

# SOCIOLOGY AND YOU



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## Presentations *for the* Classroom

### Chapter 9 Inequalities of Race and Ethnicity

EXIT





# Inequalities of Race and Ethnicity

## Summary of Topics

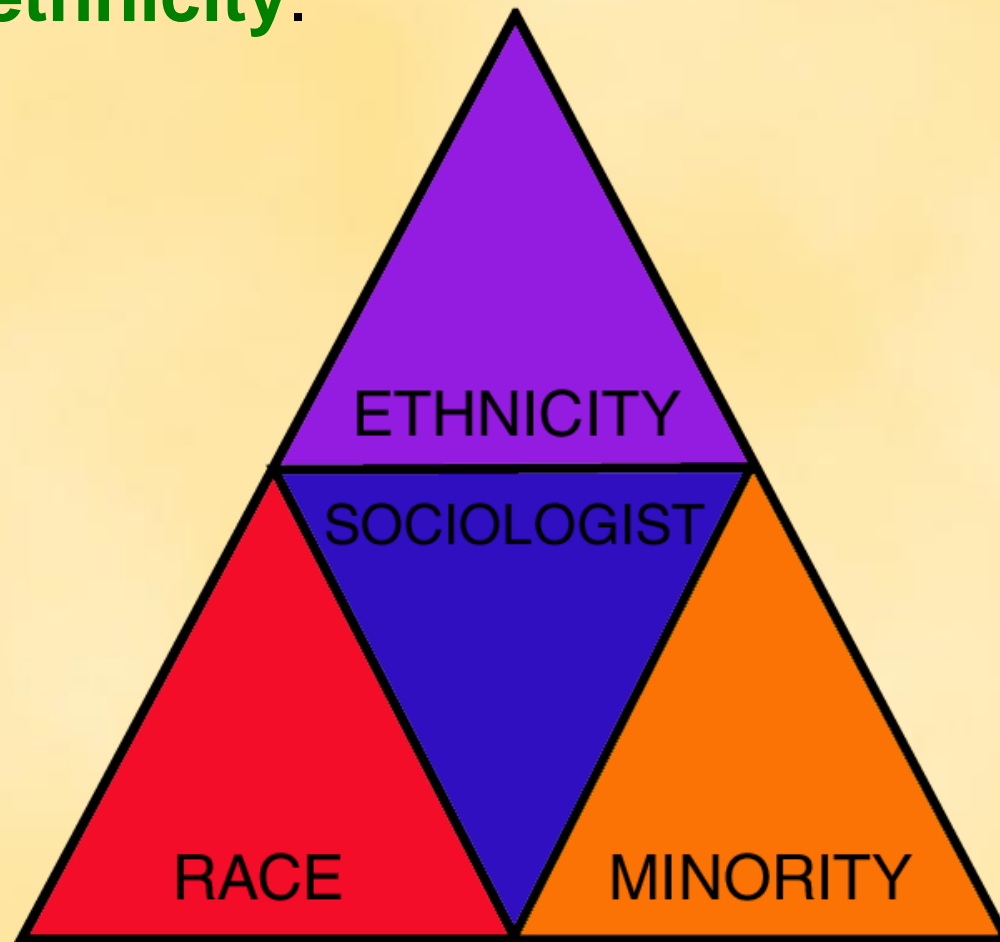
- [Minority, Race, and Ethnicity](#)
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# Minority, Race, and Ethnicity

- Sociologists have specific definitions for **minority**, **race**, and **ethnicity**.



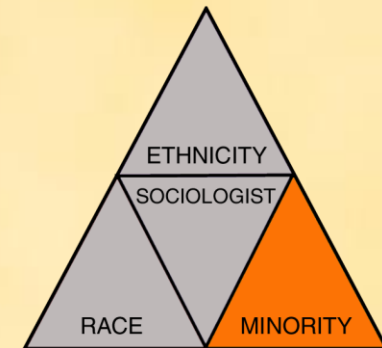
Click on a triangle to learn more about each.



# Minorities

A minority is a group of people with physical or cultural traits different from those of the dominant group in the society.

- A minority has several key features.
  - A minority has distinctive physical or cultural characteristics that can be used to separate it from the majority.
  - The minority is dominated by the majority.
  - Minority traits are often believed by the dominant majority to be inferior.
  - Members of the minority have a common sense of identity, with strong group loyalty.
  - The majority determines who belongs to the minority through ascribed status.
- Sociologists define a minority population by something more than size or number. Women in the United States outnumber males, and yet they are still referred to as a minority.

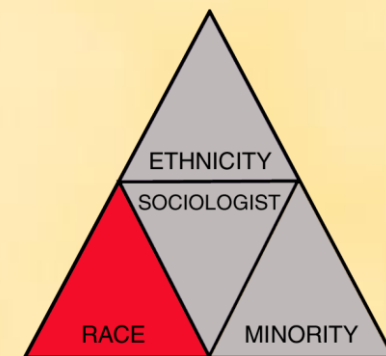




# Defining Race

Members of a **race** share certain biologically inherited physical characteristics that are considered equally important within a society.

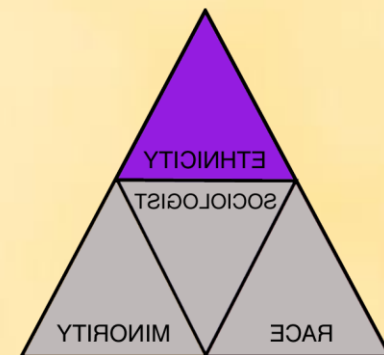
- Biologists use characteristics such as skin color, hair color, hair texture, facial features, head form, eye color, and height to determine race.
- The most common system classifies races into three major divisions—Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucasian.
- Although certain physical features have been associated with particular races, scientists have known for a long time that there is no such thing as a “pure” race.
- Most scientists consider racial classifications arbitrary and misleading.
- For students of sociology, social attitudes and characteristics that relate to race are more important than physical differences.



# Ethnicity

An **ethnic minority** is a group identified by cultural, religious, or national characteristics.

- An ethnic minority operates in a subculture defined by its own language, religion, values, beliefs, norms, and customs.
- Negative attitudes toward ethnic minorities exist in part because of **ethnocentrism**—a feeling of “us” and “them.”





## LEARNING



*Which of the following is NOT always a characteristic of a minority?*

- a. distinctive physical or cultural characteristics
- b. smaller in number than the majority
- c. dominated by the majority
- d. denied equal treatment
- e. a sense of collective identity

Click the mouse button or press the space bar to display the answer.





# Racial and Ethnic Relations

Patterns of racial and ethnic relations take two forms: assimilation and conflict.

- **Assimilation** refers to the blending or fusing of the minority groups into the dominant society.
- **Conflict** occurs when minorities oppose each other or the majority.





# Patterns of Assimilation

Patterns of assimilation include the following:

- When a racial or ethnic minority is integrated into a society, its members are given full participation in all aspects of the society.
- **Anglo-conformity:** traditional American institutions are maintained.
- **Melting pot:** all ethnic and racial minorities voluntarily blend together.
- **Cultural pluralism:** traditions and cultures exist side by side.
- **Accommodation:** a minority maintains its own culturally unique way of life but deals with the dominant culture when necessary.

# Patterns of Conflict

- Three basic patterns describe approaches that dominant cultures take in their rejection of minority groups: genocide, population transfer, and subjugation.
- **Genocide** is the systematic effort to destroy an entire population.
- **Population transfer** moves a minority to a remote location or forces them to leave the territory controlled by the majority.
- **Subjugation** denies a minority equal access to the culture and lifestyle of the larger majority.

# Examples of Conflict

- **Genocide:** Hitler's attempt to eliminate European Jews in the 1930s and 1940s, the Japanese massacre of Chinese in 1937, Serbian campaigns against Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo in the last part of the twentieth century, the Tutsi slaughter of Hutus in Rwanda in 1994
- **Population transfer:** the relocation of Native Americans to reservations

# Examples of Conflict

- **Subjugation:** denial of equal access or segregation
  - ***de jure segregation:*** denial of equal access based on the law
  - ***de facto segregation:*** denial of equal access based on everyday practice





## LEARNING



### Identify and define four patterns of assimilation.

1. *Anglo-conformity*: An Anglo is an American of English descent. Traditional American institutions are maintained, and immigrants are accepted as long as they conform to society's "accepted standards."
2. *Melting pot*: All ethnic and racial minorities voluntarily blend together.
3. *Cultural pluralism* ("tossed salad"): Traditions and cultures exist side by side.
4. *Accommodation*: A minority maintains its own culturally unique way of life but deals with the dominant culture when necessary.

Click the mouse button or press the space bar to display the answer.





# Theories of Prejudice and Discrimination

- Sociologists define prejudice as widely held preconceptions of a group (minority or majority) and its individual members.
- Prejudice involves generalized attitudes based on bias or insufficient information.
- Prejudiced attitudes are based on strong emotions, so they are often difficult to change.

# Racism

**Racism** is an extreme form of prejudice that assumes superiority of one group over others. Racists believe that discrimination or exclusion is morally justified because of their own natural superiority.

# Discrimination

- Discrimination involves treating people differently based on ethnicity, race, religion, or culture.
- Discrimination takes many forms, including the following:
  - avoiding social contact with members of minority groups
  - denying them positions that carry authority
  - blocking their access to the more exclusive neighborhoods
  - extremes such as attacking or killing minority members





# Hate Crimes

A **hate crime** is a criminal act that is motivated by extreme prejudice.

- Hate crimes involve bias related to race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or ancestry.
- Hate crimes occur because of the following:
  - Members of a group need to bolster their sense of unity against a common enemy;
  - a belief that the victim is somehow threatening the person's livelihood or self-interest;
  - labeling people who commit hate crimes; use demeaning stereotypes to justify violence directed against their victims.

# Stereotypes

A stereotype is a set of ideas—based on distortion, exaggeration, and oversimplification—that is applied to all members of a group.

- Stereotypes are used to justify unethical behavior against minority groups.
- Some examples of stereotypes in the United States include:
  - Athletes are not intelligent.
  - Politicians are corrupt.



# Perspectives on Prejudice

- The **functionalist perspective** focus on the dysfunctions caused by these practices.
- The **conflict perspective** assumes that a majority uses prejudice and discrimination as powerful tools to control a minority.
- The **symbolic interactionist** perspective asserts that members of a society learn prejudice from others' behaviors. It provides the basis for the **self-fulfilling prophecy**.



# Minority Groups in the United States

Minorities in this country still suffer from institutionalized discrimination—unfair practices that are part of society’s structure or grown out of traditional, accepted behaviors.

The largest minority groups in the United States are **African American, Latino, Native American, Asian American, and White Ethnics.**





# African Americans

**African Americans** make up the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, numbering almost 35 million, or about 13 percent of the total population.

- Their physical features and assigned status have been viewed as barriers to assimilation.
- African American income is unequal to the average income of whites.
- While education offers the promise of economic gain, results of higher education have been mixed for African Americans.



# Latinos

**Latinos** are ethnic minorities from Latin America, a region that includes Mexico, Central America, South America, and the islands of the Caribbean.

- Latinos are the fastest growing minority and they've become a force in American politics.
- Latinos fall behind white Americans in formal education.
- The average income for Latinos is higher than that of African Americans but lower than that of non-Latino whites.





# Native Americans

**Native Americans** is the term used to describe the inhabitants of North America before the European migrations.

- There are about 500 separate tribes and bands, totaling just under two million people.
- About one-fourth of Native Americans live on reservations.
- Native Americans have suffered hundreds of years of discrimination, and poverty remains a fact of life.



# Asian Americans

**Asian Americans** have come to the United States from China, the Philippines, Japan, India, Korea, and Vietnam.

- Nearly 11 million Asian Americans live in the United States comprising four percent of the total population.
- The Chinese and Japanese are the most successful Asian Americans, despite periods of hardship and adversity.
- Asian Americans have been successful because they used education to gain upward mobility.





# White Ethnics

**White Ethnics** are the descendants of immigrants from Eastern and Southern European nations—Italy, Poland, Greece, Ireland, and Slavic nations.

- The majority of white ethnics are blue-collar workers residing near large cities in the eastern United States.
- White ethnics have not been traditional victims of discrimination.



## LEARNING

*Discuss whether the following statement is true or false:*

*The evidence clearly shows that race is declining in importance in America.*

Most people will interpret the contents of this chapter to prove the statement false. The importance of a person's race is shown by the enormous social and economic costs of discrimination. Minorities lag far behind the white population in income, education, and job status.

Click the mouse button or press the space bar to display the answer.



# Chapter Summary

- Sociologists have specific definitions for minority, race, and ethnicity.
- Patterns of racial and ethnic relations take two forms: assimilation and conflict.
- Patterns of assimilation include Anglo-conformity, melting pot, and cultural pluralism.
- Conflict patterns include genocide, population transfer, and subjugation.
- Prejudice refers to attitudes, while discrimination is about behavior.

Continued on the next slide.



# Chapter Summary

- Discrimination has caused some ethnic and racial groups to lag behind the white majority in jobs, income, and education.
- Progress is being made, but the gains of all minorities remain fragile.

