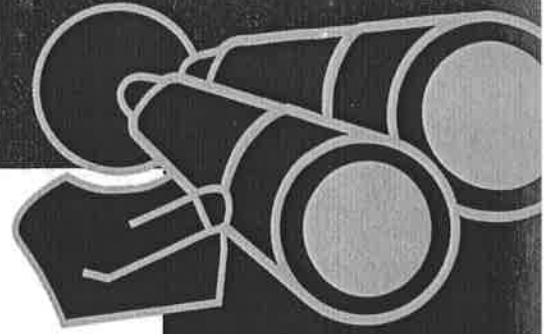


# High-Tech Hate



**The Internet has created an all-too-handly platform for hate groups to reach out to others and spread their messages.**

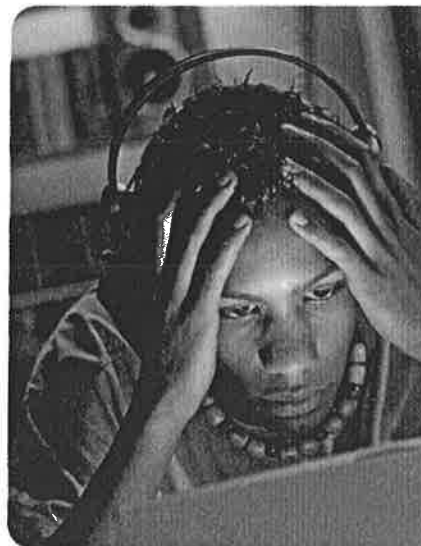
Hatred toward minority groups—for example, Jews, African Americans, or homosexuals—is not new. But the tools used by groups devoted to racism, discrimination, and violence to spread their messages and find like-minded followers have changed. The Internet has emerged as a favored medium of white supremacists, neo-Nazis, and many other hate-inspired groups.

The Internet is a potent tool. One of its features is speed. False, malicious rumors about individuals or groups can spread rapidly, reaching millions before responsible people can refute them. The Internet is also a multimedia venue—games, music, and videos spread quickly over time and space via computers and phones. Hate-filled music, images, and experiences present a seemingly friendly and accessible aspect that can draw in the uninformed or unsuspecting. Another aspect of the Internet that makes it open to abuse by hate groups is the relative lack of filters—it is hard to keep those who spread false information from enjoying access equal to those who tell the truth.

Of course, using the Internet to spread messages of hate is a double-edged sword. Critics who watch the activities of hate groups also have a lot more information with which to work. The same power that allows hate groups to reach more people also makes it possible to monitor and combat them.

#### ▶ CRITICAL THINKING

**Speculating** How do you suppose groups that monitor hate groups use the Internet to achieve their goals?



## GROUPS THAT MONITOR HATE AND DISCRIMINATORY GROUPS

### THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE (ADL)

Although the ADL began as a group "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all," the organization has extended its scope to include protecting democratic ideals and civil rights for all people.

### CENTER FOR NEW COMMUNITY

The Center for New Community, an organization grounded in many faith traditions, works to build a democratic and inclusive community "on the ground" nationwide.

### CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HATE AND EXTREMISM

The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, is a nonpartisan group opposed to censorship, violence, attacks on pluralistic democracy, and falsehoods.

### PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission is dedicated to enforcing the state's anti-discrimination laws and promoting equal opportunity.

### SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER (SPLC)

The SPLC is based in Montgomery, Alabama. The organization tracks hate groups, defends victims of discrimination, and provides materials to help educate students on equality and promote tolerance.

### NEWS SITES

Comment sections provide opportunities for haters to post their views at mainstream news outlets.



### WEBSITES

Millions share hateful information and ideas globally through sites and discussion groups.

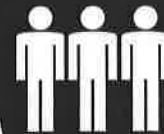
### VIDEO

Video-sharing websites share hate messages.



### SOCIAL NETWORKING

Hateful messages are posted and shared on social-networking sites.



### SMARTPHONES

Web-enabled phones transmit ideas and messages of hate.



### MUSIC

Hate-based songs are shared over the Internet.

# INTERNET HATE

## Thinking Like a Sociologist

### 1 Compare and Contrast

Do you think the Internet makes it harder or easier for people to share hateful information and messages? Explain.

### 2 Draw Conclusions

Do you think the proliferation of electronic communications will help hate groups succeed or will it lead to their downfall? Explain.

There's More Online!

- ✓ **GRAPH** Attitudes Toward Minorities
- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER** Minorities, Race, and Ethnicity
- ✓ **IMAGE** Diverse Friends
- ✓ **MAP** The African Diaspora
- ✓ **SELF-CHECK QUIZ**



## LESSON 1

# Minority, Race, and Ethnicity

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS** • *What challenges do minority groups face?* • *What are the causes and effects of racial and ethnic discrimination in society?*

### Reading **HELPDESK**



#### Academic Vocabulary

- **conception**

#### Content Vocabulary

- **minority**
- **race**
- **ethnic minority**

#### TAKING NOTES:

##### Key Ideas and Details

**DESCRIBING** As you read about minorities, race, and ethnicity, use a graphic organizer like the one below to record the characteristics of key lesson concepts.

Category	Characteristic
Minority	
Race	
Ethnicity	

## IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Sociologists have specific definitions particular to their field of study for minority, race, and ethnicity. Ethnic minorities have historically been subjected to prejudice and discrimination.

## Minorities

**GUIDING QUESTION** *What are the characteristics of a minority?*

Suppose that you and eight friends are deciding whether to go bowling or to the movies. You decide to put the question to a vote. If only three of you want to see a movie, you three are a **minority**.

But numbers alone are not the basis of the sociological definition of minority. Women in the United States outnumber males, and yet they are still referred to as a minority. African Americans in many large American cities outnumber whites. Nevertheless, they are considered minorities. For sociologists, a minority population is defined by something more than size or number. In 1945, sociologist Louis Wirth offered this sociological definition of minority:

#### PRIMARY SOURCE

“We may define a minority as a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. The existence of a minority in a society implies the existence of a corresponding dominant group with higher social status and greater privileges.”

—“The Problem of Minority Groups”

Based on Wirth’s definition, a minority has several key features:

1. A minority has distinctive physical or cultural characteristics that can be used to separate members of the minority from the majority. Physical characteristics may include skin color, facial features, and disabilities. Cultural characteristics may include accent, religion, language, and parentage. In the past, some people have been forced to carry papers or wear badges that marked them as members of a minority. For example,

in Nazi-controlled Germany, Jews in German-occupied areas were forced to wear yellow stars to separate them from non-Jewish citizens.

2. *The minority is dominated by the majority.* The majority holds an unequal share of the society's desired goods, services, and privileges. The minority has fewer opportunities to attain these socially desirable goals. The best jobs are hard for minorities to get because of a lack of education or unfair hiring practices.
3. *Members of the majority often consider minority traits to be inferior.* This presumed inferiority can be used to justify unequal treatment. For example, a majority may justify job discrimination by depicting members of a minority as shiftless or lazy.
4. *Members of a minority have a common sense of identity and strong group loyalty.* The majority's efforts to keep a minority isolated create empathy among members of a minority group. Within both a minority and a majority, there is a "consciousness of kind." Members of both groups employ a "we" and "they" vocabulary.
5. *Membership in the minority group is an ascribed status applied at birth by the majority.* The difficulty of escaping this ascribed status is especially true when it is based on physical characteristics such as race.

#### READING PROGRESS CHECK

**Interpreting** What is significant about minority being an ascribed status?

## Defining Race

**GUIDING QUESTION** *Is there a scientific basis for race?*

Members of a **race** share certain biologically inherited physical characteristics that are considered important within a society. People use characteristics such as skin color, hair texture, facial features, head form, and height to determine race.

**minority** a group of people who, because of physical or cultural traits, are differentiated from the dominant group in a society and treated unequally

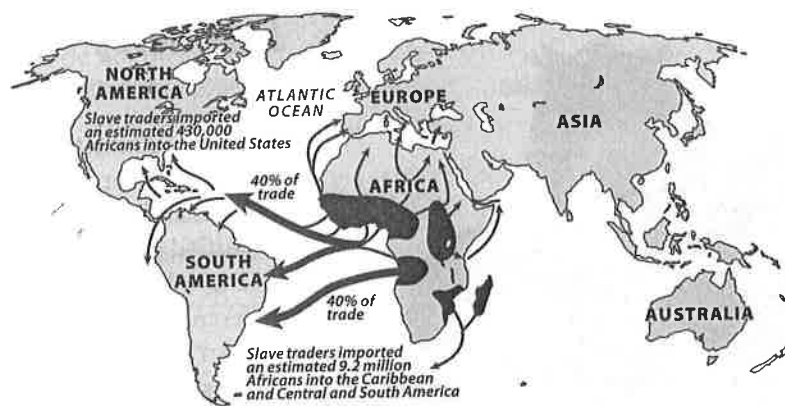
**race** people sharing certain inherited physical characteristics that are considered important within a society

## A Global Perspective

### THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Between the 1400s and 1800s, perhaps as many as 12 million Africans were taken forcibly from their homelands and shipped to the Americas and elsewhere as part of the Atlantic slave trade. Well over 90 percent of these enslaved people were taken to the West Indies and South America.

The slave trade was a horrific assault on African cultures. But this enormous migration, also called the "African Diaspora," changed and enriched life in the Americas as the various African cultures mixed with European and Native American cultures to produce a new, African American identity.



### Geography Connection

1. **Places and Regions** From what part of Africa were most of the enslaved people taken?
2. **Human Systems** How do you think the circumstances of this African diaspora have affected the development of African American culture? Explain.

Traditionally anthropologists maintained that there were three races—Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucasoid—but today there is a much more complex understanding of race.

Certain physical features were long associated with particular races. Scientists, however, have long known that there is no such thing as distinct biological races among humans. According to racial formation theory, racial categories are socially constructed and have changed over time to exclude or include different ethnic groups. In sociology, the social, political, and economic processes through which a population is classified a “race” is known as “racialization.” Most scientists today consider racial classifications to be arbitrary and misleading.

Along with attempting to identify races on the basis of physical features, some writers in the past argued that certain of these characteristics were superior and others inferior. In fact, physical characteristics are superior only in the sense that they provide advantages for living in particular environments. For example, a narrower opening between eyelids protects against bright light and extreme cold, conditions in areas such as Siberia and Alaska. A darker skin is better able to withstand sun damage. But these physical differences are controlled by a very few genes. In fact, geneticists say that there may be more genetic differences between a tall person and a short person than between two people of different so-called races who are the same height. Only about six genes in the human cell control skin color; dozens of them are needed to determine a person’s height.

There is no scientific evidence for distinct human races. And there is no scientific evidence connecting any “racial” characteristic with innate superiority or inferiority. There is, for example, no evidence of innate differences in athleticism or intelligence among the various races. For sociologists, social attitudes and characteristics that relate to race are more important than physical differences.

**ethnic minority** group identified by cultural, national, or religious characteristics

Most of the American population identifies itself as white (72 percent). Thirteen percent identify themselves as African American, 5 percent as Asian, and less than 1 percent as Native American or Native Alaskan. A growing number consider themselves members of more than one race (about 3 percent of the population).

► **CRITICAL THINKING**

**Making Connections** According to scientists and sociologists, what is problematic about identifying someone’s race?

☑ **READING PROGRESS CHECK**

**Paraphrasing** Why have scientists rejected the idea of biological races?

## Ethnicity

**GUIDING QUESTION** *What is an ethnic minority?*

The term *ethnicity* comes from the Greek word *ethnos*, originally meaning “people” or “nation.” Thus, the Greek root refers to cultural and national identity. Today, an **ethnic minority** is socially identified by unique characteristics related to culture or nationality. Just as physical characteristics define racial minorities, cultural differences define ethnic minorities.

An ethnic minority is a subculture defined by its own language, religion, values, beliefs, norms, and customs. Like any subculture, it is part of the larger culture—its members work in the majority, or host, economy. They send their children through the host educational system and are subject to the laws of the land.

Ethnic minorities are also separate from the larger culture. The separation may be maintained by the ethnic minority because its members wish to preserve their cultural and national origins. The separation could also result from the majority erecting barriers that prevent the ethnic group from blending in with the larger culture.

Negative attitudes toward ethnic minorities exist in part because of ethnocentrism. *Ethnocentrism* involves judging others in terms of one’s own cultural standards. Ethnocentrism results



## Connecting Sociology to Economics

### ATTITUDES TOWARD MINORITIES

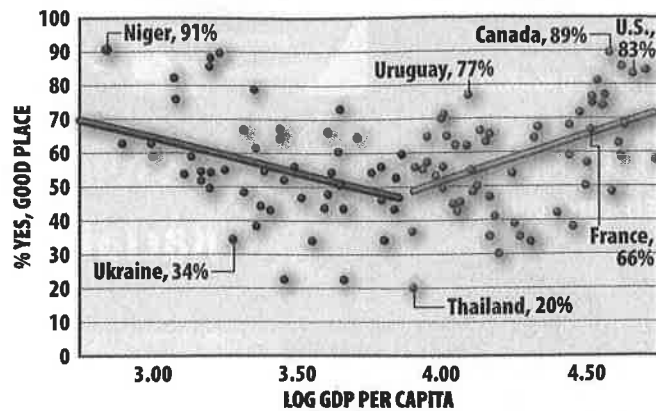
Negative attitudes about minorities are not uncommon. But research suggests that attitudes toward minorities change as overall levels of wealth rise or fall.

This graph measures responses to the question “Is the city or area where you live a good place or not a good place for racial or ethnic minorities?”

The part of the graph in red shows how, for countries with average annual incomes below \$8,000 (below 4.0 on the Log GDP scale), the percentage of people answering “yes” to that question goes down as incomes rise. But in countries where the average income is \$8,000 or above, the opposite is true: As incomes go up, the percentage of people answering “yes” to that question goes up.

There are some theories behind this pattern. For example, some experts think that income inequality often grows in poor countries that are just beginning to achieve growth. But once societies achieve a certain level of wealth, they begin to develop a greater commitment to equality. The push to include all members of society increases.

The theories may be complex. But the basic message is clear: Acceptance of minority groups varies based on economic factors.



— GDP per capita < \$8,000 (2008)  
— GDP per capita \$8,000 + (2008)

All surveys conducted  
January–December 2009

Source: Gallup

This graph shows how acceptance of minority groups varies in countries around the world depending on Gross Domestic Product.

#### ► CRITICAL THINKING

- Synthesizing** In which type of country are people most likely to believe that their communities are good places for minorities to live?
- Identifying Central Issues** What does this graph suggest about the relationship between tolerance and economics?

from the feeling of “us,” one’s own group, versus “them,” other groups. People in the majority may consider the cultural standards of other groups to be inferior. Because members of ethnic minorities do not measure up to the majority’s **conception**, or idea, of appropriate ways of behaving, that majority may assume that something is wrong with them. The result is prejudice and discrimination.

**conception** idea

#### READING PROGRESS CHECK

**Making Connections** How is ethnocentrism connected to a sense of shared identity in the majority?

### LESSON 1 REVIEW



#### Reviewing Vocabulary

- Contrasting** How are the ideas of race and ethnicity different?
- Synthesizing** If race and ethnicity are different, why can both races and ethnic groups be minorities?

#### Using Your Notes

- Summarizing** Based on the notes you took in your graphic organizer, identify an example of a racial and an ethnic minority in the United States.

#### Answering the Guiding Questions

- Evaluating** What are the characteristics of a minority?
- Analyzing** Is there a scientific basis for race?
- Drawing Conclusions** What is an ethnic minority?

#### Writing Activity

- Informative/Explanatory** Using the text’s explanation of Wirth’s definition of *minority*, write a description of *majority*.