The son of a White woman from Kansas and a Black man from Kenya, Barack Hussein Obama was sworn in as the 44th president of the United States. The ascension of a Black man to the highest office is cause for enormous and justifiable racial pride (Kamiya 2009). Yet, throughout his campaign and since his election, much attention has been given to how Obama has handled the subject of race. Though he frequently cited his biracial heritage during the campaign, his message embraced the dream that the nation would transcend the divisiveness of racial politics. In March 2008 he delivered his “A More Perfect Union” speech, responding to controversial statements made by his former pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Wright. Obama referred to the complexities of race in America as a stalemate, “a part of our union that we have yet to perfect.” He encouraged Americans to look beyond race and skin color to find that “common stake we all have in one another, and let our politics reflect that spirit as well” (Obama 2008).

The United States is a diverse racial and ethnic society. Joe Feagin and Pinar Batur (2004) report that by the 2050s, the majority of the U.S. population will comprise African, Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Native Americans. Currently, White Americans are a minority in half of the largest 100 U.S. cities and in Hawaii, New Mexico, Texas, and California. Between 2015 and 2040, White Americans are expected to become a statistical minority in many other states. The U.S. Census (2009a) estimates that in 2008, about 12.5% of the U.S. population or about 37.3 million individuals were foreign born.

Adding to the diversity of our population are increasing numbers of immigrants, their migration to the United States and throughout the world spurred on by the global economy. Population mobility since the middle of the 20th century has been characterized by unprecedented volume,
speed, and geographical range (Collin and Lee 2003). At the end of 2005, nearly 200 million people or about 3% of the world’s population lived in a country other than their birth country (DeParle 2007). The International Organization for Migration (2003) predicts that by 2030, this figure should increase to 230 million. As Zygmunt Bauman (2000) describes, “The world is on the move.” Regionally, Asia has the largest number of international migrants, about 56 million (United Nations 2009). North America, including the United States, has the second largest number of migrants, 50 million (refer to Table 3.1).

In this chapter, we explore how one’s racial and ethnic status serves as a basis of inequality. Like social class, depending on one’s race or ethnicity, a person’s life chances are altered and the likelihood of experiencing particular social problems increases. We begin first with understanding how race and ethnicity are defined.

### Defining Race and Ethnicity

From a biological perspective, a race can be defined as a group or population that shares a set of genetic characteristics and physical features. The term has been applied broadly to groups with similar physical features (the White race), religion (the Jewish race), or the entire human species (the human race; Marger 2002). However, generations of migration, intermarriage, and adaptations to different physical environments have produced a mixture of races. There is no such thing as a “pure” race.

Social scientists reject the biological notions of race, instead favoring an approach that treats race as a social construct. In Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s, Michael Omi and Howard Winant explain how race is a “concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies.”

### Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1960 Total Immigrants (Millions)</th>
<th>1960 Share of World Immigrants</th>
<th>2010 Total Immigrants (Millions)</th>
<th>2010 Share of World Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World by region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania*</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Oceania includes Micronesia, Melanesia, Polynesia, Australia, and New Zealand.

Instead of thinking of race as something “objective,” the authors argued that we can imagine race as an “illusion,” a subjective social, political, and cultural construct. According to the authors, “The meaning of race is defined and contested throughout society, in both collective action and personal practice. In the process, racial categories themselves are formed, transformed, destroyed, and reformed” (p. 21). Robert Redfield says it simply: “Race is, so to speak, a human invention” (1958:67).

Race may be a social construction, but that does not make race any less powerful and controlling (Myers 2005). Omi and Winant argued that although particular stereotypes and meanings can change, “The presence of a system of racial meaning and stereotypes, of racial ideology, seems to be a permanent feature of U.S. culture” (1994:63).

Ethnic groups are groups that are set off to some degree from other groups by displaying a unique set of cultural traits, such as their language, religion, or diet. Members of an ethnic group perceive themselves as members of an ethnic community, sharing common historical roots and experiences. All of us, to one extent or another, have an ethnic identity. Increasingly the terms race and ethnicity are presented as a single construct pointing to how both terms are being conflated (Budrys 2003).

Martin Marger (2002) explains how ethnicity serves as a basis of social ranking, ranking a person according to the status of his or her ethnic group. Although class and ethnicity are separate dimensions of stratification, they are closely related: “In virtually all multiethnic societies, people’s ethnic classification becomes an important factor in the distribution of societal rewards and hence, their economic and political class positions. . . . The ethnic and class hierarchies are largely parallel and interwoven” (Marger 2002:286).

The federal definition of ethnicity is based on the Office of Management and Budget’s 1977 guideline which defines ethnicity in terms of Hispanic/non-Hispanic status, contrary to the conventional social scientific definition as presented in the previous paragraphs. The U.S. Census treats Hispanic origin and race as separate and distinct concepts; as a result, Hispanics may be of any race. As of 2002, Hispanic Americans were the nation’s largest ethnic minority group. The U.S. Census Bureau includes in this category women and men who are Mexican, Central and South American,
Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanic. The growth in the number of Hispanic Americans has been attributed to increased international immigration and higher birthrates. The states with the highest proportion of Hispanics include New Mexico, California, Texas, and Arizona. The 2006–2008 ethnic and racial composition of the United States is presented in Table 3.2.1

The U.S. Census distinguishes between native and foreign-born residents. A native refers to anyone born in the United States or a U.S. Island area such as Puerto Rico or the Northern Mariana Islands or born abroad of a U.S. citizen parent; foreign born refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. Elizabeth Grieco (2010) writes, “The foreign born, through their own diverse origins, will contribute to the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States. How they translate their own backgrounds and report their adopted identities have important implications for the nation’s racial and ethnic composition.” In 2008, among the 37.3 million foreign born in the United States, most were from Latin America (53.4%; as displayed in Figure 3.1; U.S. Census Bureau 2009b).

Refugees are defined by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1980 as “aliens outside the United States who are unable or unwilling to return to his/her country of origin for persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” Data on the number of admitted refugees are collected annually by the U.S. Department of State. In 2008, 60,108 persons were admitted as refugees. Almost 60% of all admitted refugees were from three countries: Burma (30%), Iraq (23%), and Bhutan (8.9%). The majority of admitted refugees were less than 25 years of age (52%), male (52%), and single (57%) (Martin and Hoefer 2009).

Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Hispanic Origin, United States, 2006–2008 (Numbers in Thousands)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>223,666</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>37,132</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>2,420</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>12,164</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race</td>
<td>17,540</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two or More Races</strong></td>
<td>6,572</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</strong></td>
<td>45,432</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1 Tracy Ore (2003) acknowledges that externally created labels for some groups are not always accepted by those viewed as belonging to a particular group. For example, those of Latin American descent may not consider themselves to be “Hispanic.” In this text, I’ve adopted Ore’s practice regarding which racial and ethnic terms are used. In my own material, I use Latino to refer to those of Latin American descent and Black and African American interchangeably. However, original terms used by authors or researchers (e.g., use of the term Hispanic by the U.S. Census Bureau) are not altered.
Patterns of Racial and Ethnic Integration

Sociologists explain that ethnocentrism is the belief that one’s own group values and behaviors are right and even better than all others. Feeling positive about one’s group is important for group solidarity and loyalty. However, it can lead groups and individuals to believe that certain racial or ethnic groups are inferior and that discriminatory practices against them are justified. This is called racism.

Though not all inequality can be attributed to racism, our nation’s history reveals how particular groups have been singled out and subject to unfair treatment. Certain groups have been subject to individual discrimination and institutional discrimination. Individual discrimination includes actions against minority members by individuals. Actions may range from avoiding contact with minority group members to physical or verbal attacks against minority group members. Institutional discrimination is practiced by the government, social institutions, and organizations. Institutional discrimination may include segregation, exclusion, or expulsion.

*Figure 3.1*

U.S. Foreign Born by World Region of Birth, 2008

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2009b.*

You may not be able to tell from my last name (Leon-Guerrero), but I consider my ethnic identity to be Japanese. My middle name is Yuri, a Japanese name that means “Lily.” I am Japanese not only because of my middle name or because of my Japanese mother, but also because of the Japanese traditions that I practice, the Japanese words that I use, and even the Japanese foods that I like to eat. Do you have an ethnic identity? If you do, how do you maintain it?
Segregation refers to the physical and social separation of ethnic or racial groups. Although we consider explicit segregation to be illegal and a thing of the past, ethnic and racial segregation still occurs in neighborhoods, schools, and personal relationships. According to Debra Van Ausdale and Joe Feagin,

Racial discrimination and segregation are still central organizing factors in contemporary U.S. society. . . . For the most part, Whites and Blacks do not live in the same neighborhoods, attend the same schools at all educational levels, enter into close friendships or other intimate relationships with one another, or share comparable opinions on a wide variety of political matters. The same is true, though sometimes to a lesser extent, for Whites and other Americans of color, such as most Latino, Native and Asian American groups. Despite progress since the 1960s, U.S. society remains intensely segregated across color lines. Generally speaking, Whites and people of color do not occupy the same social space or social status. (2001:29)

Exclusion refers to the practice of prohibiting or restricting the entry or participation of groups in society. In March 1882, U.S. Congressman Edward K. Valentine declared, “The [immigration] gate must be closed.” That year, Valentine, along with other congressional leaders, approved the Chinese Exclusion Act. From 1882 to 1943, the United States prohibited Chinese immigration because of concerns that Chinese laborers would compete with American workers. Through the 1940s, immigration was defined as a hindrance rather than a benefit to the United States.
Finally, expulsion is the removal of a group by direct force or intimidation. In 2006, journalist Eliot Jaspin documented the extent of racial expulsion that occurred in towns from Central Texas through Georgia. After the Civil War through the 1920s, White residents expelled nearly all Black persons from their communities, usually using direct physical force. Thirteen countywide expulsions were documented in eight states between 1864 and 1923 in which 4,000 Blacks were driven out of their communities.

**What Does It Mean to Me?**

In early 2010, four college students from Miami Dade College, Miami, FL, began a 4-month walk to Washington, D.C., to call attention to federal legislation that would grant citizenship to students who came to this country illegally when they were young. In 1982, the Supreme Court guaranteed undocumented children access to K–12 public education but did not extend their access to higher education. The protesters included Felipe Matos, who was sent from Brazil by his mother when he was 14 years old. Matos and his fellow protesters are successful college students and graduates, but they are unable to progress professionally or academically because of their illegal status. A former student government president at Miami Dade, Matos was accepted in a Duke University graduate program. But due to his illegal status, he was not eligible for financial aid and was unable to enroll in the program (Preston 2010). Should Matos and other college students with similar immigration histories be granted citizenship? Should they have access to higher education? Would this constitute social justice? Why or why not?

**In Focus**

**Japanese American Internment Camps**

Asian Americans are often characterized as the “model minority,” which focuses on their socioeconomic achievement. Native-born Asian Americans as a group have achieved the same or better educations, occupations, and income levels as White Americans. Yet, social scientists observe how this image of success ignores Asian Americans’ history and experience of discrimination in the United States. Part of their history is the internment of Japanese Americans between 1942 and 1945.

In August 1941, U.S. Representative John Dingell (D-MI) wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, suggesting that 10,000 Hawaiian Japanese be incarcerated to ensure “good behavior” by Japan. Roosevelt did not act on Dingell’s suggestion. But 2 months later, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which allowed the Secretary of War to “prescribe military areas . . . from which any or all persons may be excluded.” Though no single ethnic group was identified, the order targeted Japanese Americans, most residing in the Western states. War department officials argued that Japanese Americans could not be trusted to serve in the Pacific theater because it was difficult to separate “the sheep from the goats” (Asahina 2006).
Scholars and historians have identified racism as the root explanation for Roosevelt’s executive order and for the lack of public outcry against the action. Cheryl Greenberg (1995) explains how anti-Asian prejudice predated Pearl Harbor, evidenced by immigration and citizenship restrictions, prohibition in several western states against property ownership or practicing certain trades, employment discrimination, and residential segregation. That there were no similar wartime incarceration programs for German or Italian Americans suggests that Japanese Americans were singled out based on racist decisions.

For the next 4 years, 120,000 Japanese Americans were relocated to several sites—undeveloped federal reclamation projects (Tule Lake, Minidoka, and Heart Mountain), on land meant for subsistence homesteads (Rowher and Jerome), on Indian reservations (Poston and Gila River), or unused public city or county land (Manzanar and Topaz). Men, women, and children were given short notice to pack all their personal items in a single suitcase. It is estimated that as a group, they left behind about $200,000,000 worth of real, personal, and commercial property (about $6.4 billion in current dollars; Asahina 2006).

On February 1, 1942, Roosevelt authorized the formation of a regimental combat team made up of Japanese American volunteers. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team would become the most decorated unit in World War II history for its size and length of service. In less than 2 years, the 442nd participated in seven major campaigns in Italy and France, received seven Presidential Distinguished Unit Citations, and was awarded 18,142 individual decorations. Approximately 22,500 Japanese Americans served in the Army during World War II in the 442nd, the 100th Battalion, and the 1399th Engineers Construction Battalion (Asahina 2006).

(Continued)
At the end of World War II, the internment camps began to shut down. Japanese Americans were instructed to return home, but the reality was that they had no homes to return to. Most were poor and homeless.

In 1948, President Truman signed the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act, to compensate Japanese Americans for certain economic losses attributable to their forced evacuation. President Gerald Ford finally rescinded Executive Order 9066 (the original order that led to their internment) in 1976. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed a presidential apology to those interned. Reagan also signed HR 442 into law, providing for individual payments of $20,000 to each surviving internee and a $1.25 billion education fund, among other provisions. Bruce Ackerman (2004:1063) observes, “It took almost half a century before the Japanese-American victims of war time concentration camps gained financial compensation, and then only by a Special Act of Congress that awarded incredibly tiny sums.”

In 2006, President George W. Bush signed a law providing federal funding to restore and preserve 10 internment camps for education and to serve as a memorial. U.S. Representative Doris Matsui (D-CA), who was born in the Poston, Arizona, camp, said at the law's signing, “Preserving these internment sites is a solemn task we all bear. Those who come after us will have a physical reminder of what they will never allow to happen again.”

Sociological Perspectives on Inequalities Based on Race and Ethnicity

Functionalist Perspective

Theorists from this perspective believe that the differences between racial and ethnic groups are largely cultural. The solution is **assimilation**, a process where minority group members become part of the dominant group, losing their original distinct group identity. This process is consistent with America’s image as the “melting pot.” Milton Gordon (1964) presents a seven-stage assimilation model that begins first with cultural assimilation (change of cultural patterns, e.g., learning the English language), followed by structural assimilation (interaction with members of the dominant group), marital assimilation (intermarriage), identification assimilation (developing a sense of national identity, e.g., identifying as an American, rather than as an Asian American), attitude receptional assimilation (absence of prejudiced thoughts among dominant and minority group members), behavioral receptional assimilation (absence of discrimination, e.g., lower wages for minorities would not exist), and finally civic assimilation (absence of value and power conflicts).

Assimilation is said to allow a society to maintain its equilibrium (a goal of the functionalist perspective) if all members of society, regardless of their racial or ethnic identity, adopt one dominant culture. This is often characterized as a voluntary process. Critics argue that this perspective assumes that social integration is a shared goal and that members of the minority group are willing to assume the dominant group’s identity and culture, assuming that the dominant culture is the one and only preferred culture (Myers 2005). The perspective also assumes that assimilation is the same experience for all ethnic groups, ignoring the historical legacy of slavery and racial discrimination in our society.

Assimilation is not the only means to achieve racial-ethnic stability. Other countries maintain **pluralism**, where each ethnic or racial group maintains its own culture.
or a separate set of social structures and institutions (structural pluralism). Cultural pluralism is also referred to as multiculturalism. Switzerland, which has a number of different nationalities and religions, is an example of a pluralistic society. The country, also referred to as the Swiss Confederation, has four official languages: German, French, Italian, and Romansh. Relationships between each ethnic group are described for the most part as harmonious because each of the ethnically diverse parts joined the confederation voluntarily seeking protection (Farley 2005). In his examination of pluralism in the United States, Min Zhou notes, "As America becomes increasingly multiethnic, and as ethnic Americans become integral in our society, it becomes more and more evident that there is no contradiction between an ethnic identity and an American identity" (2004:153).

**Conflict Perspective**

According to sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois (1996), perhaps it is wrong “to speak of race at all as a concept, rather than as a group of contradictory forces, facts and tendencies.” The problem of the 20th century, wrote Du Bois, is “the color line.”

Conflict theorists focus on how the dynamics of racial and ethnic relations divide groups while maintaining a dominant group. The dominant group may be defined according to racial or ethnic categories, but it can also be defined according to social class. Instead of relationships based on consensus (or assimilation), relationships are based on power, force, and coercion. Ethnocentrism and racism maintain the status quo by dividing individuals along racial and ethnic lines (Myers 2005).

Drawing upon Marx’s class analysis, Du Bois was one of the first theorists to observe the connection between racism and capitalist-class oppression in the United States and throughout the world. He noted the link between racist ideas and actions to maintain a Eurocentric system of domination (Feagin and Batur 2004). Du Bois wrote,

> Throughout the world today organized groups of men by monopoly of economic and physical power, legal enactment and intellectual training are limiting with great determination and unflagging zeal the development of other groups; and that the concentration particularly on economic power today puts the majority of mankind into a slavery to the rest. (1996:532)

Marxist theorists argue that immigrants constitute a reserve army of workers, members of the working class performing jobs that native workers no longer perform. Michael Samers (2003:557) suggests that immigrants are a “quantitatively and qualitatively flexible labour force for capitalists which divides and weakens working class organization and drives down the value of labour power.” Capitalist businesses profit from migrant workers because they are cheaper and flexible—easily hired during times of economic growth and easily fired during economic recessions.

Though most theorists from this perspective see conflict as emanating from one dominant group, conflict may also be mutual. Edna Bonacich (1972) offers a theory of ethnic antagonism, encompassing all levels of mutual intergroup conflict. She argues that this ethnic antagonism emerges from a labor market split along ethnic and class lines. To be split, the labor market must include at least two groups of workers whose price of labor differs for the same work. Conflict develops between three classes: businesses or employers, higher paid labor, and cheaper labor. Bonacich explains that as businesses attempt to maintain a cheap workforce (not caring about who does the work as long as it gets done), higher paid workers attempt to maintain their prime labor position (resisting the threat of lower wage laborers),
and cheaper laborers attempt to advance their position (threatening higher paid workers). Higher paid workers may use exclusionary practices (attempting to prevent the importation of cheaper nonnative labor) or caste arrangements (excluding some groups from certain types of work) to maintain their advantage in the labor market. According to Bonacich, the presence of a cheaper labor group threatens the jobs of higher paid workers and the standard for wages in all jobs. Under these conditions, laborers remain in conflict with each other, and the interests of capitalist business owners are maintained.

**Feminist Perspective**

Feminist theory has attempted to account for and focus on the experiences of women and other marginalized groups in society. Feminist theory intersects with multiculturalism through the analysis of multiple systems of oppression, not just gender, but including categories of race, class, sexual orientation, nation of origin, language, culture, and ethnicity. Emerging from this is Patricia Hill Collins's Black feminist theory. Black feminists identify the value of a theoretical perspective that addresses the simultaneity of race, class, and gender oppression.

Black feminist scholars note the misguided application of traditional feminist perspectives of “the family,” “patriarchy,” and “reproduction” to understand the experience of Black women's lives. Black women do not lead parallel lives, but rather different lives. British scholar Hazel Carby (1985:390) argues that because Black women are subject to simultaneous oppression based on class, race, and patriarchy, the application of traditional (White) feminist perspectives is not appropriate and is actually misleading in attempts to comprehend the true experience of Black women. She argued that White feminist theory has to recognize that “White women stand in a power relation as oppressors of Black women” (p. 390).

As an example, Carby analyzes an article on women in Third World manufacturing. Carby highlights how the photographs accompanying the article are of “anonymous Black women.” She observes, “This anonymity and the tendency to generalize into meaninglessness, the oppression of an amorphous category called ‘Third World Women,’ are symptomatic of the ways in which the specificity of our experiences and oppression are subsumed under inapplicable concepts and theories” (1985:394).

**Interactionist Perspective**

Sociologists believe that race is a social construct. We learn about racial and ethnic categories of White, Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, and immigrant through our social interaction. The meaning and values for these and other categories are provided by our social institutions, families, and friends (Ore 2003). As much as I and other social scientists inform our students about the unsubstantiated use of the term race, for most students, race is real. The term is loaded with social, cultural, and political baggage, making deconstructing it difficult to accomplish.

Social scientists have noted how people are raced, how race itself is not a category but a practice. Howard McGary (1999:83) defines the practice as “a commonly accepted course of action that may be over time habitual in nature; a course of action that specifies certain forms of behavior as permissible and others impermissible, with rewards and penalties assigned accordingly.” In this way, racial categories and identities serve as intersections of social beliefs, perceptions, and activities that are reinforced by enduring systems of rewards and penalties (Shuford 2001).
The practice of being raced includes with it the bestowing of power and privilege, and what is granted to one group may be denied to another. For example, Madonna and Angelina Jolie were praised (in some circles) for their adoption of children from Cambodia, Ethiopia, and Malawi, as was Sandra Bullock for her 2010 adoption of a Black child from New Orleans. Yet as Matthew Jacobson (1998) asks, why can White women have Black children but Black women cannot adopt White children? The interactionist perspective reminds us that racial designations may be fictitious, but their consequences are real.

A summary of all theoretical perspectives is provided in Table 3.3.

The Consequences of Racial and Ethnic Inequalities

Income and Wealth

“Race is so associated with class in the United States that it might not be direct discrimination, but it still matters indirectly,” says sociologist Dalton Conley (Ohlemacher 2006:A6). Data reported by the U.S. Census reveal that Black households had the lowest median income

Table 3.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functionalist</th>
<th>Conflict/Feminist</th>
<th>Interactionist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanations of racial and ethnic inequality</strong></td>
<td>Assimilation into a dominant culture preserves the stability of society.</td>
<td>Inequality is systematically maintained by those trying to preserve their advantaged positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnic pluralism may also achieve stability.</td>
<td>Class divisions overlap with racial and ethnic divisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feminist scholars advocate for a theoretical perspective that simultaneously considers the intersection of race, class, and gender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questions asked about racial and ethnic inequality</strong></td>
<td>How can minority groups be assimilated into mainstream society?</td>
<td>What powerful interest groups determine racial and ethnic inequalities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can cultural and structural pluralism be maintained?</td>
<td>How are these structures maintained?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in 2008, $34,218, which was 62% of the median income for non-Hispanic White households, $55,530. The median income for Hispanic households was $37,913, 68% of the median for non-Hispanic White households. Asian households had the highest median income, $65,637, 118% of the median for non-Hispanic White households (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, and Smith 2009).

Because of years of discrimination, low educational attainment, high unemployment, or underemployment, African Americans have not been able to achieve the same earnings or level of wealth as White Americans have. Studies indicate that for every dollar earned by White households, Black households earned 62 cents (Oliver and Shapiro 1995). Blacks have between $8 and $19 of wealth for every $100 possessed by Whites. Whites have nearly 12 times as much median net worth as Blacks, $43,000 compared with $3,700 (Oliver and Shapiro 1995).

One measure of wealth is home ownership. Home ownership is one of the primary means to accumulate wealth (Williams, Nesiba, and McConnell 2005). It enables families to finance college and invest in their future. Historically, home ownership grew among White middle-class families after World War II, when veterans had access to government and credit programs making home ownership more affordable. However, Blacks and other minority groups have been denied similar access because of structural barriers such as discrimination, low income, and lack of credit access. Feagin (1999) identifies how inequality in homeownership has contributed to inequality in other aspects of American life. Specifically, Blacks have been disadvantaged because of their lack of homeownership, particularly in their inability to provide their children with “the kind of education or other cultural advantages necessary for their children to compete equally or fairly with Whites” (p. 86).

In 2004, U.S. homeownership reached a record high of 69.2% with nearly 73.4 million Americans owning their own homes. However, racial gaps in homeownership persist. In 2008, 74.9% of White households owned their own homes, compared with 47.5% of Black households and 48.9% of Hispanics. Immigrant households are less likely to be homeowners than native-born, 52.9% versus 70% in 2008 (Kochhar, Gonzalez-Barrera, and Dockterman 2009).

**Education**

The U.S. Supreme Court’s 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled that racial segregation in public schools was illegal. Reaction to the ruling was mixed, with a strong...
response from the South. A major confrontation occurred in Arkansas, when Governor Orval Faubus used the state’s National Guard to block the admission of nine Black students into Little Rock Central High School. The students persisted and successfully gained entry into the school the next day with 1,000 U.S. Army paratroopers at their side. The Little Rock incident has been identified as a catalyst for school integration throughout the South. Despite resistance to the court’s ruling, legally segregated education had disappeared by the mid-1970s.

However, a different type of segregation persists, called de facto segregation. De facto segregation refers to a subtler process of segregation that is the result of other processes, such as housing segregation, rather than because of an official policy (Farley 2005). Here, we clearly see the intersection of race and class. Schools have become economically segregated, with children of middle- or upper-class families attending predominantly White suburban schools and the children of poorer parents attending racially mixed urban schools (Gagné and Tewksbury 2003). Researchers, teachers, and policymakers have all observed a great disparity in the quality of education students receive in the United States (for more on social problems related to education, turn to Chapter 8). Educational systems reinforce patterns of social class inequality and, along with it, racial inequality (Farley 2005).

Latinos have the lowest educational achievement rates—for high school and college degrees—compared with all other major racial and ethnic groups in the United States (refer to Table 3.4.). Richard Fry (2004) explains that although more than 300,000 young Hispanics will graduate from high school each year, fewer than 60,000 will complete a bachelor’s degree. Data indicate that about half of young Latinos who enroll in college are at least minimally prepared academically to succeed in a 4-year college. Even among the best prepared Latino students, only 57% finish a bachelor’s degree compared with 81% of their White counterparts. Hispanic undergraduates disproportionately enroll in “open-door” institutions that have lower degree completion rates (Fry 2004).

Much of the research on the achievement gap between Latinos and White students has focused on the characteristics of the students (family income, parents’ level of education). However, according to the Pew Hispanic Center (Fry 2005), we need to also consider the social context of Hispanic students’ learning, noting how educators and policymakers have more influence over the characteristics of their schools than over the characteristics of students.

### Table 3.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity (Percentages Reported), 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than 9th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, not Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Pew Hispanic Center 2010.*
Based on their state and national assessment of the basic characteristics of public high schools for Hispanic and other students, the Pew Hispanic Center found that Latinos were more likely than Whites or Blacks to attend the largest public high schools (enrollment of at least 1,838 students). More than 56% of Hispanics attend large schools, compared with 32% of Blacks and 26% of Whites. Schools with larger enrollments are associated with lower student achievement and higher drop-out rates. In addition, the center reported that Hispanics are more likely to be in high schools with lower instructional resources, which includes higher student-to-teacher ratios associated with lower academic performance. Nearly 37% of Hispanics are educated in public high schools with a student-teacher ratio greater than 22 to 1, compared with 14% of Blacks and 13% of White students (Fry 2005).

In June 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court, voting 5 to 4, invalidated the use of race to assign students to public schools, even if the goal was to achieve racial integration of a district’s schools. The ruling addressed public school practices in Seattle, Washington (where 41% of all public school students are White), and Louisville, Kentucky (where two thirds of all public school students are White). Legal experts and educators were divided about whether the ruling affirmed or betrayed Brown v. Board of Education. Though he voted with the majority, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy said in a separate statement that achieving racial diversity and addressing the problem of de facto segregation were issues that school districts could constitutionally pursue as long as the programs were “sufficiently ‘narrowly tailored’” (Greenhouse 2007:A1). It is unclear how the ruling will affect integration strategies adopted in school systems across the country.

Health

“Although race may be a social construct, it produces profound biological manifestations through stress, decreased services, decreased medications, and decreased hospital procedures” (Gabard and Cooper 1998). Racial disparities in access to health care and outcomes are pervasive, according to Sara Rosenbaum and Joel Teitelbaum (2004). The issue is twofold—access to health care and the quality of care received once in the system. First, the researchers point to this nation’s approach to health insurance as a system that “significantly discriminates against racial and ethnic minorities” (p. 138). Data reveal how in a voluntary, employment-based health care system, racial and ethnic minority group members are more likely to be uninsured or publicly insured. In 2008, White non-Hispanics had the lowest uninsured rate (10.4%), compared with Blacks (19.1%), Asians (17.6%), and Hispanics (30.7%) (DeNavas-Walt et al. 2009). These disparities continue into old age—among those 65 years or older, non-Latino White seniors are more likely to have a private or employer-based supplemental health policy in addition to their Medicare coverage, whereas minority seniors are 6 to 7 times more likely to have Medicaid (public assistance) in addition to Medicare.

Second, the researchers observe that even after minority patients enter a particular facility, they are less likely to receive the level of care provided to nonminority patients for the same condition regardless of their insurance status. For example, Latino and African American patients with public insurance do not receive coronary artery bypass surgery at rates comparable to those of White, publicly insured patients. African American patients are also less likely to receive treatment for early stage lung cancer and as a result have a lower 5-year survival rate. Medicaid-insured African American and Latino children use less primary care (depending usually on emergency treatment), experience higher rates
of hospitalization, and die at significantly higher rates than do White children. Though the U.S. government has invested in community-based primary health centers and programs to address these health care gaps, Rosenbaum and Teitelbaum (2004) conclude that these programs can hardly overcome the immense and inaccessible system of specialized and extended health services.

W. Michael Byrd and Linda Clayton (2002) assert that the health crisis among African Americans and poor populations is fueled by a medical-social culture laden with ideological, intellectual and scientific, and discriminatory race and class problems. They believe that America's health system is predicated on the belief that the poor and “unworthy” of our society do not deserve decent health. Consequently, health professionals, as well as research and educational systems, engage in what they describe as “self serving and elite behavior” that marginalizes and ignores the problems of health care for minority and disadvantaged groups. They caution that our failure to address, and eventually resolve, these race- and class-based health policy, structural, medical-social and cultural problems plaguing the American health care system could potentially undermine any possibility of a level playing field in health and health care for African American and other poor populations—eroding at the front end . . . the very foundations of American democracy. (Byrd and Clayton 2002:572–73)

U.S. Immigration: Past and Present

Most U.S. families have an immigration history, whether it is based upon stories of relatives as long as four generations ago or as recent as the current generation. Immigration involves leaving one’s country of origin to move to another. Though immigration has always been a part of U.S. history, the recent wave of immigration, particularly in the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, has led to the observation that we are in the “age of migration” (Castles and Miller 1998).

The regulation of immigration became a federal responsibility in 1875 and the Immigration Service was established in 1891. Before this, all immigrants were allowed to enter and become permanent residents. The Great Wave of immigration occurred from 1900 to 1920, when nearly 24 million immigrants, mostly European, arrived in the United States. Congress passed a national immigrant quota system in 1921, limiting the number of immigrants by national groups based on their representation in U.S. Census figures. The quota system, along with the Depression and World War II, slowed the flow of immigrants for several decades.

In 1965, Congress replaced the national quota system with a preference system designed to reunite immigrant families and attract skilled immigrants. Most of the immigrants who arrived after 1970 were from Latin America and Asia. Legislative reforms continued through the 1990s, targeting amnesty policies for illegal aliens (Center for Immigration Studies 2009). Despite the events of September 11, 2001, and a recent federal crackdown on illegal immigration, the United States still has the most open immigration policy in the world.

Most immigrants are motivated by the global economics of immigration—men and women will move from low-wage to high-wage countries in search of better incomes and standards of living. Labor migration, the movement from one country to another for employment, has been
a part of U.S. history, beginning with Chinese male workers brought to build railroads in the 1800s. These men never brought their families or had any intention of staying after their work was completed.

In their analysis of current migration trends, Gary Hytrek and Kristine Zentgraf (2007) note how an increasing number of highly skilled laborers are moving from less developed areas around the world to the United States and Europe. These migrants are more likely to return to their place of birth or move on to a third country. Migration tends to occur between geographically proximate countries—Turkey and North African migration to Western Europe and Mexican and Central American migration to the United States.

In 2007, there were 37.3 million foreign-born individuals in the United States, composing 12.5% of the total population. This is the highest number of foreign born ever recorded in U.S. history. Between 2000 and 2007, a record 10.3 million immigrants arrived in the United States. Immigrants account for one in eight U.S. residents (Camarota 2007). If the current trend continues, within 10 years, the foreign-born share of the U.S. population will match the high of 14.7% reached in 1910 (Camarota 2003). In 2007, 660,477 immigrants became naturalized citizens, having applied and met the requirements for U.S. citizenship.

Our immigrant population is concentrated in five states. California, New York, Texas, Florida, and New Jersey account for 61% of the immigrant population and only 32% of the native-born population (refer to U.S. Data Map 3.1). Steven Camarota (2007), reporting for the Center for Immigration Studies, notes that one of the striking patterns of recent immigration is the lack of diversity among immigrants themselves. Mexico accounts for the majority of immigrants, almost 6 times the combined total of immigrants from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (as reported in Table 3.5).

### Table 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>11,739,560</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1,708,542</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,513,953</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,367,772</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>1,108,289</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1,102,167</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>1,050,730</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>980,008</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>816,365</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>747,885</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Camarota 2007.*
What Does It Mean to Me?

What percentage of the population in your state is foreign born? Which state has the highest foreign-born population? Where does your state rank in terms of the number of people in the state who are foreign born? Why do you think it is placed where it is? How does the diversity (or lack of diversity) in your state affect the racial/ethnic culture in your state?
Chapter 3

The United Nations uses the analogy of multiple doors of a house to describe the different ways migrants enter a country. Migrants can enter a house through a front door (as permanent settlers), the side door (temporary visitors and workers), or the back door (irregular or illegal migrants). Back door migrants have been the recent focus of political and economic debate. Nearly one in three immigrants is an illegal alien (Camarota 2007). Unauthorized or illegal immigrants comprise about 4% of the national population. Approximately 75% of the illegal immigrant population are Hispanics; the majority, about 7 million, are from Mexico. Other regional sources include Asia (11%), Central America (11%), and South America (7%) (Passel and Cohn 2009).

In 2006 and 2007, the George W. Bush administration proposed comprehensive immigration reforms (CIR). Illegal immigration became a primary concern for Americans, responding to the threat of terrorism and increasing competition in a struggling economy. While acknowledging the country’s immigration heritage, the administration proposed strengthening security at our southern border with Mexico and establishing a temporary worker program without the benefit of amnesty. The plan was criticized for creating a class of workers who would never become fully integrated in U.S. society and for focusing specifically on Mexican workers, ignoring all other immigrant groups.

After the U.S. Congress was unable to pass a bipartisan immigration bill, the states took matters into their own hands, debating similar immigration issues in their own state legislatures (Preston 2007). In 2007 and 2008, more than 2,800 bills related to immigration were introduced throughout the country and approximately 400 were signed into law (National Conference of State Legislatures 2009). These laws addressed a range of immigration issues—the use of unauthorized illegal workers, the use of false identification (e.g., Social Security), and also the extension of education and health care benefits to legal immigrants. Arizona legislators passed the toughest immigration bill in 2010, requiring local law enforcement agencies and officers to demand proof of citizenship from suspected illegal immigrants. Failure to carry proper documentation, even if one is a legal immigrant, is a misdemeanor.

In 2009, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano laid out the Obama Administration’s CIR proposal. Similar to the Bush plan, Obama officials promoted the need for tougher enforcement laws against illegal immigrants and employers who hire them, a streamlined system for legal immigration, and a system for illegal immigrants to earn legal status (Preston 2009). Regarding the last part of the administration’s plan, Napolitano argued that it was impossible to have a fully effective immigrant law enforcement program “as long as so many millions remain in the shadows” (Preston 2009). Part of the administration’s strategy is to shift attention to employers and companies who hire unauthorized workers rather than conducting upsetting raids at workplaces. American Apparel, a Los Angeles clothing manufacturer, fired 1,800 immigrant employees after a federal investigation discovered irregularities in workers’ identification documents (Lewis 2009).

The Immigrant Experience

While most immigrants come to the United States to pursue the promise of the freedom of choice, education, economic opportunity, and a better quality of life, their lives are often filled with challenges and problems.

The post-2000 wave of immigrants included men and women with lower educational attainment—34% have less than a high school education. Considering the population of illegal immigrants, the foreign-born population as a whole is much less educated than the native-born population. Camarota (2007) observes that their lower educational attainment has “enormous implications” for their economic and social integration. A larger proportion of immigrants than those that are native born have low incomes, lack health insurance, and rely on social assistance programs.
Data from the U.S. Census Current Population Survey reveals that 15.2% of immigrants lived in poverty in 2006. One in six persons living in poverty was an immigrant. The higher incidence of poverty among immigrants as a group has increased the overall size of the population living in poverty. The lack of health insurance is also a significant problem for immigrants—33.8% of foreign-born individuals lack insurance compared with 13% of natives. Illegal immigrants are not eligible for Medicare, and legal immigrants must wait 5 years to qualify for the program. Camarota (2007) notes that immigrants’ low rate of health insurance is associated with a lower level of education and their employment. Unskilled immigrants are likely to work at jobs that do not offer health insurance, or they are unable to purchase insurance on their own.

Immigrant labor is concentrated in construction, cleaning and maintenance, production, and farming occupations. Illegal immigrants are employed in similar areas: construction, building cleaning and maintenance, food preparation and service, transportation and moving, and agriculture. There are an estimated 8.3 million illegal immigrants in the labor force (Passel and Cohn 2009). Foreign-born workers are especially susceptible to abuse, stress, and unsafe working conditions due to their overrepresentation in dangerous industries, combined with their undocumented worker status, lack of training, and lack of English literacy (Migrant Clinicians Network 2009). As reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009), in 2008, workers born in Mexico accounted for the largest proportion (42%) of foreign-born workers who died on the job. A total of 795 foreign-born workers died of fatal work injuries.

With the exception of the agricultural sector, the majority of workers in occupations where immigrants are concentrated are native-born workers (Camarota and Jensenius 2009). Yet, no single occupation is comprised entirely of immigrant labor (Camarota 2009). Immigration has been found to have a negative effect on the wages of native-born Americans primarily in low-paying, low-skilled occupations, reducing wages by an estimated 4% to 7% (Camarota 2009). As Camarota (2007:39) observes, “A central question for immigration policy is whether we should allow in so many people with little education—increasing job competition for the poorest American workers and the population needing assistance.”

As it has increased its immigration enforcement (including detainment and deportation), the Department of Homeland Security has been criticized for targeting immigrants with minor offenses, sometimes breaking up families in the process. The Human Rights Watch
(2009) reported that since stricter deportation laws were passed in 1996, most immigrants have been deported for minor offenses (such as marijuana possession or traffic offenses). The new laws disallowed judges to consider noncitizens’ ties to the United States, including family ties, business or property ownership, or service in the U.S. armed forces in deportation cases. Among legal immigrants who were deported, over 70% had been convicted for nonviolent crimes. Many lived in the United States for years and were separated from family members. The Obama administration promised a more compassionate approach to enforcement that would focus on felony criminal offenders. In 2008, 135,126 illegal immigrants with criminal records were deported (Archibold 2009).

**What Does It Mean to Me?**

Immigration is part of a complex interdependent system, where native-born Americans depend on immigrants for their labor and immigrants depend on the economic opportunities that are available in our society. Refer to the state rankings on international migration. How does your state rank in terms of the number of immigrants? Is immigration a problem in your state? Who is affected and how? What are the subjective and objective realities of immigration in your state? In the United States? Is the 2010 Arizona law an effective solution to the problem of immigration?

**Photo 3.6**

This sign near San Ysidro, California, warns motorists to look out for immigrants crossing the Interstate 5 highway. According to the U.S. Border Patrol, 1,954 people died crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally between 1998 and 2004. The leading causes of death were heat stroke, dehydration, and hypothermia; others also die in car accidents or by other accidental causes.
Global Immigration

The United States is not the only country grappling with the issue of immigration. Great Britain, France, Germany, Australia, and other countries have seen an increase in pro- and anti-immigration protests, as well as increased hate crime acts against immigrants in recent years.

Migration has been elevated to a top international policy concern (Düvell 2005) largely because of the threat of terrorism and the challenge of global politics. Migrants now depart from and arrive in almost every country in the world. During the past 30 years, the proportion of foreign-born residents living in developed countries has generally increased, whereas the proportion has remained stable or decreased in developing countries. Migrant labor has been used at both ends of the labor market—low wage/manual labor to high wage/knowledge-based labor. Though globalization has created wealth, lifting many out of poverty, it still has not narrowed the gap between the rich and the poor (Global Commission on Immigration 2005).

Consider France’s immigration situation. One in every four French citizens has a non-French parent or grandparent (Silverman 1992). About 25% of France’s immigrant population comprises men and women of color from North Africa or sub-Saharan Africa. The French government estimates there are more than 400,000 illegal immigrants in France (Sayare 2009). During fall 2005, France experienced its worst civil unrest in decades. North African rioters targeted schools, hospitals, and cars, prompting authorities to declare a state of emergency and impose curfews. The unrest broke out following the deaths of two young North African men who were electrocuted when they hid from police in an electricity substation in a Paris suburb.

The riots were characterized as France’s Katrina, exposing poverty and discrimination experienced by African French. Godoy (2002) reports that an invisible ceiling exists in France’s social and economic life that prohibits the job mobility of qualified individuals. Discrimination in housing, employment, and education are commonplace for France’s immigrants. Many bars and clubs remain closed to African French. As the rioting subsided, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin acknowledged in his remarks to the French National Assembly that the violence was the result of France’s failure to provide hope to thousands of young immigrants. Sweeping social and economic reforms were implemented after the riots.

Similar riots broke out in Rosarno, Italy, in 2010. In response to a pellet-gun attack on a Togo immigrant, African immigrants were reported to have burned cars and smashed shop windows in Rosarno over the course of 2 days. After immigrants and local residents were arrested for their participation in the vandalism, Italian authorities transported more than a thousand African workers to immigrant detention centers claiming that they were protecting the immigrants from further attacks. Though rare, other race-related riots have occurred in Italy in 2008 and 2009. There are 4 million legal immigrants and estimates of more illegal immigrants residing in the country. Flavio Di Giacomo, a spokesman for the International Organization for Migration, described how immigrant workers live in semislavery. The riots, according to Giacomo, revealed how “many Italian economic realities are based on the exploitation of low-cost foreign labor, living in subhuman conditions, without human rights” (Donadio 2010a:A7). The African laborers were paid under the table, about $30 a day for picking fruit (Donadio 2010b).

Globalization has intensified the need to coordinate and harmonize government policies. Migration flows are regarded as a threat to national and global stability, with some calling for an international migration policy (Düvell 2005). The United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Japan have increased policy coordination regarding immigration, refugee admissions, and programs to integrate foreigners and their family members already present in each country (Lee 2006).
Accelerated global migration and a resurgence of racial/ethnic conflicts characterized the close of the 20th century (Wittig and Grant-Thompson 1998) and certainly the beginning of the 21st. In an effort to reduce racial/ethnic conflict and to encourage multiculturalism, researchers, educators, political and community leaders, and community members have implemented programs targeting racism and prejudice. Acknowledging that both are complex phenomena with individual, cultural, and structural components, these strategies attempt to address some or most of the components.

Kathleen Korgen, J. Mahon, and Gabe Wang (2003) believe that colleges and universities have the potential to counter the effects of segregated neighborhoods and socialization in primary and secondary schools. Interaction among races thrust together on a college campus provides a unique opportunity for individuals to experience and discuss the aspects of racial/ethnic diversity in their lives, some for the first time (Odell, Korgen, and Wang 2005). Increased interaction with members of different groups should allow individuals an opportunity to learn from others, reducing hostility and prejudice (Shook and Fazio 2008). Gordon Allport (1954) argues that intergroup contact can have a positive effect in reducing interracial prejudice and increasing tolerance if four conditions are met: (1) There is cooperative interdependence among the groups, (2) the groups share a common goal, (3) the groups are of equal status during contact, and (4) the groups have the support of authority figures.

Increasing numbers of colleges and universities are instituting course requirements that encourage students to examine diversity in the United States and globally. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (2000) reported that 62% of schools have a diversity
course requirement or were in the process of developing one. This is quite an increase from 1990, when only 15% of colleges and universities had such a requirement. Research is emerging on the effectiveness of diversity programming on college and university campuses. In one such study, D. A. Grinde (2001) found that more than 85% of University of Vermont students believed that diversity courses strengthened their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Educational programs are used most often to promote diversity in public and private workplaces. These programs attempt to eliminate incorrect stereotypes and unfounded prejudices by providing new information to participants (Farley 2005). Diversity training is thought to make managers aware of how their biases affect their actions in the workplace (Kaley, Dobbin, and Kelly 2006). Research indicates that such programs are effective when people are not made to feel defensive over past behavior but are participating in a learning process of new (vs. old) ideas. This has also been found to be effective in diversity simulation and experiential exercises (i.e., role playing; Farley 2005). These programs are designed to familiarize employees with antidiscrimination laws, to suggest behavioral changes that could address bias, and to increase cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication among employees (Bendick, Egan, and Lofhjelm 1998).

Business leaders are motivated to address diversity on principle and because they recognize how their company's productivity and success depend on it (Galagan 1993). General diversity and management programs have been established in companies such as Aetna, Ernst and Young, General Mills, and Hewlett Packard. All programs note the importance of creating an “inclusive” workforce and work environment. In addition to diversity training or sensitivity programs, businesses have successfully implemented diversity management programs, targeting the development and advancement of women and people of color in their organizations.

AT&T is an example of a corporation that has attempted to address diversity in its organization and the communities it serves. AT&T supports the Hispanic Association of Communications Employees (HACE) of AT&T, a volunteer employee group that develops educational and community programs. Similar employee resource groups have also been established at Microsoft and Johnson & Johnson. Since 1990, the San Diego chapter of the association has awarded more than $600,000 in scholarships to high school and college students. AT&T San Diego has been a partner in community events and programming, including San Diego’s Latino Film Festival, Fiesta Patrias, and World Soccer parties. The San Diego HACE chapter, along with other city chapters (Los Angeles and Dallas), offers Internet services and training for low-income and non-English-speaking communities.

Voices in the Community

Rosa Parks

Most would mark the beginning of the U.S. civil rights movement as December 1, 1955. On that day, a Black seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to give up her seat on the bus to a White person. Rosa Parks explains,

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, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day.
I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in. (Academy of Achievement 2005)

For her actions, Parks was arrested and fined for violating a city ordinance, thrusting her in the middle of America's civil rights movement.

The bus incident led to the formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association, with a young Martin Luther King Jr. elected as its leader. The association promoted its first nonviolent protest, boycotting the city-owned bus company. The boycott lasted 381 days, ending in November 1956, when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Montgomery ordinance under which Parks had been fined, outlawing racial segregation on public transportation.

When asked about the historical bus boycott, Parks remembers,

As I look back on those days, it's just like a dream. The only thing that bothered me was that we waited so long to make this protest and to let it be known wherever we go that all of us should be free and equal and have all opportunities that others should have. (Academy of Achievement 2005)

Parks remained active in the civil rights movement until her death in 2005. In 1957, she and her husband, Raymond, moved to Detroit, Michigan. Parks worked for U.S. Congressman John Conyers. President Bill Clinton honored Parks with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996. Upon her death in 2005, her body was laid in state in the Capitol rotunda, the first woman to be so honored.

Parks was asked what advice she would give a young person who wants to make a difference. She replied,

The advice I would give any young person is, first of all, to rid themselves of prejudice against other people and to be concerned about what they can do to help others. And of course, to get a good education, and take advantage of the opportunities that they have. In fact, there are more opportunities today than when I was young. And whatever they do, to think positively and be concerned about other people, to think in terms of them being able to not succumb to many of the temptations, especially the use of drugs and substances that will destroy the physical health, as well as mental health. (Academy of Achievement 2005)

**Affirmative Action**

Since its inception nearly 50 years ago, affirmative action has been a “contentious issue on national, state, and local levels” (Yee 2001:135). Affirmative action is a policy that has attempted to improve minority access to occupational and educational opportunities (Woodhouse 2002). No federal initiatives enforced affirmative action until 1961, when President John Kennedy signed Executive Order 10925. The order created the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and forbade employers with federal contracts from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, or religion in their hiring practices. In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin by private employers, agencies, and educational institutions receiving federal funds (Swink 2003).

In June 1965, during a graduation speech at Howard University, President Johnson spoke for the first time about the importance of providing opportunities to minority groups, an important objective of affirmative action. According to Johnson (1965),
You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race and then say, “You are free to compete with all others” and still justly believe you have been completely fair. Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates. This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. (P. 366)

**Employment**

In September 1965, President Johnson signed Executive Order 11246, which required government contractors to “take affirmative action” toward prospective minority employees in all aspects of hiring and employment. Contractors are required to take specific proactive measures to ensure equality in hiring without regard to race, religion, and national origin. The order also established the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), charged with enforcing and monitoring compliance among federal contractors. In 1967, President Johnson amended the order to include discrimination based on gender (Swink 2003). In 1969, President Richard Nixon initiated the Philadelphia Plan, which required federal contractors to develop affirmative action plans by setting minimum levels of minority participation on federal construction projects in Philadelphia and three other cities (Idelson 1995). This was the first order that endorsed the use of specific goals for desegregating the workplace (Kotlowski 1998), but it did not include fixed quotas (Woodhouse 2002). In 1970, the order was extended to all federal contractors (Idelson 1995).

According to Dawn Swink (2003), “While the initial efforts of affirmative action were directed primarily at federal government employment and private industry, affirmative action gradually extended into other areas, including admissions programs in higher education” (pp. 214–15). State and local governments followed the lead of the federal government and took formal steps to encourage employers to diversify their workforces.

Opponents of affirmative action believe that such policies encourage preferential treatment for minorities (Woodhouse 2002), giving women and ethnic minorities an unfair advantage over White males (Yee 2001). Affirmative action, say its critics, promotes “reverse discrimination,” the hiring of unqualified minorities and women at the expense of qualified White males. Some believe affirmative action has not worked and ultimately results in the stigmatization of those who benefit from the policies (Heilman, Block, and Stahatos 1997; Herring and Collins 1995).

Proponents argue that only through affirmative action policies can we address the historical societal discrimination that minorities experienced in the past (Kaplan and Lee 1995). Although these policies have not created true equality, there have been important accomplishments (Tsang and Dietz 2001). As a result of affirmative action, women and people of color have gained increased access to forms of public employment and education that were once closed to them (Yee 2001). Yet, research indicates that ethnic minorities and women do not have an unfair advantage over White men. Women and ethnic minorities are not receiving equal compensation compared with White males with similar education and background (Tsang and Dietz 2001). Although it may not be perfect, affirmative action has been the “only comprehensive set of policies that has given women and people of color opportunities for better paying jobs and access to higher education that did not exist before” (Yee 2001:137).
Shawn Woodhouse (1999, 2002) argues that the differences in individual perceptions of affirmative action policy may be related to the differences of racial group histories and socialization experiences. She writes,

Based upon these rationalizations, it is implicit that individuals interpret affirmative action through an ethnic specific lens. In other words, most individuals will assess their group condition when considering contentious legislation such as affirmative action because after all, a group’s history impacts its view of American society. (2002:158)

Education

Based on Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, affirmative action policies have been applied to student recruitment, admissions, and financial aid programs. Title VI permits the consideration of race, national origin, sex, or disability to provide opportunities to a class of disqualified people, such as minorities and women, who have been denied educational opportunities. Affirmative action policies have been supported as remedies for past discrimination and as means to encourage diversity in higher education. Affirmative action practices were affirmed in the 1978 Supreme Court decision in the *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, suggesting that race-sensitive policies were necessary to create diverse campus environments (American Council on Education and American Association of University Professors 2000; Springer 2005).

Although affirmative action has been practiced since the *Bakke* decision, it has recently become vulnerable, particularly to challenges of the diversity argument in the Supreme Court’s decision. The first challenge occurred in one of our most diverse states, California. In 1995, the California Board of Regents banned the use of affirmative action guidelines in admissions. In 1996, California voters followed and passed Proposition 209, the California Civil Rights Initiative, which effectively dismantled the state’s affirmative action programs in education and employment. Also in 1996, a federal appeals court ruling struck down affirmative action in Texas. In the *Hopwood v. Texas* decision, the ruling referred to affirmative action policies as a form of discrimination against White students. State of Washington voters passed an initiative in 1998 that banned the use of race-conscious affirmative action in schools. In 1999, Florida Governor Jeb Bush banned the use of affirmative action in admission to state schools.

The *Hopwood* ruling led to a decline in the number of minority students enrolling in Texas A&M and the University of Texas (Yardley 2002). California’s state universities experienced a similar drop in minority student applications and enrollment after the *Bakke* decision and the California Civil Rights Initiative. In response, states have instituted other practices with the goal of increasing minority student recruitment. For example, California and Texas have initiated percentage solutions. In Texas, the top 10% of all graduating seniors are automatically admitted into the University of Texas system. (In 2009, the Texas Legislature voted to put limits on the program, setting enrollment caps on the number of students let in under the rule at 75% of the entering class. In fall 2008, 86% of the freshman class were admitted under the 10% rule.) California initiated a similar plan, covering only the top 4% of students, and Florida recently announced the One Florida Initiative, allowing the top 20% of graduating high school seniors into the state’s public colleges and universities. The University of Georgia increased its recruitment efforts among minority students, hoping to enlarge the pool of applications from minorities (Schemo 2001).
In 2000, a federal judge upheld the University of Michigan's affirmative action program, ruling that “a racially and ethnically diverse student body produces significant educational benefits such that diversity, in the context of higher education, constitutes a compelling governmental interest” (Wilgoren 2000:A32). In 2003, the case was considered by the U.S. Supreme Court, and in a 5 to 4 vote, the Court upheld the University of Michigan's consideration of race for admission into its law school. Writing for the majority, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor stated, “In order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity” (Greenhouse 2003:A1). In a separate decision, the U.S. Supreme Court voted 6 to 1, invalidating the university’s affirmative action program for admission into its undergraduate program. Unlike the law school program, the undergraduate program used a point system based on race. Twenty points on a scale of 150 were awarded for membership in an underrepresented minority group; 100 points were necessary to gain admission into the university (Greenhouse 2003).

In November 2006, Michigan voters approved Proposal 2, a state law banning consideration of race or gender in public university admissions or government hiring or contracting. After asking the courts if it could delay complying with the new law until its current admission process had been completed, the University of Michigan announced in January 2007 that it would comply with the law and stop considering race or gender in its admissions decisions.

Main Points

- From a biological perspective, a race can be defined as a group or population that shares a set of genetic characteristics and physical features. Social scientists reject the biological notion of race, instead treating race as a social construct.
- Ethnic groups are groups that are set off to some degree from other groups by displaying a unique set of cultural traits, such as their language, religion, or diet. Members of an ethnic group perceive themselves as members of an ethnic community, sharing common historical roots and experiences.
- Sociologists explain that ethnocentrism is the belief that the values and behaviors of one's own group are right and actually better than all others. Although feeling positive about one's group is important for group solidarity and loyalty, it can lead groups to believe that certain racial or ethnic groups are inferior and that discriminatory practices against them are justified. This is called racism.
- Certain ethnic/racial groups have been subject to institutional discrimination, discrimination practiced by the government, social institutions, and organizations. Institutional discrimination may include segregation, exclusion, or expulsion. Segregation refers to the physical and social separation of ethnic or racial groups. Exclusion refers to the practice of prohibiting or restricting the entry or participation of groups in society. Expulsion is the removal of a group by using direct force or intimidation.
- The impact of race and social class has been documented in studies regarding income attainment and mobility, educational attainment, and health and medical care. In all
three areas, racial and ethnic minorities are disadvantaged.

- The U.S. Census 2008 American Community Survey revealed that there were 37.3 million foreign-born individuals in the United States, constituting 12.5% of the total population. This is the highest number of foreign born ever recorded in U.S. history. Between 2000 and 2007, a record number of 10.3 million immigrants arrived in the United States.

- Migration has been identified as a global issue, partly because of its impact to the global economy and terrorism. Globalization has intensified the need to coordinate and harmonize government policies worldwide.

- Multiculturalism is promoted in schools and businesses through educational programming. Most U.S. colleges and universities require a diversity course as a general requirement.

- Affirmative action is a policy that has attempted to improve minority access to occupational and educational opportunities. Since its inception nearly 50 years ago, it has been a controversial issue on federal, state, and local levels.

### On Your Own

Log on to the open-access Student Study Site at [www.pineforge.com/leonguerrero3e](http://www.pineforge.com/leonguerrero3e) for these additional learning tools:

- Interactive quizzes
- Video clips
- NPR audio links
- Handbook articles
- E-flashcards
- Journal articles
- Community and policy guides
- A service learning guide
- The end-of-chapter web exercises
- Additional web resources and current events

### Internet and Community Exercises

1. In what ways does your college encourage or celebrate racial and ethnic diversity (among its students, faculty, and staff)? Consider specific college-sponsored clubs, activities, or events that highlight diversity on your campus.

2. To learn more about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, visit the websites for the Manzanar War Relocation Center and internment camps located in Tule Lake, California, and Topaz, Utah. These websites feature virtual tours, photographs, and testimony from those interned. Log on to [Study Site Chapter 3](http://www.pineforge.com/leonguerrero3e) for links.

3. Identify the largest private employer in your city or state. Investigate through the Internet or direct contact whether a diversity program or development office is in place. What are the diversity goals of this business, and how does it implement these goals (what specific program practices are in place)?

4. The International Organization for Migration, established in 1951, is an intergovernmental organization working with 127 nations to promote and support humane and effective migration management. The organization also conducts immigration research worldwide. Its website includes a global map, noting migration problems affecting a selected nation. Log on to [Study Site Chapter 3](http://www.pineforge.com/leonguerrero3e) for links.

5. Interview a student who is an immigrant. Ask the student about his or her migration experience and educational path to your college or university. Does the student's experience confirm a pattern of assimilation, pluralism, or transnationalism?

6. Does your college have a diversity requirement? If you have completed the course, do you believe the learning experience changed your diversity beliefs and values? Why or why not?
Study Questions

1. How are race and ethnicity socially constructed? Why do you think racial distinctions persist?
2. Distinguish between assimilation and pluralism (or multiculturalism). What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which model best describes racial and ethnic relations in the United States?
3. The term *transnational* has been used to describe the immigrants who “maintain familial, economic, cultural, and political ties across international borders, in effect making the home and host society a single arena for social action” (Foner 2000:170). In effect, transnationals have two homes. Is this functional for society? Is it functional for the life of an immigrant?
4. The interactionist perspective argues that certain races or ethnicities are bestowed power and privilege not given to other groups. Do you agree with this statement? What examples of privilege can you think of and what are their consequences?
5. Identify and explain the two types of racial disparities in health care.
6. What are the consequences of a less-educated, lower skilled immigrant population? How is this associated with employment, economic inequality, and health care access?
7. Which sociological perspective best explains the problem of immigration in our society? Explain.
8. Explain how having contact and interaction with other racial or ethnic groups (at school or at work) reduces interracial prejudice.