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Part I

An Introduction to the Study of Minority Groups in the United States

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DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Questions and Concepts

This chapter introduces several concepts crucial to the study of dominant-minority relations in the United States. The selections emphasize prejudice and racism but also call attention to the widely misunderstood concept of race.

The concept of race is addressed in several places. First, the Narrative Portrait by Lawrence Hill presents the efforts of a person of mixed black-white heritage to grapple with issues of identity and status in a world where people have traditionally been regarded as *either* black or white. His thoughts are consistent with the view, widely held among social scientists, that race is a *social construction:* a way of thinking about ourselves and others that is socially determined and a reflection of our experiences in a highly race-conscious society. Race is important because we are trained to think it's important, not because of some essential quality inherent in the concept.

Second, the reading by Rosenblum and Travis explores the processes by which we construct social categories like race, sex, class, and ethnicity. The authors argue that so-called racial and gender differences lie more in the cultural and social perceptions we acquire during socialization than in the nature of the phenomena themselves. In other words, group boundaries are created by a social process, not by some "natural" quality of the groups themselves, and we come to regard these boundaries as important because of our socialization, not because of anything inherent in the group.

Finally, the biological and social realities of race are explored in the Current Debate. Why do African American (and African) athletes dominate in so many sports? Jon Entine's answer to this question assumes that race is a meaningful biological reality and that the dominance of African American athletes is, in some sense, "natural." Kenan Malik, on the other hand, questions not only Entine's logic and assumptions but the reality of the concept of race itself.

The concepts of prejudice and racism are addressed from a number of perspectives. The Narrative Portrait by Mark Mathabane recounts an incident from his childhood in South Africa during the days of apartheid. In this memoir, we see how prejudice (and the perception that race is a biological reality) is carefully taught in a highly racist society and how prejudicial thinking can be reinforced even by people who believe that they are trying to combat it. The reading by Yetman distinguishes among prejudice, discrimination, and racism—concepts that are at the core of the sociological analysis of dominant-minority relations. Researchers Van

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Ausdale and Feagin explore how these concepts are used by young children in their interactions with each other. Again, we see the results of race-conscious thinking and careful training in prejudice.

Please visit the accompanying website to Race, Ethnicity, and Gender, second edition for the *Public Sociology Assignments* at http://www.pineforge.com/das2.

Questions to Consider in This Chapter

1. Is race *merely* a social construction? Is the biology of race completely irrelevant? How about gender? Is it also merely a social construction? How do gender and race differ (if at all) in this regard?

2. What are prejudice, racism, and discrimination? How are these concepts linked to each other? How do they differ? Make sure you can explain and describe each concept and cite examples from your own experience.

3. How are prejudice and racism taught? What roles do parents and significant others such as teachers, siblings, and friends play? Do we merely acquire the prejudiced views from our social environment or are we more active in the process? How?

Narrative Portrait

The Social Construction of Racial Identity

Traditionally, in the United States, race has been seen as a set of fixed, unchanging, unambiguous categories. Perhaps the most powerful example of this perception was the "one-drop rule" that has been used to determine racial identity, especially in the South. The rule was simple: any trace of black ancestry—a single drop of African-American blood in your veins—meant that you were black.

In contrast to this rigid perception, the increasing numbers of cross-group marriages and "mixed race" individuals reminds us that race is subjective and negotiable, not fixed and permanent. That is, racial identity is a definition of self that is constructed during socialization and negotiated and developed in interaction with parents, siblings, peers, and others in the community. Race is not permanent or fixed, and social conceptions can change independent of the biological realities. New racial categories can emerge as the social conception of race changes. For example, professional golfer Tiger Woods has (tongue in cheek) made up his own racial category—Cablasian—to acknowledge his Caucasian, Black, and Asian ancestry.

Although the newer, less rigid view of group membership might be growing in strength, the tradition of categorical thinking still has an enormous impact on the way people of mixed racial heritage are regarded by others and how they think about themselves and their place in the larger society. Some of these conflicts are illustrated in this selection from writer Lawrence Hill, the son of a black father and a white mother. His parents were involved in the U.S. civil rights struggle in the 1950s and 1960s but opted to move to the more tolerant racial climate of Canada to raise their children. Mr. Hill was raised in a suburb of Toronto and rarely encountered other children of color. In the passage below, he remembers some of the issues related to his multiracial status and the problem of finding a place for himself even in the mild Canadian racial atmosphere. He also reflects on the more certain racial identity of his parents, the difference between black and white racial identities, and provides something of an outsider's view on U.S. race relations.

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Developing a Racial Identity

Lawrence Hill

As a child, my experience of race, including my racial identity, was shaded quite differently from that of my parents. They were both born and raised in the United States, and their racial identities were clearly delineated all their lives. The America of their youth and early adulthood was replete with laws that banned interracial marriages and upheld segregation in every domain of public life. . . . In the United States, there was never any doubt that my father was first and foremost a black man. Or that my mother was a white woman. And there is no question that, had my siblings and I been raised in the United States, we would have been identified . . . as black. . . .

When I was growing up, I didn't spend much time thinking about who I was or where I fit in. I was too busy tying my shoelaces, brushing my teeth, learning to spell, swinging baseball bats and shooting hockey pucks. But once in a while, just as my guard was down, questions of my own identity would leap like a cougar from the woods and take a bite out of my backside.

I found that race became an issue as a result of environmental factors. The average white kid growing up in a white suburb didn't have to think of himself as white. Gradually, my environment started talking to me and making me aware that I could never truly be white. There's nothing like being called "nigger" to let you know that you're not white.

Learning that I wasn't white, however, wasn't the same as learning that I was black. Indeed, for the longest time I didn't learn what I was—only what I wasn't. In the strange and unique society that was Canada, I was allowed to grow up in a sort of racial limbo. People knew what I wasn't—white or black—but they sure couldn't say what I was . . . .

These days, I think of the factors that contributed to my sense of identity, and of how malleable that sense of identity was and still is. There were days when I went straight from my exclusive, private boys' high school to family events populated by black relatives or friends. . . . I bounced back and forth between studying Latin . . . and revering black American cultural icons, but who exactly was I? . . .

Today in Canada, black people still contend with racism at every level of society. And yet, the way my children will define themselves, and be defined by others, remains up for grabs. Racial identity is about how you see yourself, about how you construct a sense of belonging, community, awareness and allegiance.

To this date, I have mostly seen myself as black. . . . My siblings and I learned early that you can have a white parent and still be considered black, but you can never have a black parent and be considered white. It ain't allowed. You'll be reminded of your "otherness" more times than you can shake a stick at it. This is one of the reasons why I self identify as black. Attempts at pleasant symmetry, as in "half-white, half-black," trivialize to my eye the meaning of being black. . . .

The suburb of [Toronto in which I was raised] became as suffocating for [me as the U.S. had been for my parents]. There were no blacks in my school, on my street. Because I looked so different from everyone else, I feared that I was ugly. I worried about having frizzy hair, big ears, a big nose and plump lips. When I looked in the mirror, I felt disgust. None of the people I admired looked the least bit like me. Listening to my father's [stories] . . . instilled in [me and my siblings] a measure of black pride. . . . I had to find . . . ways to connect

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[to Black traditions and cultural icons]. So I ate up every bit of black writing that I could find. Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright . . . James Baldwin. Eldridge Cleaver . . . . I read Alex Haley's Autobiography of Malcolm X, and had to struggle through the section of Malcolm X's life when he ardently believed that white people were the devil incarnate. I knew this to be false. My mother was white, and she was no devil.

Without knowing exactly what I was doing, I was forming my own sense of blackness and my own connection to the black Diaspora. . . . Slowly, I was developing a sense of myself.

SOURCE: "Developing a Racial Identity" from *Black Berry, Sweet Juice: On Being White in Canada* by Lawrence Hill. Copyright © 2001 by Lawrence Hill. Reprinted by permission of the author, and HarperCollins*Publishers Ltd.* All rights reserved.

NARRATIVE PORTRAIT

THE CULTURAL SOURCES OF PREJUDICE

Kaffir Boy, Mark Mathabane's (1986) best-selling memoir of growing up in racist South Africa, provides abundant illustrations of the importance of culture and conformity in developing individual prejudice. Prior to recent social and political reforms, South Africa was the most rigidly race-conscious and segregated society on earth. Black South Africans were kept economically and politically powerless and were used as a source of cheap labor for the benefit of white South Africans. White South Africans of even modest economic means were able to afford domestic help (cooks, gardeners, maids, etc.) or other amenities because of this system of exploitation and discrimination.

This elaborate system of racial privilege was stabilized in part by a strong, government-sanctioned ideology of antiblack prejudice and racism. Black and white South Africans had little contact with each other except in situations in which the black person was clearly subordinate. What "knowledge" the white community had of blacks came from constrained, lopsided interactions or from the racist content of their culture. For example, the idea that blacks are inferior was taught in school as part of the official curriculum.

In the following passage, Mathabane recalls a day when he went to work with his grandmother, a gardener for an affluent white family named Smith. Clyde Smith was roughly the same age as Mark and clearly demonstrates the results of being socialized in a culture in which racism is both "normal" and government supported. Note that Mrs. Smith challenges her son's attitudes with antiracist values and beliefs—even blatantly racist cultures are not monolithic in their commitment to bias. How does she also reinforce racial inequality in her actions and words?

KAFFIR BOY

Mark Mathabane

"This is Mrs. Smith's house," Granny remarked as she led me up a long driveway of a beautiful villa-type house. . . . We went to a steel gate at the back of the yard, where Granny rang a bell.

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"I'm here, madam," she shouted through the gate. . . . A door creaked open, and a high-pitched woman's voice called out, "I'm coming, Ellen." . . . Presently the gate clicked open, and there appeared a short, slender white woman. . . . "I'm just getting ready to leave for tennis," she said to Granny.

"Madam, guess who I have with me today," Granny said with the widest smile. . . .

"My, what a big lad he is! . . . Is he really your grandson, Ellen?" The warmth in her voice somehow reduced my fears of her; her eyes shone with the same gentleness of the Catholic Sisters at the clinic.

"Yes, madam," Granny said proudly; "this is the one I've been telling you about. This is the one who'll some day go to university." . . .

"I believe you, Ellen," said Mrs. Smith. "He looks like a very smart pickaninny." . . .

Toward early afternoon Mrs. Smith returned. She called me to the car to remove several shopping bags from the backseat. . . . As we were talking, a busload of white schoolchildren stopped in front of the house and a young boy [Mrs. Smith's son, Clyde] alighted and ran up the driveway. . . ."Who is he, Mother?"

"That's Ellen's grandson. . . . Now run along inside and change and . . . then maybe you can play with pickaninny."

"I don't play with Kaffirs," the white boy declared. "At school they say we shouldn't."

"Watch your filthy mouth, Clyde," Mrs. Smith said, flushing crimson. "I thought I told you a million times to leave all that rubbish about Kaffirs in the classroom." . . .

Turning to Granny, . . . Mrs. Smith said, in a voice of someone fighting a losing battle, "You know, Ellen, I simply don't understand why those damn uncivilized Boers from Pretoria teach children such things."

"I agree, madam," Granny said, "All children, black and white, are God's children." . . .

"I'm afraid you're right, Ellen," Mrs. Smith said, somewhat touched. . . .

Shortly, Clyde emerged. . . . He called to me. "Come here, pickaninny. My mother says I should show you around."

I went.

I followed him around as he showed me the things his parents regularly bought him. . . . I couldn't understand why his people had to have all the luxuries money could buy, while my people lived in abject poverty. . . . We finally came to Clyde's playroom. The room was roughly the size of our house, and was elaborately decorated. . . . What arrested my attention were the stacks of comic books on the floor and the shelves and shelves of books. Never had I seen so many books. . . .

Sensing that I was in awe of his magnificent library, Clyde said, "Do you have this many books in your playroom?"

"I don't have a playroom."

"You don't have a playroom," he said bug-eyed. "Can you read? . . . My teachers tell us that Kaffirs can't read, speak or write English like white people because they have smaller brains, which are already full of tribal things. My teachers say you're not people like us, because you belong to a jungle civilization.* That's why you can't live or go to school with us, but can only be our servants."

"Stop saying that rubbish," Mrs. Smith said angrily as she entered the room. . . ."How many times have I told you that what your teachers say about black people is not true?"

"What do you know, Mama?" Clyde retorted impudently, "you're not a teacher. Besides, there are textbooks where it's so written."

*In South Africa, Kaffir is a derogatory term for blacks, roughly equivalent to nigger.

SOURCE: Reprinted with the permission of Scribner, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing Group, from *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane. Copyright © 1986 by Mark Mathabane.

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READINGS

In this section, we examine the development and application of many key concepts related to the understanding of diversity in the United States. The first reading, "Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism," examines in depth three concepts that are often confused and used interchangeably in everyday language, yet have very distinct and specific meanings in the sociological study of majority-minority relations. The author, Norman Yetman, begins by introducing sociologist Robert K. Merton's typology of prejudice (attitudes and feelings) and discrimination (behavior) and stressing the differences between the two. Discrimination is often motivated by prejudice, of course, but it can also be the result of social pressure and conformity. Likewise, prejudice does not always result in discrimination, for the same social reasons.

Yetman also reminds us that prejudice and discrimination are not simply psychological in nature. Thus, simply educating people to be "more open-minded" as a strategy of prejudice reduction is hardly enough to eliminate inequality, although many well-meaning Americans seem to think so. Driving home these distinctions, Yetman then develops a definition of racism that has both ideological and behavioral components and concludes by exploring the differences between attitudinal discrimination and institutional discrimination, providing many examples of each. Incidents with high media exposure, such as the beating of Rodney King and the refusal to serve black customers in places like Denny's restaurants, serve as examples of attitudinal discrimination. Institutional discrimination, on the other hand, refers to policies and practices that are not nearly as obvious in their intent. Examples such as jury selection from only registered voters, job referrals by word of mouth, and different penalties for crack and powder cocaine users alerts us to how covert and far-reaching the dynamics of prejudice, discrimination, and racism are in the United States.

The second selection, "Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts: The Critical Case of Very Young Children," takes us into a research setting where the concepts of prejudice, discrimination, and racism are put into practice be some of the seemingly most innocent citizens—preschool-aged children. Using the method of participant observation, authors Debra Van Ausdale and Joe R. Feagin investigate how young children negotiate racial and ethnic boundaries on their own terms with each other, rather than in response to any adult pre-formulations. This essay presents numerous firsthand examples of how children use racial and ethnic concepts to include each other as well as control each other, and also to demarcate their own and others' identities. Far from innocently parroting words they might overhear from adults, these children are quite savvy at putting racial and ethnic dividing lines into practice. Also interesting are the adult reactions to children's racial transgressions, since the adults are quick to deny that the children learned it from them. Thus, society at large has already given the children clear messages about who the in-groups and out-groups are in their communities, and they have learned these lessons well enough to begin putting them into practice, even at such young ages.

Rosenblum and Travis argue that race and gender—categories that we tend to see as "natural," unambiguous, and unchanging—are profoundly social, negotiable, and dynamic. The authors demonstrate the value of a "constructionist" approach to the social categories that people tend to accept as part of their everyday realities. By questioning the "essentialism" of these categories, they challenge us to critically examine our perceptions and assumptions of the world. They also demonstrate the ways in which categories and group names change in response to political pressures and group conflict. Rosenblum and Travis show that matters of group membership and the labels that are attached to groups—or that groups attach to themselves—are profoundly social processes that reflect the distribution of power and resources in the larger society.

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PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, AND RACISM

Norman Yetman

Prejudice and discrimination are important elements in all majority-minority relations. The term *prejudice* derives from two Latin words, *prae* "before" and *judicum* "a judgment." It denotes a judgment before all the facts are known. According to Gordon Allport, *prejudice* is "an avertive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he (or she) belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to the group" (Allport 1958:8). Prejudice thus refers to a set of rigidly held negative attitudes, beliefs, and feelings toward members of another group.

Prejudice often involves an intense emotional component. Thus, many white Americans consciously and rationally reject the myths of African American inferiority but react emotionally with fear, hostility, or condescension in the presence of African Americans. The forms of prejudice range from unconscious aversion to members of the out-group to a comprehensive, well-articulated, and coherent ideology, such as the ideology of racism.

Discrimination, on the other hand, involves unfavorable treatment of individuals because of their group membership. Prejudice and discrimination should not be equated. Prejudice involves attitudes and internal states, whereas discrimination involves overt action or behavior. Discrimination may be manifested in a multitude of ways: mild slights (such as Polish jokes); verbal threats, abuse, and epithets; intimidation and harassment (such as threatening phone calls); defacing property with ethnic slurs, graffiti, or symbols; unequal treatment (such as refusing to hire or promote qualified applicants); systematic oppression (such as slavery); or outright violence (vandalism, arson, terrorism, lynching, pogroms, massacres).

. . . Attitude surveys conducted in the United States since the 1940s have shown a significant decline in antiblack prejudice; increasingly, white Americans have come to support broad principles of racial integration and equal treatment in public accommodations, employment, public transportation, schools, housing, and marriage. For example, in 1942, 32 percent of whites agreed that whites and blacks should attend the same schools; by 1982, this figure was 90 percent. When asked in 1958 whether they would object to sending their children to schools in which half the children were black, nearly half (47 percent) responded affirmatively; by 1997, this figure had declined to 12 percent. In 1944, 45 percent thought that blacks should have as good a chance as whites to get any kind of job; and by 1972, 97 percent agreed. The percentage approving integration in public transportation rose from 46 percent in 1942 to 88 percent in 1970. Moreover, whites have indicated increasing willingness to participate personally in desegregated settings. In 1958, four-fifths of whites said they would move if blacks moved into their neighborhood "in great numbers"; in 1997, those indicating they would move declined to 12 percent. Finally, whereas only 4 percent of whites said they approved of interracial marriages in 1958, more than three-fifths (61 percent) expressed their approval in 1997 (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985; Hochschild 1995; Gallup Poll Social Audit 1997). These changes are a result of two factors. First, they reflect attitude changes among individuals over their lifetimes. Second, younger people generally exhibit less racial prejudice than their elders, and as younger, more tolerant cohorts have replaced older, more prejudiced ones, overall racial prejudice has declined (Firebaugh and Davis 1988).

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However, among white Americans, the same striking agreement on how to combat discrimination or segregation does not appear. Although today white Americans endorse broad principles of nondiscrimination and desegregation in important areas of American life, they are much less likely to support policies for translating these principles into practice. For example, despite the strong support among white Americans for the principle of integrated education, the percentage of whites who felt that the federal government should ensure that black and white children attend the same schools declined between the 1960s and 1980s. Moreover, widespread white opposition was raised to busing as a means of desegregating schools (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985).

The substantial gap between white people's support for broad principles of equality and their support for specific programs to implement these principles indicates the complexity of racial attitudes. The relationship between prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior is equally complex. Prejudice does not always produce discrimination, although it has frequently been treated as the cause of discrimination. An individual, however, may be prejudiced without *acting* in a discriminatory manner. In recent years it has become less fashionable to express racial prejudice publicly. Overt forms of discrimination, such as exclusion from public accommodations, jobs, and colleges and universities—behaviors that in the past were tolerated by most whites—are now often prohibited by law and condemned by public opinion.

The distinction between prejudice and discrimination and the interrelationship between these two phenomena were first systematically developed by Robert Merton (1949) in his classic article, "Discrimination and the American Creed." "Prejudicial attitudes," Merton argued, "need not coincide with discriminatory behavior." Merton demonstrated the range of possible ways in which prejudice and discrimination interact by distinguishing among four types of individuals:

1. The unprejudiced nondiscriminator—the all-weather liberal
2. The unprejudiced discriminator—the fair-weather liberal
3. The prejudiced nondiscriminator—the fair-weather bigot
4. The prejudiced discriminator—the all-weather bigot

The unprejudiced nondiscriminator consistently adheres to the American creed of equality for all in both belief and practice. The unprejudiced discriminator, on the other hand, internalizes and may even articulate the ideals of the American creed but may acquiesce to group pressures to discriminate. Similarly, the prejudiced nondiscriminator conforms to social pressures not to discriminate despite harboring prejudices toward ethnic minorities. Finally, the prejudiced discriminator is, like the unprejudiced nondiscriminator, consistent in belief and practice, rejecting the American creed and engaging in personal discrimination.

Merton's discussion was critical to the recognition that whether prejudice becomes translated into discriminatory behavior depends on the social context. From this perspective it becomes impossible to understand the dynamics of majority-minority relations by examining prejudice alone; prejudice is most appropriately considered not as a causal factor but as a dependent variable. As Richard Schermerhorn has cogently suggested, prejudice "is a product of situations, historical situations, economic situations, political situations; it is not a little demon that emerges in people because they are depraved" (Schermerhorn 1970:6).

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Thus, discrimination is much more likely to occur in a social setting in which acts of ethnic and racial bias are accepted or are not strongly condemned. This principle was underscored in a study undertaken at Smith College, where in 1989 racial tensions erupted after four black students received anonymous hate messages. Researchers asked students how they felt about these incidents. Before a student could answer, a confederate, arriving at the same time, would respond by strongly condemning or strongly justifying the incidents. The researchers found that the students' opinions were strongly influenced by the opinions they heard expressed by the confederates. Hearing others express strongly antiracist opinions produced similar sentiments, whereas students who first heard expressions more accepting of racism offered "significantly less strongly antiracist opinions" (Blanchard, Lilly, and Vaughn 1991:105). Clearly, the social climate affects whether personal prejudices are translated into discriminatory acts; to explain the dynamics of ethnic and racial relations fully, it is necessary to analyze the historical, cultural, and institutional conditions that have preceded and generated them.

During the past quarter century, the conceptualization of American race relations has undergone several significant changes. These changes have been profoundly influenced by the changing nature of race relations in the United States. Before the advent of the Black Protest Movement during the 1950s, social scientists focused their attention primarily on racial attitudes, because prejudice was thought to be the key to understanding racial and ethnic conflict. This perception of the essential dynamics of race relations is perhaps best illustrated in Myrdal's classic *An American Dilemma,* in which he defined race prejudice as "the whole complex of valuations and beliefs which are behind discriminatory behavior on the part of the majority group . . . and which are contrary to the egalitarian ideals in the American Creed" (Myrdal 1944:52). This model of race relations was predicated on the assumption that racial conflict in the United States was a problem of ignorance and morality that could best be solved by changing—through education and moral suasion—the majority's prejudicial attitudes toward racial minorities. "A great majority of white people in America," Myrdal wrote, "would be better prepared to give the Negro a substantially better deal if they knew the facts" (Myrdal 1944:48).

The black protest era of the 1950s and 1960s challenged the assumption that change in the patterns of racial inequality in American society could be brought about through a reduction in prejudicial attitudes alone. Sociologists and social activists focused increasingly on the dynamics of discrimination and sought means of eliminating discriminatory behavior. The numerous forms of direct protest, such as nonviolent sit-ins, boycotts, and voter registration drives, were tactics designed to alter patterns of discrimination. In keeping with this emphasis on discrimination were the legislative efforts undertaken to secure enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination in public accommodations and employment, and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which provided federal support to ensure that African Americans had the right to vote throughout the South.

However, the greatest racial unrest of the black protest era occurred after these legislative victories had been achieved. Whereas the earlier civil rights phase of the Black Protest Movement had been directed primarily against public discrimination and especially its manifestations in the South, the outbreak of urban riots in northern cities focused attention on the nature of racial inequalities affecting African Americans throughout the entire nation. For several summers during the late 1960s, the

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nation was torn with racial strife. Parts of cities were burned, property damage ran into the millions of dollars, and the toll of dead—primarily, although not exclusively, blacks—numbered almost a hundred (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders 1968:116). In July 1967 President Lyndon Johnson appointed a national commission (the Kerner Commission) to investigate the causes of these urban riots. In 1968 the commission issued its report, which concluded the following:

> What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White society condones it. . . . Race prejudice has shaped our history decisively in the past; it now threatens to do so again. White racism is essentially responsible for the explosive mixture which has been accumulating in our cities since the end of World War II. (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders 1968:203)

Racism

Especially because the Kerner Commission concluded that the ultimate responsibility for the racial disorders of the 1960s should be attributed to "white racism," the term has been widely invoked to explain racial inequalities and conflict in American society. However, the term is extremely imprecise and ambiguous. This imprecision enabled President Johnson, who had created the Kerner Commission, to ignore its findings, and his successor, Richard Nixon, to condemn and deny them. Consequently, the term *racism* is in urgent need of clarification.

First, *racism* is a general term, subsuming several analytically distinct phenomena—prejudice and several forms of discrimination. Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton distinguished between individual racism and institutional racism:

> Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks and acts by the total white community against the black community. . . . The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive of human life. . . . When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children, that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by most segments of the society. But when in that same city, Birmingham, Alabama—five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, shelter, and medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically, emotionally, and intellectually because of the conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, that is a function of institutional racism. (Carmichael and Hamilton 1967:41)

However, as I will note more fully later, prejudicial attitudes are causal factors in Carmichael and Hamilton's conceptualization of institutional racism. Moreover, they do not distinguish between psychological and sociological factors in its operation.

Another problem in the use of the word *racism* is that although it lumps together all forms of racial oppression, it is not sufficiently inclusive. It does not encompass majority-minority situations based on criteria other than race—criteria such as religion, tribal identity, ethnicity, or gender. Therefore, in the following discussion, I have analytically distinguished the terms *racism, prejudice,* and *discrimination.*

The term *racism* has traditionally referred to an *ideology*—a set of ideas and beliefs—used to explain, rationalize, or justify a racially organized social order. There are two essential parts of racism: its content and its function. Racism is distinguished from ethnocentrism by insistence that differences among groups are biologically based. The in-group is believed to be innately superior to the out-group, and

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members of the out-group are defined as being "biogenetically incapable of ever achieving intellectual and moral equality with members of the ingroup" (Noel 1972:157). Howard Schuman has offered a commonly accepted definition of racism:

> The term racism is generally taken to refer to the belief that there are clearly distinguishable human races, that these races differ not only in superficial physical characteristics, but also innately in important psychological traits, and finally that the differences are such that one race (almost always one's own, naturally) can be said to be superior to another. (Schuman 1969:44)

Racism's primary function has been to provide a rationale and ideological support —a moral justification—for maintaining a racially based social order. In other words, the assertion of the innate "natural" superiority or inferiority of different racial groups serves to justify domination and exploitation of one group by another. As Manning Nash has written, "no group of [people] is able systematically to subordinate or deprive another group of [people] without appeal to a body of values which makes the exploitation, the disprivilege, the expropriation, and the denigration of human beings a 'moral' act" (Nash 1962:288). In addition, not only does an ideology of racism provide a moral justification for the dominant group of their positions of privilege and power, but it also discourages minority groups from questioning their subordinate status and advancing claims for equal treatment.

. . . As noted before, there has been a substantial decline in professions of racist attitudes among white Americans in the past half century; especially since 1970, white Americans have increased their approval of racial integration (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985; Gallup Poll Social Audit 1997). In 1942 only 42 percent of a national sample of whites reported that they believed blacks to be equal to whites in innate intelligence; since the late 1950s, however, around 80 percent of white Americans have rejected the idea of inherent black inferiority. The Kerner Commission was therefore misleading in lumping all white antipathy toward blacks into the category of racism.

Rather than believing that African Americans are genetically inferior, whites often employ a *meritocratic ideology* to explain the substantial gap that continues to separate black and white income, wealth, and educational attainment. The basic element in a meritocratic ideology is the assumption of equality of opportunity—that all people in the United States have equal chances to achieve success, and that inequalities in the distribution of income, wealth, power, and prestige reflect the qualifications or merit of individuals in each rank in society. In other words, in a meritocratic society, all people are perceived to have an equal opportunity to succeed or fail—to go as far as their talents will take them—and the system of social ranking that develops is simply a "natural" reflection of each person's abilities or merit. Affluence is perceived as the result of the personal qualities of intelligence, industriousness, motivation, and ambition, while the primary responsibility for poverty rests with the poor themselves. Therefore, in this aristocracy of talent, those in the upper strata deserve the power, prestige, and privileges that they enjoy, while those lower in the social ranking system are placed according to their ability. Such a belief system is not inherently racist, but rather is a general judgment about human nature that can be applied to all sorts of human conditions or groups. However, it can have racist effects when it is used to explain racial inequalities in the United States without recognizing or acknowledging the external disabilities (such as prejudice and discrimination) that racial minorities experience. Thus, by this definition, African Americans are still considered inferior people; otherwise, they would be as well-off as whites.

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(See Hochschild 1995 for an excellent discussion of the conflicting perceptions of whites and blacks regarding opportunity in American society.)

If the term *racism* referred merely to the realm of beliefs and ideology and not to behavior or action, its relevance for the study of race relations would be limited. To restrict the meaning of racism to ideology would be to ignore the external constraints and societally imposed disabilities—rooted in the power of the majority group—confronting a racial minority. If one group does not possess the power to impose its belief system on another, ethnic stratification cannot occur (Noel 1968). During the late 1960s and 1970s, when critics charged that the ideology of Black Power was "racism in reverse," African American spokespersons responded that their critics failed to consider the components of differential power that enabled the ideology of white supremacy to result in white domination:

> There is no analogy—by any stretch of definition or imagination—between the advocates of Black Power and white racists. Racism is not merely exclusion on the basis of race but exclusion for the purpose of subjugating or maintaining subjugation. The goal of the racists is to keep black people on the bottom, arbitrarily and dictatorially, as they have done in this country for over three hundred years. (Carmichael and Hamilton 1967:47)

Recently Feagin and Vera (1995) have taken a similar stance against the contention that "black racism" is equally as critical an issue as white racism. They contend that "black racism does not exist" because

> Racism is more than a matter of individual prejudice and scattered episodes of discrimination. There is no black racism because there is no centuries-old system of racialized subordination and discrimination designed by African Americans to exclude white Americans from full participation in the rights, privileges and benefits of this society. Black (or other minority) racism would require not only a widely accepted racist ideology directed at whites but also the power to systematically exclude whites from opportunities and rewards in major economic, cultural, and political institutions. (Feagin and Vera 1995:ix-x)

Therefore, the crucial component of a definition of racism is behavioral. Racism in its most inclusive sense refers to actions on the part of a racial majority that have discriminatory effects, preventing members of a minority group from securing access to prestige, power, and privilege. These actions may be intentional or unintentional. This broader conception of racism therefore entails discrimination as well as an ideology that proclaims the superiority of one racial grouping over another.

As noted earlier, *discrimination* refers to the differential treatment of members of a minority group. Discrimination in its several forms comprises the means by which the unequal status of the minority group and the power of the majority group are preserved. In the ensuing discussion, I distinguish between *attitudinal* discrimination, which refers to discriminatory practices attributable to or influenced by prejudice, and *institutional* discrimination, which cannot be attributed to prejudice, but instead is a consequence of society's normal functioning. Both of these types can be further elaborated according to the sources of the discriminatory behavior. In reality, these types are at times interrelated and reinforce each other. Seldom is discrimination against a minority group member derived from one source alone.

Attitudinal Discrimination

Attitudinal discrimination refers to discriminatory practices that stem from prejudicial attitudes. The discriminator either is prejudiced or

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acts in response to the prejudices of others. Attitudinal discrimination is usually direct, overt, visible, and dramatic. Despite increasing white acceptance of principles of nondiscrimination and racial segregation, ethnic minorities, especially African Americans, continue to be confronted with incidents of attitudinal discrimination. . . . [Joe] Feagin distinguished five categories of . . . discrimination: avoidance, rejection, verbal attacks, physical threats and harassment, and physical attacks. Despite increasing verbal acceptance by whites of the principles of nondiscrimination and racial integration, African Americans have been confronted with attitudinal discrimination in almost every public aspect of their lives. Many of these discriminatory acts appear trivial, insignificant, and unimportant to white observers: a white couple's crossing the street to avoid walking past a black male, a "hate stare," receiving poor service at restaurants, stores, and hotels. Many whites also trivialize discrimination that takes the form of racial and ethnic slurs and epithets. Incidents of this kind are seldom reported in the press, yet they are demeaning realities to which minorities of all social classes are consistently exposed.

Much more dramatic incidents of discrimination are reported almost daily in the news media. For example, the brutal beating of Rodney King, a black motorist, by members of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1991 was captured on videotape, was widely publicized, and drew widespread attention to the vulnerability of blacks to police harassment. The subsequent acquittal of four police officers who had been videotaped beating him unleashed the most destructive American urban disorders of the twentieth century. Yet the King incident was only one of 15,000 complaints of police brutality filed with the federal government between 1985 and 1991 (Lewis 1991). Moreover, during the 1980s and 1990s hundreds of incidents of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and vandalism as well as physical attacks against racial and religious minorities were reported. These included the burning of over 65 black churches in 1995 and 1996 alone; although investigators concluded that there was no evidence of an organized national racist conspiracy, they did find that racial hatred was a motive in most cases (Sack 1996; Butterfield 1996).

Similarly, cases of racial discrimination in education, in housing, in public accommodations, and in the workplace continue to be widely reported. Some of the most widely publicized cases of discrimination in the workplace and in public accommodations involved nationally prominent corporations—Denny's, Shoney's, Avis, Circuit City, and Texaco (*Time* 1987; Ehrlich 1990; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1990; Jaffe 1994; Feagin and Vera 1995; Eichenwald 1996; Myerson 1997). Yet these cases were among only the most widely publicized; between 1990 and 1993 the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency responsible for enforcing civil rights laws in the workplace, resolved an average of 4,636 cases in favor of individuals charging racial discrimination. In most instances, however, discrimination is extremely difficult to prove, and the burden of filing charges and the recourse to legal remedies are so cumbersome and time-consuming that many people are discouraged from pursuing them. Nevertheless, by 1995 the EEOC had a back log of about 100,000 cases charging racial discrimination in employment alone (Kilbom 1995; Myerson 1997).

Thus, despite the enactment of antidiscrimination legislation and contrary to white perceptions that discrimination has been eradicated and that, as a consequence of affirmative action programs, minorities receive preferential treatment in hiring, recent "bias studies" have demonstrated that African Americans and Hispanics continue to experience discrimination.

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In a study of employment discrimination, for example, pairs of white and black men with identical qualifications applied for 476 jobs advertised in Washington and Chicago newspapers. Whereas 15 percent of the white applicants received job offers, only 5 percent of the black applicants did. Moreover, white applicants advanced further in the hiring process and in the Washington area were much less likely to receive rude, unfavorable, or discouraging treatment than were their black counterparts. These findings were similar to an earlier study of the hiring experiences of Hispanics and Anglos in Chicago and San Diego in which whites were three times as likely both to advance further in the hiring process and to receive job offers as were Hispanic applicants (Turner, Fix, and Struyk 1991).

What are the consequences of these continuing encounters with attitudinal discrimination? In his study involving interviews with African Americans throughout the United States, . . . Feagin found that despite antidiscrimination legislation and changing white attitudes, even middle-class blacks remain vulnerable to discrimination and that incidents of discrimination against them are far from isolated. Instead, they are *cumulative;* that is, a black person's encounters with discrimination are best described as a "lifelong series of such incidents."

The cumulative impact of constant experiences of discrimination—what writer Ellis Cose (1993) has characterized as "soul-destroying slights"—and the energy expended in dealing with them was clearly articulated by one of the respondents in Feagin's study:

> . . . if you can think of the mind as having one hundred ergs of energy, and the average man uses fifty percent of his energy dealing with the everyday problems of the world—just the general kinds of things—then he has fifty percent more to do creative kinds of things that he wants to do. Now that's a white person. Now a black person also has one hundred ergs: he uses fifty percent the same way a white man does, dealing with what the white man has [to deal with], so he has fifty percent left. But he uses twenty-five percent fighting being black, [with] all the problems of being black and what it means. Which means he really only has twenty-five percent to do what the white man has fifty percent to do, and he's expected to do just as much as the white man with that twenty-five percent. . . . So, that's kind of what happens. You just don't have as much energy left to do as much as you know you really could if you were free, [if] your mind were free.

Anthony Walton, an African American who grew up in a comfortable middle-class home in the Chicago suburbs, has referred to these "petty, daily indignities that take such a toll on the psyches of American blacks" as a "black tax," "the tribute to white society that must be paid in self-effacement and swallowed pride" (Walton 1996:7).

Attitudinal discrimination does not always occur in so virulent or so direct a manner. It may be manifested less dramatically merely by the acceptance by members of the dominant group of social definitions of traditional subordinate group roles. Malcolm X, the charismatic black protest leader who was assassinated in 1965, recalled how his well-intentioned white high school English teacher, Mr. Ostrowski, was bound by cultural norms concerning the "proper" caste roles for blacks:

> I know that he probably meant well in what he happened to advise me that day. I doubt that he meant any harm. . . . I was one of his top students, one of the school's top students—but all he could see for me was the kind of future "in your place" that almost all white people see for black people. . . . He told me, "Malcolm, you ought to be thinking about a career. Have you been giving it any thought?". . . The truth is, I hadn't. I have never figured out why I told him, "Well, yes, sir, I've been thinking I'd like to be a

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> lawyer." Lansing certainly had no lawyers—or doctors either—in those days, to hold up an image I might have aspired to. All I really knew for certain was that a lawyer didn't wash dishes, as I was doing.
>
> Mr. Ostrowski looked surprised, I remember, and leaned back in his chair and clasped his hands behind his head. He kind of half-smiled and said, "Malcolm, one of life's first needs is for us to be realistic. Don't misunderstand me, now. We all here like you, you know that. But you've got to be realistic about being a nigger. A lawyer—that's no realistic goal for a nigger. You need to think about something you can be. You're good with your hands—making things. Everybody admires your carpentry shop work. Why don't you plan on carpentry? People like you as a person—you'd get all kinds of work." (Malcolm X 1966:36)

Here we should recall Merton's distinction between the prejudiced discriminator and the unprejudiced discriminator. According to the definition advanced earlier, discrimination involves differential treatment of individuals because of their membership in a minority group. The term has traditionally referred to actions of people who arbitrarily deny equal treatment (for example, equal opportunity to obtain a job or to purchase a home) to minority group members because of their own personal prejudices. Such is the behavior of the prejudiced discriminator or all-weather bigot.

But discrimination can occur without the discriminator's necessarily harboring prejudices. As Merton points out, an unprejudiced discriminator—the fair-weather liberal—can discriminate simply by conforming to existing cultural patterns or by acquiescing to the dictates of others who are prejudiced. Such discrimination can be attributed to the actor's conscious or unconscious perception of the negative effects that nondiscriminatory behavior will have. An employer or a realtor may genuinely disclaim any personal prejudice for having refused a minority group member a job or home. Perhaps the person felt constrained by the negative sanctions of peers, or by the fear of alienating customers. In this case, the discriminatory actor's judgment would be based on the prejudicial attitudes of a powerful reference group. Although the heart and mind of the actors in our hypothetical situations may be devoid of any personal prejudice, nevertheless, the consequences—no job, no home—for the minority-group applicant are no different than if they were old-fashioned, dyed-in-the-wool bigots.

. . .

Institutional Discrimination

Both forms of attitudinal discrimination just defined are ultimately reducible to psychological variables: the actor is prejudiced, defers to, or is influenced by the sanctions of a prejudiced reference group or the norms of a racially biased culture. Institutional discrimination, on the other hand, refers to organizational practices and societal trends that exclude minorities from equal opportunities for positions of power and prestige. This discrimination has been labeled "structural" by some scholars (*Research News* 1987:9). Institutional or structural discrimination involves "policies or practices which appear to be neutral in their effect on minority individuals or groups, but which have the effect of disproportionately impacting on them in harmful or negative ways" (Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces 1972:19). The effects or consequences of institutional discrimination have little relation to racial or ethnic attitudes or to the majority group's racial or ethnic prejudices.

The existence of institutional inequalities that effectively exclude substantial portions of minority groups from participation in the

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dominant society has seldom been considered under the category of discrimination. According to J. Milton Yinger, discrimination is "the persistent application of criteria that are arbitrary, irrelevant, or unfair by *dominant standards,* with the result that some persons receive an undue advantage and others, *although equally qualified,* suffer an unjustified penalty" (Yinger 1968:449, italics added). The underlying assumption of this definition is that if all majority-group members would eliminate "arbitrary, irrelevant, and unfair criteria," discrimination would, by definition, cease to exist. However, if all prejudice—and the attitudinal discrimination that emanates from it—were somehow miraculously eliminated overnight, the inequalities rooted in the normal and impersonal operation of existing institutional structures would remain. Therefore, the crucial issue is not the equal treatment of those with equal qualifications but rather is the access of minority-group members to the qualifications themselves.

Consider the following additional examples of institutional discrimination:

- An employer may be genuinely willing to hire individuals of all races but may rely solely on word-of-mouth recommendations to fill job vacancies. If Hispanics had previously been excluded from such employment, they would be unlikely to be members of a communications network that would allow them to learn about such vacancies.

- Jury selection is supposedly color-blind in most states, with jurors randomly selected from lists of registered voters. However, because they are more likely to be poor and geographically mobile (and thus ineligible to vote), blacks are less frequently selected as jurors. Similarly, a recent study found that, because a disproportionate number of black males are in prison or have been convicted of a felony, 14 percent of black men—nearly 1.5 million of a total voting age population of 10.4 million—are ineligible to vote, thus substantially diluting African American political power (Butterfield 1997).

- City commissions are often selected on either an at-large or a district basis. In at-large elections, all voters select from the same slate of candidates. By contrast, when elections are conducted on a district basis, the city is divided into geographically defined districts, and a resident votes only for candidates within his or her district. When an ethnic or a racial group constitutes a numerical minority of a city's population, its voting power is likely to be diluted and its representation in city government is likely to be lower than its proportion of the population under an at-large system of voting. Thus, under an at-large system, a city with a population that is 40 percent black could have no black representation on the city commission if voting followed racial lines. Because of patterns of residential segregation, this situation would be much less likely in a system organized on a district basis.

- In Minnesota a judge ruled unconstitutional a law that punished possession of crack more severely than possession of comparable amounts of powdered cocaine. Testimony indicated that crack is used mainly by blacks, whereas whites are much more likely to use cocaine. Although there was general agreement that the Minnesota legislature had enacted the penalties for the two crimes without any intent of targeting a specific minority group, the judge contended that the absence of racial prejudice or negative intent in the law's enactment was less relevant in considering the constitutionality of the crack law than whether enactment affected blacks disproportionately and thus had the practical effect of discriminating against them. "There had better be a good reason for any law that has the practical effect of disproportionately punishing members of one racial

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group. If crack was significantly more deadly or harmful than cocaine that might be a good enough reason. But there just isn't enough evidence that they're different enough to justify the radical differences in penalties" (London 1991).

The issue of racial disparities in sentencing for crack and powdered cocaine has become a hotly contested part of the national debate over mandatory federal sentences for drug offenses, where blacks were 90 percent of those convicted in Federal court crack offenses but only 30 percent of those convicted for cocaine. Studies show that the physiological and psychoactive effects of crack and powdered cocaine are similar, and the independent U.S. Sentencing Commission recommended that Congress scrap laws that establish dramatically harsher sentences (by a ratio of 100 to 1) for possession of crack than for possession of cocaine. Nevertheless, in 1995 both the Clinton Administration and Congress refused to modify the disparate sentences given for possession of the two drugs, and in 1996 the Supreme Court rejected the argument that the dramatic racial differences in prosecution and penalties for crack possession reflected racial discrimination. However, the consequence of these decisions was to reinforce and maintain the dramatically disproportionate number of African Americans under the control of the criminal justice system (Morley 1995; Jones 1995; Greenhouse 1996; Wren 1996).

Institutional discrimination is central to two important recent interpretations of inequalities in American life that focus on opportunities in two institutions in American life—the economy and education. In a series of books—*The Declining Significance of Race* (1978a), *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987), and *When Work Disappears* (1996), William Julius Wilson has identified several broad social structural factors that have dramatically transformed the economic opportunity structure for African Americans. He contends that the overall economic and social position of the inner-city poor has deteriorated in the past quarter century not only because of attitudinal discrimination but also because of impersonal structural economic changes—the shift from goods-producing to service-producing industries, increasing labor market segmentation, increased industrial technology, and the flight of industries from central cities—that have little to do with race. Earlier in the twentieth century, relatively uneducated and unskilled native and immigrant workers were able to find stable employment and income in manufacturing. Today, however, deindustrialization has created an economic "mismatch" between the available jobs and the qualifications of inner-city residents. On the one hand, manufacturing jobs, which in the past did not require highly technical skills, have either been mechanized or have moved from the inner cities to the suburbs, the sun belt, or overseas. Unskilled blacks in central cities are especially vulnerable to the relocation of high-paying manufacturing jobs. On the other hand, the jobs now being created in the cities demand highly technical credentials that most inner-city residents do not have. The economic opportunities of the African American urban poor, who lack the educational and occupational skills necessary for today's highly technological jobs, are therefore rapidly diminishing. The result is extremely high levels of unemployment.

These broad structural changes have triggered a process of "hyperghettoization" in which the urban poor are disproportionately concentrated and socially and economically isolated. As many stable working-class and middle-class residents with job qualifications have moved from inner-city neighborhoods, the stability of inner-city social institutions (churches, schools, newspapers, and recreational facilities) has been undermined, and the social fabric of neighborhoods and the

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community has deteriorated. As Wilson argues . . . , "A neighborhood in which people are poor but employed is different from a neighborhood in which people are poor and jobless."

Although the lack of educational and occupational skills among the African American urban poor reflects a historical legacy of attitudinal discrimination, institutional factors—the broad structural changes in the economy that were just mentioned—play a crucial role in sustaining black economic inequality. Even if all racial prejudice were eliminated, inner-city African Americans would still lack access to high-paying jobs that provide security and stability for both families and the black community (Wilson 1987; 1996).

Similar impersonal factors play a critical role in creating and sustaining dramatic racial disparities in educational opportunities. In his powerful book, *Savage Inequalities,* Jonathan Kozol (1991) has focused on the dramatic differences in the quality of public education in poor and in wealthy school districts in the United States and on the way in which these differences—these "savage inequalities"—affect educational opportunity. Focusing on the vast disparities in the quality of facilities, programs, and curricula that typically distinguish inner-city and suburban schools, Kozol contends that what is most glaringly apparent are the dramatic financial inequities among schools serving poor and affluent students, often in neighboring school districts; schools attended by poor students are invariably the most poorly funded, while those attended by students from affluent backgrounds have the highest per-pupil expenditures. Kozol reports that a study

> [o]f 20 of the wealthiest and poorest districts of Long Island [New York], for example, matched by location and size of enrollment, found that the differences in per-pupil spending were not only large but had approximately doubled in a five-year period. Schools in Great Neck, in 1987, spent $11,265 for each pupil. In affluent Jericho and Manhasset the figures were, respectively, $11,325 and $11,370. In Oyster Bay the figure was $9,980. Compare this to Levittown, also on Long Island but a town of mostly working-class white families, where per-pupil spending dropped to $6,900. Then compare these numbers to the spending level in the town of Roosevelt, the poorest district in the county, where the schools are 99 percent non-white and where the figure dropped to $6,340. Finally, consider New York City, where in the same year, $5,590 was invested in each pupil—less than half of what was spent in Great Neck. The pattern is almost identical to that [in the Chicago and many other metropolitan areas] (Kozol 1991:120).

The principal source of these glaring financial inequities is the mechanism—local property taxes—that traditionally has been used to fund public schools. Reliance upon local property taxes to fund public schools, although perhaps initiated as public policy with no racial considerations in mind, has, given the history of racial residential segregation in American society, created dramatically different educational opportunities for white and for minority children. Recently these disparities have increased at precisely the same time that cities have undertaken extensive urban redevelopment programs; by offering tax abatements to businesses and corporations that locate in central city locations, the tax bases from which inner-city schools are funded lose an estimated $5 to $8 billion annually (Lewin 1997). Kozol contends that, because states require school attendance but allocate their resources inequitably, they "effectively require inequality. Compulsory inequity, perpetuated by state law, too frequently condemns our children to unequal lives" (Kozol 1991:56).

Similarly, in an analysis of school desegregation within and between American cities and their suburbs, David James (1989) has shown

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that the state, by creating political boundaries that separate school districts and by refusing to accept interdistrict desegregation, has been instrumental in creating school segregation, thereby reinforcing patterns of social inequality. Suburban rings surrounding major American cities tend to have multiple school districts, and black suburbanites tend to be concentrated in areas close to the central cities. Therefore, because the Supreme Court has ruled that racial segregation *within* school districts is unconstitutional but that segregation *between* districts is not, whites can avoid living in school districts with large proportions of black students. They are able to implement a form of attitudinal discrimination precisely because the structure of school districts (in many instances created without racial intent) provides such opportunities.

Institutional discrimination, although not intended to victimize racial groups directly, is thus more subtle, covert, complex, and less visible and blatant than attitudinal discrimination. Because it does not result from the motivations or intentions of specific individuals, but rather from policies that appear race-neutral, institutional discrimination is more impersonal than attitudinal discrimination, and its effects are more easily denied, ignored, overlooked, or dismissed as "natural," inevitable, or impossible to change. Nevertheless, institutional discrimination has the same discriminatory consequences for minority group members. In examining institutional discrimination, therefore, it is more important to consider the *effect* of a particular policy or practice on a minority group than it is to consider the *motivations* of the majority group.

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Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between prejudice and discrimination? Why have declining degrees of prejudice in American society not resulted in the elimination of discrimination? Given the realities, what kinds of efforts might be more effective in reducing discrimination than the current civil rights measures described in this chapter?

2. What are the key components of a definition of racism and why has there been so much confusion about developing this definition? Given this definition, blacks can be prejudiced or discriminate, but there cannot be "black racism." Why?

3. The examples of institutional discrimination given in the reading are difficult to identify and change. How would you restructure employment practices, jury selection, and educational funding procedures so that they are no longer discriminatory in the ways described by Yetman?

Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts: The Critical Case of Very Young Children

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Since the 1930s social science has examined children's attitudes toward race. . . . The literature clearly demonstrates that racial identification and group orientation are salient issues for children (Ramsey 1987).

. . . Most research focuses on children over five years of age; very young children are rarely studied. . . .

Researchers have rarely sought children's views directly, beyond recording brief responses to tests. Few have interviewed children or made in-depth, long-term observations to assess social attitudes, limiting the ability to investigate more fully the nature of children's lives. . . . An emphasis on psychological testing is often coupled with the notion that children have limited understandings of race and ethnicity (Goodman 1964; Katz 1976; Porter 1971). Children are typically assumed to have temporary or naive views about social concepts until at least age seven. Prior to that age, children's use of concepts differs from that of adults in form and content.

Little attention has been devoted to how children create and assign meaning for racial and ethnic concepts. . . .

We provide data indicating that racial concepts are employed with ease by children as young as age three. Research based on the conception of children as incapable of understanding race (Menter 1989) presents an incorrect image of children's use of abstractions. Drawing on Willis (1990) and Thorne (1993), we suggest that notions of race and ethnicity are employed by young children as integrative and symbolically creative tools in the daily construction of social life.

The Research Approach

. . . Our data come from extensive observations of 58 three-, four-, and five-year-old children in a large preschool in a southern city. The school employed a popular antibias curriculum (Derman-Sparks 1989). Over an 11-month

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period in 1993, we systematically observed everyday interactions in one large classroom containing a very diverse group of children. The center's official data on the racial and ethnic backgrounds of children in the classroom are: White = 24, Asian =19, Black = 4, biracial = 3, Middle Eastern = 3, Latino = 2, and other = 3.

Children's racial and ethnic designations, which were given by parents, were supplemented with information that we gained through classroom observation of a few children with mixed ethnic identities. We use a shorthand code to describe the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the children. For example, Rita is described as (3.5: White/Latina), indicating that she is three and one-half years old, was initially registered as White, but was later discovered to have a Latino heritage. Michael is listed as (4: Black), indicating that he is four years old, was registered as Black, and that no additional racial or ethnic information was revealed through further observation. This code attempts to illustrate the complex identities of many of the children. In a few cases we have used a broad designation (e.g., Asian) to protect a child's identity. . . .

Like the children and teachers, the senior author (hereafter Debi), a White woman, was usually in the classroom all day for five days a week. As observer and playmate, Debi watched the children and listened to them in their free play and teacher-directed activities. Over 11 months Debi observed 370 significant episodes involving a racial or ethnic dimension, about 1 to 3 episodes per day. When children mentioned racial or ethnic matters, Debi noted what they said, to whom they spoke, and the context of the incident. Extensive field notes were entered immediately on a computer in another room when the children were otherwise occupied. This was done to preserve the details of any conversations and the accuracy of the data.

Using an approach resembling that of the "least-adult role" (Corsaro 1981; Mandell 1988), Debi conducted extensive participant observation. When children or adults asked, Debi identified herself as a researcher, and she consistently assumed the role of a nonauthoritarian observer and playmate. She was soon accepted as such by children and teachers, and the children spoke freely, rarely ceasing their activities when she was present. Children's interactions with her differed from their interactions with teachers and parents. Our accounts make clear Debi's natural, nonsanctioning role in discussing racial and ethnic matters initially raised by the children. In no case did Debi ask predetermined questions. Racial and ethnic issues arose naturally. Although Debi sometimes asked questions that might have been asked by other adults, she never threatened the children with a sanction for their words or actions. Thus, our interpretations of children's attitudes and behavior evolved gradually as Debi observed the children in natural settings.

We began with the assumption that very young children would display no knowledge of racial or ethnic concepts and that any use of these concepts would be superficial or naive. Our data contradicted these expectations.

Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts to Exclude

Using the playhouse to bake pretend muffins, Rita (3.5: White/Latina) and Sarah (4: White) have all the muffin tins. Elizabeth (3.5: Asian/Chinese), attempting to join them, stands at the playhouse door and asks if she can play. Rita shakes her head vigorously, saying, "No, only people who can speak Spanish can come in." Elizabeth frowns and says, "I can come in." Rita counters, "Can you speak Spanish?" Elizabeth shakes her head no, and Rita repeats, "Well, then you aren't allowed in."

Elizabeth frowns deeply and asks Debi to intercede by telling her: "Rita is being mean to

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me." Acting within the child-initiated framework, Debi asks Rita, "If only people who speak Spanish are allowed, then how come Sarah can play? Can you speak Spanish, Sarah?" Sarah shakes her head no. "Sarah can't speak Spanish and she is playing," Debi says to Rita, without suggesting she allow Elizabeth in. Rita frowns, amending her statement: "OK, only people who speak either Spanish or English." "That's great!" Debi responds, "because Elizabeth speaks English and she wants to play with you guys." Rita's frown deepens. "No," she says. Debi queries, "But you just said people who speak English can play. Can't you decide?" Rita gazes at Debi, thinking hard. "Well," Rita says triumphantly, "only people who speak two languages."

Elizabeth is waiting patiently for Debi to make Rita let her play, which Debi has no intention of doing. Debi then asks Rita: "Well, Elizabeth speaks two languages, don't you Elizabeth?" Debi looks at Elizabeth, who now is smiling for the first time. Rita is stumped for a moment, then retorts, "She does not. She speaks only English." Debi smiles at Rita: "She does speak two languages—English and Chinese. Don't you?" Debi invites Elizabeth into the conversation. Elizabeth nods vigorously. However, Rita turns away and says to Sarah, "Let's go to the store and get more stuff."

Language was the ethnic marker here. Rita defined rules for entering play on the basis of language—she was aware that each child not only did not look like the others but also spoke a different language. . . . Here we see the crucial importance of the social-cultural context, in particular the development of racial and ethnic concepts in a collaborative and interpersonal context. Defending her rules, Rita realized her attempts to exclude Elizabeth by requiring two languages had failed. This three-year-old child had created a social rule based on a significant understanding of ethnic markers. The final "two languages" rule did not acknowledge the fact that Sarah only spoke English. Rita's choice of language as an exclusionary device was directed at preventing Elizabeth from entering, not at maintaining a bilingual play space.

Exclusion of others can involve preventing associations with unwanted others, as in Rita's case, or removing oneself from the presence of unwanted others, as in this next instance. Carla (3: White) is preparing herself for the resting time. She picks up her cot and starts to move it. The head teacher, a White woman, asks what she is doing. "I need to move this," explains Carla. "Why?" asks the teacher. "Because I can't sleep next to a nigger," Carla says, pointing to Nicole (4.5: African/biracial) on a cot nearby. "Niggers are stinky. I can't sleep next to one." Stunned, the teacher's eyes widen, then narrow as she frowns. She tells Carla to move her cot back and not to use "hurting words." Carla looks amused and puzzled but complies. Nothing more is said to the children, but the teacher glances at Debi and shakes her head.

Three-year-old Carla's evaluation of the racial status of another young child was sophisticated and showed awareness not only of how to use racial epithets but also of the negative stigma attached to black skin. Like most children we observed, Carla was not the unsophisticated, naive child depicted in the mainstream literature. She used material (e.g., the epithet) that she undoubtedly had learned from other sources, probably in interaction with other children or adults, and she applied this material to a particular interactive circumstance.

Later, after the children have been wakened and have gone to the playground, the center's White director approaches Debi and says, "I have called Carla's parents and asked them to come to a meeting with me and Karen [the teacher] about what happened." Neither Debi nor the director feel a need to clarify what he is referring to, as he adds: "If you want to attend I would really like to have you there. Karen will be there too." Debi tells him she will attend.

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"I suppose this is what you're looking for," he continues with a smile. "Well, no, not exactly," Debi replies, "but of course it is worth nothing, and I am interested in anything that the kids do with race." "Well," he shot back, "I want you to know that Carla did not learn that here!"

Although the observed children rarely used explicit racial slurs, the director's remark about the origin of Carla's epithet is typical of the responses adults gave when children at the center used negative terms. The center's staff was extremely interested in limiting children's exposure to prejudice or discrimination and used a multicultural curriculum to teach children to value diversity. The center's adults often seemed more concerned with the origins of child-initiated race-relevant behaviors than with the nuanced content or development of those behaviors.

The meeting with Carla's parents was informative. Carla's mother is biracial (Asian and White), and her father is White. Both parents are baffled when told of the incident. The father remarks, "Well, she certainly did not learn that sort of crap from us!" The teacher immediately insists that Carla did not learn such words at the center. Carla's father offers this explanation: "I'll bet she got that ["nigger" comment] from Teresa. Her dad is really red," When Debi asks what he means, the father responds, "You know, he's a real redneck." Then the director steps in: "It's amazing what kids will pick up in the neighborhood. It doesn't really matter where she learned it from. What we need to accomplish is unlearning it." He suggests methods for teaching Carla about differences and offers her parents some multicultural toys.

The reactions of the key adults illustrate the strength of adult beliefs about children's conceptual abilities. Their focus was on the child as imitator. The principal concern of teacher, parents, and administrator was to assure one another that the child did not learn such behavior from them. Thus adults reshape their conceptions as children do, collaboratively. Acting defensively, they exculpated themselves by suggesting someone else must be responsible. The director ended the blaming by attributing the source of the child's behavior to neighborhood—a diffuse, acceptable enemy—and initiated the task of unlearning.

Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts to Include

The children also used racial and ethnic understandings and concepts to include others—to engage them in play or teach them about racial and ethnic identities.

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Jewel (4: Asian/Middle Eastern) uses her knowledge of different languages to draw an adult into a child-initiated game. Jewel, Cathie (4: White), and Renee (4.5: White) are trying to swing on a tire swing. Rob, a White college work-study student, has been pushing them but leaves to perform another task. Jewel starts to chant loudly, "Unche I, Unche I!" (an approximation of what she sounded like to Debi). The other girls join in, attracting Rob's attention. He begins to push the girls again. With a smile, he asks, "What are you saying?" Jewel replies, "It means 'pants on fire'!" All three girls roar with laughter. Rob smiles and urges Jewel, "Say it again." She begins to chant it again, now drawing Rob into the play. Rob asks, "Tell me some more." Jewel shakes her head, continuing to chant "Unche I!" and to laugh. Rob persists, asking Jewel to teach him how to "talk." Jewel obliges, making up new chants and repeating them until the others get them, then changing the words and repeating the behavior again. Cathie and Renee are delighted. The playing continues for a while, with the girls chanting and Rob pushing them on the swing.

Later, Debi learned that Jewel had developed sophisticated ethnic play around her understanding of language. When Jewel translated

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"Unche I" as "pants on fire," Rob accepted this and the game continued. Several weeks later, however, Debi heard Jewel's mother greet her daughter at the door by saying "Unche I!" It seemed strange that a mother would say "pants on fire" to greet her child, and Debi noted the incident in her field notes. Some time later, when Debi presented this scene to graduate students in a seminar, one student laughed, informing her that as far as he could tell Jewel was saying her own name. The phrase meant "Jewel."

Jewel's use of her native name illustrates Willis's (1990) notion of symbolic creativity among children. Jewel was able to facilitate and increase interaction with an adult of another cultural background by choosing word symbols that intrigued the adult. As the interaction continued, she elaborated on that symbol, creating a new world of ethnic meanings that accomplished her goal. She successfully shaped an adult's actions for some time by catching his attention with language she realized he did not understand. This required that she understand his perspective and evaluate his knowledge of language, activities requiring considerable interpretive capability.

Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts to Define Oneself

The use of racial and ethnic concepts to include or exclude others is often coupled with the use of these concepts to describe and define oneself. For most children, racial and/or ethnic identity is an important aspect of themselves, and they demonstrate this in insightful ways in important social contexts.

Renee (4.5: White), a very pale little girl, has been to the beach over the weekend and comes to school noticeably tanned. Linda (4: White) and Erinne (5: biracial) engage her in an intense conversation. They discuss whether her skin would stay that color or get darker until she became, as Linda says, "an African American, like Charles" (another child). Renee denies she could become Black, but this new idea, planted in her head by interaction with the other children, distresses her. On her own initiative, she discusses the possibility with Debi and her mother, both of whom tell her the darker color is temporary.

Renee was unconvinced and commented on her racial identity for weeks. She brought up the issue with other children in many contexts. This linking of skin color with racial identity is found in much traditional literature on children's racial understandings (Clark and Clark 1940). But this racial marking was more than a fleeting interest, unlike the interest mainstream cognitive theorists might predict for such a young child. Renee reframed the meaning of skin color by questioning others on their thoughts and comparing her skin to others'.

Corinne (4: African/White) displays an ability to create meaning by drawing from her personal world. Corinne's mother is Black and is from an African country; her father is a White American. Corinne speaks French and English and is curious about everything at the center. She is a leader and often initiates activities with other children. Most children defer to her. One day Corinne is examining a rabbit cage on the playground. A teacher is cleaning out the cage and six baby bunnies are temporarily housed in an aluminum bucket that Corinne is holding. Three bunnies are white, two are black, and one is spotted black and white.

As Corinne is sitting at a table, Sarah (4: White) stuck her head into the bucket. "Stop that!" Corinne orders. Sarah complies and asks, "Why do you have the babies?" "I'm helping Marie [teacher]," says Corinne. "How many babies are there?" Sarah asks Corinne. "Six!" Corinne announces, "Three boys and three girls." "How can you tell if they're boys or girls?" Sarah questions. "Well," Corinne begins, "my daddy is White,

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so the white ones are boys. My mommy is Black, so the black ones are girls." Sarah counts: "That's only five." The remaining bunny is black and white. "Well, that one is like me, so it's a girl," Corinne explains gently. She picks up the bunny and says, "See, this one is both, like me!" Sarah then loses interest, and Corinne returns to cooing over the bunnies.

This four-year-old's explanation incorporates an interesting combination of color, race, and gender. While her causal reasoning was faulty, she constructed what for her was a sophisticated and reasonable view of the bunnies' sexes. She displayed an understanding of the idea that an offspring's color reflects the colors of its parents, a knowledge grounded in her experience as a biracial child. Strayer (1986) underscores how children develop appropriate attributions regarding situational determinants. Corinne's use of parental gender to explain the unknown gender of the bunnies was an appropriate explanation of how bunnies got certain colors. Skin color was a salient part of her identity, and it was reasonable in her social world to assume that it would be salient for the identity of others, even animals.

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Racial and ethnic understandings involve many aspects of one's culture. Jie (4.5: Asian/Chinese) brought her lunch of homemade Chinese dishes to school. When David, a White student employee, asks her what she has, she replies. "I brought food for Chinese people." Pointing to containers of Chinese food, she explains, "Chinese people prefer Chinese food." When David asks for a taste, she hesitates. "Well," she offers, "you probably won't like it. You're not Chinese." Here are the beginnings of explanations for differences between racial and ethnic groups.

Jie demonstrated not only that she recognized the differences between racial and ethnic groups, but also that she understood the socially transmitted view that physical differences are accompanied by differences in cultural tastes and behavior. Her interaction with the adult revealed a strong understanding of her culture by referring to her food as "for Chinese people" and wondering if non-Chinese people would enjoy it. Her explanation indicated that she was aware of what is *not* a part of her culture as much as what *is* a part of it, and that it is possible that outsiders would not enjoy Chinese food.

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Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts to Define Others

We observed many examples of children exploring the complex notions of skin color, hair differences, and facial characteristics. They often explore what these things mean and make racial and/or ethnic interpretations of these perceived differences. Mindy (4: White) insists that Debi is Indian. When queried, Mindy replies that it is because Debi is wearing her long dark hair in a braid. When Debi explains that she is not Indian, the child remarks that maybe Debi's mother is Indian.

These statements show not only awareness of the visible characteristics of race and ethnicity but also insight into how visible markers are passed from generation to generation. They demonstrate a child's ability to grasp salient characteristics of a racial and/or ethnic category not her own and apply them to others in a collaborative and evolving way.

In another episode, Taleshia (3: Black) approaches the handpainting table. Asked if she wants to make a handprint, she nods shyly. A child with dark brown skin, Taleshia scans the paint bottles and points to pale pink. Curious about her preference, Debi asks, "Taleshia, is this the color that looks like you?" Taleshia nods and holds out her hand. Behind

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her, Cathie (3.5: White) objects to Taleshia's decision. "No, no," Cathie interjects, "She's not that color. She's brown." Cathie moves to the table. "You're this color," Cathie says and picks out the bottle of dark brown paint. Cathie is interested in helping Taleshia correct her apparent mistake about skin color. "Do you want this color?" Debi asks Taleshia. "No," she replies, "I want this one," touching the pink bottle. Regarding Taleshia with amazement, Cathie exclaims, "For goodness sake, can't you see that you aren't pink?" "Debi," Cathie continues to insist, "you have to make her see that she's brown." Cathie is exasperated and takes Taleshia by the arm. "Look," she instructs, "you are brown! See?" Cathie holds Taleshia's arm next to her own. "I am pink, right?" Cathie looks to Debi for confirmation. "Sure enough," Debi answers, "you are pink." "Now," Cathie continues, looking relieved, "Taleshia needs to be brown." Debi looks at Taleshia, who is now frowning, and asks her, "Do you want to be brown?" She shakes her head vigorously and points to pale pink, "I want that color."

Cathie is frustrated, and trying to be supportive, Debi explains that "Taleshia can choose any color she thinks is right." Cathie again objects, but Taleshia smiles, and Debi paints her palm pink. Then Taleshia makes her handprint. Cathie stares, apparently convinced that Taleshia and Debi have lost touch with reality. As Taleshia leaves, Cathie takes her place, remarking to Debi, "I just don't know what's the matter with you. Couldn't you see that *she is brown*!" Cathie gives up and chooses pale pink for herself, a close match. Cathie makes her handprint and says to Debi, "See, I am *not* brown."

Taleshia stuck to her choice despite Cathie's insistence. Both three-year-olds demonstrate a strong awareness of the importance of skin color, and their views are strongly held. This example underscores the importance of child-centered research. A traditional conceptualization of this Black child's choice of skin color paint might suggest that the child is confused about racial identity. If she chose pink in the usual experimental setting (Clark and Clark 1940; Porter 1971), she would probably be evaluated as rejecting herself for a preferred whiteness. Debi had several other interactions with Taleshia. The three-year-old had, on other occasions, pointed out how pale Debi was and how dark her own skin was. She had explained to Debi that she was Black, that she thought she was pretty, and that pink was her favorite color. One possible explanation for her choice of pink for her skin color in the handpainting activity relies on Debi's knowledge of Taleshia's personality, family background, and previous interactions with others. Taleshia may have chosen pink because it is her favorite color, but this does not mean that she is unaware that most of her skin is dark. Another explanation for Taleshia's choice of skin color representation is that, like other African Americans, Taleshia's palms are *pink* while most of her skin is very dark. Perhaps she was choosing a color to match the color of her palms, a reasonable choice because the task was to paint the palms for handprints. The validity of this interpretation is reinforced by another episode at the center. One day Taleshia sat down and held Debi's hands in hers, turning them from top to bottom. Without uttering a word, she repeated this activity with her own hands, drawing Debi's attention to this act. The three-year-old was contrasting the pink-brown variations in her skin color with Debi's pinkish hand color. This explanation for the child's paint choice might not occur to a researcher who did not pay careful attention to the context and the child's personal perspective. Taleshia's ideas, centered in observations of herself and others, were more important to her than another child's notions of appropriate color. Far from being confused about skin color, she was creating meaning for color based on her own evaluations.

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Using Racial Concepts to Control

The complex nature of children's group interactions and their solo behaviors demonstrates that race and ethnicity are salient, substantial aspects of their lives. They understand racial nuances that seem surprisingly sophisticated, including the power of race. How children use this power in their relationships is demonstrated in two further episodes.

Brittany (4: White) and Michael (4: Black) come to Debi demanding that she resolve a conflict. Mike tearfully demands that Debi tell Brittany that he "does too have a white one." As he makes this demand, Brittany solemnly shakes her head no. "A white what?" Debi asks. "Rabbit!" he exclaims. "At home, in a cage." Brittany continues shaking her head no, infuriating Mike. He begins to shout at the top of his lungs, "I do too have a white one!" Debi asks Brittany, "Why don't you think he has a white rabbit at home?" "He can't," she replies, staring at Mike, who renews his cries. Debi tries to solve the mystery, asking Mike to describe his bunny. "She white," he scowls at Brittany. "You do not," she replies. Mike screams at her "I DO TOOO!" Debi hugs Mike to calm him and takes Brittany's hand. Brittany says, "He can't have a white rabbit." Debi asks why, and the child replies, "Because he's Black." Debi tells Brittany, "He can have any color bunny he wants." Mike nods vigorously and sticks his tongue out at Brittany, who returns the favor. "See," he says, "you just shut up. You don't know." Brittany, who is intensely involved in baiting Mike, shakes her head, and says "Can't." She sneers, leaning toward him and speaking slowly, "You're Black." Mike is angry, and Debi comforts him.

Then Debi asks Brittany, "Have you been to Mike's house to see his bunny?" "No," she says. Debi asks, "Then how do you know that his bunny isn't white?" Debi is curious to find out why Brittany is intent on pestering Mike, who is usually her buddy. "Can't *you* see that he's Black?" she gazes at Debi in amazement. Debi replies, "Yes, of course I can see that Mike is Black, but aren't we talking about Mike's rabbit?" Debi is momentarily thrown by the child's calm demeanor. Brittany again shakes her head slowly, watching Debi for a reaction all the while. "Mike is Black." she says, deliberately forming the words. She repeats, "He is Black." Debi tries again, "Yes, Mike is Black and his bunny is white," now waiting for her response. Brittany shakes her head. "Why not?" Debi tries. "Because he is *Black*," Brittany replies with a tone suggesting that Debi is the stupidest person she has ever met. "Have you been to his house?" Debi asks her again. She shakes her head no. "Then," Debi continues, "how do you know that his bunny isn't white?" "I know," Brittany replies confidently. "How?" Debi tries one last time. "He can't have just any old color rabbit?" Debi asks. "Nope." Brittany retorts firmly, "Blacks can't have whites."

Brittany insisted that Mike could not own a white rabbit because he is Black. She "knew" it and belabored this point until he was driven to seek adult intervention. His plea for intercession was unusual because he is a large boy who was normally in charge of interactions with peers. In this instance, however, he was driven to tears by Brittany's remarks. "Blacks can't have whites" was her social rule. The power of skin color had become a tool in Brittany's hands that she used to dominate interaction with another child.

Brittany's ideas are strong—she creates a similar confrontation with a different child a week later. In this later case, Brittany and Martha (3.5: Black/White) are discussing who will get to take which rabbit home. Martha states that she will take the white one. Brittany again starts the "Blacks can't have whites" routine that she so successfully used with Michael. Martha becomes upset, telling Brittany she is stupid. This scene lasts about 10 minutes until it escalates into shouting, and Joanne, a teacher,

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breaks up the fight. Neither girl will explain to Joanne what the trouble is. They both just look at her and say "I don't know" when Joanne asks what is going on. Joanne tells them that friends don't yell each other. When the teacher leaves, Martha takes a swing at Brittany, who runs away laughing and sticking out her tongue.

Thus Brittany engaged two Black children in heated interactions based on skin color. In the classical Piagetian interpretation, she would be seen as egocentric and resistant to other interpretations. Contesting her social rule on skin color creates a disequilibrium for her that would somehow be worked out as she seeks a rational, adult perspective on skin color. However, an interpretive analysis underscores the crucial collaborative context. Brittany's use of racial concepts involves her in intimate interaction with two other children. When a teacher got involved, Brittany stopped, and she and her victim refused to offer an explanation. In the first episode Brittany was willing to engage Debi, who was not a sanctioning adult, in a detailed discussion, taking valuable playtime to explain her reasoning. When confronted by a teacher, Brittany withdrew, refusing to disclose what was going on between her and the Black girl. Brittany had created a tool to dominate others, a tool based on a racial concept coupled with a social rule. In addition, all three children were highly selective about the adults with whom they shared their racially oriented views and behavior.

In another encounter, this time among three children, a White child demonstrates her knowledge of broader race relations, demonstrating her grasp of race-based power inequalities. During playtime Debi watches Renee (4: White) pull Ling-mai (3: Asian) and Jocelyn (4.5: White) across the playground in a wagon. Renee tugs away enthusiastically. Suddenly, Renee drops the handle, which falls to the ground, and she stands still, breathing heavily. Ling-mai, eager to continue this game, jumps from the wagon and picks up the handle. As Ling-mai begins to pull, Renee admonishers her, "No, no. You can't pull this wagon. Only *White Americans* can pull this wagon." Renee has her hands on her hips and frowns at Ling-mai. Ling-mai tries again, and Renee again insists that only "White Americans" are permitted to do this task.

Ling-mai sobs loudly and runs to a teacher complaining that "Renee hurt my feelings." "Did you hurt Ling-mai's feelings?" the teacher asks Renee, who nods, not saying a word. "I think you should apologize," the teacher continues, "because we are all friends here and friends don't hurt each other's feelings." "Sorry," mutters Renee, not looking at Ling-mai, "I didn't do it on purpose." "OK," the teacher finishes, "can you guys be good friends now?" Both girls nod without looking at each other and quickly move away.

This interaction reveals several layers of meaning. Both children recognized the implications of Renee's harsh words and demands. Renee accurately underscored the point that Ling-mai, the child of Asian international students, was neither White nor American. Her failure to be included in these two groups, according to Renee's pronouncement, precluded her from being in charge of the wagon. Ling-mai responded, not by openly denying Renee's statements, but by complaining to the teacher that Renee had hurt her feelings. Both children seem knowledgeable about the structure of the U.S. and global racial hierarchy and accept the superior position accorded to Whites. The four-year-old child exercised authority as a White American and controlled the play with comments and with her stance and facial expressions. Our findings extended previous research on young children's knowledge of status and power (Corsaro 1979; Damon 1977) by showing that children are aware of the power and authority granted to Whites. The children were not confused

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about the meanings of these harsh racial words and actions.

Adult Misperceptions

. . . Adults tend to control children's use of racial and ethnic concepts and interpret children's use of these concepts along prejudice-defined lines. Clearly, the social context of children's learning, emphasized in the interpretive approach, includes other children and adults, but our accounts also demonstrate the way in which children's sophisticated understandings are developed without adult collaboration and supervision.

Jason (3: White) and Dao (4: Chinese) have developed a friendship over a period of several weeks, despite the fact that Dao speaks almost no English and Jason speaks no Chinese. The two are inseparable. The adults at the center comment on the boys' relationship, wondering aloud about their communication. Yet the boys experience little trouble in getting along and spend hours engaged in play and conversation.

As this friendship develops, Jason's mother, several months pregnant at the time, comes to the head teacher with a problem. "Jason has begun to talk baby talk," she informs the teacher. "Oh, I wouldn't worry about it," the teacher reassures her. "Kids often do that when their mom is expecting another baby. It's a way to get attention." Jason's mother seems unconvinced and asks the teachers to watch for Jason's talking "gibberish" and to let her know about it.

Jason and Dao continue their friendship. Teachers remark on their closeness despite Dao's extremely limited command of English. One afternoon, Dao and Jason are playing with blocks near Debi. Deeply involved, they chatter with each other. Debi does not understand a single word either of them are saying, but they have no difficulty cooperating in constructing block towers and laugh together each time a tower collapses. Jason's mother arrives to take him home. He ignores her and continues to play. The head teacher joins the scene and begins a conversation with Jason's mother. When Jason finally acknowledges his mother's presence, he does so by addressing her with a stream of words that make no sense to the nearby adults.

"See, see? That's what I mean," Jason's mother says excitedly. "He talks baby talk. It's really getting bad." The teacher remarks that perhaps after the baby's arrival this will disappear. Debi, after a moment's thought, says to Jason, "Honey, would you say that again in English?" Jason nods and responds, "I want to check out a book from the library before we go home." The teacher and Jason's mother look at him and then at Debi. "Oh, my goodness!" the teacher exclaims, "How did you know to ask him that?" Debi gestures toward the boys and says, "It seemed reasonable. They talk all the time." "That's amazing," Jason's mother shakes her head. "What language do you think they are speaking?" she asks Debi. "I don't know," Debi responds. "I don't understand a word of it. Maybe it's invented."

With the cooperation of Dao's father, who listened in on the boys, Debi finally determined that Jason had learned enough Chinese from Dao and Dao had learned enough English from Jason to form a blended language sufficient for communication. What adults thought was "baby talk"—and what was thought by the teacher to be jealousy toward an unborn sibling—was an innovative synthesis of two languages formed by young children maintaining a cross-ethnic friendship. This is a normal human phenomenon and, if the boys were adults, would likely have been interpreted as a pidgin language—the simplified language that develops between peoples with different languages living in a common territory.

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One of the powerful ethnocultural definers of Dao's social life was his inability to speak English, which caused him grief because it kept him from following his teachers' directions promptly. He experienced difficulty in creating friendships, for most other children were not patient enough to accommodate him. Dao was a quiet and cautious child, particularly when teachers were nearby. Jason's ability to develop a language in interaction with Dao was empowering for Dao: the language was the cement that bonded the boys together. The boys' collaborative actions were not only creative, but also reveal one of the idealized (at least for adults) ways that human beings bridge ethnic and cultural differences. The boys were natural multiculturalists.

Conclusion

Through extensive observation, this study has captured the richness of children's racial and ethnic experiences. The racial nature of children's interactions becomes fully apparent only when their interactions are viewed over time and in context. Close scrutiny of children's lives reveals that they are as intricate and convoluted as those of adults.

Blumer (1969:138) suggests that any sociological variable is, on examination, "an intricate and inner-moving complex." Dunn (1993) notes that children's relationships are complex and multidimensional, even within their own families. In the case of Jason and Dao, for example, the interactions were not only complex and incomprehensible to adults, but also evolved over time. By exploring the use of racial concepts in the child's natural world, instead of trying to remove the child or the concepts from that world, we glean a more complete picture of how children view and manipulate racial and ethnic concepts and understandings.

For most children, racial and ethnic issues arise forcefully within the context of their interaction with others. Most of the children that we observed had little or no experience with people from other racial or ethnic groups outside of the center. For these very young children, who are having their first extensive social experiences outside the family, racial and ethnic differences became powerful identifiers of self and other. . . .

To fully understand the importance of children's racial and/or ethnic understandings, the nuanced complexity and interconnected nature of their thinking and behavior must be accepted and recognized. Measures of racial and ethnic awareness should consider not only children's cognitive abilities but also the relationships that children develop in social situations.

. . .

Regarding the racial and ethnic hierarchy, young children understand that in U.S. society higher status is awarded to White people. Many understand that simply by virtue of their skin color, Whites are accorded more power, control, and prestige. Very young children carry out interactions in which race is salient. Racial knowledge is situational, and children can interact in a race-based or race-neutral manner, according to their evaluations of appropriateness. In children's worlds race emerges early as a tool for social interaction and quickly becomes a complex and fluid component of everyday interaction.

The behaviors of the children in this preschool setting are likely to be repeated in other diverse settings. The traditional literature accepts that children display prejudice by the time they arrive at school, but offers no explanation about the acquisition of this prejudice beyond it being an imitation of parental behavior. We expect continuity of children's racial and ethnic categories across settings, for children

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reveal a readiness to use their knowledge of race and ethnicity.

The observed episodes underscore problems in traditional theories of child development. When children fail cognitive tasks framed in terms of principles such as conservation and reciprocity, researchers often conclude that children lack the cognitive capability to understand race. However, surveys and observations of children in natural settings demonstrate that three-year-old children have constant, well-defined, and negative biases toward racial and ethnic others (Ramsey 1987). Rather than insisting that young children do not understand racial or ethnic ideas because they do not reproduce these concepts on adult-centered cognitive tests, researchers should determine the extent to which racial and ethnic concepts—as used in daily interaction—are salient definers of children's social reality. Research on young children's use of racial and gender concepts demonstrates that the more carefully a research design explores the real life of children, the more likely that research can answer questions about the nature of race and ethnicity in children's everyday lives.

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Discussion Questions

1. There is a T-shirt that reads: "No Child Is Born a Racist." Based on the analysis presented in this reading, do you think that this statement is true? Is prejudice an inborn personality trait, a case of children mimicking adults, or is it the result of a complex combination of social factors? If the latter is true, what are the social causal factors for children?

2. On the one hand, we see these children enacting boundaries that seem cruel. On the other hand, we see them breaking barriers that most adults never get past. How can both be happening at the same time? What does this tell us about prejudice and discrimination?

3. Why do you think adults attribute blame to someone else when their child has made a racial slur? Would the adults engage in this type of behavior if the child had been reprimanded for any other type of misbehavior? What kind of "unlearning" approach would be most effective for children? Is "We don't say that word" enough? What do you think needs to happen to enable children to unlearn negative stereotypes at this early age?

Constructing Categories of Difference

Karen Rosenblum and Toni-Michelle Travis

Race, sex, and class may be described as "master statuses." In common usage "status" means prestige, but in most social science literature status is understood as a position within a social structure, for example, a kinship or occupational status. Any individual simultaneously occupies a number of statuses, but their master status "in most or all social situations, will overpower or dominate all other statuses. . . . Master status influences every other aspect of life, including personal identity" (Marshall, 1994:315).

We argue that there are important similarities in how the master statuses like race and sex operate. . . . This is not to say that these master statuses operate identically, or that people in these categories have had interchangeable experiences. The past and present circumstances of African American, Latino, and Asian American men and women are distinctive on innumerable counts; they cannot easily be compared to the experience of white women. . . . The impact of race and sex . . . unfolds quite differently in the upper, middle, working, and poor classes. Nonetheless, there are also important similarities in the way these master statuses are currently constructed and in their impact on individual lives. . . .

The Essentialist and Constructionist Orientations

The difference between the constructionist and essentialist orientations is illustrated in the tale of the three umpires:

> Social psychologist Hadley Cantril relates the story of three baseball umpires discussing their profession. The first umpire said, 'Some are balls and some are strikes, and I call them as they are.' The second replied, 'Some's balls and some's strikes, and I call 'em as I sees 'em.' The third thought about it and said, 'Some's balls and some's strikes, but they ain't nothing 'till I calls 'em' (Henshel and Silverman, 1975:26).

The first umpire takes an essentialist position. In arguing that "I call them as they are," he indicates his assumption that balls and strikes

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are entities that exist in the world independent of his perception of them. For this umpire, "balls" and "strikes" are distinct, easily identified, mutually exclusive categories, and he is a neutral and relatively powerless observer of them. In all, he "regards knowledge as objective and independent of mind, and himself as the impartial reporter of things 'as they are'" (Pfuhl, 1986:5). For this essentialist umpire, balls and strikes exist in the world; he simply observes their presence.

Thus, the essentialist orientation presumes that the items in a category all share some "essential" quality, their "ball-ness" or "strike-ness." For essentialists, the categories of race, sex, . . . and social class identify significant, empirically verifiable similarities among and differences between people. From the essentialist perspective, for example, racial categories exist apart from any social or cultural processes; they are objective categories of essential difference between people.

Though somewhat removed from pure essentialism, the second umpire still affirms that there is an independent, objective reality, though it is one which is subject to *interpretation.* For him, balls and strikes exist in the world, but individuals might have different perceptions of which is which.

The third umpire, who argues "they ain't nothing till I call 'em," is unabashedly constructionist. He argues that "conceptions such as 'strikes' and 'balls' have no meaning except that given them by the observer" (Pfuhl, 1986:5); balls and strikes do not exist until an umpire names them as such. While the essentialist presumes an external world with distinct categories existing independent of observation, the constructionist argues that reality cannot be separated from the way that a culture makes sense of it. From the constructionist perspective *social* processes determine that one set of differences is more important than another, just as social processes shape our understanding of what those differences *mean.* The constructionist assumes that "essential" similarities are conferred and created rather than intrinsic to the phenomenon, that the way that a society identifies its members tells us more about the society than about the individuals so classified. Thus, the constructionist perspective treats classifications such as race as socially constructed through political, legal, economic, scientific, and religious institutions. Although individuals do not on their own create such classifications, macro-level social processes and institutions do. . . .

Few of us have grown up as constructionists. More likely, we were raised as essentialists who believe that master statuses such as race or sex encompass clear-cut, immutable, and in some way meaningful differences. From an essentialist perspective, one simply *is* what one *is:* someone with African ancestry is black, and a person with male genitalia is male even if he does not feel like a male. It is fairly unsettling to have these bedrock classifications questioned which is what the constructionist perspective does.

However, not all of us have grown up as essentialists. Those from mixed racial or religious backgrounds are likely to be familiar with the ways in which identity is not clear cut. They grow up understanding how definitions of self vary with the context; how others try to define one as belonging in a particular category; and how in many ways, one's very presence calls prevailing classification systems into question. For example, being asked "What are you?" is a common experience among mixed-race people. Such experiences make evident the social constructedness of racial identity.

Still, few of us are likely to take either an essentialist or constructionist perspective exclusively. . . . Our own perspective as authors has been constructionist. Nonetheless, we have sometimes had to rely on essentialist terms we ourselves find problematic. The irony of simultaneously questioning the idea of race,

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but still talking about "blacks," "whites," and "Asians" . . . has not escaped us. . . .

Further, . . . master statuses are not parts of a person that can simply be broken off from one another like the segments of a Tootsie Roll (Spelman, 1988). Each of us is always simultaneously all of our master statuses, and it is that complex package that exists in the world. . . . Indeed, even the concept of master status suggests that there can be only one dominating status, though we would reject that position. . . .

Discussions about racism and sexism generate the intensity they do partly because they involve the clash of essentialist and constructionist assumptions. . . .

Naming and Aggregating

Classification schemes are by definition systems for *naming* categories of people; thus constructionists pay special attention to the names people use to refer to themselves and others—particularly the points at which new names are asserted, the negotiations that surround the use of particular names, and those occasions when categories of people are grouped together or separated out.

Asserting a Name

The issues surrounding the assertion of a name are similar whether we are talking about individuals or categories of people. A change of name involves, to some extent, the claim of a new identity. For example, one of our colleagues decided that she wanted to be called by her full first name, rather than by its abbreviated version because the diminutive had come to seem childish to her. It took a few rounds of reminding people that this was her new name, and with most that was adequate. One telling example was provided by a young woman who wanted to keep her "maiden" name after she married. Her fiancé agreed with her decision, recognizing how reluctant he would be to give up his name were the tables turned. When her prospective mother-in-law heard of this possibility, however, she was outraged. In her mind, a rejection of her family's name was a rejection of her family: she urged her son and his fiancé to reconsider getting married. (We do not know how this story ended.)

Thus, the assertion of a name can yield some degree of social conflict. On both the personal and a societal level, naming can involve the claim of a particular identity and the rejection of others' power to impose a name. All of this applies to individual preferences. For example, is one Chicano, Mexican American, Mexican, Latino, Hispanic, Spanish-American, or Hispaño; Native American, American Indian, or Sioux; African American or black; girl or woman; Asian American or Japanese American; gay or homosexual? This list does not begin to cover the full range of possibilities; or include geographic and historical variations.

> Geographically, *Hispanic* is preferred in the Southeast and much of Texas. New Yorkers use both *Hispanic* and *Latino.* Chicago, where no nationality has attained a majority, prefers *Latino.* In California, the word *Hispanic* has been barred from the *Los Angeles Times,* in keeping with the strong feelings of people in the community. Some people in New Mexico prefer *Hispaiio.* Politically, *Hispanic* belongs to the right and some of the center, while *Latino* belongs to the left and the center. Historically, the choice went from *Spanish* or *Spanish-speaking* to *Latin American, Latino,* and *Hispanic* (Shorris, 1992:xvi-xvii).

Thus, determining the appropriate name by which to refer to a category of people is no easy task. It is unlikely that all members of the category prefer the same name; the name members use for one another may not be acceptable when used by those outside the group; nor is it

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always advisable to ask what name a person prefers. We once saw an old friend become visibly angry when asked whether he preferred the term "black" or "African American." "Either one is fine with me," he replied, "*I* know what *I* am." To him, such a question indicated that he was being seen as a member of a category rather than as an individual.

As we have said, on both the individual and collective level naming may involve a redefinition of self, an assertion of power, and a rejection of others' ability to impose an identity. For this reason, social movements often claim a new name, just as those who continue to use the old name may do so as a way to indicate opposition to the movement. For example, in the current American setting, we may be in the midst of a change from "black" to "African American." "Black" emerged in opposition to "Negro" as the Black Power movement of the Black Panthers, Black Muslims, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) came to distinguish itself from the more mainstream Martin Luther King wing of the civil rights movement (Smith, 1992).

The term "Negro" had itself been born of a rejection of the term "colored" that dominated the mid- to late-nineteenth century. The term "African" had preceded "colored," and was used as late as the 1820s. Led by influential leaders such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, "'Negro' was seen as a 'stronger' term [than "colored"] . . . despite its association with racial epithets. 'Negro' was defined to stand for a new way of thinking about Blacks" (Smith, 1992:497–8).

On the same grounds, president of the National Urban Coalition Ramona H. Edelin, proposed in 1988 using "African American" instead of "black." The campaign to adopt the term, led by Coalition spokesman Jessie Jackson, met with immediate success among black leaders and now both terms are in use (Smith, 1992).

Ironically, the phrase "people of color" is emerging now as a reference encompassing all non-white Americans. White students unfamiliar with the historical background of "colored" will sometimes use that term interchangeably with "people of color." Unaware of the historical distinction, they are surprised by the anger with which they are met.

Each of these changes—from "Negro" to "black" to "African American"—was first promoted by activists as a way to demonstrate their commitment to change and militance. . . . [Similarly], the women's movement has asserted "woman" as a replacement for "girl." The significance of these two terms is revealed in the account of a student who described a running feud with her roommate. The student preferred the word "woman" rather than "girl," arguing that the application of the word "girl" to females past adolescence was insulting. Her roommate, who was also female, just as strongly preferred the term "girl" and just as regularly applied it to the females she knew. Finally, they tried to "agree to disagree," but each of them had such strong feelings on the matter it was clear they could not be roommates much longer.

How could these two words destroy their relationship? It appears that English speakers use the terms "girl" and "woman" to refer to quite different qualities. "Woman" (like "man") is understood to convey adulthood, power, and sexuality; "girl" (like "boy") connotes youth, powerlessness, and irresponsibility (Richardson, 1988). Thus, the two roommates were asserting quite different places for themselves in the world. One claimed adulthood; the other saw herself as not having achieved that. This is the explanation offered by many females: It is not so much that they like being "girls," as that they value youth and/or do not yet feel justified in calling themselves "women." Yet this is precisely the identity the women's movement has put forward: "We cannot be girls any more, we must be women."

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The Negotiation and Control of Names

While individuals and social movements may assert a name for themselves, government agencies also control access to such categorizations. Still, these agencies are not impervious to social movements and social change. The recent history of U.S. Census Bureau classifications offers an example of the negotiation of a categorization system.

Census classifications and census data are significant for a variety of reasons. The census determines the apportionment of seats (among states) in the U.S. House of Representatives, and it affects the distribution of federal monies to states, counties, and cities for "everything from feeding the poor to running mass transit systems" (Espiritu, 1992:116). Since the census is conducted only once every ten years, its results shape policy for a decade.

Most important to our discussion, events in the 1960s and 1970s elevated the importance of census data:

> . . . The proliferation of federal grants programs and the cities' increasing dependence upon them tended to heighten the political salience of census statistics. Such formulas often incorporated population size, as measured or estimated by the Census Bureau, as a major factor. By 1978 there were more than one hundred such programs, covering a wide range of concerns, from preschool education (Headstart) to urban mass transportation. . . . [T]he single most commonly used data source was the decennial census (Choldin, 1994:27–8).

The census offered an important source of information by which the courts, Congress, and local entities could gauge the extent of discrimination. "Groups had to prove that they had been discriminated against in order to qualify for federal help under the Voting Rights Act. . . . To receive help in the form of an affirmative action plan from the newly established Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, each minority had to demonstrate its disproportionate absence from certain categories of employment" (Choldin, 1986: 406). As legislation raised the stakes involved in census data, disputes regarding its structure escalated. In response, the Census Bureau—for the first time ever—established minority committees to advise the government on the content and implementation of the 1980 census (Choldin, 1986).

On the Hispanic Advisory Committee, representatives argued strongly that the census "differentially undercounted" the Hispanic population, i.e., that the census missed more Hispanics than it did those in other categories. Undercounting primarily affects those who are low-income, non-English speaking, and live in inner cities—those who are poor often lack stable residences and are thus difficult to reach; those who cannot read English cannot answer the questions (only in 1990 did the census provide for Spanish-language surveys); those who are illegal immigrants may be unwilling to respond to the questionnaire. (The Constitution requires a count of all the people in the United States, not just those who are legal residents.)

While the Census Bureau might use birth and death records to determine the undercount of blacks, representatives on the Hispanic Advisory Committee pointed out that the Latino undercount could not be determined by this method since birth and death records did not record Hispanic ancestry. As a way to correct for an undercount, the advisory committee argued for the introduction of a Spanish/ Hispanic origin *self-identification* question in the 1980 census. Thus, negotiation produced a new census category. . . .

Thus, while many treat census classifications as if they were fixed categorizations grounded in scientifically valid distinctions, that is not the case as even the Census Bureau admits: "The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification, it does not denote any clear-cut scientific definition of biological

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stock . . . the categories of the race item include both racial and national origin or sociocultural groups" (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). Indeed, the federal guidelines that regulate research and policy-making in health, education, employment, civil rights compliance, school desegregation, and voting rights are similarly clear that the classifications "should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature" (Overbey, 1994).

Still, when we consider "official counts" of the population, we risk believing that what is counted must be real. While the Census Bureau and other federal agencies operate from explicit constructionist premises, the data they produce may be used toward an essentialist worldview in which racial categories are presumed to reflect real and abiding differences between people. Indeed, the Census Bureau [made a change to the 2000 Census that allowed people to check more than one race box for the first time].

The Spanish/Hispanic origin question provides an example of the negotiation of a categorization. By contrast, assignment to the category "Native American" was not initially open to negotiation by those it affected: Native Americans were not allowed to define who was included within that classification, only the federal government could do that.

Historically, federal definitions relied on the idea of "blood quantum," which was a measure of how much of one's ancestry could be traced to Native Americans. This standard was established in the 1887 General Allotment Act, which redistributed collectively held reservation land as individually deeded parcels. In order to qualify for a land parcel, Native Americans had to document that they possessed one-half or more Native American ancestry. . . . Despite an ongoing debate about abandoning blood quantum, the standard persists for access to federal and some state services (one-quarter ancestry is now the usual requirement). Though individual tribes now define their own criteria for tribal membership, many still rely on the blood quantum standard.

Aggregating and Disaggregating

The naming or labeling processes we have described serve both to aggregate and disaggregate categories of people. On the one hand, the federal identification of categories of disadvantaged Americans collapsed various national-origin groups into four headings—Hispanics, Native Americans, Blacks, and Asian or Pacific Islanders (Lowry, 1982). Thus, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, and Cuban Americans all became "Hispanic" in some way. On the other hand, the groups which comprised these aggregates had historically regarded one another as different and thus the aggregate category was likely to "disaggregate" or decompose back into its constituent national-origin elements.

While one might think that "Hispanic" or "Asian American" are terms used for self-identification, that does not appear to be often the case. In the U.S. "Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans have little interaction with each other, most do not recognize that they have much in common culturally, and they do not profess strong affection for each other" (de la Garza, et al., 1992:14). Thus, it is not surprising that a survey of the Latino population concludes that "respondents do not primarily identify as members of an Hispanic or Latino community. . . . [Rather, they] overwhelmingly prefer to identify by national origin . . ." (de la Garza, et al., 1992:13). While members of these groups share common positions on many domestic policy issues, they do not appear to share a commitment to Spanish language maintenance, common cultural traditions, or religiosity (de la Garza, et al., 1992). In short, the category "Latino/Hispanic" exists primarily, but not exclusively, from the perspective of non-Latinos.

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The same can be said about the aggregate census category "Asian or Pacific Islander," which encompasses about fifty different nationalities. While the classification "Hispanic" offers at least a commonality in Spanish as a shared language in the country of origin, "Asian American" encompasses groups with unique languages, cultures, and religions; different racial groupings; and several centuries of congenial and/or hostile contact with members of other groups with whom they now share the category "Asian American." In all, the category "Asian American" aggregates on the basis of geography rather than any cultural, racial, linguistic, or religious commonalities. "Asian Americans are those who come from a region of the world that *the rest of the world* has defined as Asia" (Hu-Dehart, 1994).

Aggregate classifications like "Latino," "Hispanic," or "Asian American" were not simply the result of federal classifications, however. These terms were first proposed by student activists following the lead of the Black Power and Civil Rights movements, and they continue to be used, although by a small proportion of people. As Yen Le Espiritu describes . . . , college students coined the pan-ethnic identifier Asian American in response to "the similarity of [their] experiences and treatment." As we saw earlier, when participants in social change movements forge new social identities and alliances, they also assert new names for themselves. In all, people use both aggregating pan-ethnic terms like "Asian American" and disaggregating national origin identifiers like Japanese American—each is used at particular moments, for particular reasons.

For two categories, however, Native and African Americans, the submerging of differences into an aggregate classification was the direct result of conquest and enslavement.

The "Indian," like the European, is an idea. The notion of "Indians" was invented to distinguish the indigenous peoples of the New World from Europeans. The "Indian" is the person on shore, outside of the boat. . . . There [were] hundreds of cultures, languages, ways of living in Native America. The place was a model of diversity at the time of Columbus's arrival. Yet Europeans did not see this diversity. They created the concept of the "Indian" to give what they did see some kind of unification, to make it a single entity they could deal with, because they could not cope with the reality of 400 different cultures (Mohawk, 1992:440).

Conquest made "Indians" out of a heterogeneity of tribes and nations distinctive on linguistic, religious, and economic grounds. It was not only that Europeans had the unifying concept of "Indian" in mind—after all, they were sufficiently cognizant of tribal differences to generate an extensive body of tribally specific treaties. It was also that conquest itself—encompassing as it did the usurpation of land, the forging and violation of treaties, and the implementation of policies that forced relocation and concentration—structured the life of Native Americans along common lines. While contemporary Native Americans still identify themselves by tribal ancestry, just as those called Asian American and Latino identify themselves by national origin, their shared experience of conquest also forged the common identity reflected in the aggregate name, Native American.

Similarly, the capture, purchase, forced and often fatal relocation of Africans, and their experience of being moved from place to place when they were sold as property, created the category now called African American. This experience forged a single people from those who had been culturally diverse; it produced an "oppositional racial consciousness," i.e., a unity-in-opposition (Omi and Winant, 1994). "Just as the conquest created the 'native' where once there had been Pequot, Iroquois, or Tutelo, so too it created the 'black' where once there had been Asante or Ovimbundu, Yoruba or Bakongo" (Omi and Winant, 1994:66). . . .

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Every perspective on the social world emerges from a particular vantage point, a particular social location. Ignoring who the "us" is in the boat risks treating that place as if it were anywhere and nowhere, as if it were just the view "anyone" would take. Historically, the people in the boat were European, contemporarily they are white Americans. As Ruth Frankenberg frames it . . . , in America "whites are the nondefined definers of other people," "the unmarked marker of others' differentness." Failing to identify the "us" in the boat, means that "white culture [becomes] the unspoken norm," a category that is powerful enough to define others while itself remaining invisible. Indeed, as Frankenberg argues, those with the most power in a society are best positioned to have their own identities left unnamed, thus masking their power.

The term androcentrism describes the world as seen from a male-centered perspective. By analogy, one may also describe a Eurocentric perspective. To some extent, regardless of their sex [or] race, all Americans operate from an andro- [and] Euro- perspective since these are the guiding assumptions of the culture. Recognizing these as historically and culturally located perspectives makes it possible to evaluate their adequacy.

Dichotomization

As we have seen, many factors promote the construction of aggregate categories of people. Often aggregation yields dichotomization, that is, the sense that there are two and only two categories, that everyone fits easily in one or the other, and that the categories stand in opposition to one another. . . . In contemporary American culture we [often separate the world into] "us" and "them"—as if people could be sorted into two mutually exclusive, opposed groupings.

Dichotomizing Race

Perhaps the clearest example of dichotomization is provided by the "one-drop rule. . . ." The one-drop rule describes the set of social practices whereby someone with any traceable African heritage is judged to be "black" by both American blacks and whites. . . . In American society this rule is applied only to blacks—no other category of people is defined by only "one drop." This is not simply an informal social practice; it was a principle reaffirmed in 1986 by the Supreme Court in *Jane Doe v. the State of Louisiana*. . . .

The one-drop rule explains why some American racial classifications are so confounding to many immigrant and even native-born Americans. . . . In contemporary American culture, assignment to the status of black is not based on appearance or even the preponderance of racial heritage. Rather, social custom and law hold that a person with as little as 1/32 African ancestry is black. The American one-drop rule precisely denied the possibility of being mixed; instead, it defined a child born to black and white parents as black.

While the black/white dichotomy may well be the most abiding and rigidly enforced racial distinction in American society, different regions and historical periods have also produced their own splits: In the southwest the divide has been between Anglos and Latinos; in parts of the west coast it is between Asian Americans and whites. Still, each of these distinctions is embedded in the country's historic dichotomy of "whites" and "non-whites." That distinction was stressed early in the nation's history: "Congress's first attempt to define American citizenship, the Naturalization Law of 1790, declared that only free 'white' immigrants could qualify" for citizenship (Omi and Winant, 1994:81). That position was reaffirmed in 1922, when the Supreme Court held that a Japanese immigrant could not become a naturalized U.S. citizen because he was not white, a position

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the Court reiterated a year later in terms of Asian Indians (Espiritu, 1992; Takaki, 1993). In this way, needed labor could be recruited to the country, while minimizing the risk that immigrants would become permanent residents and an economic threat (Steinberg, 1989). Not until 1952 were all immigrants eligible for naturalization, though the children of immigrants born on U.S. soil were always considered U.S. citizens.

Thus, while three racial categories—"white," "Negro," and "Indian"—were identified throughout the nineteenth century (Omi and Winant, 1994), all were located within the white/non-white dichotomy. In 1854, the California Supreme Court in *People v. Hall* held that blacks, mulattos, Native Americans, and Chinese were "not white" and therefore could not testify for or against a white man in court (Takaki, 1993:205–6). (Hall, a white man, had been convicted of killing a Chinese man on the testimony of one white and three Chinese witnesses; the Supreme Court overturned the conviction.) By contrast, Mexican residents of the Southwest territories ceded to the United States in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo "were defined as a white population and accorded the political-legal status of 'free white persons'" (Omi and Winant, 1994). As historian David Roediger argues, even European immigrants were initially treated as non-white, or at least not-yet-white. In turn, they lobbied for their own inclusion in American society on the basis of the white/non-white distinction.

> [Immigrants struggled to] equate whiteness with Americanism in order to turn arguments over immigration from the question of who was foreign to the question of who was white. . . . Immigrants could not win on the question of who was foreign. . . . But if the issue somehow became defending "white man's jobs" or "white man's government" . . . [they] could gain space by deflecting debate from nativity, a hopeless issue, to race, an ambiguous one. . . . After the Civil War, the new-coming Irish would help lead the movement to bar the relatively established Chinese from California, with their agitation for a "white man's government," serving to make race, and not nativity, the center of the debate and to prove the Irish white (Roediger, 1994:189–90).

Thus, historically "American" has meant white, as many Asian Americans are casually reminded when they are complimented for speaking such good English—a compliment which presumes that someone who is Asian could not be a native-born American. . . . Novelist Toni Morrison would describe this as a story about "how American means white":

> Deep within the *word* "American" is its association with race. To identify someone as South African is to say very little; we need the adjective "white" or "black" or "colored" to make our meaning clear. In this country it is quite the reverse. American means white and Africanist people struggle to make the term applicable to themselves with . . . hyphen after hyphen after hyphen (Morrison, 1992:47).

Because American means white, those who are not white are presumed to be recent arrivals and are regularly told to go "back where they came from." In short, in America we appear to operate within the dichotomized *racial* categories of American/non-American—these are racial categories, because they effectively mean white/non-white.

But what exactly *is* race? First. we need to distinguish race from ethnicity. Social scientists define ethnic groups as categories of people who are distinctive on the basis of national origin, language, and cultural practices. As Robert Blauner explains, . . . "members of an ethnic group hold a set of common memories that make them feel that their customs, culture, and outlook are distinctive." Thus, racial categories encompass diverse ethnic groups; e.g., in America the racial category "white" encompasses ethnic groups such as Irish, Italian, and

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Polish Americans. Unfortunately, many fail to recognize ethnic distinctions among people of color. For example, not all American blacks are African American, some are Haitian, Jamaican, or Nigerian; African American is an ethnic group identification that does not encompass all American blacks.

Returning to the concept of race, the term most likely first appeared in the Romance languages of Europe in the Middle Ages where it was used to refer to breeding stock (Smedley, 1993). A "race" of horses, for example, would describe common ancestry and a distinctive appearance or behavior. "Race" appears to have been first applied to humans by the Spanish in the sixteenth century in reference to the New World populations they discovered. It was later adopted by the English, again in reference to people of the New World, and generally came to mean "people," "nation," or "variety." By the late eighteenth century, "when scholars became more actively engaged in investigations, classifications, and definitions of human populations, the term 'race' was elevated as the one major symbol and mode of human group differentiation employed extensively for non-European groups and even those in Europe who varied in some way from the subjective norm" (Smedley, 1993:39).

Though elevated to the level of science, the concept of race continued to reflect its origins in animal husbandry. Farmers and herders had used the concept to describe stock bred for particular qualities; scholars used it to suggest that human behaviors could also be inherited. "Unlike other terms for classifying people . . . the term 'race' places emphasis on innateness, on the inbred nature of whatever is being judged" (Smedley, 1993:39). Like animal breeders, scholars also presumed that appearance revealed something about potential behavior, that among humans race signified something more than just difference of color. Just as the selective breeding of animals entailed the ranking of stock by some criteria, scholarly use of the concept of race involved the ranking of human "races" along a variety of dimensions. Thus, differences in skin color, hair texture, and the shape of head, eyes, nose, lips, and body were developed into an elaborate system for classifying humans into discrete categories. These categories were then ranked as to their merit and potential for "civilization." Although the conquered peoples of the world were the objects of this classification system, they did not participate in its invention.

The idea of race emerged among all the European colonial powers (although their conceptions of it varied), but only the British in North America (and South Africa) constructed a system of rigid, exclusive racial categories and a social order *based on race,* a "racialized social structure" (Omi and Winant, 1994).

> [S]kin color variations in many regions of the world and in many societies have been imbued with some degree of social value or significance, but color prejudice or preferences do not of themselves amount to a fully evolved racial world view. There are many societies, past and contemporary, in which the range of skin color variation is quite large, but all such societies have not imposed on themselves worldviews with the specific ideological components of race that we experience in North America or South Africa (Smedley, 1993:25).

This racialized social structure—which in America produced a race-based system of slavery and later a race-based distribution of political, legal, and social rights—was an historical first. "Expansion, conquest; exploitation, and enslavement have characterized much of human history over the past five thousand years or so, but none of these events before the modern era resulted in the development of ideologies or social systems based on race" (Smedley, 1993:15). While differences of color had long been noted, social structures had never before been built on those differences.

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Thus, it is not surprising that scientists have assumed that race difference involves more than simply skin color or hair texture and have sought the biological distinctiveness of racial categories—but with little success. In the early twentieth century, anthropologists looked to physical features such as height, stature, and head shape to distinguish the races, only to learn that these are affected by environment and nutrition. Later, the search turned to genetic traits carried in the blood, only to find that those cannot be correlated with conventional racial classifications. Even efforts to reach a consensus about how many races there are or what specific features distinguish them from one another are problematic.

If our eyes could perceive more than the superficial, we might find race in chromosome 11: there lies the gene for hemoglobin. If you divide humankind by which of two forms of the gene each person has, than equatorial Africans, Italians and Greeks fall into the "sickle-cell race"; Swedes and South Africa's Xhosas (Nelson Mandela's ethnic group) are in the healthy hemoglobin race. Or do you prefer to group people by whether they have epicanthic eye folds, which produce the "Asian" eye? Then the !Kung San (Bushmen) belong with the Japanese and Chinese. . . . [D]epending on which traits you pick, you can form very surprising races. . . . How about blood types, the familiar A, B, and O groups? Then Germans and New Guineans, populations that have the same percentages of each type, are in one race; Estonians and Japanese comprise a separate one for the same reason. . . . The dark skin of Somalis and Ghanaians, for instance, indicates that they evolved under the same selective force (a sunny climate). But that's all it shows. It does *not* show that they are any more closely related in the sense of sharing more genes than either is to Greeks. Calling Somalis and Ghanaians "black" therefore sheds no further light on their evolutionary history and implies—wrongly—that they are more closely related to each other than either is to someone of a different "race." . . . If you pick at random any two "blacks" walking along the street, and analyze their 23 pairs of chromosomes, you will probably find that their genes have less in common than do the genes of one of them with that of a random "white" person [because the genetic variation within one race is greater than the average difference between races] (Begley, 1995:67, 68).

In all, the primary significance of race is as a *social* concept: We "see" it, we expect it to tell us something significant about a person, we organize social policy, law, and the distribution of wealth, power and prestige around it. From the essentialist position, race is assumed to exist independent of our perception of it; it is assumed to significantly distinguish people from one another. From the constructionist perspective, race exists because we have created it as a meaningful category of difference between people.

Dichotomizing Sex

First, the terms "sex" and "gender" require clarification. "Sex" refers to females and males, i.e., to chromosomal, hormonal, anatomical, and physiological differences. By contrast, "gender" describes the socially constructed roles associated with sex. Gender is learned; it is the historically specific acting out of "masculinity" and "femininity." . . .

While the approach may be unsettling, sex can be understood as a socially created dichotomy much like race. As developmental geneticist Anne Fausto-Sterling and anthropologist Walter Williams make clear, Western culture has an abiding commitment to the belief that there are two and only two sexes and that all individuals can be clearly identified as one or the other (Kessler and McKenna, 1978). [But] sex refers to a complex set of attributes—anatomical, chromosomal, hormonal,

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physiological—that may sometimes be inconsistent with one another or with an individual's sense of their own identity. This is illustrated in the recent case of a Spanish athlete who is anatomically female, but in a pre-game genetic test was classified as male. On the basis of that test, she was excluded from the 1985 World University Games. She was then reclassed as female in 1991, when the governing body for track-and-field contests abandoned genetic testing and returned to physical inspection. As the gynecologist for the sports federation noted, "about 1 in 20,000 people has genes that conflict with his or her apparent gender" (Lemonick, 1992).

Nonetheless, just as with race, . . . membership is assigned to one or the other of the sex categories irrespective of inconsistent or ambiguous evidence. Indeed, the conviction that there ought to be consistency between the physical and psychological dimensions of sex propels some people into sex change surgery in an effort to produce a body consistent with their self-identity. Others will pursue psychotherapy seeking an identity consistent with their body. In either case, it makes more sense to us to use surgery and therapy to create consistency than to accept inconsistency: a man who feels like a woman must become a woman rather than just being a man who feels like a woman.

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Discussion Questions

1. Explain the difference between the "essentialist" and "constructionist" perspectives. Try to develop an example of the difference that parallels the baseball umpire metaphor presented in the reading. Cite examples of each approach to gender and race from your own experiences.

2. Why do group names and definitions matter? What exactly is at stake when the census is conducted? Explain some of the recent changes that have occurred in naming groups. Why did these changes occur? Who initiated the change? Why?

3. How does labeling " . . . serve to both aggregate and disaggregate categories of people"? How and why does aggregation lead to dichotomization? How and why has the concept of race changed over time? How are sex and race similar as social constructions? How are they different?

Current Debates

Race and Sports

How real is race? Is it a matter of biology and genes and evolution or purely a social fiction arising from specific historical circumstances, such as American slavery? Does knowing people's race tell us anything important about them? Does it give any useful information about their character, their medical profiles, their trustworthiness, their willingness to work hard, or their intelligence? Does race play a role in shaping a person's character or his or her potential for success in school or on the job?

This debate about the significance of race and the broader question of "nature versus nurture" has been going on in one form or another for a very long time. One version of the debate has centered on the relationship between intelligence and race. One side of the debate argues that biological or genetic differences make some races more capable than other races. Today, the huge majority of scientists reject this argument and maintain that there is no meaningful connection between race and mental aptitude.[1]

1. For the latest round of arguments in this debate, see Herrnstein, R., & Murray, C. (1994). *The bell curve*. New York: Free Press; and Jacoby, R., & Glauberman, N. (1995). *The bell curve debate*. New York: Random House.

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Another manifestation of this debate centers on the relationship between race and sport. The fact is that—contrary to their general status as a minority group—African Americans dominate several different sports in the United States today. For example, African Americans are heavily overrepresented at the highest levels of achievement in basketball, football, track and field, and, to a lesser extent, baseball and soccer. While blacks are only about 13% of the population, they comprise the vast majority of professional basketball and football players and are overrepresented in other sports as well. With Tiger Woods dominating professional golf, only the National Hockey League remains "white" among North American professional team sports. Black Americans are more prominent among professional athletes—and especially among the very elite—than in virtually any other sphere of American life. Furthermore, the phenomenon is worldwide: in international track, athletes of African descent dominate both sprinting and long-distance running.

Why is this so? Has race played a role in establishing this pattern? Are people of African descent "naturally" better athletes? Or are there social, cultural, and environmental forces at work here that produce this extraordinary dominance? One thing we do know, after so many decades of debate on this topic, is that there is no easy choice between nature and nurture; virtually every scholar agrees that explanations must include both genetic heritage and experience.

Journalist Jon Entine has recently argued the view that the dominance of black athletes in some sports is more biological: "Elite athletes who trace most or all of their ancestry to Africa are by and large better than the competition" (Entine, 2000, p. 4). While Entine agrees that the racial performance gap in sports is partly due to cultural and environmental conditions (nurture), he argues that blacks are better athletes mainly because of a superior genetic heritage. The genetic differences are slight, but they are "crucial in competitions in which a fraction of a second separates the gold medalist from the also-ran" (Entine, 2000, p. 4). Specifically, blacks of West African heritage (which would include African Americans, whose ancestors were taken as slaves from this area) have a number of physiological traits that give them a decisive advantage in sprinting, leaping, and quick, explosive movements. These traits, in Entine's view, explain the dominance of blacks in certain sports (sprinting, basketball) and in certain positions (wide receiver in football) that capitalize on these abilities. Athletes of East African descent, on the other hand, inherit a set of abilities that give them greater endurance and lung capacity, traits that, according to Entine, explain the dominance of East Africans (Kenyans, for example) in long-distance races on the international and Olympic levels. In the excerpt below, Entine summarizes the biological advantage of black athletes.

Writer Kenan Malik argues that Entine's argument is based on an arbitrary and uncritical view of race. He raises several questions and probes the weaknesses of some widespread assumptions about race.

THE DOMINANCE OF BLACK ATHLETES IS GENETIC

Jon Entine

Since the first known studies of differences between black and white athletes in 1928, the data have been remarkably consistent: In most sports, African-descended athletes have the capacity to do better with their raw skills than whites. Let's summarize the physical and physiological differences known to date. Blacks with West African ancestry generally have relatively less subcutaneous fat on arms and legs and proportionally more lean body and muscle

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mass . . . bigger, more developed musculature in general, a longer arm span, faster patellar tendon reflex, greater body density, a higher percentage of fast-twitch muscles and more anaerobic enzymes, which can translate into more explosive energy. Relative advantages in these physiological and biomechanical characteristics are a gold mine for athletes who compete in . . . football, basketball, and sprinting . . .

East Africa produces some of the world's best aerobic athletes because of a variety of bio-physiological attributes. Blacks from this region . . . have more energy-producing enzymes in the muscles and an apparent ability to process oxygen more efficiently, resulting in less susceptibility to fatigue; they have a slighter body profile and a larger lung capacity than whites or West Africans, which translates into greater endurance.

White athletes appear to have a physique between . . . West Africans and East Africans. They have more endurance but less explosive running and jumping ability than West Africans; they tend to be quicker than East Africans but have less endurance.

SOURCE: From *Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk About It* by Jon Entine. Copyright © 1999 by Jon Entine. Reprinted by permission of PublicAffairs. A member of Perseus Books, L.L.C.

The Argument for Genetic Differences Is Deeply Flawed

Kenan Malik

What lies behind black domination of sport? The traditional liberal answer points the finger at social factors. Black people, so the argument goes, have been driven into sport because racism has excluded them from most areas of employment. Racism also makes blacks hungrier than whites for success. . . . Journalist Jon Entine dismisses [this] environmentalist theory of black athletic prowess as "political correctness." . . .

The liberal consensus, Entine argues, has served only to disguise the truth about the black domination of sport—which is that black people are built to run and jump. . . . [Entine and others argue] that it's time we put away our fears of talking about racial differences and face up to the facts of genetic diversity.

The view that black sportsmen and women have a natural superiority rests on the evidence of physiological research, largely into two groups of athletes: East African long-distance runners and West African sprinters.

East Africa, and Kenya in particular, is the powerhouse of middle- and long-distance running. . . . [R]esearch suggests that the secret of such spectacular success lies in superior biology. Athletes of West African descent—and that includes most African Americans . . .—have, on the other hand, a physique that is suited to . . . sprinting and jumping.

For Entine, such . . . differences demonstrate the natural superiority of black athletes. For Entine's critics, . . . the very search for such differences betrays a racist outlook. . . . The . . . problem with the "blacks are born to run" thesis is . . . that it is factually incorrect . . . It is certainly possible to divide humanity into a number of races . . . according to skin colour and body form. However, it is also possible to do it many other ways—using, for instance, blood group, lactose tolerance, sickle cell, or any other genetic trait. Genetically, each would be as valid a criterion as skin colour. The distribution of one physical or genetic characteristic is not necessarily the same as that of another. . . . The current division of the world into black, white, [and] Asian races is, in

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other words, as rooted in social convention as in genetics.

Entine rejects such criticisms as mere "semantics," but his own argument shows why it is not so. According to Entine, East Africans are naturally superior at endurance sports, West Africans at sprinting and jumping, and "whites fall somewhere in the middle." But if East and West Africans are at either end of a genetic spectrum of athletic ability, why consider them to be part of a single race, and one that is distinct from whites? Only because, conventionally, we use skin colour as the criterion of racial difference. . . .

Not only are genetic notions of population differences distinct from political concepts of race, but the physiology of human differences is not easy to interpret in sporting terms. Jon Entine suggests that West Africans have relatively slender calves compared to whites, and that this helps their sprinting ability. It is difficult to see how, because muscle power increases with cross-sectional area; smaller calves should make it harder, not easier, to excel in explosive sprinting events. . . .

It is true that athletes of West African descent living in North America, Western Europe and the Caribbean dominate many sports. But contemporary West Africans do not. This is the opposite of what one should expect if athletic ability were predominantly determined by genetics. In the United States, considerable intermixing between black and white has meant that the African American population embodies, on average, roughly 30 per cent of genes from populations of European descent. Hence, African Americans should be poorer athletes than West Africans. The reverse is true.

What all this suggests is that the relationship between sport, culture and genetics is much more complex than either liberal anti-racists or conservatives such as Entine . . . will allow. Athletic talent is at least in part inherited, and there are undoubted genetic differences between regional populations. . . . There is no reason to assume that all populations have physical characteristics equally suited to every athletic activity. But are blacks naturally better athletes than whites? Not necessarily. After all, how many African Pygmies have you ever seen climbing on to the winners' rostrum?

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Debate Questions to Consider

1. Is Entine using the social or biological definition of race? Is it racist to argue that blacks are "naturally" gifted? Is it appropriate for scientists to pursue the issue raised by Entine?

2. How strong are Malik's arguments? What does he mean when he questions the practice of grouping East and West Africans into the same race? What larger point is he making when he notes the absence of West Africans and Pygmies from the highest levels of sports competition?

3. If Entine is wrong, what social and environmental arguments might explain black dominance of sport? What is Malik implying when he says that these relationships are "more complex" than is commonly recognized? What personal or psychological factors might be relevant? Could it be that blacks are more determined to succeed ("hungrier" in Malik's words) in sports than whites? If so, why?