

1 Race and Ethnicity

2 Race and Ethnicity

- These terms are frequently confused and misused.
- Race: is a socially constructed category composed of people who share biologically transmitted traits that members of a society consider important.
 - Race is a significant concept because most people regard it as important.

3 Racial types

- Race came into being as a social category when nineteenth-century biologists tried to construct racial types. Sociologists consider term like *Caucasoid*, *Negroid*, and *Mongoloid* as misleading at best because there are NO! biologically pure races.
- A trend toward mixture:
 - The number of officially recorded interracial births has tripled in the last three decades. (70's, 80's, 90's) Although members of American society attach considerable importance to race, biologically speaking, race has less and less meaning in the United States.

4 Ethnicity

- A shared cultural heritage.
 - Ethnicity involves even more variability and mixture than race because most people identify with more than one ethnic background.

5 Minorities

- A category of people, distinguished by physical or cultural traits, who are socially disadvantaged.

6 Prejudice

- A rigid and irrational generalization about an entire category of people.
- Prejudices are prejudgments, and they can be positive or negative, and often takes the form of Stereotypes.
- Stereotypes are exaggerated descriptions applied to every person in the category.

7 Racism

- A powerful and destructive form of prejudice.
- Racism refers to the belief that one racial category (group) is superior or inferior to another.

8 Theories of Prejudice

1) Scapegoat Theory: prejudice results from frustrations among people who are themselves disadvantaged.

Ex: one group is blamed by another group as the cause for their problems.

Typically the group being blamed has little power.

9 Theories of Prejudice

2) Authoritarian personality theory views prejudice as a personality trait in certain individuals
Persons with extreme prejudice tend to rigidly conform to conventional cultural values, see moral

issues as clearcut matters of right and wrong.

Generally, will hold prejudice toward all minorities

10 **Theories of Prejudice**

3) Culture theory holds that some prejudice is held by everyone because it is embedded in the culture.

Bogardus (1968) developed the concept of Social Distance. Most people in the U.S. feel closest to people of English, Canadian & Scottish heritage, less to French, Germans, Swedes & Dutch, most negative toward people of Asian or African heritage.

11 **Theories of Prejudice**

4) Conflict Theory: powerful people use prejudice to justify oppressing others who are different.

12 **Discrimination**

- Treating various categories of people unequally.
- While prejudice is attitude, discrimination is action. It can be positive or negative.
- Merton: Four combinations of prej/discrim
 - Active-bigotry
 - Timid-bigotry
 - Fair-weather liberalism
 - All-weather liberalism

13 **Prejudice and Discrimination**

- The vicious cycle: based on the Thomas Theorem
 - Situations defined as real become real in their consequences.
 - Text p. 280

14 **Patterns of interaction**

- Pluralism: a state which racial and ethnic minorities are distinct, but have social parity.
- Ex. The United States is a pluralistic society to the extent that all people have equal standing under the law.

15 **Patterns of interaction**

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 - Our tolerance for social diversity is limited.
 - People of various colors and cultures have unequal social standing.

19 **Patterns of interaction**

- Assimilation: the process by which minorities gradually adopt patterns of the dominant culture.
 - Assimilation involves changes in ethnicity, but not in race.
 - Miscegenation- is the diminishing of racial traits over generations through biological reproduction by partners of different racial groups.

20 **Patterns of interaction**

- Segregation: the physical and social separation of groups of people.
- Genocide: the systematic killing of one group by another.
 - The deadliest form of racism.

21 **Race and Ethnicity in the U.S.**

- Seven racial groups live in the U.S.
 - Native Americans
 - White Anglo-Saxon Protestants
 - African Americans
 - Asian Americans
 - Hispanic Americans
 - White Ethnic Americans
 - Middle Eastern Americans

22 **Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.**

- Native Americans:
 - Original inhabitants of the Americas
 - Prior to European contact they lived in hundreds of distinct societies.
 - 1871-1924 they lived under a policy of forced assimilation.
 - Have been encouraged to move from the reservations to urban society.
 - Many have come together recently to assert pride in their culture and past.

23 **Race & Ethnicity in the U. S.**

- White Anglo-Saxon Protestants:
 - Mostly of English origin.
 - Have dominated the U.S. since colonial days.
 - Most came to this country with skills and motivated to succeed.
 - There have been many times when WASP's have been opposed to non-anglo immigrants.
 - Power has been declining as we enter the 21st century.

24 **Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.**

- African Americans:
 - Initially came as indentured servants or slaves.
 - The basic denial of human rights was in sharp contrast to the “promise of the American republic.” (Myrdal- the American dilemma)
 - 1865- Thirteenth Amendment outlaws slavery but,
 - Jim Crow laws perpetuate the “slave-like” status.

25 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- African Americans: (con’t)
 - 20th century, mass migration to urban areas of the northern U.S., followed by the civil rights movement of the 1960’s.
 - Educational gap has narrowed substantially in recent years.
 - Political clout has increased substantially as well, in recent decades.

26 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- Asian Americans:
 - Are considered to have a model minority image
 - **Chinese Americans**- began with the 1840’s gold rush, and worked on the railroad track laying gangs of the 1860’s.
 - Many urban areas have a “Chinatown” within it
 - Assimilation and upward mobility began in the World War II era.
 - Currently outpace the national average, both economically and educationally.

27 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- Japanese Americans:
 - Came at first in the late 19th century to work, and experienced legal and social discrimination.
 - During WWII, many were confined in relocation camps.
 - Many made dramatic economic recovery after the war.
 - Strong upward mobility has encouraged cultural assimilation and interracial marriage.

28 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- Korean, Vietnamese, Filipino Americans:
 - Have all immigrated since the mid-1950’s.
 - Many have achieved economic success and have begun to assimilate themselves into society.

29 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- Hispanic Americans:
- Mexican Americans
 - Most are recent immigrants, although many lived in areas that were annexed by the U.S. in the last 150 years.
 - Many are well below the national average in economic and educational attainment.

30 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- Puerto Rican Americans:
 - Travel occurs freely between the island and the mainland, especially New York City.
 - The most socially disadvantaged Hispanic minority.

31 Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.

- Cuban Americans:
 - Many immigrated after the 1959 Marxist revolution, and settled in Miami and other U.S. cities.
 - Most are well educated and successful in business and professional people have done relatively

well in the U.S.

32 **Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.**

- White Ethnic Americans:
 - Come from other European nations than Britain.
 - Most experienced substantial prejudice and discrimination when they arrived here in the 19th century.
 - Many have now fully assimilated and achieved substantial success.

33 **Race & Ethnicity in the U.S.**

- Middle Eastern Americans:
 - Many of those from Islamic heritage have immigrated in the last 40 years.
 - Most came under student visas to attend college, graduate school, or post-graduate education.
 - Many returned to their home countries to become leaders in their respective home governments.

34 **Race & Ethnicity: Looking ahead**

- Immigration has generated striking cultural diversity.
- Many arrivals have faced much of the same prejudice and discrimination experienced by those who came before them.
- However, the foundations continue to teach the idea of inclusion and acceptance through knowledge.