Annual Report 1999*.
- Ratner, S. & Abrams, J. (1997). *Accountability for Human Rights Atrocities in International Law: Beyond the Nuremberg Legacy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Quintiliani, K. (2009). Cambodian refugee families in the shadows of welfare reform. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, *7*(2), 129–158.

- United States Department of State. (n.d.). *Japanese-American Relations at the Turn of the Century, 1900–1922*.
- Williams, S. (2005). Genocide: The Cambodian experience. *International Criminal Law Review*, *5*(3), 447–461.
- Yang, C. (2020). *The Peculiar Afterlife of Slavery: The Chinese Worker and the Minstrel Form*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.Eastman, J.C. (2006). *From Feudalism to Consent: Rethinking Birthright Citizenship.* Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation.

This page titled 9.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-NC-ND license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **9.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

9.3: Intersectionality

Women and Gender Issues

Where Do Women Fit In?

Asian America has masked a series of internal tensions. In order to produce a sense of racial solidarity, Asian American activists framed social injustices in terms of race, veiling other competing social categories such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationality. The relative absence of gender as a lens for Asian American activism and resistance throughout the 1970s until the present should therefore be read as neither an indication of the absence of gender inequality nor of the disengagement of Asian American women from issues of social justice.

Many Asian American activists (including some of the authors in this book) refute the label "feminist" although their work pays special attention to the experiences of women. Sometimes this feeling reflects a fear of alienating men -- a consequence that seems inevitable if men are unable to own up to their gender privilege. At other times, the antipathy towards feminism reflects the cultural insensitivity and racism of white, European feminists.

Dragon Ladies: A Brief History

Empress Tsu-his ruled China from 1898 to 1908 from the Dragon Throne. The New York Times described her as "the wicked witch of the East, a reptilian dragon lady who had arranged the poisoning, strangling, beheading, or forced suicide of anyone who had ever challenged her autocratic rule." The shadow of the Dragon Lady -- with her cruel, perverse, and inhuman ways -- continued to darken encounters between Asian women and the West they flocked to for refuge.

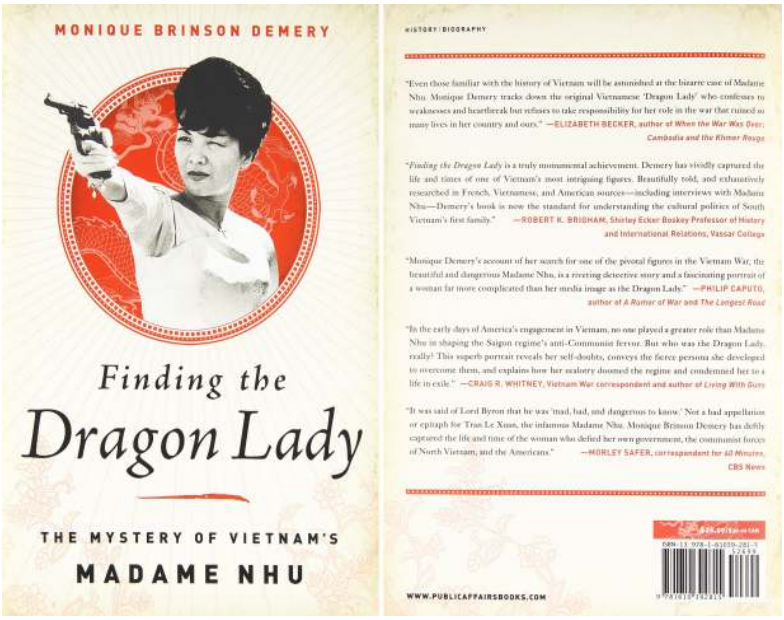


Figure **9.3.1**: "Finding the Dragon Lady: The Mystery of Vietnam's Madame Nhu - Monique Brinson Demery" (CC BY 2.0; manhhai via Flickr)

Far from being predatory, many of the first Asian women to come to the U.S. in the mid-1800s were disadvantaged Chinese women, who were tricked, kidnapped, or smuggled into the country to serve the predominantly male Chinese community as prostitutes. The impression that all Asian women were prostitutes, born at that time, "colored the public perception of, attitude toward, and action against all Chinese women for almost a century," writes historian Sucheng Chan.

Police and legislators singled out Chinese women for special restrictions "not so much because they were prostitutes as such (since there were also many white prostitutes around) but because -- as Chinese -- they allegedly brought in especially virulent strains of venereal diseases, introduced opium addiction, and enticed white boys into a life of sin," Chan also writes. Chinese women who were not prostitutes ended up bearing the brunt of the Chinese exclusion laws that passed in the late 1800s.

During these years, Japanese immigration stepped up, and with it, a reactionary anti-Japanese movement joined established anti-Chinese sentiment. During the early 1900s, Japanese numbered less than 3 percent of the total population in California, but nevertheless encountered virulent and sometimes violent racism. The "picture brides" from Japan who emigrated to join their husbands in the U.S. were, to racist Californians, "another example of Oriental treachery," according to historian Roger Daniels.

It bears noting that despite the fact that they weren't in the country in large numbers, Asian women shouldered much of the cost of subsidizing Asian men's labor. U.S. employers didn't have to pay Asian men as much as other laborers who had families to support, since Asian women in Asian bore the costs of rearing children and taking care of the older generation.

Asian women who did emigrate here before the 1960s were also usually employed as cheap labor. In the pre-World War II years, close to half of all Japanese American women were employed as servants or laundresses in the San Francisco area. The World War II internment of Japanese Americans made them especially easy to exploit: they had lost their homes, possessions, and savings when forcibly interned at the camps, Yet, in order to leave, they had to prove they had jobs and homes. U.S. government officials thoughtfully arranged for their employment by fielding requests, most of which were for servants.

Immigration Characteristics

Issues concerning immigration affect many aspects of the Asian American community. This is understandable since almost two-thirds of all Asian Americans are foreign-born. Before trying to examine the many controversies regarding the benefits or costs of immigration, we first need to examine the characteristics of the immigrant population, Asian and otherwise.

The Immigrant and U.S. Born Populations

The data in the following table was calculated using the 2000 Census 1% Public Use Microdata Samples, and they compare different immigrant groups (based on their home country area) with each other and with all those who are either U.S.-born or foreign-born in the U.S. on different measures of socioeconomic achievement. You can click on a column heading to sort up or down. You can also read the detailed description of the methodology and terminology used to create the statistics.

The statistics include immigrants from all countries, not just those from Asia. According to the 2000 Census, the immigrant/foreign-born population of the U.S. was just about 28,910,800. Of these, 5.5% were Black, 25.9% were Asian, 46.4% were Hispanic/Latino, and 22.1% were white. The statistics below represent sound research but different statisticis can be used to support both sides of an issue. So you can choose to agree with my conclusions or not.

We should first understand that immigrating to another country is not an easy thing to do. It almost always involves making elaborate preparations and costs a lot of money. Many times it also means giving up personal relationships at home (at least temporarily, if not permanently) and learning a new language and culture. The point is, not everyone who wants to immigrate actually does. In fact, those who are very poor rarely immigrate -- they just don't have the resources. Those who do immigrate tend to be from their country's middle and professional classes.

This point is illustrated by the results from the table, which compares various socioeconomic characteristics between U.S.-born and immigrant groups by their home country area. To view the full-size table of statistics, click on Table 9.3.2. Once the table appears, you can click on a column heading to sort up or down. You can also read the detailed description of the methodology and terminology used to create the statistics.

Table 9.3.2: Socioeconomic characteristics of immigrant groups by home country area. (Courtesy of Asian Nation)

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Immigrant Groups by Home Country Area

Numbers are in percentages, except for income
Click on a column heading to sort up or down

	Not Proficient in English	Less Than High School	College Degree	Advanced Degree	High Skill Occupation	Married, Spouse Present	Homeowner	Median Personal Income	Median Family Income	Living in Poverty	Public Assistance
All U.S.-Born	0.6	17.5	23.1	2.6	19.8	60.8	74.8	$22,100	$46,000	11.7	1.8
All Immigrants	30.5	39.1	23.3	4.2	20.2	62.1	55.7	$15,600	$42,000	17.0	2.6
Asia & Pacific Islands	23.4	21.2	42.5	6.8	34.3	67.9	60.2	$20,600	$56,800	12.4	2.4
Africa	7.6	12.1	43.8	8.2	29.1	58.7	44.1	$20,000	$45,005	15.7	2.6
Europe, Russia, & Canada	11.5	23.2	28.9	5.8	27.5	64.9	69.7	$26,000	$49,015	10.9	1.7
Latin & South America and Caribbean	44.0	57.4	9.1	1.9	8.0	58.0	47.7	$15,600	$42,400	22.3	3.0

The results show that immigrants as a group actually have a slightly higher college degree attainment rate and a much higher rate of having an advanced degree (medical, law, or doctorate) than do the U.S.-born. On both measures, immigrants from Africa actually have the highest educational achievement rates and they also have the lowest rate of having less than a high school education. African immigrants are also most likely to be in the labor market.

Therefore, it's clear that immigrants from Africa tend to come from their country's elite classes. In contrast, the statistics point out that immigrants from Latin and South America and from the Caribbean have the lowest educational attainment rates. We can probably surmise from this that they are more likely to be from rural or working class backgrounds. As another example of this implication, immigrants from Latin/South America and the Caribbean have the lowest median personal (per capita) income, as well as the highest rates of living in poverty and receiving public assistance.

In addition, they have the lowest rates of being married with spouse present, working in a high skill (executive, professional, technical, or upper management) occupation and the lowest media socioeconomic index (SEI) score, a measure of occupational prestige. However, these statistics do not necessarily lead to the conclusion that immigrants from Latin/South America and the Caribbean are a drain on the U.S. economy or that they consume more benefits than they contribute. For a discussion of that issue, be sure to read the article on the impacts of immigration.

Other Groups and Their Levels of Success

In regard to other immigrant groups, the statistics above show that immigrants from Asia and Pacific Islands compare quite favorably to other immigrants and to the U.S.-born as well. However, there also seems to be a much wider spread of characteristics among Asian immigrants. In other words, there seems to be many who are more likely to be from rural or working class backgrounds (and therefore have lower socioeconomic attainment rates), along with many other Asian immigrants from middle class and professional backgrounds who have very high attainment rates.

For example, Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants have a much rate of not being proficient in English than do the U.S.-born (which is understandable since English is a foreign language to most Asians) and they also have a higher rate of less than high school completion than do the U.S.-born. On the other hand, Asian & Pacific Islander immigrants have a median personal (per capita) income comparable to the U.S.-born, along with a much higher median family income. They also have higher rates of having a college degree, an advanced degree, and working at a high skill occupation than do the U.S.-born.



Figure **9.3.3**: Citizenship ceremony, 1960. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center via Flickr)

Similarly, immigrants from Europe, Russia, and Canada tend to have socioeconomic attainment levels that are very comparable to that for the U.S.-born and in several categories, outperform them as well. These include higher rates of having a college degree, an advanced degree, working in a high skill occupation, and most notably, the highest median personal (per capita) income of all groups in the table. Interestingly, they also have the lowest rate of being in the labor market, which may suggest that many are retired but rather affluent as well.

Overall, all of these socioeconomic measures and statistics comparing immigrants to the U.S.-born population suggest that in most cases, both groups are relatively close to the other. But again, these numbers can be used to support both sides of the immigration debate -- that immigrants are not achieving as well as the U.S.-born and vice-versa. However, it does seem clear that these statistics do not support the stereotype of immigrants as being chronically unemployed, in poverty, and on public assistance. They do suggest that just like any other social group in the U.S., there is a lot of diversity within each group and that we as a society should be careful about making sweeping generalizations about all members of a particular group.

Religion, Spirituality & Faith

Among the more traditional elements of Asian American culture, religion, spirituality, and faith have always been important to Asian American communities, as they were for many generations before them. But within the diversity of the Asian American community, so too comes diversity in our religious beliefs and practices.

Which Religion is the Most Popular?

One of the first questions to examine is, which religions or faith traditions are the most popular among Asian Americans and among each of the different Asian ethnic groups? Unfortunately, nationally representative and reliable statistics are difficult to find. There are few studies or data that would answer these questions conclusively, particularly ones that break down religious affiliation among different Asian ethnic groups.

Table **9.3.4**: American Religious Identification Survey 1990-2008: Asian Americans. (Data from the ARIS)

American Religious Identfication Survey 1990-2008: Asian Americans			
	1990	**2001**	**2008**
None/Agnostic	**16%**	**22%**	**27%**
Eastern Religions	**8%**	**22%**	**21%**
Catholic	**27%**	**20%**	**17%**

American Religious Identfication Survey 1990-2008: Asian Americans			
Other Christian			
Christian Generic	*13%*	*11%*	*10%*
Mainline Christian	*11%*	*6%*	*6%*
Baptist	*9%*	*4%*	*3%*
Pentecostal & Protestant	*3%*	*2%*	*2%*
Mormon	*2%*	*0%*	*0%*
Muslim	**3%**	**8%**	**8%**
New Religious Movements	**2%**	**1%**	**2%**
Jewish	**1%**	**0%**	**0%**
Don't Know/ Declined to Answer	**4%**	**5%**	**5%**

Nonetheless, there are some statistics that give a general picture of religious affiliation within the Asian American community. One of the largest, most up to date, and most comprehensive sources is the American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS), conducted by researchers at Trinity College (CT). The ARIS was first conducted in 1990, again in 2000, and the most recent wave was completed in 2008. The 2008 study includes data from a large, nationally representative sample of 54,461 U.S. adults in the 48 contiguous states.

The following Table 9.3.5 is taken from the ARIS 2008 report. The results show that while no religion can claim a majority of followers in the Asian American community, as of 2008, those who claim no religious affiliation are the largest group. In fact, this group has grown significantly since the first ARIS study in 1990 and its percentage in 2008 (27%) among Asian American is the largest of all the major racial ethnic groups in the study (whites are second with 16% claiming no religious affiliation). The second-largest religious group among Asian Americans are "Eastern Religions" that include Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, Baha'i, Shintoist, Zoroastrian, and Sikh. These Eastern Religions saw a dramatic increase from 1990 to 2001, then leveled off in 2008. Catholics are the third-largest group at 17% in 2008, with their proportions declining notably from 27% in 1990.

Table 9.3.5: Pew Research Institute, Forum on Religion & Public Life 2008: Asian Americans. (Used with permission; Religious Landscape Study. Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (2020))

			2008
Christian			**45%**
	Protestant		*27%*
		Evangelical	17%
		Mainline	9%
		Historically Black	< 0.5%
	Catholic		*17%*
	Mormon		*1%*
	Jehovah's Witness		*< 0.5%*
	Orthodox		*< 0.5%*
	Other Christian		*< 0.5%*
Eastern & Other Religions			**30%**
	Hindu		*14%*
	Buddhist		*9%*
	Muslim		*4%*
	Other World Religions		*2%*
	Other Faiths		*1%*
	Jewish		*< 0.5%*
Unaffiliated			**23%**
	Secular Unaffiliated		*11%*
	Religious Unaffiliated		*5%*
	Agnostic		*4%*
	Atheist		*3%*
	Don't Know/Refused		*2%*

The category of "Christian Generic" (comprising those who identified as Christian, Protestant, Evangelical/ Born Again Christian, Born Again, Fundamentalist, Independent Christian, Missionary Alliance Church, and Non-Denominational Christian) is the fourth-largest group at 10% in 2008. Other Christian and Protestant denominations are listed below that. The results show that in

2008, Muslims represented 8% of the Asian American population (up from 3% in 1990) and "New Religious Movements" (comprising those who identified as Scientology, New Age, Eckankar, Spiritualist, Unitarian-Universalist, Deist, Wiccan, Pagan, Druid, Indian Religion, Santeria, and Rastafarian) claiming 2% in 2008.

These results are largely confirmed by a second comprehensive survey of religious identification taken in 2008, the **U.S. Religious Landscape Survey** (1.2 MB), a national survey of over 35,000 respondents conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.

In contrast to the ARIS 2008 report, the USLRS methodology sometimes includes the same denomination with separate categories (i.e., Baptists can be both "Evangelical" and "Mainline") -- please check page 12 and Appendix 2 of the USLRS report for the exact categorizations and their detailed explanation of their methodology. The data shown here is for Asian American respondents only and is taken from page 40 of their report.

Again the data show that Christian faiths and denominations claim the highest percentage of followers among Asian Americans, with Eastern Religions and unaffiliated responses also claiming large numbers of respondents. Interesting, once the unique faiths within the "Eastern Religions" category are expanded, we see that Hinduism is the mos popular eastern faith among Asian Americans (due largely to the large size of the Indian American population), with Buddhism second.

Unfortunately, neither the ARIS nor the USLRS studies break the religious affiliation down to specific Asian ethnic groups. For that matter, I have yet to find any research that does. So to try to measure the size of religions within each ethnic group, we can look at the proportions for different religions within that Asian country. Although it's not completely accurate, it's a generally safe assumption that the religious proportions within an Asian country are similar to that within its community in the U.S., since the majority of Asian Americans are foreign-born, as stated in the 2000 CIA World Factbook:

- Bangladesh: Muslim 88.3%, Hindu 10.5%, other 1.2%
- India: Hindu 80%, Muslim 14%, Christian 2.4%, Sikh 2%, Buddhist 0.7%, Jains 0.5%, other 0.4%
- Philippines: Roman Catholic 83%, Protestant 9%, Muslim 5%, Buddhist and other 3%
- Japan: observe both Shinto and Buddhist 84%, other 16% (including Christian 0.7%)
- South Korea: Christian 49%, Buddhist 47%, Confucianist 3%, Shamanist, Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way), and other 1%

Again, these stats are imperfect because as China and Viet Nam are both officially atheist countries, there are no statistics on the proportions of religions in each country.



Figure **9.3.6**: Indian/Filipino wedding. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Ron Tamondong via Flickr)

How Religion, Spirituality, and Faith Help

Ultimately, as there is so much diversity in the Asian American population in so many ways, so too this applies to our religions and practices of spirituality and faith. But they all share the commonality of helping Asian Americans adjust to life in the U.S. and all the issues that surround what it means to be an Asian American.

As several social scientists point out, these various forms of spirituality and faith help Asian Americans to deal with the upheavals of immigration, adapting to a new country, and other difficult personal and social transformations by providing a safe and comfortable environment in which immigrants can socialize, share information, and assist each other. In this process, religious

traditions can help in the process of forming Asian immigrant communities by giving specific Asian ethnic groups another source of solidarity, in addition to their common ethnicity, on which to build relationships and cooperation. In fact, history shows that numerous churches and religious organizations played very important roles in helping immigrants from China, Japan, the Philippines, South Asia, and Korea adjust to life in the U.S.

Also, the secular functions of religion are just as, if not even more important in helping Asian Americans in their everyday lives. Specifically, many churches, temples, and other religious organizations provide their members with important and useful services around practical, everyday matters such as translation assistance. Other practical examples include information and assistance on issues relating to education, employment, housing, health care, business and financial advice, legal advice, marriage counseling, and dealing with their Americanized children, etc. As such, many churches are almost like social service agencies in terms of the ways in which they help Asian Americans in practical, day-to-day matters.

Other scholars and studies show that churches can also provide social status and prestige for their members. As one example sociologist Pyong Gap Min describes that since many Korean immigrants face underemployment due to their lack of English fluency once they immigrate to the U.S. (especially if they come from educated and professional backgrounds in Korea), they often feel ashamed, embarrassed, or alienated as they adjust to their lower status level in the U.S. Within their church however, many Korean immigrants find a sense of status through official positions inside the church. These can include being assistant ministers, education directors, unordained associate pastors, elders, deacons, and committee chairs, etc.

Finally, as Bankston and Zhou point out in their study of the New Orleans Vietnamese community, religion can play a significant part in affecting a young Asian American's ethnic identity. The Catholic churches in the Vietnamese section of the city helped to keep young Vietnamese Americans integrated within the larger community. Those youngsters who attended church and participated in religious activities more were more likely to do well in school and to stay out of trouble.

Of course, religion, spirituality, and faith is only one part of this adaptation and socialization process and it interacts with many other factors in affecting how an Asian immigrant adjusts to his/her new life in the U.S. Nonetheless, its power is undeniable. For hundreds of generations in the past, it has bonded communities and been the basis for many people's lives. Even with changes in culture, physical location, and social institutions, its effect lives on.

Young, Gay, and APA

Asian Americans who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) frequently face a double or even triple jeopardy -- being targets of prejudice and discrimination because of their ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. The following is an article entitled "Young, Gay, and APA," originally published in the July 17, 1999 issue of AsianWeek Magazine, written by Joyce Nishioka. It captures many of the obstacles and challenges that LGBT Asian Americans go through as they search for acceptance and happiness with the multiple forms of their personal identities.

Double Jeopardy

Nineteen-year-old Eric Aquino remembers a day not that long ago when he kneeled down to tie his shoe during P.E. class. He looked up to find a boy towering over him, saying, "That's where you belong" and making a comment about oral sex. "People teased me because they perceived me as a gay, fag queer," he remembers. "What could I do but ignore it? One thing I always did was ignore it."

While feelings of rejection and questions about "being normal" haunt most adolescents, they often hit harder at those who are minorities, either racial or sexual. And too often, those are the kids who get the least support. A 1989 study from the Department of Health and Human Services found that a gay teen who comes out to his or her parents faced about a 50-50 chance of being rejected and 1 in 4 had to leave home. Ten years later, a study in The Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine found that gay and bisexual teens are more than three times as likely to attempt suicide as other youths.

Surveys indicate that 80 percent of gay students do not feel safe in schools, and one poll by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed 1 in 13 high school students had been attacked or harassed because they were perceived to be homosexual. Nationwide, 18 percent of all gay students are physically injured to the point they require medical treatment, and they are seven times as likely as their straight peers to be threatened with a weapon at school, according to the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.



Figure **9.3.7**: Gay Asian Pacific Support Network. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Akasha Yi via Flickr)

Protecting homosexual Asian teens from discrimination requires double-duty measures, advocates say. Ofie Virtucio, a coordinator for AQUA, San Francisco's only citywide organization for gay Asian American teenagers (now known as the API Wellness Center), maintains that they are especially likely to be closeted and ignored. "Asians are the model minorities," she says, describing a common stereotype. "They can't be gay or at risk; they don't commit suicide or self-mutilate." In reality, Kim says, "There are many API youths in the California public school system who are gay or perceived as being gay and face angry discrimination and harassment. And there is nothing to adequately protect them."

As Kwok and thousands of others might attest, to be young, gay and APA is to simultaneously confront the ugly specters of barriers and discrimination that come with being gay in America and those that come with being Asian in America. "With the anti-Asian sentiment, students are harassed more for being Asian because it's more visible than sexuality." says San Francisco school district counselor Crystal Jang.

The Closet is a Lonely Place to Live

"People don't think there are API gays and lesbians," Virtucio says. "There is hardly any research, and no money goes to them." Consequently, no one knows precisely how many of San Francisco's Asian American children are gay. But if the often quoted figure of 10 percent of a population holds, the figure could exceed 1,300 in the public junior high and high schools alone. Asian American students, says Jang, account for about 90 percent of the kids she sees through the district's Support Services for Sexual Minorities Youth Program. Though there are more support groups for gay youths than ever before, Virtucio said many Asian American teens find it difficult to fit in. Nor do they have any role models. This decade's most noted gays and lesbians -- actresses Ellen DeGeneres and Anne Heche, Ambassador James Hormel and former Wisconsin congressman Steve Gunderson, Migden and Kuehl -- are all white, and so is society's perception of gay America.

"They can't go to programs for queer gay youths when no one speaks their language," Virtucio says. "How can they be understood when they talk about their close-knit family they can never come out to? They need to see people like them. Even if it's just serving rice, they need something familiar so they could [relate] and feel like they could be part of this community," says Virtucio, who touts her four-year-old group as "a channel to come out." In the summer, 20 to 30 teens -- half of whom are immigrants -- go to AQUA's weekly drop-in sessions. Though the group initially attracted mostly college-age men, most of its members today are younger, and half are female. At a recent get-together, the girls seemed much less vocal than boys, and though several young men agreed to be interviewed, no girls did. Jang explains that girls are more likely than boys to refrain from expressing their sexuality, possibly because of the shame they think they may bring on themselves and their families. One girl, she recalled, fell in love with her godsister and wanted to tell her, but she was afraid that if she did, everyone in Chinatown would find out.

For both genders, though, coming out to family and friends is a huge issue, one that Virtucio says cannot be put off indefinitely. "Parents want to know," she said, adding that many AQUA members have told her that they suspected that their parents knew about their sexuality long before their children would admit to themselves. Mothers, she said, might ask daughters questions like, "Why to you dress that way? Wear a skirt." Or they might tell their sons, "Don't walk like that." At the same time, she said, cultural pressures to put the family first or to hide one's feelings often convince Asian and Asian American youth to internalize their sexuality. Each family member often is expected to fill an explicit role. For example, she explained, a Filipina, particularly the first-

born daughter, "is supposed to take care of the family, and get married and have kids." A first-born Chinese son, she added, "can never be gay. He is supposed to extend the family name."

Desmond Kwok says his parents accept his sexual orientation -- though they don't necessarily support him emotionally. He acknowledges an ongoing "starvation for love" that he blames on his parents. Both have been distant, he says, especially his father, a businessman who lives in Chicago. Kwok says he found support for coming out not from his family, but from a gang he was in two years ago. "They were really cool with it, and it boosted my confidence in the whole coming-out process," he said. "They'd say, 'If someone has a grudge against you for being gay, we're there for you. We'll kick their asses.' "

Now, Kwok dates "older" Asian and Asian American men -- at least 19 -- because few come out before then, he says. He admits that he has tried to find boyfriends over the Internet, at bars and cafes, "the worst places to meet a good boyfriend. A graduate of the School of the Arts, a magnet academy, Kwok said he intends to continue his work as an advocate for gay Asian and Asian American teens. Yet even now he cannot rid "the feeling of being alone -- being around people who really love you, but still knowing they are heterosexual. They'll be with their girlfriends or boyfriends, and here I am all alone, sitting around, boo-hoo, no boyfriend."

'Straight' Into Isolation, 'Out' Into Happiness

Eric Aquino never had such peer support growing up in Vallejo, Calif., and especially in junior high school. "I felt alone," Aquino said. He avoided his locker, where the popular kids hung out, and instead took long, circuitous paths to classes to dodge their cruel comments. "A good day for me was being able to walk down the hall without having anyone ask, 'Are you gay? Do you suck dick?' His grades fell. "I would be late to class and wouldn't bring my books," he explained. "I couldn't concentrate. I looked at the clock until it was 3 o'clock and time to go."

Aquino's high school years were both the happiest and one of the most depressing times of his life. He joined marching band and had friends for the first time, but he also started feeling that he was, in fact, gay. "Friends were important to me because I never had any, but they didn't know me for what I was," he said. Aquino thought perhaps he should wait until he was 18 to come out, so that if his parents rejected him, he could run away. He also considered living in the closet and spent much of his time thinking of ways to keep his secret. "I thought of different alternatives, other options. Like, I'll get married and have kids, [then divorce] and be a single parent, and my parents would just think I never found love again."

Thinking Sociologically

Once LGBTQ Asian Americans come out of the closet, do they find more support and acceptance within the mainstream LGBTQ community? Many do, but unfortunately, anti-Asian racism among the predominantly white LGBTQ community still exists. Joseph Erbentraut's article "Gay Anti-Asian Prejudice Thrives On the Internet " and Gay.net's article "Gay Racism Comes Out" provide insight into the challenges that LGBTQ Asian Americans face with regards to acceptance in the larger LGBTQ community. How are LGBTQ Asian Americans treated in the LGBTQ community in your city?

Ofiee Virtucio, 21, can relate to the feeling of isolation. "Maybe it's the feeling where you know you're Asian but sometimes in situations you're embarrassed to be," she said. "That's where I was for a long time. Of course I was lonely." When she was 13 and still in the Philippines, she recalls, her mother asked her, "Tomboy ca ba?' -- are you gay? She looked me in the eyes; she was worried," Virtucio said. "I said, 'No!' " She wishes that her mom had replied, "Whatever you are, it's OK. I still love you, Ofie.' " Two years later, the family came to the United States. "I had to be white in a month," she recalled. "When I started talking, I had an American accent that I could use, so I could make friends," she said. "During senior year, I was in denial being Filipino and didn't talk about being gay. Most importantly, I had to get friends. I had to get to know what America is all about. I had to survive."

She recalled: "I was trying to be straight but didn't want to have sex. I didn't want a man's penis in me." Though she had a boyfriend in high school, she secretly had crushes on girls, especially the teenage lesbians who were "out." At the same time, she recalls, she "couldn't relate. They were more 'we're-here-we're-queer' ... I knew I was gay, but I thought, 'I'm not like that.' It made me think I could never be like that." So, she said, "When my friends would talk about cute guys, I would jump into the conversation. I thought, 'OK, I have to do this right now,' so I'd say things like, 'Oh, he's so cute.' "Then when I would go home, I'd be like ... oh," said Virtucio, covering her eyes with her palms. "It hurts. It really, really hurts."

Virtucio finally acknowledged her sexuality during her college years, "the happiest time in my life." At age 18, she found her first girlfriend and experienced her first kiss, but it took many more years before she felt truly comfortable about being a lesbian. "I knew it was going to be a hard life," she said. "I thought, 'How am I going to tell my siblings? How am I going to get a job? Am I going to be constrained to having only gay friends? What are people going to think of me? I thought people would know now -- just because I know I'm gay -- that they'll just see it."

Virtucio never had the opportunity to come out to her mother, who passed away when she was 15. But in college, she did tell her father. She remembers he was in the garden watering plants when he asked her, out of the blue, whether her girlfriend was more than a friend. Startled, Virtucio says she denied it, but later that day, she opened the door to his bedroom and said it was true. They took a walk on the beach after that. "He told me whatever made me happy was fine," Virtucio recalls. "My father used to be mean to my mom, pot-bellied, chauvinistic," she says. "But for some reason he found it in his heart to understand. That moment was amazing for me. I thought if my dad could understand, I really don't care what the world thinks. I'm just going to be the person I am."

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)
- Asian Nation (Le) (CC BY-NC-ND) adapted with permission

Works Cited **& Recommended for Further Reading**

- Carnes, T. & Yang, F. (Eds.). (2004). *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Cho, S. (1997). *Rice: Explorations into Asian Gay Culture & Politics*. San Francisco, CA: Queer Press.
- Chou, R.S. (2012). *Asian American Sexual Politics: The Construction of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Duncan, P. & Wong. G. (Eds). (2014). *Mothering in East Asian Communities*. Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Eng, D.L. & Hom, A.Y. (Eds.). (1998). *Q & A: Queer in Asian America*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Forbes, B.D., Mahan, J.H. (Eds.). (2017). *Religion and Popular Culture in America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Fujiwara, L. & Roshanravan S. (Eds.). (2018). *Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Politics*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Hune, S. (Ed.). (2020). *Our Voices, Our Histories: Asian American and Pacific Islander Women*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Kang, M. (2010). *The Managed Hand: Race, Gender and the Body in Beauty Service Work*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jeung, R. (2004). *Faithful Generations: Race and New Asian American Churches*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Lee, J. & Zhou, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Leong, R. (1995). *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ling, H. (2007). *Voices of the Heart: Asian American Women on Immigration, Work, and Family*. Kirksville, MO:Truman State University Press.
- Mishima, Y. (1988). *Confessions of a Mask*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Prasso, S. (2006). *The Asian Mystique: Dragon Ladies, Geisha Girls, and Our Fantasies of the Exotic Orient*. New York, NY: Public Affairs Publishing.
- Quang, B., Yanagihara, H. & Liu, T. (Eds.). (2000). *Take Out: Queer Writing from Asian Pacific America*. New York, NY: Asian American Writers' Workshop.
- Seagrave, S. (1992). *Dragon Lady: The Life and Legend of the Last Empress of China.* New York, NY: Knopf Books.
- Seidman, S. (2002). *Beyond the Closet: The Transformation of Gay and Lesbian Life*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Shimizu, C. (2007). *The Hypersexuality of Race: Performing Asian/American Women on Screen and Scene*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Stevenson, M.R. (2003). *Everyday Activism: A Handbook for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual People and Their Allies*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Tan, J. (1998). *Queer Papi Pørn: Gay Asian Erotica*. Jersey City, NJ: Cleis Press.
- Toyama, N.A., Gee, T., Khang, K., de Leon, C.H., & Dean, A. (Eds.). (2005). *More Than Serving Tea: Asian American Women on Expectations, Relationships, Leadership and Faith*. Westmont, IL: IVP Books.
- Valverde, K., Linh, C. & Wei Ming, D. (Eds.). (2019). *Fight the Tower: Asian American Women Scholars' Resistance and Renewal in the Academy*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Wat, E.C. (2002). *Making of a Gay Asian Community: An Oral History of Pre-AIDS Los Angeles*. New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield.

This page titled 9.3: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **9.3: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

9.4: Social Institutions

Education

In a lot of ways, Asian Americans have done remarkably well in achieving "the American dream" of getting a good education, working at a good job, and earning a good living. So much so that the image many have of Asian Americans is that we are the "model minority" -- a bright, shining example of hard work and patience whose example other people of colors should follow (Wu, 2018). However, the practical reality is slightly more complicated than that.

Statistics Don't Lie . . . Do They?

Once in a great while, statistics don't lie. It is true that in many ways, Asian Americans have done very well socially and economically. The data in Table 9.4.1 was calculated using the 2000 Census Public Use Microdata Samples, then comparing the major racial/ethnic groups among different measures of what sociologists call "socioeconomic achievement."

Table **9.4.1**: Socioeconomic characteristics by racial groups. (Courtesy of Asian Nation)

Socioeconomic Characteristics by Racial/Ethnic and Asian Ethnic Groups
Numbers are in percentages, except for income
Click on a column heading to sort up or down

	Not Proficient in English	Less Than High School	College Degree	Advanced Degree	High Skill Occupation	Married, Spouse Present	Homeowner	Median Personal Income	Median Family Income	Living in Poverty	Public Assistance
Whites	0.7	15.3	25.3	3.0	21.4	64.5	78.2	$23,640	$48,500	9.4	1.3
Blacks	0.8	29.1	13.6	1.2	12.3	38.0	54.4	$16,300	$33,300	24.9	4.5
Latinos/Hispanics	30.3	48.5	9.9	1.6	9.6	56.3	52.4	$14,400	$36,000	21.4	3.5
Native American Indians	2.6	27.4	10.8	0.9	11.9	50.2	64.2	$14,500	$32,240	25.1	6.1
Indians	8.4	12.6	64.4	12.5	51.6	74.9	56.8	$26,000	$69,470	8.2	0.9
Cambodian, Hmong, or Laotian	44.3	52.7	9.2	0.4	9.8	66.6	53.3	$16,000	$43,850	22.5	9.9
Chinese	31.3	23.6	46.3	8.5	41.9	67.1	65.7	$20,000	$58,300	13.1	1.8
Filipinos	7.0	13.1	42.8	4.3	29.7	62.7	67.6	$23,000	$65,400	6.9	1.6
Japanese	10.0	9.5	40.8	4.6	32.0	60.7	70.8	$26,000	$61,630	8.6	0.9
Koreans	32.9	13.8	43.6	5.6	27.0	69.0	51.9	$16,300	$48,500	15.5	1.6
Pacific Islanders	7.1	21.7	13.6	1.6	13.8	61.4	48.1	$19,100	$50,000	16.7	4.4
Vietnamese	40.4	37.8	13.8	2.5	22.6	61.2	60.0	$16,000	$51,500	13.8	4.8

These numbers tell you that among the five major racial/ethnic groups in the U.S., Asian Americans have the highest college degree attainment rate, rates of having an advanced degree (professional or Ph.D.), median family income, being in the labor force, rate of working in a "high skill" occupation (executive, professional, technical, or upper management), and median Socioeconomic Index (SEI) score that measures occupational prestige. Yes, in these categories, Asians even outperform whites. Asian Americans seem to have done so well that magazines such as Newsweek and respected television shows such as 60 Minutes proclaim us to be the "model minority."

Many people go even further and argue that since Asian Americans are doing so well, we no longer experience any discrimination and that Asian Americans no longer need public services such as bilingual education, government documents in multiple languages, and welfare. Further, using the first stereotype of Asian Americans, many just assume that all Asian Americans are successful and that none of us are struggling.

On the surface, it may sound rather benign and even flattering to be described in those terms. However, we need to take a much closer look at these numbers. As we will see, many other statistics show that Asian Americans are still the targets of racial inequality and institutional discrimination and that the model minority image is a myth.

When Good Numbers Go Bad

Again, we need to remember that not all Asian Americans are the same. For every Chinese American or South Asian who has a college degree, the same number of Southeast Asians are still struggling to adapt to their lives in the U.S. For example, as shown in

the tables in the Socioeconomic Statistics & Demographics article, Vietnamese Americans only have a college degree attainment rate of 20%, less than half the rate for other Asian American ethnic groups. The rates for Laotians, Cambodians, and Hmong are even lower at less than 10% (Ty, 2017).

The results show that as a whole Asian American families have higher median incomes than white families. However, this is because in most cases, the typical Asian American family tends to have more members who are working than the typical white family. It's not unusual for an Asian American family to have four, five, or more members working. A more telling statistic is median personal income (also known as per capita income). The results above show that Asian Americans still trail whites on this very important measure.

"Success" May Only Be Skin-Deep

Another telling statistic is how much more money a person earns with each additional year of schooling completed, or what sociologists call "returns on education." One of the first in-depth studies that looked at per capita income between Asian Americans and other racial/ethnic groups came from Robert Jiobu and is cited in Asian Americans: An Interpretive History by Sucheng Chan. Using this measure, research consistently shows that for each additional year of education attained, whites earn another $522.

That is, beyond a high school degree, a white with 4 more years of education (equivalent to a college degree) can expect to earn $2088 per year in salary. In contrast, returns on each additional year of education for a Japanese American is only $438. For a Chinese American, it's $320. For Blacks, it's even worse at only $284. What this means is that basically, a typical Asian American has to get more years of education just to make the same amount of money that a typical white makes with less education.

Recent research from scholars such as Timothy Fong (2020), Roderick Harrison, and Paul Ong, to name just a few, continues to confirm these findings that controlling for other variables, Asian Americans still earn less money than whites with virtually equal qualifications. Once again, for each statistic that suggests everything is picture-perfect for Asian Americans, there is another that proves otherwise.

As another example, in California, almost 40% of all Vietnamese refugees are on public assistance and in Minnesota and Wisconsin, an equal number of Cambodians, Hmong, and Laotians also receive public assistance. Another example is that of many Korean immigrants who come to the U.S. with very high levels of education. But for various reasons (i.e., not being fluent in English), many are not able to get decent jobs that pay well. Therefore, they are forced to to work as janitors, waiters, busboys, or go into business for themselves to survive. The only reason why many Korean small business owners are able to make a small profit is that they have no paid employees and work 20 hours a day.

Always Check Below the Surface

Another point is that even despite the real successes we've achieved, Asian Americans are still significantly underrepresented in positions of political leadership at the local, regional, state, and federal levels (despite the successes of a few individuals such as Norman Mineta and Elaine Chao) -- just like Blacks, Latinos, and American Indians. In the corporate world, Asian Americans are underrepresented as CEOs, board members, and high-level supervisors -- just like Blacks, Latinos, and American Indians.



Figure **9.4.2**: Chinese Miner Statue. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Nick Ares via Flickr)

This is not to say that there aren't Asians Americans out there who are quite successful and have essentially achieved the American dream. As their socioeconomic attainment levels clearly illustrate for example, Asian Indians consistently outperform not only other Asian ethnic groups but whites in several achievement measures, sometimes by a large margin. And of course, you'll find plenty of examples of Asian Americans who are quite affluent and successful, and as Asian Americans, we should rightly feel proud of these examples of success.

The point is that just because many Asian Americans have "made it," it does not mean that all Asian Americans have made it. In many ways, Asian Americans are still the targets of much prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination. For instance, the persistent belief that "all Asians are smart" puts a tremendous amount of pressure on many Asian Americans. Many, particularly Southeast Asians, are not able to conform to this unrealistic expectation and in fact, have the **highest high school dropout rates** in the country (Chou, 2008).

Asian Americans are also increasingly becoming the targets of hate crimes. In fact, research shows that Asian Americans are the fastest growing victims of hate crimes in the U.S. Asian Indians and other successful Asian Americans may have extraordinary levels of socioeconomic achievement but it's very unlikely that many of them will say that they no longer experience discrimination because of their Asian ethnicity.

Ultimately, the process of achieving socioeconomic success among Asian Americans is very complex. There are many examples of affluence and prosperity within the Asian American population but in many ways, we still face the same types of racism, social inequality, and institutional discrimination that other groups of color face. Therefore, the image that the entire Asian American community is the "model minority" is a myth.

The Economy

Work, employment, and occupational mobility have been prominent features of the history of Asian American communities ever since they first arrived in the U.S. In fact, the fundamental reason why the majority of Asians first immigrated to America was to find work and earning a living to support themselves and their families. To this day, work remains an important part of life for Asian Americans and the reason why so many Asians continue to immigrate to the U.S.

Self-Employment Then and Now

In the early era of Asian American history, the Gold Rush was one of the strongest pull factors that led many Chinese to come to the U.S. to find their fortune and return home rich and wealthy. In addition, many Chinese (and later other Asian groups as well) also came to Hawai'i as contract laborers to work in sugarcane plantations. On the mainland, Chinese also worked as small merchants, domestics, farmers, grocers, and starting in 1865, as railroad workers on the famous Transcontinental Railroad project.

However, the anti-immigrant and anti-Chinese nativist movement of the late 1800s, best represented by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, forced the Chinese to retreat into their own isolated communities as a matter of survival. Inside these early Chinatowns, the tradition of small business ownership developed as many Chinese provided services to other Chinese and increasingly, to non-Chinese, such as restaurants, laundry, and merchandise retailers.

The phenomenon of self-employment has been a prominent mode of work for many Asian Americans, starting with the first Asian immigrants into the U.S. and continuing through today. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act led to the immigration of millions of Asians into the U.S. and also resulted in the growth of Asian ethnic enclaves in numerous metropolitan areas around the U.S. These two developments have led to a resurgence of self-employment among many Asian Americans.

Scholars have described four general reasons why Asian Americans are likely to become self-employed, all of which can overlap with each other. These theories are described in more detail in the article on Asian Small Businesses. Briefly summarized, they include:

- Labor market discrimination: becoming self-employed in order to avoid having to settle for lower-status or lower-paying jobs in the conventional labor market.
- Ethnic resources: either having "cultural" characteristics that facilitate entrepreneurship or relying on family and relatives for cheap labor and/or co-ethnics for patronage.
- Structural opportunities: openings within certain economic sectors, markets, or industries that offer easy entry but also include high risks of failure.

- Class resources: attaining education, training and experience, and/or financial capital in order to enter self-employment.

These tensions have led to numerous incidents of hostility, most famously represented by the extensive burning of Korean-owned businesses in the Los Angeles riots of 1992. In response, many Asian small business owners have made concerted efforts to address these complaints and reach out more to their communities in order to improve relations.

Adapting to Deindustrialization

While a large proportion of Asian Americans are self-employed, most are conventional employees in the U.S. labor market. The passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act finally made it illegal to discriminate against someone based on race or ethnicity, which removed legal barriers to employment opportunities for Asian Americans. Reflecting the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the Asian American population, contemporary Asian Americans also have different employment and occupational mobility patterns as well.

Social scientists have described how the American economy has undergone **deindustrialization** in the last few decades, from an economy based on manufacturing to one centered around technological innovation, information management, and services. Within this context, many scholars also note that the U.S. labor is becoming increasingly polarized. That is, there has been an expansion in the number of jobs at the top, within "information-intensive" sectors, and that require high levels of education and job skills and that pay very well -- jobs that many Asian Americans have successfully landed.

At the same time, there has also been a proliferation of jobs at the bottom that are relatively low-paying, unstable, and require little education or skills. However, the middle layer of skilled manufacturing and blue collar jobs has generally been shrinking, thereby leading to this stratified labor market. At the low end of the labor market, many Asian Americans share much in common with early Chinese laborers in that they possess little formal skills and English fluency. As a result, they have little choice but to work in relatively low-paying unstable service sector jobs, many located inside traditional urban Asian ethnic enclaves.

To illustrate these patterns, using data from the 2000 Census 5% PUMS, Table 9.4.3 presents distributions of occupational categories for different racial/ethnic and Asian groups (employed, ages 25-64).

Table **9.4.3**: Distribution of occupational categories, by racial/ethnic and Asian groups. (Courtesy of Asian Nation)

Distributions of Occupational Categories, by Racial/Ethnic and Asian Groups
Numbers are in percentages
Click on a column heading to sort up or down

	Executive & Senior Management	Computer, Scientific, & Engineering	Legal & Financial Services	Medical/ Healthcare Professionals	Education, Media, & Social Services	Sales, Operations, & Support	Skilled Blue-Collar	Manual Svcs., Farming, & Military
Whites	11.7	5.2	4.1	5.2	10.5	29.4	26.4	8.4
Blacks	5.5	2.7	2.6	4.3	8.7	31.3	30.5	13.8
Latinos/Hispanics	5.4	2.2	1.9	2.2	6.2	24.2	37.0	20.5
Native American Indians	6.8	2.5	2.1	3.1	9.0	26.3	33.6	16.1
Indians	11.1	25.8	4.9	11.8	6.6	22.5	12.4	4.8
Cambodian, Hmong, or Laotian	3.3	4.2	1.4	1.6	4.7	18.7	53.6	12.7
Chinese	10.9	19.9	6.2	5.5	8.6	23.2	14.4	12.7
Filipinos	5.5	7.1	5.0	15.7	4.7	31.7	17.9	12.7
Japanese	14.7	10.3	6.2	5.5	13.6	30.7	11.3	8.9
Koreans	10.8	7.0	4.5	6.2	10.1	31.0	17.9	12.8
Pacific Islanders	6.0	3.6	2.2	3.0	5.6	32.7	30.9	16.0
Vietnamese	4.2	12.0	2.9	3.9	4.2	18.1	37.0	17.8

The results indicate that for most racial/ethnic and Asian groups, the largest proportion within each group are concentrated in either the "Sales, Operations, and Support" or "Skilled Blue Collar" occupational categories. On the other hand, the lowest proportions within most groups are found in the "Legal and Financial Services" occupations.

Other notable findings are that, of all the racial/ethnic groups in the table, Asian Indians have the highest proportion in the "Computer, Scientific, & Engineering" occupations. Also, Chinese and Japanese share the highest proportion among all groups in the "Legal and Financial Services" occupations. Filipinos have the highest proportion of those in the "Medical/Healthcare

Professionals" categories while Japanese have the highest proportion in the "Education, Media, & Community Services" occupations.

In general, the results again confirm that, at least in terms of occupational attainment, Asian Indians as a group seem to have attained the most prestigious jobs. In addition, Chinese are well-represented in the computer, scientific, and engineering fields, Filipinos have a significant level of representation among medical professionals, and Japanese enjoy a relatively high level of representation as executives and upper management. Conversely, employed Cambodians/Hmong/Laotians and Vietnamese tend to be more working class, as shown by their higher representations in the skilled blue collar occupations.

Persistent Glass Ceiling Barriers

As the statistics show, many Asian Americans have attained skilled, prestigious, and relatively high-paying professional jobs. At the same time, many still face numerous challenges in their work environments. For example, although Asian Americans have the highest rates of having a college (43% of all adults between 25 and 64) or a law, medicine, or doctorate degree (6.5% of all adults between 25 and 64), they only have the second highest median personal (per capita) income behind that for white workers.

That is, within many occupations, Asian Americans are still paid less than whites, despite having the same educational credentials and years of job experiences. In addition, numerous studies continue to point out that Asian Americans are still underrepresented as senior executives in large publicly-owned corporations.

Many scholars point out that the relative lack of Asian Americans within the most prestigious occupations is due to the continuing presence of **glass ceiling** barriers within the workplace, meaning that one's success hits an invisible barrier. There are several glass ceiling mechanisms that affect Asian Americans. The first is that many companies consciously or unconsciously bypass Asian Americans when it comes to recruiting for and outreaching to future executives. This may be based on the implicit assumption that Asian Americans do not fit their picture of a future executive or corporate leader.



Figure **9.4.4**: Discussions with members of the Asian-American business community at the Eden Center in Falls Church-at Falls Church, VA. (CC PDM 1.0; U.S. Senator Tim Kaine via Flickr)

A second glass ceiling mechanism occurs when Asian Americans have a hard time penetrating the old boys network (social connections experienced by elite men) in many occupational environments. Research consistently shows that it is in these informal social networks that valuable mentoring takes place, along with an exchange of important career information. In this case, Asian Americans are hurt by the persistently stereotype that all Asians are foreigners or outsiders.

Third is the phenomenon of "institutional tracking" in which Asian Americans are confined to only professional and technical jobs. While these jobs may pay well up to a certain point, many are dead end jobs that do not have promotion ladders or career tracks that lead up to supervisory or executive positions. Many Asian Americans are restricted to working in these "white collar sweatshops" because their supervisors may feel that they are not interested in managerial, supervisory, or executive positions.

Similarly, many Asian American professionals are alleged to lack the language, communication, or leadership skills required for promotion. In other words, the belief is that while Asian Americans are skilled at technical aspects of certain occupations, they may not have the "soft skills" related to personality, attitude, and behavior that would give them a competitive edge when it comes to

moving up into senior leadership positions. Within this context, Asian American workers may be subject to biased and subjective standards of evaluating their work performance.

Achievement in the New Millennium

Despite the challenges that Asian American workers continue to face, they continue to use hard work and employment to attain socioeconomic mobility through numerous boom and bust cycles of the American economy. In the process, many Asian Americans have achieved impressive occupational successes and are poised to become prominent members of their respective industries.

Initially achieving success only to be driven into relative isolation, Asian Americans have persevered, adapted, and taken innovative strategies on their way toward achieving socioeconomic mobility. Reflecting the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Asian American population, employment patterns among workers range from unskilled service sector employees to highly-educated and highly-skilled professionals. Regardless of type of work, Asian Americans continue to further contribute to the strength and vitality of America's economy and culture.

The Family

One of the most public manifestations of race is the choice of one's partner or spouse. This very individual and personal aspect can sometimes produce a lot of public discussion. Studies consistently show that Asian Americans have some of the highest "intermarriage" (also known as "outmarriage") rates among racial/ethnic minorities -- marrying someone else outside of their own ethnic group. But as always, there's more to the story than just the headline.

The Public and Private Sides of Ethnicity

Whether it's dating or marrying someone of a different race, interracial relationships are not a new phenomenon among Asian Americans. When the first Filipino and Chinese workers came to the U.S. in the 1700s and 1800s, they were almost exclusively men. A few of them eventually married women in the U.S. who were not Asian. However, many people soon saw Asian intermarriage with whites as a threat to American society. Therefore, anti-miscegenation laws (discussed earlier in Chapter 1.4) were passed that prohibited Asians from marrying whites.

Table 9.4.5: Marriage Patterns for Six Largest Asian American Ethnic Groups (2010) (Updated Nov. 2011). (Data courtesy of Asian Nation)

https://socialsci.libretexts.org/@go/page/104084

Marriage Patterns for Six Largest Asian American Ethnic Groups (2010)
(Updated Nov. 2011)

	All Spouses	USR + USR or FR	USR + USR Only
Men			
Asian Indian	92.5	76.9	62.4
Other Asian	1.5	4.2	4.5
white	4.3	13.3	25.6
Black	0.3	0.9	0.7
Hispanic/Latino	0.8	2.5	3.5
Multiracial & All Others	0.6	2.1	3.4
Population Size (x1000)	701.6	62.1	32.1
Women			
Asian Indian	92.9	70.6	52.0
Other Asian	0.9	1.9	2.9
white	4.7	22.6	37.8
Black	0.5	1.8	2.8
Hispanic/Latino	0.4	1.4	2.1
Multiracial & All Others	0.7	1.7	2.4
Population Size (x1000)	691.6	68.3	39.2

Men			
Chinese	88.8	63.9	53.6
Other Asian	4.8	12.9	14.8
white	5.2	19.2	26.5
Black	0.1	0.1	0.2
Hispanic/Latino	0.7	2.1	2.6
Multiracial & All Others	0.5	1.7	2.3
Population Size (x1000)	707.0	140.8	96.8
Women			
Chinese	79.9	52.4	46.1
Other Asian	3.5	9.9	10.4
white	14.5	31.9	37.7
Black	0.3	0.7	0.7
Hispanic/Latino	0.9	2.8	2.8
Multiracial & All Others	0.8	2.3	2.4
Population Size (x1000)	777.9	138.5	112.6
Men			
Filipino	85.1	54.2	42.1
Other Asian	2.6	7.1	7.9
white	7.9	24.0	31.8
Black	0.2	1.0	1.4
Hispanic/Latino	2.8	9.0	11.0

Multiracial & All Others	1.4	4.7	5.8
Population Size (x1000)	440.8	99.2	71.3
Women			
Filipino	61.6	36.7	29.1
Other Asian	2.6	6.2	6.4
white	27.0	37.2	42.7
Black	2.6	4.0	4.4
Hispanic/Latino	3.7	8.1	8.5
Multiracial & All Others	2.6	7.8	8.9
Population Size (x1000)	608.7	121.0	102.2
	All Spouses	USR + USR or FR	USR + USR Only
Men			
Japanese	62.8	54.5	53.8
Other Asian	11.5	14.2	12.2
white	18.8	22.8	25.1
Blacks	0.2	0.3	0.3
Hispanic/Latino	3.3	3.8	3.6
Multiracial & All Others	3.5	4.5	4.9
Population Size (x1000)	151.1	104.7	91.2

Women			
Japanese	44.4	48.9	49.3
Other Asian	8.0	12.2	11.0
white	38.1	29.4	29.9
Black	2.1	0.7	0.8
Hispanic/Latino	3.2	3.7	3.9
Multiracial & All Others	4.1	5.1	5.2
Population Size (x1000)	212.6	104.3	99.7
Men			
Korean	90.4	61.1	44.8
Other Asian	2.9	10.4	13.0
white	5.3	23.1	34.6
Black	0.2	0.8	1.2
Hispanic/Latino	0.9	3.7	5.3
Multiracial & All Others	0.4	0.7	1.1
Population Size (x1000)	265.4	47.8	30.2
Women			
Korean	68.1	35.4	24.1
Other Asian	3.6	9.2	9.8
white	24.4	48.4	57.7
Black	1.4	1.6	1.9

Hispanic/Latino	1.3	2.7	3.3
Multiracial & All Others	1.2	2.7	3.3
Population Size (x1000)	351.5	72.6	58.4
Men			
Vietnamese	92.6	71.0	59.0
Other Asian	3.4	11.9	13.7
white	2.8	13.1	21.9
Black	0.0	0.2	0.4
Hispanic/Latino	0.5	2.6	3.3
Multiracial & All Others	0.6	1.3	1.6
Population Size (x1000)	299.7	44.9	26.8
Women			
Vietnamese	84.6	56.3	40.6
Other Asian	4.2	11.1	12.2
white	9.4	28.7	41.3
Black	0.2	0.5	0.5
Hispanic/Latino	0.9	2.9	4.5
Multiracial & All Others	0.7	0.5	0.8
Population Size (x1000)	323.6	54.4	35.0
USR = U.S.-Raised (1.5 generation or higher)			

FR = Foreign-Raised (1st generation)
"USR + USR or FR" = Spouse 1 is U.S.-Raised while Spouse 2 can be U.S.-Raised or Foreign-Raised
"USR + USR Only" = Both spouses are U.S.-Raised
Methodology used to tabulate these statistics

History shows that these anti-miscegenation laws were very common in the U.S. They were first passed in the 1600s to prevent freed Black slaves from marrying whites and the biracial children of white slave owners and African slaves from inheriting property. It was not until 1967, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the Loving v. Virginia case that such laws were unconstitutional. At that time, 38 states in the U.S. had formal laws on their books that prohibited non-whites from marrying whites. As such, one could argue that it's only been in recent years that interracial marriages have become common in American society (Wong, 2015).

Of course, anti-miscegenation laws were part of a larger anti-Asian movement that eventually led to the Page Law of 1875 that effectively almost eliminated Chinese women from immigrating ot the U.S., the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, and other restrictive regulations. These laws actually made the situation worse because Asian men were no longer able to bring their wives over to the U.S. So in a way, those who wanted to become married had no other choice but to socialize with non-Asians (Pascoe, 2010).

After World War II however, the gender dynamics of this interracial process flip-flopped. U.S. servicemen who fought and were stationed overseas in Asian countries began coming home with Asian "war brides." Data show that from 1945 into the 1970s, thousands of young women from China, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and later Viet Nam came to the U.S. as war brides each year. Further, after the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, many of these Asian war brides eventually helped to expand the Asian American community by sponsoring their family and other relatives to immigrate to the U.S. (Koshy, 2005).

These days, Asian Americans in interracial relationships are very common. One of the best research articles on this topic is a study conducted by Shinagawa and Pang entitled "Asian American Panethnicity and Intermarriage," reprinted in the highly recommended Asian Americans: Experiences and Perspectives. Similar in structure to their study, J.J. Huang and C.N. Le have analyzed data from the U.S. Census Bureau to construct the following table on marriage patterns among Asian Americans.

How to Read and Understand the Table

Using data from the 2010 Census (updated Nov. 2011), the table shows the percentage of the six largest Asian ethnic groups who are married either **endogamously** (within their ethnic group), to another Asian (outside their ethnic group), or to someone who is white, Black, Hispanic/Latino, or someone who is Mixed-Race/Multiracial, by husbands and wives. The other major component of the table is that it presents different numbers depending on which statistical model is used.

That is, the specific numbers for each ethnic group vary depending on how you measure "intermarriage." The different models are:

- All Spouses: This model include all marriages that involve at least one Asian American. The benefit of this approach is that you get a complete picture of all marriages involving Asian Americans. The drawback is that since most married Asian Americans are immigrants, many of them got married in their home countries before immigrating to the U.S. -- i.e., they came to the U.S. already married.
- USR + USR or FR: USR stands for "U.S.-Raised," or those who are either born in the U.S. (the 2nd generation or higher) or came to the U.S. at age 13 or younger (the '1.5 generation'), while FR stands for "Foreign-Raised," the 1st generation (those who came to the U.S. at age 14 or older). In this model, the 'subject' spouse (either the man or the woman) is USR, but his/her spouse can be either USR or FR. This model narrows down the sample somewhat by trying to exclude those who were already married when they arrived in the U.S.
- USR + USR Only: This model includes only marriages in which both spouses are U.S.-raised. This has the advantage of including only those who were raised and socialized within American society and its racial dynamics. It is this U.S.-raised population that best represents young Asian Americans, since they are the ones who have the most exposure to prevailing American cultural images and media. The drawback of this model is that by focusing exclusively on the U.S.-raised (who only represent about one quarter of all marriages involving Asian Americans), it may overemphasize and "over-highlight" instances of outmarriage among Asian Americans.

These three models are presented to you the reader to give you the opportunity to decide for yourself which model best represents the "true" picture of marriage among Asian Americans. You should understand that each model has its strengths and weaknesses

and as you can see, each produces some very different numbers. If you would like to read about the exact procedure J.J. Huang and C.N. Le used to calculate these numbers, visit the Statistical Methodology page.

These are certainly a lot of numbers to consider and as mentioned above, each model presents a different proportion. Nonetheless, what these stats tell us is that generally speaking, across all three models (calculated by using the admittedly unscientific method of averaging the proportions across all three models to emphasize the last two models), these are the Asian ethnic groups are most or least likely to have each kind of spouse:

Men/Husbands -- Most / Least Likely to Have a(n) __ Wife:

- Endogamous -- Most: Asian Indian / Least: Japanese
- Other Asian (Pan-Asian) -- Most: Japanese / Least: Asian Indian
- White -- Most: Japanese / Least: Vietnamese
- Black -- Most: Filipinos / Least: Chinese
- Hispanic/Latino -- Most: Filipinos / Least: Chinese
- Multiracial or Other -- Most: Japanese / Least: Koreans

Women/Wives -- Most / Least Likely to Have a(n) __ Husband:

- Endogamous -- Most: Asian Indian / Least: Filipinos/Koreans (tied)
- Other Asian (Pan-Asian) -- Most: Japanese / Least: Asian Indians
- White -- Most: Korean / Least: Asian Indian
- Black -- Most: Filipinos / Least: Vietnamese
- Hispanic/Latino -- Most: Filipinos / Least: Asian Indian
- Multiracial or Other -- Most: Filipinos / Least: Vietnamese

Recent Trends and Developments

The numbers presented above only represent a 'cross sectional' look at racial/ethnic marriage patterns involving Asian Americans. In other words, they only represent a 'snapshot' look using the latest data from 2010. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that such marriage patterns have evolved and changed over time. In order to get a closer look at recent trends, we can compare these numbers to data from the 2006 Census.

In comparing the 2010 data to the 2006 numbers, there are a few notable trends we can observe:

- Consistently, rates of marriages involving Asian Americans and whites have declined. Specifically, among those marriages in which both spouses are U.S.-raised, for five of the six Asian American ethnic groups, the rates of interracial marriage to a white spouse for both men and women have declined from 2006 to 2010. Among men/husbands, the largest decline involved Asian Indians and Koreans. For women/wives, the largest decline was for Filipinos and Koreans.
- The only exceptions to this trend of declining rates of white-Asian marriages were for Asian Indian women/wives (whose rate slightly increased from 2006 to 2010) and for both Vietnamese men/husbands and women/wives. For Vietnamese men, their rates of marriage to a white wife increased from 15.0% to 21.9% while for Vietnamese women, their rate for having a white husband jumped from 28.3% to 41.3%.
- Strangely, the sample population sizes for U.S.-raised married Vietnamese American men and women have declined from 2006 to 2010. For example, in 2006, there were about 40,500 and 45,200 U.S.-raised Vietnamese men and women respectively who were married. In 2010, those numbers declined to 26,795 and 34,998. Some possible explanations are that many who were married in 2006 got divorced, U.S.-raised Vietnamese men and women are delaying getting married, and/or many U.S.-raised Vietnamese have changed their ethnic identity to some other ethnic group, such as Chinese or Hmong.
- In contrast to the declining rates of Asian-white marriages, the rates for Pan-Asian/Other Asian marriages have increased notably from 2006 to 2010 (having a spouse of a different Asian ethnicity). This increase was almost universal across all six ethnic groups and for both genders (the only exception was for Filipino women). Among U.S.-raised men/husbands, Vietnamese Americans experienced the biggest increases in having a pan-Asian spouse -- from 5.8% in 2006 to 13.7% in 2010 for men and from 7.8% to12.2% for women/wives.

Now that we have a general picture of what the marriage rates are for all members of each of these six Asian American ethnic groups, on the next page we will take a more specific look at only those Asian Americans who grew up in the U.S. and are therefore most likely to have been socialized within the context of U.S. racial landscape and intergroup relations -- the U.S.-born and those who immigrated to the U.S. as children.

The Government

Getting Into the Arena Early

Even back in the late 1800s, Asians mobilized their resources to lobby for equal rights and access to economic, land, and occupational opportunities that they were being denied. Up through the 1920s, over 1,000 lawsuits were filed in state and federal courts by Asian Americans seeking to receive their proper legal rights. During this time, Asian Americans also organized boycotts, circulated petitions, conducted letter-writing campaigns, published newspapers and magazines promoting their cause, and formed coalitions with several non-Asian organizations.

These activities demonstrate that Asian Americans are not always quiet, modest, and reluctant to "cause trouble." The Asian American community has a clear sense of justice, as illustrated by their collective mobilization to fight for justice regarding Vincent Chin's murder. To that end, many Asian Americans have tried to participate in the political arena, in one form or another.



Figure 9.4.6: Buddha Statue. (CC BY-SA 2.0; William Cho via Flickr)

One of the easiest way to participate is to donate money to candidates or political parties. Such was the case back in 1996 when the Democratic Party was raising funds for President Clinton's reelection. As the nation soon learned, the Democrats were accused of illegally accepting money from foreigners. The media and soon Congressional Republicans identified these foreigners as Asian and accused them of trying to influence U.S. policy to the benefit of their Asian countries and businesses. They were accused of trying to "buy" influence with the President.

Thereafter, the Democrats were forced to return a substantial portion of those campaign contributions. Any donor who had an Asian name or who was suspected of having connections to Asian businesses overseas most likely had their contributions returned. Soon after that, Congressional committees began a series of high-profile and public investigations, centering on the now-famous "fundraising" event at a southern California Buddhist temple attended by Al Gore. Ultimately, several Asian Americans entered plea bargains or were convicted of channeling foreign contributions to the Democratic Party.

Stereotypes and Hypocrisy Go Hand in Hand

First we should realize that it is legal for permanent residents who are not yet U.S. citizens to donate money. Second, it is legal for U.S. subsidiaries of foreign corporations to donate money if they only donate funds that were earned in the U.S. Further, anyone can donate if the money goes to a political party rather than an individual politician. Finally, it's interesting why nobody ever accuses Canadian and European corporations of trying to buy influence with the U.S. government, even though their contributions are several times that from Asian companies.



Figure 9.4.7: "Arrival of U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao." (CC PDM 1.0; U.S. Embassy, The Hague)

But the most disturbing part of this episode was once again, the entire Asian American community was singled out and publicly vilified for the wrongdoings of just a handful of people. Many politicians and other social commentators were screaming that Asian foreigners were trying to "buy the white House." Asian Americans were again accused of being deceitful, un-American, and secretly loyal to only Asian countries and businesses.

It is one thing to punish individuals who have actually broken laws. But it is another to then generalize suspicions and stereotypes to an entire group of people. All Asian Americans are affected by this prejudice and racial profiling -- Republican or Democratic, liberal or conservative. Unfortunately, that was exactly what happened to Asian American in this episode. Sad to say, it will probably not be the last.

The Leaders and Trailblazers

Nonetheless, several Asian Americans past and present have defied these cultural and institutional barriers (including perceptions that Asians aren't capable of being leaders) and have successfully represented not just the Asian American community but their entire multi-racial constituency. The first national Asian American political leaders came from Hawai'i and were able to parlay their broad base of supporters to win seats in the U.S. House of Representative and Senate in the 1950s.

The first mainland Asian American to become a member of the U.S. House of Representatives was Dalip Singh Saund, a South Asian farmer (with a Ph.D. degree) from central California. The fist mainland Senator was the ultra-conservative S.I. Hayakawa from California, former President of San Francisco State University. More recently, the most prominent Asian American politicians include:

- Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawai'i
- Former U.S. Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Bill Lann Lee
- Governor of the state of Washington Gary Locke, the first Asian American governor outside of Hawai'i
- Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao
- Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta

Secretary Mineta is the only Democrat serving in President Bush's cabinet and was the first Asian American cabinet Secretary, appointed by former President Clinton to lead the Department of Commerce in 2000. In fact, President Bush has named the more Asian Americans to top federal positions than any other President.

However, Elaine Chao symbolizes a constant dilemma for the Asian American community. On the one hand, most of us are very proud that she is the first Asian American woman to be a cabinet Secretary. She hopefully represents the growing political power of the Asian American community and a sign that perhaps both political parties will not take us for granted any longer. On the other hand, she's a Republican whereas about two-thirds of all Asian Americans who are registered to vote are Democrats.

Therefore, many of us have to weigh the costs and benefits of supporting her as an Asian American versus our dislike for Republican policies and ideology. In the end, as Martin Luther King so eloquently stated, individuals must be judged on the content of their character and what they do -- not on the color of their skin or their ethnicity.

Having said that however, we must recognize and appreciate the diversity within the Asian American community. This includes differences in terms of ethnicity, age, educational attainment, income, languages and English proficiency, and in this case, political

views. In this sense, Secretary Chao, along with Secretary Mineta and all other Asian American politicians serving our country at all levels, deserve our thanks and support.

The Future is Now

These days, as the size of the Asian American population continues to grow, so do the number of Asian Americans entering the political arena and public service. The latest people such as California Democrat Mike Honda and Louisiana Republican Bobby Jindal, who recently lost a close race to be Governor of Louisiana. We are also witnessing many Asian Americans entering politics at the local level, especially in areas where Asian Americans constitute an increasingly large portion of the population. These include many suburban areas in southern and northern California.

On the national level, several Asian American organizations have recently formed a coalition to develop a comprehensive policy platform. Their goal is to encourage political leaders in general and presidential candidates in particular to treat Asian Americans with the same level of attention and respect that they do other racial/ethnic constituents, such as Blacks, Latinos, and Jews. As part of this effort, political action committees such as the 80-20 Initiative are trying to mobilize a powerful Asian American bloc vote by casting 80% of Asian American ballots for the candidate that they will endorse later in the year.

Interestingly, as Asian Americans become more common among civic and political leaders (similar to what's happening with many predominantly Latino/Hispanic areas around the country), they still face subtle charges that they are somehow "taking over," implying that they have some sinister or evil master plan for world domination. Ironically, many long-time white residents in these localities where Asian Americans are increasingly prominent now feel that they're being excluded from full civic participation and are made to feel like outsiders.

Many observers point out that these complaints are only inevitable and temporary frictions that occur when the balance of power begins to shift from one group to another. It will nonetheless be interesting to see how the landscape of political power at different levels in the U.S. evolves as our society continues to become increasing multicultural and racially/ethnically diverse .

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College).
- Asian Nation (Le) (CC BY-NC-ND) adapted with permission

Works Cited & Recommended for Further Reading

- Aoki, A., Lien, P. (Eds.). (2020). *Asian Pacific American Politics: Celebrating the Scholarly Legacy of Don T. Nakanishi*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Chin, M.M. (2020). *Stuck: Why Asian Americans Don't Reach the Top of the Corporate Ladder*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Chou, R.S. & Feagin, J.R. (2008.) *The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Constable, N. (2003). *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and "Mail Order" Marriages*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Fong, T.P. (2020). *The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority (3rd Ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hartlep, N.D. & Porfilio, B.J. (Eds.). (2015). *Killing the Model Minority Stereotype: Asian American Counterstories and Complicity*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Hsu, M.Y. (2017). *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Koshy, S. (2005). *Sexual Naturalization: Asian Americans and Miscegenation*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press
- Liu, B. (Ed.). (2017). *Solving the Mystery of the Model Minority: The Journey of Asian Americans in America*. New York, NY: Cognella Academic Publishing.
- Liu, M. & Lai, T. (2008). *The Snake Dance of Asian American Activism: Community, Vision, and Power*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Koshy, S. (2005). *Sexual Naturalization: Asian Americans and Miscegenation*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press
- Maeda, D.J. (2011). *Rethinking the Asian American Movement*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nemoto, K. (2009). *Racing Romance: Love, Power, and Desire Among Asian American/White Couples*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Okamoto, D.G. (2014). *Redefining Race: Asian American Panethnicity and Shifting Ethnic Boundaries*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Osuji, C.K. (2019). *Boundaries of Love: Interracial Marriage and the Meaning of Race*. New York, NY: NYU Press.

- Pascoe, P. (2010). *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Prasso, S. (2010). *The Asian Mystique: Dragon Ladies, Geisha Girls, and Our Fantasies of the Exotic Orient*. New York, NY: Public Affairs Publishing.
- Shimizu, C. (2007). *The Hypersexuality of Race: Performing Asian/American Women on Screen and Scene*. Duke University Press.
- Thai, H.C. (2008). *For Better or For Worse: Vietnamese International Marriages in the New Global Economy*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Ty, E. (2017). *Asianfail: Narratives of Disenchantment and the Model Minority*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Wong, E.L. (2015). *Racial Reconstruction: Black Inclusion, Chinese Exclusion, and the Fictions of Citizenship*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Wong, J., Ramakrishnan, S.K., Lee, T., & Junn, J. (2011). *Asian American Political Participation: Emerging Constituents and Their Political Identities*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Wu, C. (2018). *Sticky Rice: A Politics of Intraracial Desire*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Wu, E. (2013). *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

This page titled 9.4: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **9.4: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

9.5: Social Change and Resistance

AAPI Activism

Though the model minority stereotype implies that Asian Americans are non-confrontational and have not struggled against inequality and oppression, there is a long history of activism amongst Asian American communities. One pattern noted earlier is that of the formation of Asian American ethnic enclaves. These became the central gathering spaces for Asian American activists in the 1960s. Following World War II, Asian American enclaves, which are predominantly near urban centers, faced displacement by corporate interests and local governments through the enactment of "redevelopment zones." Not unlike the contemporary struggles against **gentrification** (the process of changing a neighborhood to become more affluent and white) happening in predominantly communities of color today, local governments exercised eminent domain which resulted in the forcing out of residents and small businesses to make way for capital investment, especially in downtown areas in big cities across the country such as San Francisco, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Los Angeles. This displacement of the poor, elderly, and working class immigrants helped give rise to the Asian American Movement (AAM) (Liu & Geron, 2008). Though the AAM would become most known for its opposition to the Vietnam War, its anti-imperialist advocacy, and organizing for racial justice to support other communities of color, the first issues it organized around related to the needs of the enclaves' working class residents such as the implementation of service programs and the protection of affordable housing. As Liu & Geron note, "In casting much of its lot with the interests of these communities and the residential population of workers, shopkeepers, street youth, and elderly, the Asian American Movement built, educated, and significantly defined itself" (2008, p. 23).

Saving the I-Hotel

One significant campaign against the dispersal and destruction of an Asian American ethnic enclave was the campaign to save the International Hotel in the Manilatown District of San Francisco. In the 1960s as the Financial District expanded, the Manilatown, which was home to many Filipino farm workers, merchant marines and service workers, was threatened by "higher use" development. The International Hotel, which housed mostly elderly Filipino and Chinese residents, was slated to be demolished in order to build a multi-level parking lot. What ensued was a nine-year long anti-eviction campaign supported by widespread student and community grassroots support (Dong, 2010). Such groups included affordable housing advocates, gay and lesbian activists, trade unions, women, and other progressive groups (Soloman, 1998). After initial efforts to delay the eviction, the building which already functioned as a de facto community center expanded to include a flourishing movement center for local grassroots organizations, arts and cultural groups, and a bookstore. In addition to preventing evictions, The International Hotel Tenants Association and its allies demanded the preservation of low-cost housing (Liu & Geron, 2008). In 1977, the campaign culminated in an eviction that enlisted "the deployment of over 400 riot police, mounted patrols, anti-sniper units and fire ladder trucks in a 3:00 AM eviction raid" (Dong, 2010, p. 5). Following the eviction and demolition in 1979, thanks to the activists efforts, Mayor Dianne Feinstein established the International Hotel Citizens Advisory Committee (IHCAC) to ensure that low-cost housing would be built on-site. Check out this interview with the IHCAC from 2016 to learn more about this story.

Pan-Asianism & Black Power

Beyond the enclave-based organizing efforts, what differentiated the AAM from previous Asian American activists was its emphasis on **pan-Asianism** which is an ideology that promotes the political and economic unity and cooperation of Asian peoples. In fact, one of AAM's notable achievements is the creation of the term "Asian American" which includes the myriad Asian ethnic groups who have migrated to the United States. While the recognition of Asian Americans as a group has its value for political organizing efforts and as a label of self-determination, as has been discussed in other parts of this chapter, it can also reinforce the stereotype that all Asians are the same. Though the identity of "Asian American" is rarely self-ascribed (people tend to say they are "Japanese American," "Korean American," "Thai," etc.) the term, coined by Berkeley students Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee, was originally inspired by the Black Power Movement and as a way to unite Japanese, Chinese and Filipino American students on campus under the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) formed in 1968 (Maeda, 2016). The pan-Asian ideology also included a transnational solidarity with people of color around the world impacted by U.S. neo-imperialism. Similarly, on the East Coast, two leftist Nisei (second-generation Japanese) women, Kazu Iijima and Minn Masuda, saw the anti-racist and anti-imperialist values promoted by Black Power as the antidote to the pro-assimilationist sentiment that developed in the Japanese American community following their experiences with being interned in concentration camps during World War II (Maeda, 2016).



Figure **9.5.1**: An issue of The Black Panther. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Steve Rhodes via Flickr)

Asian Women's Organizing

Another similarity between the Black Power and the AAM was the sidelining of women's issues and the lack of women in leadership positions. Though the fundamental concerns of social justice, equity and human rights are just as much women's issues as they are men's issues, the patriarchal cultural dynamics often pushed Asian women's concerns to auxiliary groups. The change in immigration laws facilitated the migration of highly educated and affluent Asian immigrants after 1965 also gave rise to the formation of large, primarily middle-class East Asian women's organizations. These groups received more support from conservative and mainstream institutions since they focused on education and service projects rather than the radical, leftist organizing found in the AAM. This distinction contributed to the perpetuation of the model minority myth by implying that, "there was a 'good' minority in tacit opposition to the 'bad' minorities -- African Americans and Latinos" (Shah, 1997).

Not only were Asian women sidelined in the AAM, but they were have also been marginalized in the women's movement. Mitsuye Yamada, author of “Asian Pacific American Women and Feminism,” writes about the disappointment and invisibility many Asian Pacific American women have felt towards the women’s movement. Issues important to Euro American feminists have not always included issues important to and perspectives of Asian Pacific American women. Yamada examines that women of color are often made to feel they have to choose between ethnicity and gender, and she argues the two are not at war with each other, so Asian Pacific American women should not have to choose one or the other. Barbara Ryan, author of Identity Politics in the Women's Movement, quotes Yamada:

> Asian Pacific American women will not speak out to say what we have on our minds until we feel secure within ourselves that this is our home too, and until our white sisters indicate by their actions that they want to join us in our struggle because it is theirs also...We need to raise our voices a little more, even as they say to us ‘This is so uncharacteristic of you.’ To fully recognize our own invisibility is to finally be on the path towards visibility.

Millenial Amanda Nguyen, a civil rights activist and founder of RISE, a non-profit organization protecting the rights of sexual assault victims, has raised her voice to call attention to and make visible the violence against the AAPI community. Nguyen exercised her agency through her Instagram social media post in February 2021 which attracted more than 3 million views within 24 hours. In her post, she called out the anti-Asian backlash and increase of hate crimes (150% increase nationwide!) affecting AAPI communities in the U.S in 2020 and 2021, which has been virtually ignored by the mainstream press. In turn, Nguyen's activism has caused the mainstream media to cover Nguyen's plea for voices and issues of the AAPI community to be raised.



Video 9.5.2: Activist Amanda Nguyen on recent spike in anti-Asian hate crimes: "We are dying to be heard." (Close-captioning and other settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; CBS News via CBS News.com)

Asian American Activism Today

As more recent immigration laws have again added complexity to the Asian American population by bringing less educated, working class or poor Asian immigrants to the U.S., we have also seen the rise of neoliberal globalization policies such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) that favor corporate interests and deregulation. These changes mean that those new migrants and the majority of Asian workers globally, especially women, are laboring under substandard working conditions and being compelled to compete for the most debasing, lowest-paying jobs. This state of affairs has mobilized activists in a reinvigorated labor movement that is international and spans industries. A new generation of activists that are putting poor immigrant and refugee Asian women at the forefront of organizing efforts with a global and intersectional lens is rising up.

One such organization is Khmer Girls in Action (KGA), which is located in central Long Beach, California which is home to the largest population of Cambodians outside of Southeast Asia. KGA's mission is, "to build a progressive and sustainable Long Beach community that works for gender, racial and economic justice led by Southeast Asian young women" (Khmer Girls in Action). This youth-led organization partners with other community groups on campaigns such as Long Beach Invest in Youth to survey residents in order to identify what resources and programs are needed for their community to thrive. Through their campaign efforts, they highlighted the disparities in local public spending on youth programs compared to youth arrests ($204 to $10,500 respectively). Though their focus is to support the Cambodian community, the coalitions they form with other groups and the issues they work on undoubtedly serve to benefit other marginalized communities as well.

Another organization that KGA has partnered with is the Filipino Migrant Center which serves the South Bay cities of California. According to their mission statement, they are "are a Filipino immigrant-led organization who aims to educate, organize, and mobilize low-income, working class Filipino families" (Filipino Migrant Center). One of their notable campaigns is the "Stop Labor Trafficking! Stop Forced Migration!" campaign. According to the Philippine Department of Labor (2015), over 6,092 Filipinos leave the Philippines everyday in search of work in over 200 countries. The Filipino Migrant Center has successfully assisted over 50 Filipino migrant workers who faced abusive and exploitative conditions revealing the international impact of Asian and Pacific Islander activism in the United States. As unfettered global and racial capitalism rages on, such organizations will continue to serve a vital role in protecting workers both in the United States and abroad.

Did you know?

Many native Hawaiians resist being labeled "American" as they feel their islands were stolen from them and that the overthrow of the last Hawaiian ruler Queen Lili'uokalani and the ensuing annexation were illegal. There is an ongoing fight for Hawaiian sovereignty, self-determination, and self-governance. Sovereignty advocates have attributed problems plaguing native communities including homelessness,

poverty, economic marginalization, and the erosion of native traditions to the lack of native governance and political self-determination (Trask, 2000).



Video 9.5.3: "Act of War - The Overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation" (Close-captioning and other settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; SQUEEZZIE #RAKOUM MHA BENI SAF via YouTube)

Key Takeaways

- Asian Americans are diverse and all have different push and pull factors that brought them to the United States
- Pacific Islanders are indigenous to their homelands and can be understood as colonized peoples.
- Asian Americans have often formed ethnic enclaves which provide economic opportunities and entry points to U.S. society for immigrants.
- The U.S. has a long history of discrimination and othering Asian Americans as the "yellow peril" and that continues to be reflected in COVID-19 related hate crimes.
- The model minority myth is a stereotype and is reductive of the diverse experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- Religious affiliation has helped immigrant Asian Americans adjust to life in the U.S.
- LGBTQ+ Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face double minority status and can feel isolated in their experience.
- Many Asian Americans who arrived as refugees continue to rely on public assistance, highlighting the need to recognize the diversity in Asian American experiences.
- Asian Americans have some of the highest rates of marrying someone else outside of their own ethnic group among racial/ethnic minorities.
- There is a long history of Asian American and Pacific Islander resistance to oppression in and by the U.S. as well as movements of multiracial solidarity.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Gutierrez, Erika. (Santiago Canyon College)

Works Cited

- Dong, H. (2010). *International Hotels Final Victory:* International Hotel Senior Housing, Inc.
- Filipino Migration Center. (n.d.). *Stop Labor Trafficking! End forced migration!*
- Khmer Girls in Action. (2020). *Campaigns.*
- Liu, M., & Geron, K. (2008). Changing neighborhood: ethnic enclaves and the struggle for social justice. *Social Justice*, *35*(2), 18–35.
- Maeda, D. (2016). The Asian American movement. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History.*
- Ryan, B. (2001). *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement.* New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Shah, S. (Ed.). (1999). *Dragon Ladies: Asian American Feminists Breathe Fire.* Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Solomon, L. (1998). "No evictions: we won't move!" the struggle to save the i-hotel. *Roots of Justice: Stories of Organizing in Communities of Color.* Berkeley, CA: Chardon Press: 93-104.
- Trask, H. (March 2000). The struggle for hawaiian sovereignty - introduction. *Cultural Survival.* 24(1).

This page titled 9.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **9.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: Middle Eastern Americans

10.1: History and Demographics

10.2: Intergroup Relations

10.3: Intersectionality

10.4: Social Institutions

10.5: Social Change and Resistance

This page titled 10: Middle Eastern Americans is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

10.1: History and Demographics

Defining the Middle East

In 1902 the term "Middle East" was coined in order to designate the area residing between Egypt and Singapore, comprising major access points to Asia, such as the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, etc. West Asia, where most of the countries of the Middle East reside, used to be called the "Near East," but the newer term Middle East" came into usage in the early part of the 20th century.

The term "Middle East" reflects a European worldview, originally imposed on the Middle East through colonization. This is why, if you decide to study the Middle East further or visit there, you may encounter conflicting geographical definitions. Often the term "Middle East" is employed, while at the same time some may choose to speak about their country as part of "West Asia," "North Africa," or even "Europe" (in the case of Turkey).

The term "Middle Eastern" has been used as an umbrella term to encompass the large numbers of people in the region who are in fact incredibly diverse. This diversity includes race, language (Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew), culture (Arab, Persian, Israeli, Turkish) and religion (Muslim, Jewish, Christian). The goal of this chapter is to focus on the unique and immense diversity of the groups of the region, rather than succumb to the temptation of a single broad generalization.



Figure **10.1.1**: The Middle East, 1993. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Terri L Beal via Flickr)

Nation-States and Stateless Nations

In the Middle East, there were always concepts of cultural community, somewhat synonymous with nation, or people, but national identities were not defined by a particular state. Let's take an example from Arabic speaking communities of the Middle East. A nation, or a people, is usually referred to as qawm in Arabic. Thus, qawmia is usually how the word nationalism is translated.

Likewise, the word umma, which means community and is used by Muslims to refer to their global community, is also sometimes translated as "nation." Traditionally, cultural communities were also based on a particular religious tradition. National identity is therefore a complicated topic in the context of the Middle East. For the sake of this discussion, however, it is important to know that various cultural communities, whether they called themselves qawm or umum (plural for umma), came to consider themselves nations. At the same time, many of those, did not possess a state of their own, and some continue to be without a state. They are thus "stateless nations."

Examples of stateless nations:

- The Kurds currently reside in Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey, but they have not established an internationally-recognized state based on their national identity.
- The Jews were a stateless nation until 1948 when they declared Israel a state, which immediately gained recognition from the U.S., followed by the rest of the world.

- Palestinians are currently members of a stateless nation, although the sovereignty of Palestine has been recognized by 135 member countries of the U.N. The term "State of Palestine" is only used officially by Sweden.

In the Middle East, the formation of nation-states created numerous marginalized groups in each country, whose cultural, linguistic or religious identity doesn't match with the official nationality of the country. The examples are too numerous to list. The key aspect to be aware of is that the identity of the most powerful group of the country – which is usually also the majority group but not always – does not represent the entire population. For example in Iran the majority identity is Farsi-speaking, Shi'i Muslim. There are numerous Kurdish, Arab, Azeri, Assyrian, Jewish, Iranians, among others, and each may be speakers of a different language, and/or adherents to a different religious tradition.

Persian Americans

Iranian American is used interchangeably with Persian American, partly due to the fact that, in the Western world, Iran was known as "Persia." Most Iranian Americans arrived in the United States after 1979, as a result of the Iranian Revolution and the fall of the Persian monarchy, with over 40% settling in California, specifically Los Angeles. Unable to return to Iran, they have created many distinct ethnic enclaves, such as the Los Angeles Tehrangeles community. Today, the United States contains the highest number of Iranians outside of Iran.

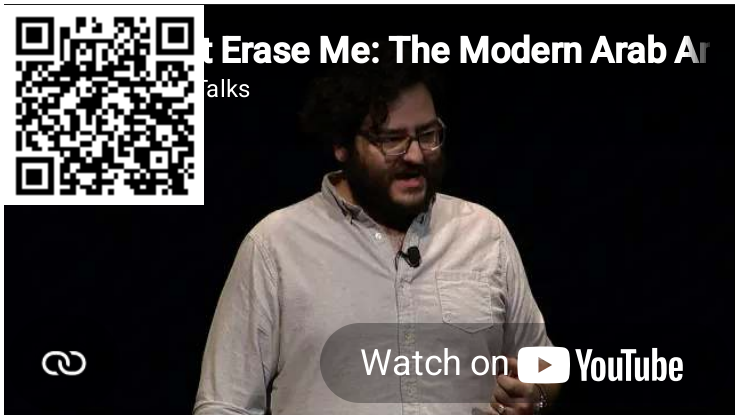


Figure **10.1.2**: "I am a Persian Girl!" (CC BY 2.0; Hamed Saber via Flickr)

There is a tendency among Iranian Americans to categorize themselves as "Persian" rather than "Iranian", mainly to dissociate themselves from the Islamic regime of Iran which has been in charge since the 1979 Revolution, and also to distinguish themselves as being of Persian ethnicity, which comprise about 65% of Iran's population. While the majority of Iranian Americans come from Persian backgrounds, there is a significant number of non Persian Iranians such as Azeris and Kurds within the Iranian American community, leading some scholars to believe that the label "Iranian" is more inclusive, since the label "Persian" excludes non Persian minorities.

Arab Americans

If ever a category was hard to define, the various groups lumped under the name "Arab American" is it. After all, Latinx or Asian Americans are so designated because of their countries of origin. But for Arab Americans, their country of origin—Arabia—has not existed for centuries. In addition, Arab Americans represent all religious practices, despite the stereotype that all Arabic people practice Islam. As Myers (2007) asserts, not all Arabs are Muslim, and not all Muslims are Arab, complicating the stereotype of what it means to be an Arab American.



Video **10.1.3**: Don't Erase Me: The Modern Arab American. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; TEDx Talks via YouTube)

Geographically, the Arab region is made up of the Middle East and parts of northern Africa. People whose ancestry can be traced to the area or who primarily speak Arabic may consider themselves to be Arab. There are 22 Arab Nations including: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

The first Arab immigrants came to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were predominantly Syrian, Lebanese, and Jordanian Christians, and they came to escape persecution and to make a better life. These early immigrants and their descendants, who were more likely to think of themselves as Syrian or Lebanese than Arab, represent almost half of the Arab American population today (Myers, 2007). Restrictive immigration policies from the 1920s until 1965 curtailed all immigration, but Arab immigration since 1965 has been steady. Immigrants from this time period have been more likely to be Muslim and more highly educated, escaping political unrest and looking for better opportunities. The Arab American community in the U.S. is concentrated in five regions: the Detroit/Dearborn area, Los Angeles, New York/New Jersey, Chicago, and Washington D.C., but segments of the population live in all 50 states.

According to the best estimates of the U.S. Census Bureau, the Arabic population in the United States grew from 850,000 in 1990 to 1.2 million in 2000, an increase of .07% (Asi & Beaulieu, 2013). By some estimates, there are as many as 3 million people in the United States today with Arab ancestry. Among those that identify as Arab American, the largest group is from Lebanon, followed by Egypt, Syria, and Palestine.

Muslim Americans

Islam has approximately 1.7 billion followers worldwide, and is the second largest religion in the world after Christianity. Most Muslims belong to one of two denominations: Sunni (87–90%) or Shia (10-13%). Muslims make up 24% of the world's population, compared to 33% for Christianity (Pew Templeton 2015). About 13% of Muslims live in Indonesia, the largest Muslim-majority country; 31% of Muslims live in South Asia, the largest population of Muslims in the world; 20% inhabit the Middle East–North Africa region, where it is the dominant religion; and 15% reside in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sizeable Muslim communities are also found in the Americas, the Caucasus, Central Asia, China, Europe, Mainland Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and Russia.

Islam is monotheistic religion and it follows the teaching of the prophet Muhammad, born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in 570 C.E. Muhammad is seen only as a prophet, not as a divine being, and he is believed to be the messenger of Allah (God), who is divine. The followers of Islam, whose U.S. population is projected to double in the next twenty years (Pew Research Forum, 2011), are called Muslims.

Islam means "peace" and "submission." The sacred text for Muslims is the Qur'an (or Koran). As with Christianity's Old Testament, many of the Qur'an stories are shared with the Jewish faith. Divisions exist within Islam, but all Muslims are guided by five beliefs or practices, often called "pillars:" 1) Allah is the only god, and Muhammad is his prophet, 2) daily prayer, 3) helping those in poverty, 4) fasting as a spiritual practice, and 5) pilgrimage to the holy center of Mecca.

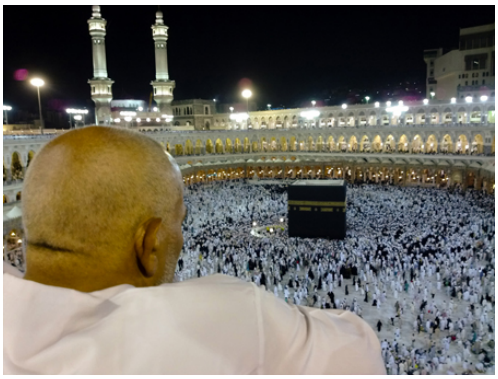


Figure **10.1.4**: A cornerstone of Muslim practice is journeying to the religion's most sacred place, Mecca. (CC BY-SA; Raeky via Flickr)

In the United States, Muslim Americans are a very diverse group that represent different racial and ethnic backgrounds. It is estimated that the Muslim population in the United States is as follows:

- 20-42% African American
- 24-33% South Asian (Indonesian, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani)
- 12-32% Arab
- 15-22% "other" (Iranian, Turkish and white and Hispanic converts)

African Americans who embrace Islam represent a large segment of the Muslim community in the United States. There are about 1 million Black American Muslims in the U.S., and they are thought to account for 90% of all converts to Islam in the country (Pew Research Center 2015).

Jewish Americans

After their Exodus from Egypt in the thirteenth century B.C.E., Jews, a nomadic society, became monotheistic, worshipping only one God. The Jews' covenant, or promise of a special relationship with Yahweh (God), is an important element of Judaism, and their sacred text is the Torah, which Christians also follow as the first five books of the Bible. Talmud refers to a collection of sacred Jewish oral interpretation of the Torah. Jews emphasize moral behavior and action in this world as opposed to beliefs or personal salvation in the next world. With between 14.5 and 17.4 million adherents worldwide, Judaism is the tenth largest religion in the world.

Today, the largest Jewish religious movements are Orthodox Judaism (Haredi Judaism and Modern Orthodox Judaism), Conservative Judaism, and Reform Judaism. Major sources of difference between these groups include their approaches to Jewish law, the authority of the Rabbinic tradition, and the significance of the State of Israel. There is a wide spectrum of devotion, practice, and even appearance within Judaism, but the most visible are Orthodox Jews because they are recognized by their outward appearance.

Orthodox men are expected to wear a ritual fringe called Tzitzit, and the donning of a head-covering for males at all times is a well-known attribute distinguishing Orthodox Jews. Many men grow beards, and Haredi men wear Black hats with a skullcap underneath and suits. Modern Orthodox Jews are sometimes indistinguishable in their dress from general society, although they, too, wear kippahs and tzitzit; additionally, on Shabbat, Modern Orthodox men wear suits (or at least a dress shirt) and dress pants, while women wear fancier dresses or blouses.



Figure **10.1.5**; Satmar Family, Brooklyn. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; johnwilliamsphd via Flickr)

What exactly makes someone Jewish? Is it the Jewish faith? Although Jewish religious practices and beliefs continue to be very important, a large number of adult Jews today do not regularly practice the Jewish religion. Is it physical features? Although some Jews can be distinguished by physical features, Jews today come from all parts of the world and thus can have tremendous variation in appearance. Is it culture? Jews share important cultural traits, however cultural identity can be very different from one Jew to the next as degrees of cultural assimilation vary. The Israeli Law of Return specifically defines who is Jewish and extends Israeli citizenship to all Jews. Jews are defined as "any person who has at least one Jewish grandparent or whose spouse has at least one Jewish grandparent." Israeli law also recognizes all converts to the Jewish faith. Thus, the question of whether the Jewish people are a race, religion or ethnic group, is not one that is easily resolved.

The largest migration of Jews to the United States occurred at the end of the nineteenth century. This was synonymous with the great European migration to the United States. European immigration, particularly from Eastern Europe, was halted as a result of immigration laws in the 1920s. However, Jewish migration to the United States began to rise again beginning around 1933. At this time, Jews arriving to the United States were not only immigrants, they were refugees, attempting to escape the tyranny of the Third Reich in Europe. The most distinctive feature of the Jewish population in the United States today is its concentration in three areas: New York City, Los Angeles, and South Florida. These three areas account for 60 percent of the nation's entire Jewish population. In these areas, many public schools observe major Jewish holidays including Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, and Passover.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Introduction to Sociology (Lumen) (CC By 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Keys to Understanding the Middle East (Payind & McClimans) (CC BY-SA 4.0)
- Orthodox Judaism (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Iranian Americans (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Asi, M. & Beaulieu, D. (2013). Arab households in the united states: 2006–2010. *U.S. Census Bureau*.
- Myers, J.P. (2007). *Dominant-Minority Relations in America*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Pew Research Center. (2015, May 12). *America's Changing Religious Landscape.*
- Pew Research Center. (2011, January 27). *The Future of the Global Muslim Population*. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.
- Pew Research Center. (2015, April 2). *The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050*. Washington DC: Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures.

This page titled 10.1: History and Demographics is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **10.1: History and Demographics** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

10.2: Intergroup Relations

Intergroup Consequences

A variety of intergroup consequences can be used to explain the experiences of Middle Eastern Americans. At the inhumane extreme, **genocide** (the systematic killing of an entire people) explains the Holocaust. Between 1941 and 1945, across German-occupied Europe, Nazi Germany, and its collaborators systematically murdered some six million Jews, around two-thirds of Europe's Jewish population. The murders were carried out through mass shootings, extermination through work in concentration camps, and gas chambers. This genocide led many to flee as refugees to the United States; however, thousands of Jews fleeing the horrors of the Nazi regime were denied asylum as they were feared to be Nazi spies (Gross, 2015).

Patterns of Intergroup Relations: Middle Eastern Americans

- **Extermination/Genocide:** The deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation (e.g. Holocaust).
- **Expulsion/Population Transfer:** The dominant group expels the marginalized group (e.g. Syrian refugees).
- **Segregation:** The dominant group structures physical, unequal separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. detainment after 9-11).
- **Separatism:** The marginalized group desires physical separation of two groups in residence, workplace & social functions (e.g. Quranic schools).
- **Fusion/Amalgamation:** Race-ethnic groups combine to form a new group (e.g. intermarriage).
- **Assimilation:** The process by which a marginalized individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant group (e.g. Judaization).
- **Pluralism/Multiculturalism:** Various race-ethnic groups in a society have mutual respect for one another, without prejudice or discrimination (e.g. Muslims elected to Congress).

The mass **expulsion** (when the dominant group expels the marginalized group) of Jews during WWII was followed many decades later by another Middle Eastern group, Syrians, who fled the Syrian Civil War. In the last five years, the pre-war population of the Syrian Arab Republic was estimated at 22 million; of that number, the United Nations identified 13.5 million as displaced persons, requiring humanitarian assistance. Of these, since the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, more than six million were internally displaced, and around five million had crossed into other countries. While not a world leader in accepting Syrian refugees, the U.S. did accept 16,218 Syrian refugees by 2016. In 2017, President Donald Trump signed an executive order suspending any further resettlement of Syrian refugees to the U.S. indefinitely until further notice due to security concerns.

Segregation (physical separation of a marginalized group from the dominant group) is yet another intergroup consequence that can be used to understand the experience of some Middle Easterners, particularly Arab and Muslim American men post 9-11. As a result of the 2001 terrorist attack, as David Cole describes below, the U.S. government rounded up more than 5,000 foreign nationals from Middle Eastern countries, many of whom were deported or detained for months. Similar to the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII, these individuals were rounded up merely because of "guilt by association," as being foreigners "associated with" the terrorist act - but the overwhelming majority actually had no proven association to the attacks.



Video 10.2.1: David Cole - Enemy Aliens & Constitutional Freedoms. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; pdxjustice Media Productions via YouTube)

As quoted in an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) press release:

> Immigrants weren't the enemy...But, the war on terror quickly became a war on immigrants. The Inspector General's findings confirm our long-held view that civil liberties and the rights of immigrants were trampled in the aftermath of 9/11.

Another intergroup consequence of relevance is **separatism**, physical separation of race-ethnic groups as desired by a marginalized group, in the case of schooling. Some communities offer a private schooling experience that caters to the needs of Muslim or Jewish families and their children. Quranic or Sunday schools or schools for Black Muslims offer specific religious instruction to those attending mosque schools or as a supplement for children who attend public schools (Schaefer, 2019). Similarly, Hebrew school can be either an educational regimen separate from secular education similar to the Christian Sunday school, education focusing on topics of Jewish history and learning the Hebrew language, or a primary, secondary or college level educational institution where some or all of the classes are taught in Hebrew.

With the increasing practice of intermarriage, Jews marrying non-Jews, **fusion** has become a norm in the 21st century. In the 1970s, more than 64% of Jews married other Jews (Schaefer, 2019). From 2000 to 2013, that percentage dropped to 42% (ibid). Hence, in contemporary society, intermarriage is common practice. For some, this represents a threat to the faith of Judaism. For others, this represents an opportunity to be raised as bi-cultural - practicing both Hanukkah and Christmas, speaking Hebrew and English. This can also feed into **assimilation**, conforming to the norms of dominant culture, which lessens, or in some cases, eliminates ties to one's ethnic background. **Judaization** is the "lessening importance of Judaism as a religion and the substitution of cultural traditions as the ties that bind Jews" (Schaefer, 2019, p. 304).

Finally, **pluralism**, exemplified by mutual respect and appreciation for diverse cultures, may be understood to relate to Middle Easterners by considering ethnic enclaves and officials elected to office. Consider New York City. Several Middle Eastern ethnic groups have immigrated to New York and formed several neighborhoods with a high concentration of people who are of Arab descent. Between the 1870s and the 1920s, the first wave of Arab immigrants brought mostly Syrian and Lebanese people to New York City, the majority of them being Christian. There are now around 160,000 Arabic people in New York City and more than 480,000 in New York State. According to the Arab American Institute the population of people who identify themselves as Arab, grew by 23% between 2000 and 2008. New York today has the second largest number of Jews in a metropolitan area, behind Tel Aviv (in Israel). Borough Park, Brooklyn is one of the largest Orthodox Jewish communities in the world.

A growing number of Muslims have been elected to political office. A Somali-born woman, Ilhan Omar has served as the U.S. Representatives for Minnesota's 5th congressional district since 2019. She is also one of the first two Muslim women (along with Rashida Tlaib) to serve in Congress. A member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Omar has advocated for a living wage, affordable housing, universal healthcare, student loan debt forgiveness, protection of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals,

abolition of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender rights. However, she is not well received by pro-Israel Jewish groups, as she has frequently denounced Israel's occupied Palestinian territories; she has been accused of anti-semitic remarks, for which she has apologized.



Figure **10.2.2**: Ilhan Omar, official portrait, 116th Congress. (CC PDM 1.0; Kristie Boyd via Wikimedia)

Islamophobia

Let us turn to a stark contrast to pluralism. Relations between Muslim and Arab Americans and the dominant majority group have been marked by mistrust, misinformation, and deeply entrenched beliefs. Helen Samhan of the Arab American Institute suggests that Arab-Israeli conflicts in the 1970s contributed significantly to cultural and political anti-Arab sentiment in the United States (2001). The United States has historically supported the state of Israel, while some Middle Eastern countries deny the existence of the Israeli state. Disputes over these issues have involved Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. A more detailed discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is provided later in the chapter.

As is often the case with stereotyping and prejudice, the actions of extremists come to define the entire group, regardless of the fact that most U.S. citizens with ties to the Middle Eastern community condemn terrorist actions, as do most inhabitants of the Middle East. Would it be fair to judge all Catholics by the events of the Inquisition? Of course, the United States was deeply affected by the events of September 11, 2001. This event has left a deep scar on the American psyche, and it has fortified anti-Arab sentiment for a large percentage of Americans. In the first month after 9/11, hundreds of hate crimes were perpetrated against people who looked like they might be of Arab descent.





Figure 10.2.3 and Figure 10.2.4: The proposed Park51 Muslim Community Center generated heated controversy due to its close proximity to Ground Zero. In these photos, people march in protest against the center, while counter-protesters demonstrate their support. (CC BY 2.0; Photos (a) and (b); David Shankbone via Wikimedia)

Arab Americans are still victims of racism and prejudice. Racial profiling has proceeded against Arab Americans as a matter of course since 9/11. Particularly when engaged in air travel, being young and Arab-looking is enough to warrant a special search or detainment. This **Islamophobia** (irrational fear of or hatred against Muslims) does not show signs of abating. A recent survey of 5,000 respondents showed that many do not consider Muslims to be sufficiently "American," with 67% of Democrats and only 36% of Republicans agreeing with the statement that "Muslim Americans want to fit in as American citizens."

Anti-Semitism

For centuries, the Jewish people have struggled to overcome hatred. Religious observances such as passover, Hanukkah and Purim commemorate some of these struggles. **Anti-Semitism** (anti Jewish prejudice and discrimination) has existed since before Christianity and continues to exist today. The most horrific example of this was the Holocaust. The Holocaust was the state sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of Jews by Nazi Germany. As a result, two-thirds of the Jewish population in Europe was killed.

The **Anti-Defamation League** (ADL), founded in 1913, publishes an annual report that details incidents of anti-Semitism in the United States. In 2018, the ADL recorded 1,879 anti-Semitic incidents. These incidents included: vandalism, graffiti in the form of swastikas or anti Jewish sentiments, harassment, assault and murder. Some of these incidents were carried out by neo-nazis or skinheads, who are known to perpetuate anti Semitic ideologies. Recent attacks on synagogues in the United States (Pittsburgh, PA in 2018 and Poway, CA in 2019 are just two recent examples) have reminded people all over the world of the dangers of anti-Semitism.



Figure 10.2.6: Vigil against anti-Semitic graffiti in Hampstead, London 30th December 2019. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Steven Eason via Flickr)

Muslim and Jewish Relations: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Throughout history, few groups have been so closely linked as Muslims and Jews. Tension and conflict among these groups have arisen throughout history as a result of religious differences, political differences, and conflict over land and natural resources. Today, the most contentious example of this conflict is represented in the continuing struggle between Israel and Palestine. Jews and Muslims both claim a religious tie to the land in Israel and Palestine, not only because both religions had major events take place there and are deeply rooted in the area, but because both claim that they were promised the land by God, through Abraham. Abraham had more than one son, however, and descendants from Isaac were predominantly Jewish and descendants from Ishmael became predominantly Muslim.

In the early 20th century, Jews fleeing persecution in Europe wanted to establish a national homeland in what was an Arab and Muslim majority territory. The Arabs resisted, seeing the land as rightfully theirs. Israel and the surrounding Arab nations fought several wars over the territory. The 1967 war left Israel in control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, two territories that are home to large Palestinian populations. One approach to resolving the conflict would establish Palestine as an independent state in Gaza and most of the West Bank, leaving the rest of the land to Israel. Another approach would give all of the land to either Israel or Palestine. The conflict over who gets what land and how it's controlled is one that remains today.

Although the United States has historically been a strong supporter of Israel, the U.S. government has traditionally supported advancing a solution that would reconcile the claims of the two parties: Israel and Palestine. Multiple administrations have attempted to initiate a process that would result in two distinct states. However, many critics have claimed that the potential for this outcome has diminished as a result of President Trump's policies.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Introduction to Sociology (Lumen) (CC By 4.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- Hebrew School (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- The Holocaust (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Ilhan Omar (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- New York City Ethnic Enclaves (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- American Civil Liberties Union. (2003, June). Internal justice department report details 9/11 detainees' plight; Arab, Muslim, South Asian immigrant languished in detention for months. *American Civil Liberties Union.*
- Gross, D. (2015, November 18). The U.S. government turned away thousands of Jewish refugees, fearing that they were nazi spies. *Smithsonian Magazine*.
- Samhan, H.H. (2001). Who are Arab Americans? *Arab American Institute Foundation.*
- Schaefer, R.T. (2019). *Racial and Ethnic Groups.* 15th ed. New York, NY: Pearson.

This page titled 10.2: Intergroup Relations is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **10.2: Intergroup Relations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

10.3: Intersectionality

Muslim Women and Hijab

The role of women in the Muslim community has received a good amount of attention. One such area of focused attention is in standards of dress. Islam stresses that women should be protected and must present themselves in a modest way while in public. The prophet Muhammad indicated that the female body should be covered with loose fitting clothing with the exception of the face, hands, and feet. **Hijab** refers to garments that allow women to adhere to the guidelines of modest dress. Hijab may include head or face covering as well as other garments worn to maintain modesty.



Figure **10.3.1**: "Cairo Egypt Burka - Burqa" (CC BY 2.0; Jay Galvin via Flickr)

If and how women cover themselves varies from person to person, from country to country and among various religious sects. Some Muslim women simply do not practice hijab. Some wear hijabs that loosely cover their hair and neck. Other women may wear very full coverings that conceal almost their entire bodies. These coverings include **niqab** (the face veil), **chador** (a full-body covering that leaves the face exposed), and **burqa** (a loose-fitting garment which covers the woman from head to toe and covers her face with a mesh weave that enables her to see).

Some in western societies view hijab as a symbol of oppression, a means for making women fade into the background of society. However, many Muslim women view it as a symbol of their identity, their strength, their beliefs, their values, and their respect for their bodies. For many Muslim women, these are not oppressive garments, but rather liberating garments, that free them from being regarded as a sexual object. In fact, in the second half of the twentieth century, the practice of veiling increased among Muslim women in the Middle East as well as around the world (Ahmed, 2011). Hijab has not only become more common among Muslim women, but has emerged as an important symbolic representation of Islamic feminism.

Islamic Feminism

Fatema Mernissi

Fate Mernissi (1940-2015) was a Moroccan feminist writer and sociologist, with her work focusing on a voice for the oppressed and marginalized women. Her legacy can be greatly attributed to her scholarly and literary contributions to the early feminist movement, as she tackles issues such as Eurocentrism, intersectionality, transnationalism, and global feminism.

Mernissi is known for her sociolopolitical approaches towards discussing gender and sexual identities, specifically those of which are focused within Morocco. She became known internationally mainly as an Islamic feminist. She authored Beyond the Veil in 1975. In her writings, she was largely concerned with Islam and women's roles in it, analyzing the historical development of Islamic thought and its modern manifestation. Through a detailed investigation of the nature of the succession to Muhammed, she cast doubt on the validity of some of the **hadith** (sayings and traditions attributed to him), and therefore the subordination of women that she sees in Islam, but not necessarily in the Quran.



Figure 10.3.2: "Fatema Mernissi" (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Nikka Singh via Flickr)

A recurring topic for multiple of her writings is Scheherazde and the digital sphere, as she explores cases in which women take part in online media outlets. In these writings, she mentioned how technology is quickly spreading - via the Internet - and analyzes the roles and contributions of women in this movement.

She also wrote about life within harems, gender, and public and private spheres. In one of her articles, Size 6: The Western Women's Harem, she discusses the repression and pressures women face merely based on their physical appearance. Whether in Moroccan society or the West, she surmises that women must live up to stereotypical standards such as dress sizes (e.g. size 6) and that these practices isolate and mistreat women. Later, in her book, Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World, Mernissi she looks at how fundamentalism controlled what a woman would be able to wear, so a democratic society that freed women to dress as they pleased could appear threatening to a hyper-masculine culture.

Additionally, she notes that Muslim women were not victims of their religious practices any more than Western women were victims of the patriarchy; both groups of women were oppressed by specific social intitutions within a religion or society created to profit off of the marginalization of others. She explains that Western women were veiled, just as Muslim women were, yet Western veils were much more discreet. To her, youth and beauty veiled Western women, and once a woman no longer had these, she was hardly recognized by society.

Mernissi's work highlighted how Western feminism could be detrimental to the empowerment of women around the globe if it lacked an intersectional approach to women's issues. In her book, The Forgotten Queens of Islam, she uses an intersectional lens to understand the positions of women throughout early Islamic history through social and political identities that created modes of discrimination. Her aim was to bring to light the significant contributions that women had throughout early Islamic history and debunk the misconceptions about the absence of women as political and authoritative figures. She did this through exploring leadership roles that women were involved in throughout Islamic history, including accounts of 15 women and the active roles they played in pre-modern Islam politics.

In her book Women's Rebellion & Islamic Memory, Mernissi analyzes the role of women in relation to the world of contemporary Islam and how the state ultimately supports inequality. She argues that the freedom from these controlling traditions and expectations of women is the only way for the Arab world to develop. In her book, Islam and Democracy, she suggests ways in which progressive Muslims, including feminists, who choose to advocate for democracy and resist

> fundamentalism should draw from the same sacred texts as those who seek to oppress them, in order to prove that Islam is not fundamentally against women.

Feminism is often thought of as incompatible and categorically opposed to the cultural and religious traditions of Islam. The truth, however, is that Muslim women have been active in feminist movements and ideals for many years. In fact, research has shown that one in four Arab Muslims supports feminism (Glas and Alexander, 2020). Just as feminism in the West has given women a voice and an opportunity to challenge gender inequality in society, so too has feminism among Muslim women. All social movements are unique to the social and cultural context in which they arise, and Islamic feminism is no exception. Muslim women have adapted their own strategies for countering gender oppression, while at the same time working within an Islamic framework. Thus balancing their feminist ideals with the religious beliefs they hold dear.

The Centre for Muslim Minorities and Islam Policy Studies defines a **Muslim feminist** as "one who adopts a worldview in which Islam can be contextualized and reinterpreted in order to promote concepts of equity and equality between men and women; and for whom freedom of choice plays an important part in expression of faith." The term "Islamic feminism" distinguishes those women who work specifically within the Islamic faith, as opposed to “secularist feminism” which is weakly attached to religion or not at all.

A basic tenant of Islamic feminism is that at its core, it draws upon the Quranic concept of equality of all human beings, and insists on the application of this theology to both the public and private spheres. Muslim feminists argue that the oppressive practices - to which women in the Middle East are subjected - are caused by the prevalence of patriarchal interpretations of Islam, rather than Islam itself (Ahmed, 1992). Thus Muslim feminists strive to balance cultural and religious traditions, while articulating and fighting for their feminist concerns, defining and developing feminism and feminist practices on their own terms. Just as Muslim women do, Jewish women have also strived to balance feminism and faith.

Jewish Feminism

Jewish feminism is a movement that seeks to make the religious, legal, and social status of Jewish women equal to that of Jewish men. Feminist movements, with varying approaches and successes, have opened up within all major branches of the Jewish religion.

In its modern form, the Jewish feminist movement can be traced to the early 1970s. Judith Plaskow, known for being the first Jewish feminist theologian, claims the main grievances of early Jewish feminists were women's exclusion from the **minyan** (all male prayer group), women's exemption from **mitzvot** (the 613 commandments given in the Torah at Mount Sinai and the seven rabbinic commandments instituted later, for a total of 620), and women's inability to function as witnesses and to initiate divorce in Jewish religious courts (Plaskow, 2003). The issue of divorce is expressed in the term **agunah**, which describes a woman whose husband refuses, or is unable, to grant her a divorce according to Jewish law.

Just as there are varying degrees to which Jews adhere to cultural and/or religious practices, so too are there various versions of feminist theologies that exist within the Jewish Community. For example, Orthodox Jewish feminism seeks to change the position of women from within Jewish law. Orthodox feminists work with rabbis and rabbinical institutions to create more inclusive practices within Orthodox communal life and leadership. Orthodox feminism tends to focus on issues such as fostering women's education, leadership, ritual participation, and making synagogue more women friendly. Some branches of Jewish feminism focus on the gender polarity that exists in the religious and cultural practices within the Jewish community. While Orthodox feminists strive for women's rights and opportunities, they do so within the framework of Jewish law.



Figure \(\PageIndex{3}: Bella Abzug. (CC PDM 1.0; Library of Congress via House of Representatives)

Bella Savitzky Abzug (1920-1998), born to an Orthodox Russian Jewish family in New York City, was a social activist, U.S. Representative, and a leader in the women's movement in the United States. She worked alongside other feminists such as Gloria Steinem, Shirley Chisholm, and Betty Friedan to found the National Women's Political Caucus. She attributed her inclination towards feminism to her time spent at synagogue. According to Azbug, "It was during these visits to the synagogue that I think I had my first thoughts as a feminist rebel. I didn't like the fact that women were consigned to the back rows of the balcony."

LGBTQIA+ Rights

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens generally have limited or highly restrictive rights in most parts of the Middle East, and are open to hostility in others. Sex between men is illegal in 10 of the 18 countries that make up the region. It is punishable by death in 6 of these 18 countries. The rights and freedoms of LGBTQIA+ citizens are strongly influenced by the prevailing cultural traditions and religious mores of people living in the region – particularly Islam. Several Middle Eastern countries have received strong international criticism for persecuting homosexuality and transgender people by fines, imprisonment and death.



Figure 10.3.4: "Apartheid" (CC BY-SA 2.0; Loozrboy Via Flickr)

Male same sex activity is illegal and punishable by imprisonment in Kuwait, Egypt, Oman, Qatar, and Syria. It is punishable by death in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. In Yemen or Palestine (Gaza Strip) the punishment might differ between death and imprisonment depending on the act committed. Even though laws against female same sex activity are less strict, few countries recognize legal rights and provisions.

In the United States, LGBTQIA+ Middle Eastern Americans face a unique challenge. On the one hand, there is the challenge of post 9/11 attitudes and discrimination toward Muslim Americans. As Muslim society is still, by and large, heteronormative, there is also the challenge of hostility, harassment or discrimination that may be experienced from the the Middle Eastern community at large.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Bella Abzug (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Fatema Mernissi (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Jewish Feminism (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- LGBT Rights in the Middle East (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Ahmed, L. (1992). *Women and Gender in Islam*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ahmed, L. (2011). *Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence from the Middle East to America.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Glas, S. & Alexander, A. (2020). Explaining support for Muslim feminism in the Arab middle east and north Africa. *Gender & Society*, 34(3), 437–466.
- Plaskow, J. (2003). Jewish feminist thought. In D.H. Frank & O Leaman (Eds). *History of Jewish Philosophy.* London, UK: Routledge.
- Independent Lens. (2020). Shadya. *Independent Television Service, Public Broadcast Network.*

This page titled 10.3: Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **10.3: Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

10.4: Social Institutions

10.4: Social Institutions

Religious Identities of the Middle East

About 55% of the world's population profess one of the main monotheistic faiths that are found in the Middle East (2.2 billion Christians; 1.6 billion Muslims; 14 million Jews). These faiths are referred to as "Abrahamic Religions" because they each trace their origins to the Hebrew prophet Abraham. The similarities across the Abrahamic religions and other religious groups can be attributed to shared histories, values and cultural practices. Today the Middle East is defined by conflict and antagonism, but there are many shared worldview within these religions, in addition to the differences. For instance, all of these religions consider the Temple Mount in Jerusalem to be central to their traditions and understanding of spirituality.



Figure **10.4.1**: Aerial view of the "Temple Mount", sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Godot13 (Andrew Shiva) via Wikimedia)

Religion has been a powerful social force in the region because, especially in the past, religious identity has been something closer to an ethnicity in the Middle East, defining one's cultural identity as well as one's spirituality. There are general cultural aspects shared by Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They each:

- Were founded by a Semitic person or people;
- Refer to the same God: Yahweh in Hebrew; Jehovah in English; Allah in Arabic; Khuda in Persian.
- Use similar concepts of Justice. For example the idea that one should always consider God to be present when one is judging. Other than murder, adultery and stealing, bearing false witness was one of the most egregious crimes in the societies in which these religions originated.

Islam and Judaism have more doctrinal similarities with each other than they have with Christianity, especially in regard to their concepts of monotheism (God being without offspring or partner – this is a specific reference to Surat al-Ikhlas of the Qur'an in

Islam), their legal systems and in their rigorous restrictions on daily life and practice, such as their protocols for diet. However, unlike Judaism, both Islam and Christianity are universal religions; i.e., one needn't be born into it to participate in the religion. The following religious comparison grid provides key areas of similarity and difference amongst them.

Figure **10.4.2**: Abrahamic Religions Comparison Chart. (CC BY-SA 4.0; via Payind & McClimans)

Abrahamic Religions Comparison Chart

Belief/Practice	Judaism	Christianity	Islam
Concept of God, monotheism	One god, considered as creator and sustainer of the universe. Worship of any additional gods is discouraged by banning images of humans and animals which could potentially be idols.	One god, considered as creator and sustainer of the universe. God as cause of Mary's immaculate conception, and "father" of Jesus.	One god, considered as creator and sustainer of the universe. God possesses no partner, no offspring. Worship of any additional gods, or idols, is strictly forbidden. Worship of any additional gods is discouraged by banning images of humans and animals which could potentially be idols.
Messengers of God/Prophets	Belief in prophets of God.	Belief in prophets of God. Jesus is considered the Son of God.	Belief in prophets of God. Belief that Muhammad is the last of God's prophets. Jesus is considered a prophet.
Timing for weekly worship/community gathering.	This is a day of rest, Friday evening through Saturday evening is a time of required rest from normal daily work. Synagogue services on Saturday are a time designated for community.	This is a day of rest, Community worship on Sunday. It is a required day of rest from normal daily work.	Friday is the day for group prayer. Work is allowed, however.
Scripture	Torah (including the Ten Commandments).	Torah (including the Ten Commandments); New Testament.	Torah (including the Ten Commandments); Psalms; Gospels of the Christian Bible; Qur'an
Afterlife/eschatology	Judgment Day, Hereafter	Judgment Day, Hereafter, Heaven, Hell, Purgatory, Limbo	Judgment Day, Hereafter
Stories of Human Origin	Adam and Eve as the first humans; the great flood;	Adam and Eve as the first humans; the great flood;	Adam and Eve as the first humans; the great flood;
Alms	Tithing, or giving a portion of your wealth to those in need.	Tithing, or giving a portion of your ealth to those in need.	Alms, or Zaka, is one of the five pillars
Circumcision	Required for males.	Not required.	Required for males.
Pilgrimage	Was required, until the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed.	not required. many pilgrimage sites, however.	required to Mecca. tombs and shrines that may also pilgrimage sites.
Ritual Use of Water	Ablutions before prayer, and traditionally before entering the Temple in Jerusalem.	Holy water is used before entering a church, to bless worshipers during mass, and to baptize.	Ablutions are required before prayer.
Messianic expectations	The king will one day return.	Jesus will return on Judgment day	Shi'is expect the rightly-guided Imam, or Mahdi, to return.
Supernatural entities	Angels	Angels, Satan/Lucifer	Angels, Jinn, Satan, or Shaytan/Iblis
Fasting and Dietary restrictions	Fasting for Yom Kippur. Multiple restrictions and requirements for preparation, including the way to slaughter animals. No pork. Ritual use of alcohol.	Fasting for lent. Eastern Orthodox Christianity requires a vegetarian diet for lent. Pork is allowed. Ritual use of alcohol.	Fasting for Ramadan. Multiple restrictions and requirements for preparation, including the way to slaughter animals. No pork. No alcohol.

Religious Diversity

Within each of these religions there is immense diversity. For example, many do not know how diverse the state of Israel is in reality. Israeli citizens can be Jewish, Muslim, Druze or Christian. They can also be Arab, in addition to every ethnic heritage around the world. In general, Jews with European heritage are called Ashkenazi Jews, while Jews from the Middle East are called Sephardic Jews, or Mizrachim. Core tenets from the Torah are shared by all Jewish communities, but the practices surrounding them vary from community to community.

Likewise, there is much diversity within Muslim-majority countries, and within the global Muslim population as a whole. Several communities follow religious practices which emphasize different aspects than mainstream Islam, have separated into a theology, or combine theologies with other religions:

- ‘Alawi Shi’ism: a form of Shi’ism, but more centered on venerating ‘Ali. There are many communities in Syria and Turkey
- The Druze Faith: Islamic foundation, but radically different practices and theology
- The Bahai’ Faith: Related to Shi’i Islam, recognizing a prophet who came after Muhammad, however.
- Yazidism; Combination of Islam, Zoroastrian and other traditions

These facets of diversity show how many people of colors there are, and have been, in the Middle East, and how problematic it can be to generalize about the religious outlook of a country, or even a small area within a country. In the U.S. and other countries around the world, many Middle Eastern immigrants represent minority communities of the Middle East.

Christian communities in Middle Eastern countries are perhaps the least represented communities in mainstream information sources. Assyrians, Armenians, Copts, and other cultural groups that are predominantly Christian, are increasingly minoritized in Muslim-majority countries while at the same time many of their communities in diaspora. Only Armenians have their own nation-state. Middle Eastern Christian communities are more prominent in the U.S., because they make up a larger percentage of the total number of individuals who have emigrated from the Middle East to the U.S., than do Muslims. Therefore, it is more likely for one to meet a Christian with Middle Eastern heritage in the U.S. than in the region. Such as the examples below.



Figure 10.4.3: Andre Agassi, famous American tennis player with Iranian, Assyrian, and Armenian heritage. (CC BY-SA 2.5; Akademan via Wikimedia)



Figure **10.4.4**: Paula Abdul, American singer of Syrian-Jewish descent. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Toglenn via Wikimedia)

We go into more detail about Islam and Islamic practices because of the impact Islam has had on all members of society (including non-Muslims), and the need to correct pervasive stereotypes about Muslims.

What is Shar'ia Law?

Islamic law, or the shar‘ia, guides the religious practices of Muslim communities, and may also may serve as a basis for government. Shar’ia remains an important guide to daily life for many Muslims, but its legislation now resides outside of the legal system in most Muslim-majority countries, with differing levels of involvement and influence. In some cases shar‘ia has remained the state’s government and legal system, as in Saudi Arabia. In any Muslim community, however, Islam’s precepts for good conduct remain paramount. The Five Pillars provide a foundation for proper religious practice, and are as follows (in order of importance):

1. Shahada, or Declaration of Faith;
2. Salat, or Prayer (5 times daily);
3. Saum, or Fasting (Especially During the Month of Ramadan);
4. Zakat, or Alms (2.5% of one’s income should go to those in need, provided one has that much after meeting one’s own, one’s immediate family, and surrounding community needs);
5. Ḥaj, or Pilgrimage (if one has the health and financial means, a Muslim is required to go to Mecca once in his or her lifetime, during the month of Ḥaj and perform a specific set of rituals)

In Islam, the only requirement to become Muslim is the first pillar; which is simply to utter the Shahada, or Declaration of Faith (translation, Payind): “I bear witness that there is no God other than the one God. I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant messenger of God.”

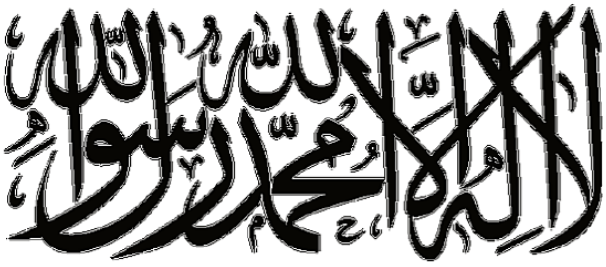


Figure **10.4.5**: Image of the Shahada in Arabic Calligraphy. (CC PDM 1.0; via Pixabay)

Beyond the Five Pillars, however, a moral life includes principles from the Qur’an and the example set by the prophet Muhammad which provide a moral foundation for the practices and laws which are intended to guide all facets of individual lives, families and

society as a whole. These principles for leading a correct life often require a moral struggle to achieve. This relates to a duty in Islam called jihad.

The Concept of Jihad

The meaning of jihad is struggle – it can be internal and spiritual/ moral, or external and physical/combat. Inner struggle is considered the "Greater Jihad", or Jihad al-Akbar, due to its greater difficulty and greater importance in the life of a Muslim. Jihad al-Akbar is revered by Muslims. Jihad's other meaning, related to war against an enemy, is the lesser jihad, or Jihad al-Asghar. This is the struggle against injustice, oppression or invasion, and it allows the use of military force. Jihad al-Asghar possesses greater renown in the West, due to three powerful factors:

1. Jihadi extremist groups in the news,
2. European conflicts between Europe and what they called "Islamdom", termed "Holy War" at the time (jihad continues to be translated as "holy war" for this reason).
3. Stereotypes of Muslims as angry and violent aggressors pervade the Western knowledge base due to this history and the reinforcement of these images through various forms of media.

Following the 9/11 attacks in 2001 by the terrorist group Al-Qaeda, the word "jihad" has become a contentious term associated with extremists who justify their violent actions as part of a a political project, or a religious war against nonbelievers. Despite the multiple and many benevolent applications of the concept of jihad, today it is often narrowly associated with a form of holy war, or with sacrificing one's life for the sake of God.

Al-Qaeda (the "base" or "foundation") is a terrorist network of Islamic extremists and Salafist jihadists (a splinter group from Sunni Islam). Islamic extremism is not the same thing as Islam. Islam, by definition, is peaceful. Al-Qaeda formed during the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989) and has had a strong presence at various times in different regions throughout the Middle East. It is connected with ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, also called the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or the Islamic State, which recently controlled large areas in Iraq and Syria, but lost nearly all of its significant territory by March 2019. ISIS claimed responsibility for the Easter suicide bombings in Sri Lanka, which killed over 250 people at churches and hotels, and has also been connected with terrorist activities in Congo, the Philippines, Nigeria, Libya, and parts of Egypt. It's important to note that Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups or splinter sects are not representative of Islam overall, just as extremist Christian terrorists such as the Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh are not representative of mainstream Christian beliefs.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Introduction to Sociology (Lumen) (CC BY 4.0)
- Keys to Understanding the Middle East (Payind & McClimans) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

This page titled 10.4: Social Institutions is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **10.4: Social Institutions** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

10.5: Social Change and Resistance

Immigration and the "Muslim Ban"

In the aftermath of 9/11, there was a significant decline in Arab and Muslim immigration to the United States. However, with United States military action in countries such as Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, the numbers of refugees to the U.S. increased from 2007-2016. During 2016, concerns over terrorism rose again as a result of terrorist attacks in France and Belgium. In 2017, President Trump issued an executive order banning all people (including refugees and visa holders) from seven Muslim majority countries. These countries included: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. This "Muslim Ban" faced multiple legal challenges. Despite these challenges, in 2018 the Supreme Court released their decision to uphold the ban. Critics felt that the ban was more an expression of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims than a concern for national safety. In 2021, as one of his top priorities, newly elected President Biden reversed the "Muslim Ban." He issued the following statement.

The United States was built on a foundation of religious freedom and tolerance, a principle enshrined in the United States Constitution. Nevertheless, the previous administration enacted a number of Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations that prevented certain individuals from entering the United States — first from primarily Muslim countries, and later, from largely African countries. Those actions are a stain on our national conscience and are inconsistent with our long history of welcoming people of all faiths and no faith at all.



Figure 10.5.1: Muslim ban protest. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Sasha Patkin via Flickr)

Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)

Several civil rights and public policy organizations, including the Muslim Public Affairs Commission (MPAC) and The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), serve to improve the lives of American Muslims as well as the perceptions of these individuals. Located on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties organization.

CAIR was created as an organization dedicated to challenging anti-Muslim discrimination and stereotypes of Islam and Muslims. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, CAIR increased its advocacy work, as they received 1,658 reports of discrimination, profiling, harassment, and physical assaults against persons appearing Arab or Muslim, a threefold increase over the prior year. The reports included beatings, death threats, abusive police practices, and employment and airline-related discrimination (Cole, 2002). CAIR has conducted investigations, issued reports, held press conferences, filed lawsuits, and organized political action to protest aspects of U.S. counter terrorism policy. In 2005, CAIR coordinated the joint release of communication by 344 American Muslim organizations, mosques, and imams nationwide that stated:

> Islam strictly condemns religious extremism and the use of violence against innocent lives. There is no justification in Islam for extremism or terrorism. Targeting civilians' life and property through suicide bombings or any other method of attack is haram or forbidden—and those who commit these barbaric acts are criminals, not martyrs.



Video 10.5.2: Council on American Islamic Relations. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; WHYY via YouTube)

Jewish Activism

Social justice and doing what is right is part of the fabric of Jewish identity and Jewish teachings. In America, Jews have become leaders in most every aspect of civil society and philanthropy. From immigration to the civil rights movements and the liberation of oppressed peoples throughout the world, many Jewish Americans take the value of social justice very seriously. This speaks to values of Reform Judaism which stress the importance of solving social problems, on the basis of justice and righteousness, presented by the contrasts and evils of society. Jewish Americans were part of the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

During the Civil Rights Movement, Jewish activists were involved in a number of fronts. According to historian Cheryl Greenberg,

> It is significant that ... a disproportionate number of white civil rights activists were [Jewish] as well. Jewish agencies engaged with their African American counterparts in a more sustained and fundamental way than did other white groups largely because their constituents and their understanding of Jewish values and Jewish self-interest pushed them in that direction.

As discussed in Chapter 7.5, the summer of 1964 was designated the Freedom Summer, and many Jews from the North and West traveled to the South to participate in a concentrated voter registration effort. Two Jewish activists, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, and one Black activist, James Chaney, were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan near Philadelphia, Mississippi, as a result of their participation. Their deaths were considered martyrdom by some, and temporarily strengthened Black-Jewish relations.

Martin Luther King Jr., said in 1965,

> *How could there be anti-Semitism among Negroes when our Jewish friends have demonstrated their commitment to the principle of tolerance and brotherhood not only in the form of sizable contributions, but in many other tangible ways, and often at great personal sacrifice. Can we ever express our appreciation to the rabbis who chose to give moral witness with us in St. Augustine during our recent protest against segregation in that unhappy city? Need I remind anyone of the awful beating suffered by Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld of Cleveland when he joined the civil rights workers there in Hattiesburg, Mississippi? And who can ever forget the sacrifice of two Jewish lives, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, in the swamps of Mississippi? It would be impossible to record the contribution that the Jewish people have made toward the Negro's struggle for freedom—it has been so great.*

Under the Jewish teaching that we are all created in the image of God, Rabbi Sandra Lawson wrote the following song, I Am Human (in Hebrew, Oseh Shalom) as a reminder to never give up and remember the struggle and pursuit of treating each other with

love, dignity, and respect. Here are the lyrics of the song that Rabbi Lawson wrote in 2015 upon reflecting on the senseless police killings of community members such as Freddie Gray, Sandra Bland, and Walter Scott:

Oseh Shalom Bimromav
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom
May the one who makes peace from heaven above
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom (will Make Peace)

I am human and I am free
Watch me fly above the trees
You can hear my cry and you can hear my roar
but you can't take away my soul

Oseh Shalom Bimromav
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom
May the one who makes peace from heaven above
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom (will make peace)

We'll fight and we'll cry and we'll even abide
We'll say goodbye just to stay alive
And the day will come to have dignity again

Oseh Shalom Bimromav
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom
May the one who makes peace from heaven above
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom (will make peace)

I am human and I am free
Watch me fly above the trees
Hu Ya'aseh Shalom (will make peace)

Anti-Defamation League

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), formerly known as the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, is an international Jewish non-governmental organization based in the U.S. It was founded in late September 1913 by the independent Order of B'nai Brith, a Jewish service organization, in the wake of the contentious conviction for murder of Leo Frank. ADL states that its mission is a dual one: To stop the defamation of the Jewish people, and to secure justice and fair treatment for all," via the development of "new programs, policies and skills to expose and combat whatever holds us back. With a focus on combating anti-Semitism and other forms of hate, and fighting domestic extremism both online and off, ADL describes it "ultimate goal" as "a world in which no group or individual suffers from bias, discrimination, or hate. In 2018, ADL rebranded itself as an "anti-hate" organization, and adopted the logo: Fighting Hate for Good.



Figure 10.5.4: Jonathan Greenblatt, National Director and CEO of the Anti-Defamation League since 2015. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Gage Skidmore via Wikimedia)

The US Census Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Category

The U.S. Census has struggled with the issue of Middle Eastern identity. Former President Barack Obama's administration was considering adding a Middle East/North Africa (MENA) category to the Census, for which organization such as American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) lobbied. However, advocates for the MENA category blame its absence on the administration of President Donald Trump, who targeted, with his signing of the "Muslim Ban," many from MENA countries. In 2018, federal officials said that a MENA category would not be added, citing concerns that MENA was seen not as a race, but an ethnicity. So, the 2020 Census, as in previous years, did not offer an “Arab” or MENA box to check under the question of race. Individuals who want to be counted as Arab had to check the box for “some other race” and then write in their race. However, when the Census data is tallied, they will likely be marked as white. This is problematic, however, as it denies Arab Americans opportunities for nearly $400 billion in federal assistance. A lack of recognition also allows for continued civil rights abuses and stigmatization of Arab Americans that can permeate into policy (Alshammari, 2020).



Video 10.5.5: Rashida Tlaib Questions Why 2020 Census Erases Middle Eastern & North African Identity. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; NowThis News via YouTube)

Key Takeaways from Chapter 10

- Middle Eastern Americans are a diverse group of different races, languages (Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew), cultures (Arab, Persian, Israeli, Turkish) and religions (Muslim, Jewish, Christian).

- A variety of intergroup consequences can be used to explain the experiences of Middle Eastern Americans, including: genocide, expulsion, segregation, separatism, fusion, assimilation, and pluralism.
- Both Muslim and Jewish women have been active in feminist movements that work within their faith.
- The primary religions of the Middle East include: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. All of which are monotheistic faiths that trace their origins to the Hebrew prophet Abraham. While they are distinct, there is also overlap between them.
- Several organizations have been created to advocate for social change and justice in the Middle Eastern community, including: the Muslim Public Affairs Commission (MPAC), The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).
- Current public policy impacting Middle Eastern Americans include: the Muslim Ban (overturned in 2021) and the US Census Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Category.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Ramos, Carlos. (Long Beach City College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Anti-Defamation League (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)
- African American - Jewish Relations (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)
- Council on American - Islamic Relations (Wikipedia) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Works Cited

- Alshammari, Y.H. (2020, April 1). Why is there no mena category on the 2020 us census? *Aljazeera.*
- Cole, D. (2002). Enemy aliens. *Georgetown Law Faculty Publications and Other Works*. 956.
- Greenberg, C. (2006). *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century.* Princeton University Press.
- Harb, A. (2018). U.S. fails to add MENA to the U.S. census. *Middle East Eye.*
- King, M.L., Jr., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, James Washington (Ed.), HarperCollins, 1990, p. 669.
- Proclamation on Ending Discriminatory Bans on Entry to the United States, 2021, www.whitehouse.gov

---

This page titled 10.5: Social Change and Resistance is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **10.5: Social Change and Resistance** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

11: Contemporary Social Movements

11.1: Defining Social Movements

11.2: Immigrant Rights

11.3: Black Lives Matter

11.4: Indigenous Sovereignty and Environmental Justice

11.5: White Nationalism

11.6: Solidarity and Intersectionality

This page titled 11: Contemporary Social Movements is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

11.1: Defining Social Movements

Learning Objectives

- Distinguish between different types of social movements
- Describe and apply the four stages of social movements

Types of Social Movements

We know that social movements can occur on the local, national, or even global stage. Are there other patterns or classifications that can help us understand them? Sociologist David Aberle (1966) addresses this question by developing categories that distinguish among social movements by considering 1) what it is the movement wants to change and 2) how much change they want. He described four types of social movements, including: alternative, redemptive, reformative, and revolutionary social movements.

- **Alternative movements** are typically focused on self-improvement and limited, specific changes to individual beliefs and behavior. These include things like Alcoholics Anonymous, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), and Planned Parenthood.
- **Redemptive movements** (sometimes called religions movements) are "meaning seeking," are focused on a specific segment of the population, and their goal is to provoke inner change or spiritual growth in individuals. Some sects fit in this category.
- **Reformative social movements** seek to change something specific about the social structure. They may seek a more limited change, but are targeted at the entire population. Environmental movements, the women's suffrage movement, or the more contemporary "Buy Nothing Day," which protests the rampant consumerism of Black Friday, are examples of reformative movements.
- **Revolutionary movements** seek to completely change every aspect of society—their goal is to change all of society in a dramatic way. Examples include the Civil Rights Movement or the political movements, such as a push for communism.

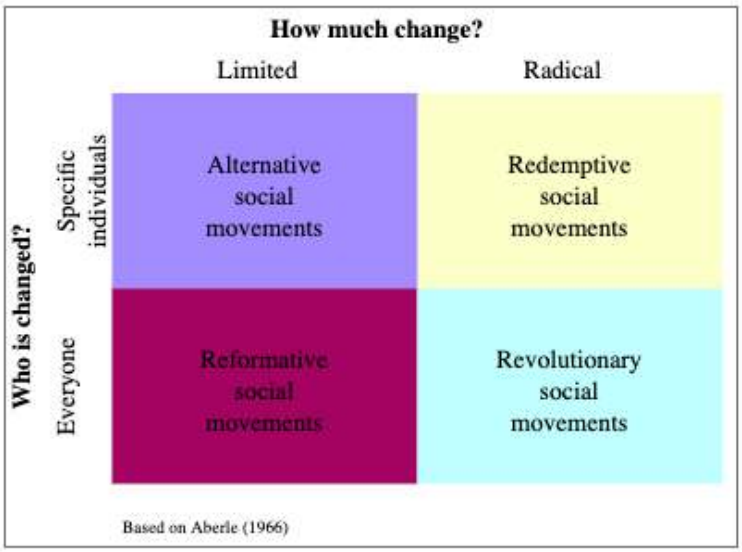


Figure **11.1.1**: David Aberle identified these four types of social movements, with some types of movements targeting either specific individuals or everyone, while some want limited changes, and others are more radical. (Chart based on Aberle)

Other helpful categories that are helpful for sociologists to describe and distinguish between types of social movements include:

- **Scope**: A movement can be either reform or radical. A reform movement advocates changing some norms or laws while a radical movement is dedicated to changing value systems in some fundamental way. A reform movement might be a green movement advocating a sect of ecological laws, or a movement against pornography, while the American Civil Rights movement is an example of a radical movement.
- **Type of Change**: A movement might seek change that is either innovative or conservative. An innovative movement wants to introduce or change norms and values, like moving towards self-driving cars, while a conservative movement seeks to preserve

existing norms and values, such as a group opposed to genetically modified foods.

- **Targets**: Group-focused movements focus on influencing groups or society in general; for example, attempting to change the political system from a monarchy to a democracy. An individual-focused movement seeks to affect individuals.
- **Methods of Work**: Peaceful movements utilize techniques such as nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience. Violent movements resort to violence when seeking social change. In extreme cases, violent movements may take the form of paramilitary or terrorist organizations.
- **Range**: Global movements, such as communism in the early 20th century, have transnational objectives. Local movements are focused on local or regional objectives such as preserving an historic building or protecting a natural habitat.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Introduction to Sociology (Lumen) (CC BY 4.0)

This page titled 11.1: Defining Social Movements is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **11.1: Defining Social Movements** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

11.2: Immigrant Rights

The Boundaries of Citizenship

In this modern era of globalization the boundaries of national citizenship have been challenged by multi-national trade agreements, offshore manufacturing and growing international migration. These forces have contributed to a domestic struggle to reassert the parameters of national identity, especially among many middle-class and white working class Americans. The perceived advances of outsider reference groups during this period such as immigrants and minorities further contribute to sense of crisis in the boundaries of national citizenship (Nicholls, 2019). These developments have led some Americans to feel like "strangers in their own land" as if they have been patiently waiting in line for their American Dream only to watch other historically marginalized groups cut in line ahead of them (Hochschild, 2016). At the same time, as Walter J. Nicholls (2019) notes, "The leading advocates (of the immigrant rights movement) from the mid-2000s onward embraced a liberal variant of nationalism that depicted America as welcoming and immigrants as highly deserving subjects. Rather than call for the dismantlement of borders or for post-national citizenship, the mainstream immigrant rights movement celebrated the nation and wrapped immigrants in the American flag" (p. 2). This struggle over who belongs and who doesn't is not a new one, but has become an central issue in modern politics as workers are squeezed by the rapidly accelerating forces of globalization, and politicians, both local and national, seize on these insecurities and promote "law and order" approaches to limiting immigrant rights.

Thinking Sociologically

Some have advocated for **post-nationalism** since today's world is very globalized with goods and services crossing borders on a daily basis. According to post-nationalism, the category of the nation is no longer sufficient to describe the fundamentals of political identity or state government. The concept of postnationalism seeks to break the tie between citizenship and ethnic identity or existential difference. One example of this is the European passport (Sassen, 2002). Do you think people should be able to move across borders on the American continent with some kind of postnationalist or denationalized passport? Why or why not?

Battleground: Suburbia

The first battleground of the contemporary struggles for immigrant rights was suburban America in the 1990s where immigrants began to be more visible as street corner vendors and day laborers seeking work in shopping center parking lots. Larger gateway cities were no strangers to immigrants and generally are characterized by more diversity and liberal political cultures (Walker & Leitner, 2011). Suburbia, however, characterized by the legacy of redlining policies made it less receptive to integrating outsiders who were perceived as threats to the culture and civic conditions (Massey & Denton, 1998). Xenophobic responses translated into policies that restricted immigrant assimilation such as bans on soliciting work in public, street vending, renting apartments to undocumented immigrants, and the use of foreign languages in public records (Nicholls, 2018). Various actors were employed in the enforcement of these policies including police, landlords, store owners, employers, and contractors. These repressive measures created a sense of out-group solidarity and elicited resistance from targeted immigrants and their supporters who argued that undocumented immigrants had a right to free speech, assembly. and due process.



Figure 11.2.1: No Day Laborers - Walgreens. (CC BY-NC 2.0; cobalt123 via Flickr)



Figure 11.2.2: Natural Allies. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; SEIU International via Flickr)

Natural Allies

Because many other members of society were "entangled" with the lives of undocumented people, many natural allies have come to their defense. Many undocumented people live in mixed status families (as discussed earlier in Chapter 3.5) which means that even those with legal status have much to lose when their family members are targeted for deportation. Latinx immigrants with legal status or citizenship status were also targeted and discriminated against as illegal due to their racialized traits and cultural dispositions. Policies like Arizona's SB1070, the so-called "show-me-your-papers" statute, meant that law enforcement could ostensibly racially profile anyone of Latinx descent (discussed earlier in Chapter 3.4). Undocumented people have friends and neighbors, go to church, contribute to the local economy through their spending and taxation, thus dispersing the financial, psychic, and emotional costs of their repression. These social connections provide undocumented people with a reservoir of sympathy and solidarity for which to lean on for protection and support.



Figure **11.2.3**: Dreamers. (CC BY 2.0; Molly Adams via Flickr)

Dreamers

On June 15, 2012 President Barack Obama issued an executive branch memorandum known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) that allowed some individuals who were brought to the United States illegally as children to apply for a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and to become eligible for a work permit in the United States. Recipients cannot have felonies or serious misdemeanors on their record and would not have a path to citizenship through this policy. This policy was a major victory for a young generation of activists dubbed Dreamers, after the failed DREAM Act (2001) which would have provided paths to citizenship through two years of military service or 2 years of college education. Though the policy did not apply to all who were brought as children as they had to be no older than 31 on the date it was signed and had to have been brought before June 2007 as a child no older than 15, the Migration Policy Institute estimates that over 1.3 million people qualified. As of March 2020, there are 643,560 DACA recipients who have been able to come out of the shadows and, at least temporarily have some sense of stability and opportunity that evaded them previously.



Figure **11.2.4**: Immigrant Rights March, circa 2017. (Sofia Beas via sbeas@lbcc.edu)

DACA would not have been possible if it weren't for the brave young organizers and activists, such as Jose Antonio Vargas featured in Video 11.2.5 below, and the various advocacy organizations who created spaces for young undocumented people to share their stories and realize that they were not alone. "This kind of political socialization helped shape how they thought and felt about their own "illegality." They learned that there was nothing to be ashamed of. They also learned that sticking together as a group allowed them to make powerful claims for equal rights" (Nicholls, 2014). They took their powerful claims and newfound strength in

numbers to the offices of senators and the Department of Homeland Security to stage acts of civil disobedience. For this subgroup of undocumented immigrants, the narrative was compelling: they were socialized in U.S. schools, were not familiar with any other country, they played by the rules, and therefore had the right to pursue the American dream.



Video 11.2.5: Actions are illegal, never people: Jose Antonio Vargas. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; TEDx Talks via YouTube)

According to a June 2020 Pew survey, 74% of Americans support granting legal status to immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children, but as is discussed later in Chapter 11.5, white nationalist sentiments pervade the Trump White House which is why on September 5, 2017, President Trump announced an end to DACA (Edelman, 2017). Then Attorney General Jeff Sessions criticized DACA as "unilateral executive amnesty" and claimed that it "yielded terrible humanitarian consequences" in addition to making unsubstantiated claims that it "denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same jobs to go to illegal aliens." This announcement sent the hundreds of thousands of DACA recipients into panic-mode as their futures were uncertain yet again. Luckily for them, on June 18, 2020 the Supreme Court ruled that the way DACA was rescinded was unlawful. Then, the most recent announcement from the Department of Homeland Security substantially limits the policy by only allowing those who have already received DACA previously to reapply for only one year of deferred action, placing additional financial burdens as the fee to renew is $495. Many local organizations have taken to raising funds for this renewal fee as most come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds again demonstrating the pivotal role that allies play in this struggle for immigrant rights. Most recently, on December 4th, 2020, a federal judge ordered a full restoration of DACA which means that first-time applicants will be accepted. Additional court cases challenging DACA are pending.

Asylum Seekers

The United States is a signatory to the United Nation's 1967 Protocol which defines a refugee as "as a person who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her home country, and cannot obtain protection in that country, due to past persecution or a well-founded fear of being persecuted in the future “on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” According to the American Immigration Council, from 2004-2019 upon arriving at the U.S. border an asylum seeker must undergo a credible fear and reasonable fear-screening which is a part of the expedited removal process. If the asylum officer deems that the person has a "significant possibility" of establishing eligibility for asylum, they are referred to immigration court to proceed with the defensive asylum process, otherwise the person is removed from the United States.

Under the Trump administration this process has been substantially changed. As of April 2018 asylees arriving at the U.S.' southern border are now told to wait in Mexico until Customs and Border Protection officers determine that a given port of entry has capacity to process them. Additionally, those fleeing domestic violence no longer qualify for asylum, and as of July 2019 anyone who transited through a third country must apply for asylum there before arriving in the United States. Under this rule, almost everyone who arrives at the U.S.-Mexico border is ineligible for asylum as many are fleeing violence and poverty in Central American countries such as Guatemala and El Salvador.

No change however has elicited more public outcry than that of family separation. As a part of President Trump's "zero-tolerance" approach a policy of separating children from the parents or guardians that they entered the U.S. with at the southern border Mexico was officially adopted in April of 2018, though later investigations showed that the practice was in place for an year prior

to the announcement. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, at least 4,368 children were separated as of January of 2020. In response, a coalition of 250 organizations led by the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Women's Refugee Commission, MomsRising, FWD.us, United We Dream, People's Action, ACLU, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, MoveOn called "Families Belong Together" formed. Even though President Trump signed an executive order ending the policy on June 20, 2018 - on June 30th, hundreds of thousands of people in all 50 states participated in a "Families Belong Together" protest showing the interest the general public has in immigration issues.



Figure 11.2.6: Families Belong Together Rally at the Border. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; mirsasha via Flickr)



Figure 11.2.7: Migrant detention facilities. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Thomas Cizauskas via Flickr)

Migrant Detention Facilities

The outrage at family separation brought to light the existence of and conditions in immigrant detention centers. Images of children on cold cement floors in warehouses caged by chain linked fences and covered in metallic space blankets circulated widely on the internet eliciting shock and disgust at the Trump administration even though many of the photos were taken during the Obama administration (Gomez, 2019). In reality, migrant detention has been on the rise for the past 3 decades leading Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to outsource the detention to private companies (Law, 2019). The conditions in these facilities have been characterized as "squalid conditions, overcrowding, cold temperatures, (and) inadequate medical care," leading to "tragic deaths." Many activists and civil rights organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) have argued that the increase in immigrant detention is in reality an expansion of the **prison-industrial complex** (PIC) (Luan, 2018). The PIC is a term used by activists to characterize the mutually profitable relationships among private corporations that secure government contracts to build and maintain prison facilities, those that profit from the use of prison labor and the politicians they lobby for "tough on crime" and "zero tolerance" immigration policies. According to government data, over 70% of migrants are held in private detention facilities. In 2018, the U.S. awarded 6.8 billion dollars in federal contracts for private detention facilities run by companies like the two largest Geo Group and Core Civic (formerly Corrections Corporation of America). Just as in private

prisons, migrants are held in some facilities where they are coerced to work for as little as a dollar a day, as has been alleged in 4 ongoing lawsuits. Rising awareness of these perceived abuses has led to nation-wide "Close the camps" protests and calls to "Abolish ICE." Other tactics include targeting the banks that finance private detention facilities. For example, the aforementioned Families Belong Together coalition collected over 1 million signature urging JP Morgan Chase to divest from Geo Group and Core Civic, and in March 2019 they announced they would be doing just that (Green, 2020). This successful campaign shows the importance of digital media in spreading awareness and in mobilizing people to bring about tangible progress towards social justice.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)

Works Cited

- *About us.* (2020). Families Belong Together.
- American Oversight. (2020). Conditions in migrant detention centers. *American Oversight.*
- American Immigration Council. (2020). *Asylum in the United States.* American Immigration Council.
- Edelman, A. (2017, September 5). Trump ends DACA program, no new applications accepted. *NBC News.*
- Freedom for Immigrants. (2020). Detention by the numbers. *Freedom for Immigrants.*
- Gomez, A. (2019, February 7). Democrats grill Trump administration officials over family separation policy on the border. *USA Today.*
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center. (2020). DACA frequently asked questions. *Immigrant Legal Resource Center.*
- Law, V. (2019, Jan. 29). End forced labor in immigrant detention. *New York Times.*
- Law, V. (2019, May 29). Investigation: corporations are profiting from immigrant detainees' labor. some say it's slavery. *In These Times.*
- Luan, L. (2018, May 2). Profiting from enforcement: The role of private prisons in U.S. immigration detention. *The Online Journal of the Migration Policy Institute.*
- Massey, D.S. & Denton, N.A. (1993). *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass.* Harvard University Press.
- Nicholls, W.J. (2013). *The DREAMers: How the Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed the Immigrant Rights Debate in the United States.* Stanford University Press.
- Nicholls, W.J. (2019). *The Immigrant Rights Movement: The Battle over National Citizenship.* Stanford University Press.
- Pew Research Center. (2020, June 17). American broadly support legal status for immigrants brought to U.S. illegally as children. *Pew Resesarch Center.*
- Sassen, S. (2002). Towards Post-National and Denationalized Citizenship. In: E. F. Isin, & B. S. Turner (Eds.), Handbook of Citizenship Studies (pp. 277-291). London: Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608276.n17

This page titled 11.2: Immigrant Rights is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **11.2: Immigrant Rights** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

11.3: Black Lives Matter

Social Movement Stages, Media, and Black Lives Matter

Chances are you have been asked to tweet, friend, like, or donate online for a cause. Nowadays, social movements are woven throughout our social media activities. After all, social movements start by activating people.

Considering the ideal type stages discussed above, you can see that social media has the potential to dramatically transform how people get involved. Look at stage one, the **preliminary stage**: people become aware of an issue, and leaders emerge. Imagine how social media speeds up this step. Suddenly, a shrewd user of Twitter can alert their thousands of followers about an emerging cause or an issue on their mind. Issue awareness can spread at the speed of a click, with thousands of people across the globe becoming informed at the same time. In a similar vein, those who are savvy and engaged with social media emerge as leaders. Suddenly, you don't need to be a powerful public speaker. You don't even need to leave your house. You can build an audience through social media without ever meeting the people you are inspiring.

This is what happened in the case of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. The movement was co-founded in 2013 by three Black community organizers: Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi. Garza, Cullors and Tometi met through Black Organizing for Leadership & Dignity (BOLD), a national organization that trains community organizers. They began to question how they were going to respond to what they saw as the devaluation of Black lives after George Zimmerman's acquittal in the shooting death of African-American teen Trayvon Martin in February 2012. Garza wrote a Facebook post titled "A Love Note to Black People" in which she said: "Our Lives Matter, Black Lives Matter." Cullors replied: "#BlackLivesMatter." Tometi then added her support, and BLM was born as an online campaign to support all Black lives - including women, queer, and transgender people.

This emergence stage quickly escalated to coalescence, as the movement became nationally recognized for its street demonstrations following the 2014 deaths of two African Americans: Michael Brown—resulting in protests and unrest in Ferguson (St. Louis) - and Eric Garner in New York City. Since the Ferguson protests, participants in the movement have demonstrated against the deaths of numerous other African Americans by police actions or while in police custody. In the summer of 2015, Black Lives Matter activists became involved in the 2016 United States presidential election.



Figure 11.3.1: Black Lives Matter - We Won't Be Silenced - London's Oxford Circus - 8 July 2016. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Alisdare Hickson via Flickr)

Social media is immensely helpful during the coalescence stage. **Coalescence** is the point when people join together to publicize the issue and get organized. President Obama's 2008 campaign was essentially a case study in organizing and publicizing through social media. Using Twitter and other online tools, the campaign engaged volunteers who had typically not bothered with politics and empowered those who were more active to generate still more activity. It is no coincidence that Obama's earlier work experience included grassroots community organizing. In 2009, when student protests erupted in Tehran, social media was considered so important to the organizing effort that the U.S. State Department actually asked Twitter to suspend scheduled maintenance so that a vital tool would not be disabled during the demonstrations.

The next stage of the development of a social movement is **institutionalization,** when it it is an established organization, typically with a paid staff. In the case of Black Lives Matter, the movement grew into a national network of over 30 local chapters between 2014 and 2016. The overall Black Lives Matter movement, however, is a decentralized network and has no formal hierarchy. The movement still has a strong presence and has even joined forces with other, more systematically organized groups, such as the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL). There is now a coalition of groups across the United States which represent the interests of

Black communities. It was formed in 2014 as a response to sustained and increasingly visible violence against Black communities, with the purpose of creating a united front and establishing a political platform. The collective, also known as a social movement sector, is made up of more than 150 organizations, with members such as the Black Lives Matter Network, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, and the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights.

Watch the Video 11.3.2 below, Black Lives Matter: A History, as it explains how this group has been fighting to be heard since 2013 - and the phrase itself is now being seen on streets and screens all around the world after the killing of George Floyd.



Video **11.3.2**: Black Lives Matter Explained: A History. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Channel 4 News (UK) via YouTube)

2020 Uprisings

In the summer of 2020, in the middle of a global pandemic, masses of Americans took the streets to demand justice for George Floyd who was pressed to the ground by his neck by a Minneapolis police officer for more than 9 minutes while he called for his deceased mother and pleaded, "I can't breathe" (as was presented at the beginning of Chapter 1.1). The footage of the brutal murder went viral via social media incensing Americans already in a state of anxiety, locked down in their homes, and economy shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The calls for justice soon began to culminate in more specific demands to defund the police. Scholar Angela Davis, also a prison and police abolitionist, argues that these calls are rooted in abolitionist philosophy which aims to strategically shrink the size of the prison industrial complex (PIC) eventually rendering it impotent while diverting funds towards community investment and social services such as youth centers, addiction and substance abuse supportive services, mental health, and education to more effectively target the root causes of crime (Democracy Now!, 2020). Activists and scholars view the prison industrial complex as a system designed to marginalize Black, Brown, Indigenous, and poor communities while providing slave labor for corporations and the state while also disenfranchising those communities electorally (CR10 Publications Collective, 2008).

While some argue that defunding the police would make communities less safe (Southers, 2020), abolitionists argue that the latest expansion of the PIC originates in false fears engineered by politicians, like Richard Nixon, aiming to redirect the primary national concerns of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement to the need to crack down on drugs and crime. As explained in the 13th documentary below, in the 1980's President Ronald Reagan doubled-down on this tactic by waging a "War on Drugs" that disproportionately incarcerated Black and Latinx populations. The "tough on crime" political tactic has been effective in ginning up the public fear needed to justify expansion of local police budgets and lengthier sentencing policies such as those featured in the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, which was signed in to law by President Bill Clinton and largely written by now Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden (Alexander, 2010).



Video **11.3.3**: The film *13th*. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; NetFlix via YouTube)

Another point of controversy is that fact that these uprisings grew violent, sparked by the burning down of the 3rd precinct where the 4 officers involved in Floyd's murder worked. One Monmouth University poll revealed that 54% of respondents thought the actions taken by protesters, including the burning of the precinct building, was fully or partially justified (Monmouth University Poll, 2020). The demands to defund the police have been influential in Minneapolis where Floyd's murder took place, as the City Council has agreed to disband the police department and create a new public safety system, though activists say they will have to wait and see what actually comes of these efforts.

While comparisons to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s abound, the broader legislative and structural impact of these uprisings is yet to be seen. Still, polls showed that in the two weeks following Floyd's murder, support for Black Lives Matter increased significantly as unfavorable views of the police surfaced which combined with increasing public sentiment, among all Americans, that African Americans face substantial discrimination.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Introduction to Sociology 2e (OpenStax) (CC BY 4.0)

Works Cited

- Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* New York, NY: The New Press.
- CR10 Publications Collective. (2008). *Abolition now!: Ten Years of Strategy and Struggle Against the Prison Industrial Complex.* Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- Democracy Now! (n.d.). *Freedom Struggle: Angela Davis on Calls to Defund Police, Racism & Capitalism, and the 2020 Election.* [Video]. Democracy Now.
- Monmouth University Poll. (2020). National: protestors' anger justified even if actions may not be. *Monmouth University.*
- Southers, E.G. (2020, June 11). Black ex-cop: i understand the anger but don't defund police. It could make things worse. *USA Today.*

This page titled 11.3: Black Lives Matter is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **11.3: Black Lives Matter** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

11.4: Indigenous Sovereignty and Environmental Justice

Standing Rock Sioux Opposition to Dakota Access Pipeline

At the core of the struggles of Native American people are the issues of land use and sovereignty (discussed earlier in Chapter 5.5). A **sovereign state** is a political organization with a centralized government that has supreme independent authority over a geographic area. The U.S. has a long history of breaking treaties with American Indian Nations for the purposes of resource extraction. As awareness of the climate crisis increases, especially among young people, resistance to new fossil fuel infrastructure such as the Keystone XL(KXL) pipeline and the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) is playing a central role in climate activism. Groups like the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN), formed in 1990, lie at the intersection of these social issues. Merging cultural beliefs and activism, IEN's direct-action training against the KXL referenced the Lakota prophecy of the Black Snake, which they believe to be a "manifestation of the sickness of society" and symbolic of oil pipelines (Bioneers, 2017). Their organizational goals are as follows:

1. Educate and empower Indigenous Peoples to address and develop strategies for the protection of our environment, our health, and all life forms – the Circle of Life.
2. Re-affirm our traditional knowledge and respect of natural laws.
3. Recognize, support, and promote environmentally sound lifestyles, economic livelihoods, and to build healthy sustaining Indigenous communities.
4. Commitment to influence policies that affect Indigenous Peoples on a local, tribal, state, regional, national and international level.
5. Include youth and elders in all levels of our work.
6. Protect our human rights to practice our cultural and spiritual beliefs.

These efforts culminated in 2016 as a group of Indigenous youth dubbed the Youth Council some of whom had been trained by IEN., staged a 2,000 mile relay run from the Sacred Stone Camp, a prayer camp established to resist DAPL on the northern end of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, to Washington D.C. to deliver a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers asking that the permit for DAPL to cross the Missouri River be denied.

As explained in the DAPL Fact Zine:

The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) is proposed to transport 450,000 barrels per day of Bakken crude oil (which is fracked and highy volatile) from the lands of North Dakota to Patoka, Illinois. The threats this pipeline poses to the environment, human health and human rights are strikingly similar to those posed by the Keystone XL. Because the DAPL will cross over the Ogallala Aquifer (one of the largest aquifers in the world) and under the Missouri River twice (the longest river in the United States), the possible contamination of these water sources makes the Dakota Access pipeline a national threat.



Video 11.4.1: "Mni Wiconi: The Stand at Standing Rock." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Divided Films via YouTube)

As featured in the video above, Mni Wiconi: The Stand at Standing Rock, what followed were months of peaceful protest that became the single largest gathering of Native Americans in 100 years. In the Sioux language, Mni Wiconi translates to "Water Is Life, Water is Sacred." Led by LaDonna Brave Bull Allard, the water protectors organized at Standing Rock were comprised of Standing Rock Lakota Sioux tribal members in conjunction with peoples from more than 280 Indigenous Nations, including former Vice-Presidential candidate Winona LaDuke, and allies such as Bernie Sanders and Leonardo DiCaprio in addition to people from numerous civil rights, environmental, and veterans organizations. Unarmed protestors faced down private security forces and were attacked by security dogs, sprayed with pepper spray, and hosed down with water canons in freezing temperatures by the Morton County Sheriffs Department. Though President Barack Obama made statements in support of a re-routing of the pipeline "in a way that is properly attentive to the traditions of the first Americans," as one of his first acts as President Donald Trump signed an executive memorandum instructing the Army to expedite the review and approval process for the unbuilt section of the Dakota Access Pipeline. As of the writing of this text, DAPL has oil flowing but it is still being litigated.



Figure **11.4.2**: MNI WICONI banner. (CC BY 2.0; Becker1999 via Wikimedia)

Did you know?

Youth led movements such as the Sunrise Movement along with indigenous groups such as IEN are advocating for a Green New Deal (GND) in the United States which would implement a just transition from a fossil fuel based energy economy to a sustainable "green" economy. The GND employs an environmental justice lens that addresses the needs of black, brown, indigenous, and marginalized communities while developing jobs in infrastructure and clean energy. The GND is a plan for one hundred percent clean, renewable energy by 2030 utilizing a carbon tax, a jobs guarantee, free college, single-payer healthcare, and a focus on using public programs.

Media Blackout & Social Media

Just as with the Black Lives Matter movement, social media played a pivotal role in amplifying the call to hopeful protestors who preferred to be called water protectors. Activists noted that the mainstream media was not covering the protests as much as they felt it should. Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, an organization that aims to challenge media bias, noted that by September 7th, 2016, many months into the protests that had already drawn thousands of peaceful supporters that were subject to violence from both private security and local law enforcement, of the three major media outlets ABC, CBS, and NBC, only CBS had aired a lone 48 word segment that ran at 4 a.m. Independent journalist and host of Democracy Now!, Amy Goodman said of the apparent media Blackout,

It is astounding how little coverage they have gotten over these months. But this very much goes in lockstep with a lack of coverage of climate change. Add to it a group of people who are marginalized by the corporate media, Native Americans, and you have a combination that vanishes them. And yet these protests have only intensified, the resistance camps have only grown over the months, without the media megaphone of the corporate media.

Goodman herself was present at the protests, and had a warrant issued for her arrest alleging that she participated in a "riot." This shows that while "the revolution will not be televised," it may end up being tweeted instead.



Video 11.4.3: "Gil Scott Heron: The Revolution Will Not Be Televised with lyrics." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Jeremy Alexander via YouTube)

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Boundless) (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Levin, S. (2016). Judge rejects riot charges for journalist amy goodman after oil pipeline protest. *The Guardian*.
- Naurackas, J. (2016). Dakota access Blackout continues on abc, nbc news. *Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting*.

This page titled 11.4: Indigenous Sovereignty and Environmental Justice is shared under a CC BY-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **11.4: Indigenous Sovereignty and Environmental Justice** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

11.5: White Nationalism

"Free White Persons"

The Nationality Act of 1790 granted naturalization and citizenship in the United States to "free white persons" only and as we covered in Chapter 6.1, immigration policies have kept the country largely white. However, by 2050, the U.S. is projected to become a majority-minority country, discussed further in Chapter 12.5. Across U.S. history, some whites have met changes towards diversity and integration with violence and state legislation designed to restrict and prevent equal opportunity and advancement for all. In recent years, **white nationalism** (the belief that the United States should be a white ethnostate or white nation-state) has experienced a resurgence as populist attitudes, right-wing political beliefs, and anti-immigrant sentiment have been spurred on by an increasingly globalized world and changing racial landscape. White nationalists see themselves as protecting the Western world from non-white invasion and theft of resources and national identity which has shaped recent political campaigns in the U.S. that deploy "anti-globalist" and anti-immigrant rhetoric (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016).

Radicalization Online

In 1995, there were only a few hate groups online; today there are hundreds. The internet is a low-cost and efficient medium with which to amplify the white nationalist message. According to hate group expert Mark Potok,

> The internet is allowing the white supremacy movement to reach into places it has never reached before -- middle and upper middle-class, college bound teens. The movement is terribly interested in developing the leadership cadre of tomorrow...The movement is interested not so much in developing street thugs who beat up people in bars, but [in] college-bound teens who live in middle-class and upper-class homes (Swain, 2004).

Many of these websites present with informational resources where one can learn about American history and society. In fact, until recently one such site (stormfront.org) had a page dedicated to the "true historical examination" of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that depicted him as a communist, a drunk, and a rapist. The site also provided a link to download flyers which visitors were invited to distribute at their schools (Lee & Leets, 2002). Additionally, with the advent of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), radicalization has spiraled in the last several years. As explained in the 2020 documentary (see trailer below in Video 12.5.1), The Social Dilemma, technology via social media connects us but also controls us, divides us, monetizes us, manipulates us, polarizes us, distracts us, and divides us, to the point that former technology executives and designers predict a civil war as a result of the radicalization online.



Video **11.5.1**: "The Social Dilemma | Official Trailer | Netflix." (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; NetFlix via YouTube)

Mainstreamers, Vanguardists & Alt-right

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center there are two major categories for pursuing a white enthnostate: **mainstreaming** and **vanguardism**. Mainstreamers seek to obtain power through an infiltration of traditional political institutions. The goal is to

access positions that would put white nationalists in control of resources that could help to exclude and further marginalize non-whites such as instituting anti-immigration policies and eliminating social welfare programs.

Vanguardists take a more radical position that encourages a violent overthrow and seek to antagonize society towards a race-war and what they believe to be the inevitable collapse of America.

A third, more recent development merges these two styles and has come to be referred to as the "alt-right." Alt-right tactics focus on online activism in the form of "shitposting," meme making, and online harassment.



Figure **11.5.2*a***; Alt-right. "Alt-Right" (CC BY 2.0; Mike Licht, NotionsCapital.com via Flickr) Figure **11.5.2*b***; Donald Trump Alt-right supporter. "Donald Trump alt-right supporter" (CC BY 2.0; Fibonacci Blue via Wikimedia)

Unite the Right Rally

On the weekend of August 11, 2017, an estimated five hundred white supremacists and neo-Nazi's marched in the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia, decrying the proposed removal of a Robert E. Lee statue and chanting "Jews will not replace us!" and "Blood and soil!" They also chanted nationalist slogans representing Nazi Germany's ideal of a "racially" defined national body. Unlike the Ku Klux Klan which traditionally wears white robes and pointed hoods to conceal their identity, the participants in the "Unite the Right" rally donned tiki torches, white polo shirts and khaki slacks, uniforms that are linked to far-right groups such as Vanguard America and Identity Evropa, which has since rebranded as the American Identity Movement. The purpose of these strict fashion choices are to help the members distance themselves from their historical ideological roots and appear more mainstream and palatable to the broader public.



Figure **11.5.3**: Charlottesville "Unite the Right" rally. (CC BY 2.0; Anthony Crider via Wikimedia)

The following day, an estimated 1,000 counter-protestors, many of whom were ordinary residents of Charlottesville while others were part of more organized efforts from the faith-based groups, civil rights organizations, local businesses, and faculty and students at the University of Virginia, gathered to voice their disapproval of the rally. Tragically, one white protestor, Heather Heyer, 32, died when James Alex Fields Jr. plowed his car into a crowd of peaceful counter-protestors. In what some have argued is a lightly veiled approval of the rally's demands, President Trump remarked that "there were very fine people" on both sides of the

protests spurring more debate on whether President Trump is a white nationalist himself, though he claimed he was merely voicing support for the defense of the Robert E. Lee statue (Kessler, 2020).

January 6, 2021

While most of the thousands of protesters were peaceful, an extreme incidence of violent domestic terrorism occurred on January 6, 2021 as alt-right, paramilitary and white supremacists stormed the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. Orchestrated by the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys, the violent protesters responded to the online, social media calls to "stop the steal," the (false) reference to President Biden stealing the election from former President Donald Trump - despite the fact that 7 million more Americans voted for Biden who also won the electoral college vote. Hundreds of individuals have been arrested for the violence in the Capitol, violence that was broadcast worldwide, including through the protesters' social media accounts, which in turn led to their tracking and arrests. The deaths of 5 individuals were attributed to the insurrection of January 6, and former President Trump was tried for impeachment in the House and Senate, though the latter fell short of the required 67 votes to impeach. National intelligence experts warn of the increasing threat of domestic violent terrorism, from both the political right and left, pose to our national security. Further, the fragility of our democracy was evidenced in this fateful event.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)

References

- Bonikowski, B. & DiMaggio, P. (2016). Varieties of american popular nationalism. *American Sociological Review 81*(5): 949-980.
- Kessler, G. (2020, May 8). The "very fine people" at charlottesville: who were they? *The Washington Post.*
- Lee, E. & Leets, L. (2002). Persuasive storytelling by hate groups online: examining its effects on adolescents, *American Behavioral Scientist 45*, 927-957.
- McDermott, A. (1999, February 23). White hate group websites on the rise. *CNN.*
- Swain, C.M. (2004) *The New white Nationalism in America: Its Challenge to Integration.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

This page titled 11.5: White Nationalism is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **11.5: White Nationalism** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

11.6: Solidarity and Intersectionality

While each one of the movements covered in this chapter has specific identities that were central, in reality, social movements centering around race have intersecting dynamics, especially around social class and gender. For example, it is notable that the founders and most prominent leaders of Black Lives Matter are Black women: Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Khan-Cullors. Two out of these three women identify as queer. This is in stark contrast to the Civil Rights Movement which was characterized by patriarchal power structures and primarily male figureheads (Kuumba, 2002). The historical mis-remembering of Rosa Parks as simply a Black woman whose feet were tired after a long day of work exemplifies the sidelining of Black women's role in advancing the cause through the Montgomery Bus Boycott - despite male leaders' dismissal of the tactic. Rosa Parks in her own words: "People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically … No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in" (Theo-Harris, 2018).

Similarly, the fight against building oil pipelines on Indian reservations has implications for the drinking water of millions of non-Native people and on the climate and global population as a whole. Environmental injustice harms not just one marginalized group but many in addition to poor whites, so calls for justice require solidarity across these categories of identity (Mohai, Pellow & Roberts, 2009). We have seen how pivotal social media and media coverage is to amplifying these causes and most importantly, bringing diverse people together for the same cause. Dr. King, a sociologist in his own right, understood the importance of appealing to allies and what are commonly referred to today in the movements as "accomplices" or "co-conspirators," or individuals engaged in proactive behavior that helps support the movement or cause, which is why he was willing to lead a group of peaceful protestors from Selma to Montgomery to demand voting rights for African Americans despite the risks of physical violence and brutalization from law enforcement and white terrorists, in part because he understood that the national broadcasting of these images would draw empathy from otherwise privileged and unengaged audiences (Powell & Kelly, 2017). Though the march started with only 2,000 participants, ultimately 50,000 supporters from across the country joined in the efforts. Similarly, when tribal historian LaDonna Brave Bull Allard put out the call for supporters to join the prayer camp at Standing Rock, it swelled to thousands. Those who could not travel supported through online fundraising campaigns and donated supplies such as blankets, heavy jackets, and camping supplies to the encampment. Allard thanked the "keyboard warriors" who amplified the cause via social media and despite the mainstream media blackout, many became aware of their struggles against the Dakota Access Pipeline through these acts of solidarity and online activism (Democracy Now!, 2020). Likewise, the 2020 summer protests following the police lynching of George Floyd were comprised of a diverse collective, of mostly young people in the U.S. and internationally, in which signs read, "Latinos for Black Lives," "White Silence is Violence," "Filipinos for Black Power," and "Queer and Black Trans Lives Matter."



Figure 11.6.1: "Black Trans Lives Matter" (CC BY 2.0; alecperkins via Flickr)

The immigrants rights movement in the United States also opens up intersectional discourse of the U.S. role abroad and questions of militarism, global capitalism, and even the impact of the "War on Drugs" on not only poor communities of color in the U.S. but in other nations. Reflecting on the work of artivist Julio Salgado, featured in Chapter 8.3, the intersection of undocumented and

LGBTQIA+ statuses led to a new term, Undocuqeer. Pointing back to Chapter 1.1 and a century ago, W.E.B. Du Bois highlighted that the "problem of the color line" is not just specific to the experience in the United States, rather it is an issue of global importance. As we seek to improve race relations domestically, it is vital to take a global intersectional perspective that does not make invisibile the experiences of the "third" or exploited world (Mohanty, 1984). Racial hierarchy and division was historically constructed as a tool to disempower and dominate, so any attempt to challenge such structures requires an intersectional perspective that can strengthen movements and highlight the need for solidarity and awareness among members of various oppressed and dominant groups, with the aim to improve the human condition.



Figure **11.6.2**: "London Refugee Solidarity March" (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Manos Simonides via Flickr)

A final example of solidarity and intersectionality can be understood on a local level in Long Beach, California. A grass-roots coalition of nearly 20 community groups created the People's State of the City in 2013, as a way of drawing attention to experiences of marginalized groups living and working in the city - as their issues were generally not addressed by the local power structure. Video 11.6.3 provides an excerpt from the 2016 People's State of the City, a glimpse at the solidarity and intersectionality of diverse groups such as East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, Unite! Here Local 11 (hotel workers), Californians for Justice (educational justice), Mentoring Youth Through Empowerment (a program of the LGBTQ Center), and Khmer Girls in Action. The People's State of the City emphasizes "people power" and giving voice to lived experiences of people of color in the city.



Video **11.6.3**: 2016 Long Beach People's State of the City. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; LAANE via YouTube)

Key Takeaways

- Undocumented immigrants continue to fight for citizenship and find natural allies in the community members they have built social connections with.

- Black Lives Matter formed in 2014 in response to the vigilante violence that killed Trayvon Martin and has grown to incorporate a wider critique of the racist criminal justice system and systemic racism and anti-blackness in the U.S. and around the world.
- Indigenous rights and sovereignty are intertwined with environmental justice causes.
- White supremacists continue to pose the greatest threat to public safety in the 21st century and the threats are amplified by internet communications and widening wealth inequality.
- Multi-racial solidarity remains the key to combating racism and economic oppression.

Contributors and Attributions

- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Johnson, Shaheen. (Long Beach City College)

Works Cited

- Democracy Now! (2020). *A dream that comes true: standing rock elder hails order to shut down dapl after years of protest.* [Video]. YouTube.
- Mohai, P., Pellow, D., & Roberts, J.T. (2009). Environmental justice. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, *34*, 405-430.
- Mohanty, C. (1984). Under western eyes: feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. *Boundary 2*, *12/13*, 333-358.
- Powell, J. & Kelly, A. (2017). Accomplices in the academy in the age of Black lives matter. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis*, *6*(2).
- Theo-Harris, J. (2018). *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

This page titled 11.6: Solidarity and Intersectionality is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **11.6: Solidarity and Intersectionality** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

12: Policies and Future of Race-Ethnic Relations

12.1: Introduction

12.2: Affirmative Action

12.3: Reparations

12.4: Immigration

12.5: The Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States

This page titled 12: Policies and Future of Race-Ethnic Relations is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

12.1: Introduction

Where Are We Now?

In 1903 sociologist W.E.B Du Bois wrote in his classic book The Souls of Black Folk that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line.” Now that we have examined race and ethnicity in the United States, what have we found? Where do we stand 118 years after Du Bois wrote about the problem of the color line?

On the one hand, there is cause for hope. Legal segregation is gone. The vicious, “old-fashioned” racism that was so rampant in this country into the 1960's has declined dramatically since that tumultuous time. People of color have made important gains in several spheres of life, such as occupying some important elected positions in and outside of the South, a feat that would have been unimaginable a generation ago. Perhaps most notably, Barack Obama has African ancestry and identifies as African American, and on his election night people across the country wept with joy at the symbolism of his victory. Certainly progress has been made in U.S. racial and ethnic relations.

On the other hand, there is also cause for despair. In the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd in 2020, demands for racial justice and reform were pervasive as hundreds of thousands of people protested all over the country. These demands highlighted the work that remains to be done. The old fashioned racism has been replaced by a modern, symbolic racism that still blames people of color for their problems and reduces public support for government policies designed to address their struggles. Institutional discrimination and racial profiling remains pervasive, and hate crimes remain all too common.

Over one hundred years after W.E.B Du Bois wrote about the problem of the color line, racial and ethnic inequality remains a persistent and pervasive issue in the United States. Therefore, the question of how to achieve racial and ethnic equality is an important one. How do we promote equality in an unequal world? One suggestion is to encourage policies, practices and laws rooted in equity.



Figure 12.1.1: Equity! (CC BY-NC 2.0; City of Seattle Community Tech via Flickr)

Equity vs. Equality

Equality entails giving everyone the exact same resources. **Equity** entails directly addressing barriers to equality while also providing intentional support, specifically to groups who have been historically and systematically disadvantaged. It is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups (Armstrong, 2019). What is the difference between equity and equality? Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things.



Video **12.1.2**: Why Equity Matters in Education. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (Fair Use; Education Northwest via YouTube)

The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed in order to achieve true equality (Armstrong, 2019). Efforts in achieving equality that do not specifically address the existing gaps in opportunities and resources that exist between racial and ethnic groups in the United States only serve to recreate and reproduce the existing inequalities.

In the past decade, equity has been infused into the dialog of higher education. According to the Center for Urban Education (CUE), equity refers to achieving parity in student educational outcomes, regardless of race and ethnicity. Further, equity moves beyond issues of access to higher education and centers instead success outcomes for students of color. (Student success outcomes may be measured by completing a course with a passing grade, completing a degree or certificate, transferring to a 4-year university).

Many institutions of higher education, including faculty members, have strived for **equity-mindedness**: the perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by practitioners who call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes (CUE). Rather than place the blame of unequal student outcomes on the shoulders of students, equity-minded practitioners instead take personal and institutional responsibility for the success of their students and strive to critically reassess their own practices. To become equity-minded requires that practitioners are race-conscious and aware of the socio-historical context of exclusionary practices within United States higher education (CUE). In finality, in order to achieve equity, or equality of outcomes, students must be provided additional resources and support to counter the inequality they have experienced in their previous schooling, socialization, and life experiences.

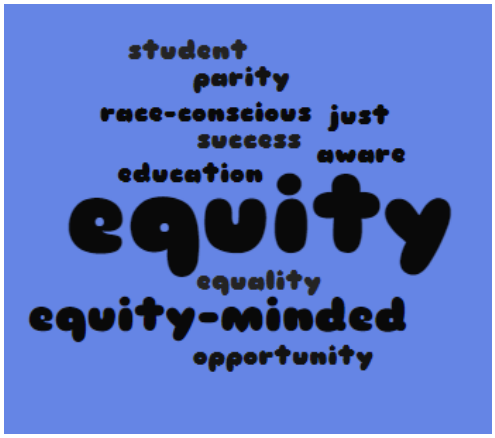


Figure **12.1.3**: Equity Word Cloud generated by Janét Hund.

In the following sections, we will focus our attention on the status of some of the equity-driven policies in the United States, namely affirmative action and reparations.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Hund, Janét. (Long Beach City College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Armstrong, K. (2019). *What Exactly is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?* National Association of Colleges and Employers.
- Center for Urban Education. (n.d.). Equity and Student Success.

This page titled 12.1: Introduction is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **12.1: Introduction** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

12.2: Affirmative Action

Affirmative action refers to the equitable treatment of minorities and women in employment and education. Affirmative action programs were begun in the 1960's to provide people of color and women access to jobs and education to make up for past discrimination. President John F. Kennedy was the first known official to use the term, when he signed an executive order in 1961 ordering federal contractors to “take affirmative action” in ensuring that applicants are hired and treated without regard to their race and national origin. Six years later, President Lyndon B. Johnson added sex, race and national origin as demographic categories for which affirmative action should be used. Johnson gave a very famous speech about it in 1965:

You do not take a person who has been hobbled by chains, liberate him, bring him up to the starting line, and then tell him that he's free to race against all the others and still justly believe that you have been completely fair (Le, 2001).

Although many affirmative action programs remain in effect today, court rulings, state legislation, and other efforts have limited their number and scope. Despite this curtailment, affirmative action continues to spark much controversy, with scholars, members of the public, and elected officials all holding strong views on the issue (Cohen & Sterba, 2003; Karr, 2008; Wise, 2005). One area in particular that has been a subject of much debate, is college admissions.

One of the major court rulings on affirmative action, was the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978). Allan Bakke was a 35 year old white man who had twice been rejected for admission into the medical school at the University of California, Davis. At the time he applied, UC Davis had a policy of reserving 16 seats in its entering class of 100 for qualified people of color to make up for their underrepresentation in the medical profession. Bakke’s college grades and scores on the Medical College Admission Test were higher than those of the people of color admitted to UC Davis either time Bakke applied. He sued for admission on the grounds that his rejection amounted to reverse racial discrimination on the basis of his being white (Stefoff, 2005).

The case eventually reached the Supreme Court, which ruled 5–4 that Bakke must be admitted into the UC Davis medical school because he had been unfairly denied admission on the basis of his race. As part of its historic but complex decision, the Court thus rejected the use of strict racial quotas in admission as it declared that no applicant could be excluded based solely on the applicant’s race. At the same time, however, the Court also declared that race may be used as one of the several criteria that admissions committees consider when making their decisions. For example, if an institution desires racial diversity among its students, it may use race as an admissions criterion along with other factors such as grades and test scores.

The most recent debate over affirmative action came in 2014, when Students for Fair Admissions, representing a group of Asian-American students rejected by Harvard, filed a lawsuit against the University. The students challenged Harvard's admissions process, arguing that Harvard caps the number of spots available to Asian students and claiming that the only way to truly ensure that Asian Americans stand an equal chance in admissions is if race is completely removed from the process. In 2019 a federal judge ruled that Harvard could legally consider a person’s race in the application process to create a more diverse student body, thus upholding affirmative action. The case was appealed by Students for Fair Admissions, and is expected to go before the Supreme Court.

Opponents of affirmative action cite several reasons for opposing it. Affirmative action, they say, is reverse discrimination and, as such, is both illegal and immoral. Opponents of affirmative action argue that the people benefiting from affirmative action are less qualified than many of the whites with whom they compete for employment and college admissions. In addition, opponents say, affirmative action implies that the people benefiting from it need extra help and thus are indeed less qualified. This implication stigmatizes the groups benefiting from affirmative action.



Figure 12.2.1: Working together as a team. (CC PDM 1.0; RawPixel via LifeofPix)

In response proponents of affirmative action give several reasons for favoring it. Many say it is needed to make up not just for past discrimination and lack of opportunities for people of color but also for ongoing discrimination and lack of opportunity. For example, because of their social networks, whites are much better able than people of color to find out about and to get jobs (Reskin, 1998). If this is true, people of color are automatically at a disadvantage in the job market, and some form of affirmative action is needed to give them an equal chance at employment. Proponents also say that affirmative action helps add diversity to the workplace and to the campus. Many colleges, they note, give some preference to high school students who live in a distant state in order to add needed diversity to the student body; to "legacy" students—those with a parent who went to the same institution—to reinforce alumni loyalty and to motivate alumni to donate to the institution; and to athletes, musicians, and other applicants with certain specialized talents and skills. If all of these forms of preferential admission make sense, proponents say, it also makes sense to take students' racial and ethnic backgrounds into account as admissions officers strive to have a diverse student body. Further, proponents argue that claims of reverse discrimination are emotion-based not fact-based.

Proponents add that affirmative action has indeed succeeded in expanding employment and educational opportunities for people of color, and that individuals benefiting from affirmative action have generally fared well in the workplace or on the campus. In this regard research finds that African American students graduating from selective U.S. colleges and universities after being admitted under affirmative action guidelines are slightly more likely than their white counterparts to obtain professional degrees and to become involved in civic affairs (Bowen & Bok, 1998).

As this brief discussion indicates, several reasons exist for and against affirmative action. A cautious view is that affirmative action may not be perfect but that some form of it is needed to make up for past and ongoing discrimination and lack of opportunity in the workplace and on the campus. Without the extra help that affirmative action programs give disadvantaged people of color, the discrimination and other difficulties they face are certain to continue. The timeline of U.S. Supreme Court decisions pertaining to affirmative action provides an understanding of how the Court has shaped affirmative action policy and practice - and will likely continue to do so in the future.



Figure 12.2.2: "Supreme Court" (CC BY 2.0; TexasGOPVote.com via Flickr)

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Bowen, W.G., & Bok, D.C. (1998). *The Shape of the River: Long-term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Cohen, C., & Sterba, J.P. (2003). *Affirmative Action and Racial Preference: A Debate*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Karr, J. (Ed.). (2008). *Affirmative Action*. Detroit, MI: Greenhaven Press.
- Le, C.N. (2001). Affirmative action and asian americans. *Asian-Nation: The Landscape of Asian America.*
- Reskin, B.F. (1998). *Realities of Affirmative Action in Employment*. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- Stefoff, R. (2005). *The Bakke Case: Challenging Affirmative Action*. New York, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark.
- Wise, T.J. (2005) *Affirmative Action: Racial Preference in Black and white*. New York, NY: Routledge.

This page titled 12.2: Affirmative Action is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **12.2: Affirmative Action** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

12.3: Reparations

Racism has caused tremendous harm to many racial and ethnic groups in the United States. Many argue that in order to advance equity, this harm merits a response. One proposed solution involves providing compensation for victims of racism. **Reparations** refers to the act of repairing damage and providing restitution for past harms. One example of reparations in the United States is the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which acknowledged that a great injustice had been committed against Japanese Americans when they were interned during World War II. The act mandated that Congress pay each living victim of internment $20,000 in reparations.



Figure **12.3.1**: "Poston, Arizona Relocation Camp for Japanese-Americans" (CC PDM 1.0; (Hikaru Iwasaki) pingnews.com via Flickr)

Although most of the discussion around reparations is focused on the financial aspect, it is important to note that there are other very important components to a program of reparations. The first of these is recognition. Recognition involves society's acknowledgment of the anger, hurt, injustice and material loss caused by racism, and how these wrong doings continue to affect people's lives today (Yamamoto, 2009). This recognition extends to the specific experiences of racial and ethnic groups in the United States, such as how African Americans feel about slavery, Native Americans about genocide, and Japanese Americans about internment.

The second component of reparations is responsibility. This involves acknowledging that someone is responsible for the harms inflicted on racial and ethnic groups in the United States (Yamamoto, 2009). The question of responsibility often comes up with regard to slavery. Who is responsible? Individual slave owners? Their descendants? The United States government? Many are calling for reparations for African Americans. Proponents claim this would not only address the harms of slavery, but also of Jim Crow laws and ongoing discrimination in employment, housing, education, the criminal justice system etc. Opponents argue that descendants of enslaved people did not experience the oppression of slavery, noting that reparations were given to Japanese American survivors of internment during WWII, not their descendants. Another argument against reparations suggests that reparations for one group (e.g. African Americans) will open up the door for other groups (e.g. Native Americans and Mexican Americans, groups who lost land during the expansion of Manifest Destiny).

Finally, there is the question of the reparations themselves. These reparations could take the form of direct cash transfers. However, reparations do not only have to mean sending checks. In fact, many argue that reparations in the form of a one time payment, will not address the systemic barriers that continue to impact people of color. Reparations could also involve any or all of the following:

- Full and free access to college education
- Guaranteed minimum livable income
- Community development funds
- Land grants

- Construction of monuments and museums honoring the history of communities of color
- Legislation mandating ethnic studies curriculum
- Legislation that requires the government to acknowledge racial injustice and execute a plan to address its impact

According to The Movement for Black Lives, "The government, responsible corporations and other institutions that have profited off of the harm they have inflicted on Black people — from colonialism to slavery through food and housing redlining, mass incarceration, and surveillance — must repair the harm done" (2021). The harm inflicted on Black Americans ranges from the TransAtlantic Slave Trade to chattel slavery (intergenerational slavery for life) to Jim Crow to the War on Drugs to police terror/violence to redlining to poverty to health inequities to unemployment to incarceration (The Movement for Black Lives, 2021).



Video **12.3.2**: Ta-Nehisi Coates' full opening statement on reparations at House hearing. Author Ta-Nehisi Coates told lawmakers at a House committee hearing that the debate over reparations is "a dilemma of inheritance." Coates called out Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for saying a day earlier that reparations were not "a good idea" because no one who is currently living is responsible. Coates told lawmakers that many of the inequalities created by slavery persist today, including in the form of economic and health disparities. (Close-captioning and other YouTube settings will appear once the video starts.) (CC PDM 1.0; PBS (Public Broadcasting Service) NewsHour via YouTube)

In The Case for Reparations, TaNehisi Coates writes,

What I'm talking about is more than recompense for past injustices—more than a handout, a payoff, hush money, or a reluctant bribe. What I'm talking about is a national reckoning that would lead to spiritual renewal. Reparations would mean the end of scarfing hot dogs on the Fourth of July while denying the facts of our heritage. Reparations would mean the end of yelling "patriotism" while waving a Confederate flag. Reparations would mean a revolution of the American consciousness, a reconciling of our self-image as the great democratizer with the facts of our history...But I believe that wrestling publicly with these questions matters as much as—if not more than—the specific answers that might be produced. An America that asks what it owes its most vulnerable citizens is improved and humane. An America that looks away is ignoring not just the sins of the past but the sins of the present and the certain sins of the future. More important than any single check cut to any African American, the payment of reparations would represent America's maturation out of the childhood myth of its innocence into a wisdom worthy of its founders.

In this expose, Coates reminds the reader that Representative John Conyers introduced (for 25 years straight) a bill, now called House Resolution 40 or the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act, to study slavery and its lingering effects was never even voted on in Congress. Sponsored most recently in 2019 by Representative Shelia Jackson Lee, this bill has never received a vote. Coates has questioned why. Why couldn't a bill simply to study reparations ever get to a vote, let alone be passed?

Perhaps the racial reckoning appeals from the summer 2020 multiracial protests throughout the U.S. (and the world) against the police killing of George Floyd may usher into the U.S. a similar kind of response that Germany provided post WWII. Despite initial resistance to provide reparations for the inhumane harm inflicted upon Jewish people by Nazi Germany, Germany ultimately provided billions of dollars of reparation payments to Israel in the two decades following the end of the Nazi occupation (Coates, 2014). Though such reparations could never make up for the atrocious murder of more than 6 million people, Coates offers, "They

did launch Germany's reckoning with itself, and perhaps provided a road map for how a great civilization might make itself worthy of the name."



Figure **12.3.3**: "Israel 2009" (CC BY-SA 2.0; commensaFamily via Flickr)

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)

Works Cited

- Coates, T. (2014, June). The case for reparations. *The Atlantic.*
- The Movement for Black Lives. (2021). *Policy Platforms: Reparations.* The Movement for Black Lives.
- Yamamoto, E. (2009). *Interracial Justice: Conflict and Reconciliation in Post Civil Rights America*. New York: New York University Press.

This page titled 12.3: Reparations is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **12.3: Reparations** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

12.4: Immigration

Since the 1980s, large numbers of immigrants have entered the United States from countries in Asia, Latin America, and elsewhere. This new wave of immigration has had important consequences for American social, economic, and political life (Dinnerstein & Reimers, 2009; Waters & Ueda, 2007).

One of the most important consequences is competition over jobs. The newcomers have tended to move into the large cities on the East and West Coasts and in the southwestern region of the country. At the same time, eastern and western cities were losing jobs as manufacturing and other industries moved South or overseas. The new immigrants thus began competing with native-born Americans for increasingly scarce jobs. Their increasing numbers also prompted native-born whites to move out of these cities in a search for all-white neighborhoods. As they did so, they left behind them neighborhoods that were increasingly segregated among ethnic lines.

Many Americans take a dim view of immigration. In a 2009 Gallup Poll, 50% of Americans thought that immigration should be decreased, 32% thought it should stay at its present level, and only 14% thought it should be increased (Morales, 2009). As the text notes, fear of job competition is a primary reason for the concern that Americans show about immigration. Yet another reason might be their fear that immigration raises the crime rate. A 2007 Gallup Poll asked whether immigrants are making "the situation in the country better or worse, or not having much effect" for the following dimensions of our national life: food, music and the arts; the economy; social and moral values; job opportunities; taxes; and the crime situation. The percentage of respondents saying "worse" was higher for the crime situation (58%) than for any other dimension. Only 4% of respondents said that immigration has made the crime situation better (Newport, 2007).

However, research conducted by sociologists and criminologists finds that these 4% are in fact correct: immigrants have lower crime rates than native-born Americans, and immigration has apparently helped lower the U.S. crime rate (Immigration Policy Center, 2008; Sampson, 2008;Vélez, 2006). What accounts for this surprising consequence? One reason is that immigrant neighborhoods tend to have many small businesses, churches, and other social institutions that help ensure neighborhood stability and, in turn, lower crime rates. A second reason is that the bulk of recent immigrants are Latinos, who tend to have high marriage rates and strong family ties, both of which again help ensure lower crime rates (Vélez, 2006). A final reason may be that undocumented immigrants hardly want to be deported and thus take extra care to obey the law by not committing street crime (Immigration Research Library, 2008).

Reinforcing the immigration-lower crime conclusion, other research also finds that immigrants' crime rates rise as they stay in the United States longer. Apparently, as the children of immigrants become more "Americanized," their criminality increases. As one report concluded, "The children and grandchildren of many immigrants—as well as many immigrants themselves the longer they live in the United States—become subject to economic and social forces that increase the likelihood of criminal behavior" (Rumbaut & Ewing, 2007, p. 11).

As the United States continues to address immigration policy, it is important that the public and elected officials have the best information possible about the effects of immigration. The findings by sociologists and other social scientists that immigrants have lower crime rates and that immigration has apparently helped lower the U.S. crime rate add an important dimension to the ongoing debate over immigration policy.



Figure 12.4.1: "Very well, then - you're all deported!" (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Michael Harren via Flickr)

One other impact of the new wave of immigration has been increased prejudice and discrimination against the new immigrants. As noted earlier, the history of the United States is filled with examples of prejudice and discrimination against immigrants. Such problems seem to escalate as the number of immigrants increases. The past two decades have been no exception to this pattern. As the large numbers of immigrants moved into the United States, blogs and other media became filled with anti-immigrant comments, and hate crimes against immigrants increased. As one report summarized this trend,

There's no doubt that the tone of the raging national debate over immigration is growing uglier by the day. Once limited to hard-core white supremacists and a handful of border-state extremists, vicious public denunciations of undocumented brown-skinned immigrants are increasingly common among supposedly mainstream anti-immigration activists, radio hosts, and politicians. Most notably, President Trump's platform during his campaign to build a border wall between the United States and Mexico. While their dehumanizing rhetoric typically stops short of openly sanctioning bloodshed, much of it implicitly encourages or even endorses violence by characterizing immigrants from Mexico and Central America as "invaders," "criminal aliens," and "cockroaches."

The results are no less tragic for being predictable: although hate crime statistics are highly unreliable, numbers that are available strongly suggest a marked upswing in racially motivated violence against all Latinos, regardless of immigration status (Mock, 2007).

Meanwhile, the new immigrants have included thousands who are undocumented. Many are detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in local jails, federal prisons, and other detention facilities. Immigrants who are in the United States legally but then get arrested for minor infractions are often also detained in these facilities to await deportation. It is estimated that ICE detains about 300,000 immigrants of both kinds every year. Human rights organizations say that all of these immigrants suffer from lack of food, inadequate medical care, and beatings; that many are being detained indefinitely; and that their detention proceedings lack due process.



Figure 12.4.2: "IMMIGRATION REFORM" (CC BY-ND 2.0; occupyreno_media via Flickr)

Moving forward, immigration policy is proving to be an important priority for President Biden. While the Trump presidency was characterized by the building of the wall on the southern border, the Muslim ban, caged families at the border, a dramatic decline in accepting refugees and asylees, and a general anti-immigration/America First stance, the Biden presidency is entertaining a comprehensive immigration reform bill to provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented individuals, strengthen labor protections, prioritize smart border controls, and address root causes of migration (The White House, 2021). This reform bill would be the first of its kind since the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, discussed earlier in Chapter 3.5 and Chapter 8.5. Critics of Biden's plan argue it will increase the flow of undocumented immigrants into the country and reward individuals who have not followed immigration laws. As the Pew Research Center study authored by Colby & Ortman (2015) predicts that the growth rate of the foreign born will reach 19% of the U.S. population in 2060, up from 13% in 2014, the question will be: what type of rights and experiences will these immigrants have in the United States?

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Colby, S.L. & Ortman, J.M. (2015). Projections of the size and composition of the u.s. population: 2014 to 2060. *U.S. Census.*
- Dinnerstein, L., & Reimers, D.M. (2009). *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Immigration Policy Center. (2008, September 10). From anecdotes to evidence: Setting the record straight on immigrants and crime. *Immigration Research Library.*
- Mock, B. (2007). Immigration backlash: Hate crimes against Latinos flourish. *Immigration Research Library.*
- Morales, L. (2009, August 5). Americans return to tougher immigration stance. *Gallup.com.*
- Newport, F. (2007, July 13). Americans have become more negative on impact of immigrants. *Gallup.com.*
- Rumbaut, R.G., & Ewing, W.A. (2007). The myth of immigrant criminality and the paradox of assimilation: Incarceration rates among native and foreign-born men. *American Immigration Council*.
- Sampson, R.J. (2008). Rethinking crime and immigration. *Contexts, 7 (*2), 28–33.
- The White House. (2021, January 20). *Fact Sheet: President Biden Sends Immigration Bill to Congress as Part of His Commitment to Modernize our Immigration System.*
- Vélez, M.B. (2006). Toward an understanding of the lower rates of homicide in Latino versus Black neighborhoods: A look at Chicago. In J. Hagen, R. Peterson, & L. Krivo (Eds.), *The Many Colors of Crime: Inequalities of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America* (pp. 91-107), New York: New York University Press.

- Waters, M.C., & Ueda, R. (Eds.). (2007). *The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration since 1965*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

This page titled 12.4: Immigration is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **12.4: Immigration** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

12.5: The Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States

The U.S. racial and ethnic landscape is expected to change dramatically during the next few decades. Figure **12.5.1** shows the racial and ethnic distribution in the United States in 2008 and the projected distribution for the year 2050. Whereas about two-thirds of the country in 2008 consisted of whites of European backgrounds, in 2050 only about 46% of the country is expected to be non-Latino white, with Latinos making the greatest gains of all the other racial and ethnic groups. On the other side of the coin, people of color now constitute about one-third of the country but their numbers will increase to about 54% of the country in 2050 (Roberts, 2008).

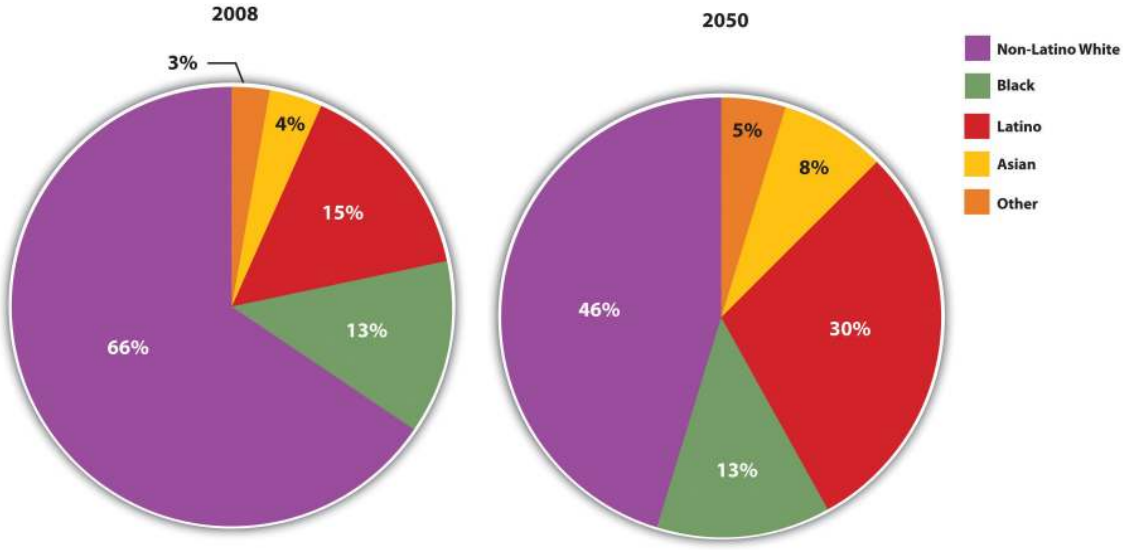


Figure **12.5.1**: Racial and Ethnic Composition of the United States, 2008 and 2050 (Projected). (*Data from Roberts, S. (2008, August 14). In a generation, minorities may be the U.S. majority. The New York Times, p. A1.)*

Three decades from now, then, whites, the dominant racial group today in terms of power and privilege, will constitute less than half the country. This is also referred to as becoming a **majority-minority nation**, meaning majority people of color. It is difficult at this early date to predict what difference this demographic shift will mean for racial and ethnic relations in the United States.

These shifting demographics make it even more urgent that individuals in their daily lives and the local, state, and federal governments in their policies do everything possible to foster mutual understanding and to eliminate individual and institutional discrimination. In the democracy that is America, we must try to do better so that there will truly be “liberty and justice for all.” If not, we are doomed to repeat the experiences of the past.



Figure 12.5.2: Love! (CC BY-NC 2.0; Peg Hunter via Flickr)

Conclusion

As the United States attempts, however haltingly, to reduce racial and ethnic inequality, sociology has much insight to offer in its emphasis on the structural basis for this inequality. This emphasis strongly indicates that racial and ethnic inequality has much less to do with any personal faults of people of color than with the structural obstacles they face, including ongoing discrimination and lack of opportunity. Efforts aimed at such obstacles, then, are in the long run essential to reducing racial and ethnic inequality (Danziger, Reed, & Brown, 2004; Loury, 2003; Syme, 2008).

Some of these efforts include the following:

1. Adopt a national “full employment” policy involving federally funded job-training and public-works programs.
2. Increase federal aid for the working poor, including earned income credits and child care subsidies for those with children.
3. Increase the federal and state minimum wage to reflect a living wage.
4. Establish well-funded early-childhood intervention programs.
5. Improve schooling and increase school funding.
6. Provide accessible and affordable health care services for individuals and families.
7. Strengthen affirmative action programs within the limits imposed by court rulings.
8. Strengthen legal enforcement of existing laws forbidding racial and ethnic discrimination in hiring and promotion.
9. Strengthen efforts to reduce residential segregation.
10. Encourage comprehensive criminal justice reform.

Key Takeaways from Chapter 12

- A focus on equity driven programs is key to achieving racial and ethnic equality. Equity entails directly addressing barriers to equality while also providing intentional support, specifically to groups who have been historically and systematically disadvantaged.
- Affirmative action is an equity driven program to provide people of color and women access to jobs and education to make up for past discrimination. Although still in place, legal efforts opposing affirmative action programs have limited their number and

scope.

- Reparations refers to the act of repairing damage and providing restitution for past harms. Reparations in the form of a one time payment was given to Japanese Americans who were interned during World War II. Reparations for the African American community is still advocated for today.
- Themes like crime, competition for jobs, and citizenship status, informed much of the immigration policy during President Trump's term. Reforming immigration policy an important priority for President Biden.
- It is estimated that the United States will be a majority-minority country by 2050. It is difficult at this early date to predict what difference this demographic shift will mean for racial and ethnic relations.

Contributors and Attributions

- Rodriguez, Lisette. (Long Beach City College)
- Tsuhako, Joy. (Cerritos College)
- Sociology (Barkan) (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

Works Cited

- Danziger, S., Reed, D., & Brown, T. (2004). Poverty and prosperity: Prospects for reducing racial/ethnic economic disparities in the United States. Geneva: UNRISD.
- Loury, G.C. (2003). *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Syme, S.L. (2008). Reducing racial and social-class inequalities in health: The need for a new approach. *Health Affairs, 27*, 456–459.
- Roberts, S. (2008, August 14). In a generation, minorities may be the U.S. majority. *The New York Times*, p. A1.

This page titled 12.5: The Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

- **12.5: The Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States** by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako is licensed CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

13: Ancillary Materials

13.1: Powerpoint Presentations
13.2: Test Bank

This page titled 13: Ancillary Materials is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

13.1: Powerpoint Presentations

This page titled 13.1: Powerpoint Presentations is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

13.2: Test Bank

This page titled 13.2: Test Bank is shared under a not declared license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Erika Gutierrez, Janét Hund, Shaheen Johnson, Carlos Ramos, Lisette Rodriguez, & Joy Tsuhako (ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI)) .

Index

A

AB540
3.5: Social Change and Resistance
adultification bias
7.3: Intersectionality
affirmative action
12.2: Affirmative Action
African American family
7.4: Social Institutions
African Americans
7.1: History and Demographics
age stratification
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
American Indian Movement
5.5: Social Change and Resistance
Andry's plantation
7.2: Intergroup Relations
animism
5.4: Social Institutions
Anti Defamation League
10.2: Intergroup Relations
Anti Semitism
10.2: Intergroup Relations
anticipatory socialization
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
assimilation
5.2: Intergroup Relations
asylum seekers
11.2: Immigrant Rights
augmented family structure
7.4: Social Institutions
authoritarian personality
4.3: Discrimination

B

Bering strait theory
5.1: History and Demographics
Black Lives Matter
7.5: Social Change and Resistance
11.3: Black Lives Matter
black sexuality
7.3: Intersectionality
Booker T Washington
7.2: Intergroup Relations
Buffalo Treaty
5.5: Social Change and Resistance
burqa
10.3: Intersectionality

C

chador
10.3: Intersectionality
civil rights movement
7.5: Social Change and Resistance
class consciousness
6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility
collective identity
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
colonization
5.1: History and Demographics
colorism
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
conflict theory
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives
consanguine kin
5.4: Social Institutions
Creole
1.4: Multiracial Americans
critical race theory
2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives
cultural capital
4.1: Socialization and Culture
cultural creation
4.1: Socialization and Culture
cultural genocide
5.2: Intergroup Relations
cultural hegemony
4.1: Socialization and Culture
cultural relativism
1.3: Ethnicity and Religion
Curse of Ham
7.1: History and Demographics

D

DACA
3.5: Social Change and Resistance
de jure discrimination
3.2: Intergroup Relations
discrimination
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
4.5: Social Change and Resistance
DREAM Act
3.5: Social Change and Resistance

E

emigration
3.2: Intergroup Relations
Emmett Till
7.5: Social Change and Resistance
Environmental Theory
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
ethnicity
1.3: Ethnicity and Religion
eugenicide
7.4: Social Institutions
Eurocentrism
6.5: Social Institutions
exchange theory
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination

F

families
3.4: Social Institutions
feminism
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
forced sterilization
7.4: Social Institutions
frustration theory
4.3: Discrimination
functionalism
2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives

G

Gay culture
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
gender
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
gender wage gaps
8.3: Intersectionality
genocide
5.2: Intergroup Relations
Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907
9.2: Intergroup Relations
gentrification
6.5: Social Institutions
9.5: Social Change and Resistance

H

hegemonic ruling class
4.1: Socialization and Culture
hijab
10.3: Intersectionality
hogan
5.4: Social Institutions
hypersegregation
4.5: Social Change and Resistance

I

Iiniiwa
5.5: Social Change and Resistance
immigrant rights
11.2: Immigrant Rights
immigration
3.1: History and Background
3.2: Intergroup Relations
10.5: Social Change and Resistance
Immigration Act of 1924
6.1: History and Demographics
implicit bias
4.4: Racism
incest taboo
5.4: Social Institutions
individual discrimination
4.5: Social Change and Resistance
institutional discrimination
4.5: Social Change and Resistance
institutional racism
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
internal colonialism
5.2: Intergroup Relations

intersectionality
7.3: Intersectionality
8.3: Intersectionality
Islamic Law
10.4: Social Institutions
Islamophobia
3.5: Social Change and Resistance
10.2: Intergroup Relations

J
jihadism
10.4: Social Institutions
Jim Crow
7.2: Intergroup Relations
Jim Crow laws
7.2: Intergroup Relations

K
kinaalda
5.4: Social Institutions

L
land acknowledgement
5.1: History and Demographics
Loving v. Virginia
8.5: Social Change and Resistance

M
macrosociology
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
mainstreaming
11.5: White Nationalism
marginality
1.4: Multiracial Americans
matrilineal descent
5.3: Intersectionality
matrilocal
5.3: Intersectionality
matrix of domination
8.3: Intersectionality
microaggressions
4.4: Racism
microsociology
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
mulatto
1.4: Multiracial Americans
multiracial
1.4: Multiracial Americans
Muslim ban
10.5: Social Change and Resistance

N
Nat Turner
7.2: Intergroup Relations
Nation of Islam
1.3: Ethnicity and Religion
naturalization
3.4: Social Institutions
niqab
10.3: Intersectionality

P
panethnicity
5.5: Social Change and Resistance
paradigms
2.1: What is a Theory?
paternalism
5.2: Intergroup Relations
patrilineal descent
5.3: Intersectionality
Pierre Bourdieu
4.1: Socialization and Culture
pluralism
3.2: Intergroup Relations
prejudice
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
4.3: Discrimination
prophetic testimony
7.4: Social Institutions
pull factors
3.2: Intergroup Relations
push factors
3.2: Intergroup Relations

R
racial exogamy
1.4: Multiracial Americans
racial steering
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
racism
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
4.3: Discrimination
Red Power
5.5: Social Change and Resistance
redlining
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
4.5: Social Change and Resistance
6.5: Social Institutions
Regents of the University of California v. Bakke
12.2: Affirmative Action
rites of passage
5.4: Social Institutions

S
Saartjie Baartman
7.3: Intersectionality
scapegoat theory
4.3: Discrimination
scapegoating
9.2: Intergroup Relations
sedimentation of racial inequality
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
segmented assimilation theory
3.2: Intergroup Relations
sex
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
sexuality
1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality
Shahada
10.4: Social Institutions
shar'ia
10.4: Social Institutions
sharecropping
7.2: Intergroup Relations
slave revolts
7.2: Intergroup Relations
social learning theory
4.3: Discrimination
social location
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
social solidarity
2.1: What is a Theory?
social status
4.1: Socialization and Culture
socializing agents
4.1: Socialization and Culture
sociological imagination
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
state sovereignty
5.5: Social Change and Resistance
status shifting
4.1: Socialization and Culture
steering
6.5: Social Institutions
stereotypes
4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
4.3: Discrimination
symbolic ethnicity
1.3: Ethnicity and Religion
symbolic interactionism
1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination
2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives

T
theory
2.1: What is a Theory?
Tuskegee experiment
7.4: Social Institutions

U
Unite the Right rally
11.5: White Nationalism
United States Customs and Border Protection
3.4: Social Institutions
usufruct rights
5.4: Social Institutions

V
vanguardism
11.5: White Nationalism
vision quest
5.4: Social Institutions

W

WEB DuBois
- 7.2: Intergroup Relations

web of institutional racism
- 1.6: Social Change and Resistance

White Anglo Saxon Protestants
- 6.1: History and Demographics

white ethnics
- 6.1: History and Demographics

white flight
- 6.5: Social Institutions

white nationalism
- 6.6: Social Change and Resistance
- 11.5: White Nationalism

white privilege
- 4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice
- 6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility

white trash
- 6.4: Intersectionality

X

xenophobia
- 3.5: Social Change and Resistance

Y

yellow peril
- 9.2: Intergroup Relations

Z

Zoot Suit riots
- 8.2: Intergroup Relations

Glossary

Glossary

Sample Word 1 | Sample Definition 1

Detailed Licensing

Overview

Title: ETH 202: Racial and Ethnic Relations

Webpages: 89

Applicable Restrictions: Noncommercial, No Derivatives

All licenses found:

- Undeclared: 32.6% (29 pages)
- CC BY-NC-SA 4.0: 22.5% (20 pages)
- CC BY 4.0: 20.2% (18 pages)
- CC BY-SA 4.0: 16.9% (15 pages)
- CC BY-NC 4.0: 5.6% (5 pages)
- CC BY-NC-ND 4.0: 2.2% (2 pages)

By Page

- ETH 202: Racial and Ethnic Relations - *Undeclared*
  - Front Matter - *Undeclared*
    - TitlePage - *Undeclared*
    - InfoPage - *Undeclared*
    - ProgramPage - *Undeclared*
    - Table of Contents - *Undeclared*
    - About the Book and the Authors/Contributors - *Undeclared*
    - Licensing - *Undeclared*
  - 1: Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations - *Undeclared*
    - 1.1: Sociological Perspective and Sociological Imagination - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.2: Defining Race - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.3: Ethnicity and Religion - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.4: Multiracial Americans - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.5: Social Stratification and Intersectionality - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 1.6: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 2: Sociological Theories and Patterns of Intergroup Relations - *Undeclared*
    - 2.1: What is a Theory? - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 2.2: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives - *Undeclared*
    - 2.3: Patterns of Intergroup Relations - *CC BY 4.0*
  - 3: Immigration and Migration - *Undeclared*
    - 3.1: History and Background - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 3.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-NC 4.0*
    - 3.3: Intersectionality - *CC BY-NC 4.0*
    - 3.4: Social Institutions - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 3.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY-NC 4.0*
  - 4: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism - *Undeclared*
    - 4.1: Socialization and Culture - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 4.2: Stereotypes and Prejudice - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 4.3: Discrimination - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 4.4: Racism - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 4.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5: Native Americans - *Undeclared*
    - 5.1: History and Demographics - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 5.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 5.3: Intersectionality - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 5.4: Social Institutions - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 5.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY-NC 4.0*
  - 6: Euro Americans and Whiteness - *Undeclared*
    - 6.1: History and Demographics - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 6.3: Whiteness- White Privilege, White Supremacy, and White Fragility - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 6.4: Intersectionality - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.5: Social Institutions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.6: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY 4.0*
  - 7: African-Americans - *Undeclared*
    - 7.1: History and Demographics - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 7.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 7.3: Intersectionality - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 7.4: Social Institutions - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
    - 7.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
  - 8: Latinx - *Undeclared*
    - 8.1: History and Demographics - *CC BY 4.0*

- 8.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-NC 4.0*
- 8.3: Intersectionality - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
- 8.4: Social Institutions - *CC BY 4.0*
- 8.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY 4.0*

9: Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders - *Undeclared*

- 9.1: History and Demographics - *CC BY-NC-ND 4.0*
- 9.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-NC-ND 4.0*
- 9.3: Intersectionality - *CC BY 4.0*
- 9.4: Social Institutions - *CC BY 4.0*
- 9.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY 4.0*

10: Middle Eastern Americans - *Undeclared*

- 10.1: History and Demographics - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
- 10.2: Intergroup Relations - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
- 10.3: Intersectionality - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
- 10.4: Social Institutions - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
- 10.5: Social Change and Resistance - *CC BY-SA 4.0*

11: Contemporary Social Movements - *Undeclared*

- 11.1: Defining Social Movements - *CC BY 4.0*
- 11.2: Immigrant Rights - *CC BY 4.0*
- 11.3: Black Lives Matter - *CC BY 4.0*
- 11.4: Indigenous Sovereignty and Environmental Justice - *CC BY-SA 4.0*
- 11.5: White Nationalism - *CC BY 4.0*
- 11.6: Solidarity and Intersectionality - *CC BY 4.0*

12: Policies and Future of Race-Ethnic Relations - *Undeclared*

- 12.1: Introduction - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.2: Affirmative Action - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.3: Reparations - *CC BY 4.0*
- 12.4: Immigration - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12.5: The Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

13: Ancillary Materials - *Undeclared*

- 13.1: Powerpoint Presentations - *Undeclared*
- 13.2: Test Bank - *Undeclared*

Back Matter - *Undeclared*

- Index - *Undeclared*
- Glossary - *Undeclared*
- Glossary - *Undeclared*
- Detailed Licensing - *Undeclared*