LECTURE OUTLINE

I. Racial, Ethnic, and Minority Groups

A. Racial groups

1. A RACIAL GROUP is a socially defined group distinguished by selected inherited physical characteristics.

2. The concept of “racial groups” is controversial. Even anthropologists and biologists disagree over the issue of whether race is a meaningful biological concept.

3. Classifications of peoples by skin color has been complicated by the effects of climate and biological mixing; in reality, no truly objective criteria of racial groups based solely on physical or biological characteristics exists.

4. Social definitions far outweigh biological definitions.

B. Ethnic groups

1. An ETHNIC GROUP is a group defined by race, religion, or national origin as such that its members share a sense of peoplehood.

2. Whereas race is based on social definitions of selected physical characteristics, ethnicity is based upon cultural traits that reflect national origin, religion, and language.

C. Minority groups

1. A MINORITY GROUP is a group that is subordinate to the majority in power and privilege; such groups are usually, but not always, smaller than the dominant group.

2. In the United States, the most highly valued norms have historically been those of the WASP middle classes.

II. Attitudes and Their Influence

One of the most serious problems faced by most racial and ethnic groups is how they are perceived and treated by others.

A. A PREJUDICE is a negative attitude toward an entire category of people.

1. ECONOMIC THEORIES OF PREJUDICE suggest that competition between groups is inevitable when different groups seek commodities that are in short supply.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES OF PREJUDICE suggest that prejudice satisfies psychic needs or compensates for personality defects; SCAPEGOATING involves blaming another person or group for one’s own problems. PROJECTION involves attributing one’s own unacceptable traits or behaviors to another person or group. FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION THEORY, a form of projection, suggests that groups that fail repeatedly to achieve desired goals take out their frustration on a socially approved target, a racial or ethnic group.

3. AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY THEORY suggests that people with a certain type of personality are relatively likely to be prejudiced.

4. STEREOTYPES are widely held beliefs about the character and behavior of all members of a group; stereotypes of minorities tend to be negative.

5. Stereotyping is functional in that it helps us sort people into categories, but it is dysfunctional in that it distorts reality and is often used to justify discrimination. Stereotyping may also lead to the self-fulfilling prophecy, which occurs when a prediction influences people’s behavior such that the prediction comes true.

6. In applying theories of prejudice, Allport (1954) noted that interracial interaction reduces prejudice only when the groups are of equal status, have common goals, and have their interactions sanctioned by authorities. An approach based on these principles, known as the “jigsaw technique,” has been developed to reduce prejudice in the classroom. A variety of approaches to reducing prejudice in the community at large have been developed; knowledge of prejudice can also be useful on the job and in personal life.

B. DISCRIMINATION is overt behaviors or actions excluding all members of a group from certain rights, opportunities, or privileges.

1. While prejudice is a judgment, discrimination is an action; the dominant group in a society practices discrimination to protect its advantages.

2. INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION is the continuing exclusion or oppression of a group as a result of criteria established by an institution.

III. Racism

A. RACISM is the belief that one racial group or category is inherently superior to others. It includes prejudices and discriminatory behaviors.

B. Racism has three components:

1. The belief that one’s own race is superior to other races, known as ethnocentrism

2. An ideology that justifies the subjugation of another group

3. The beliefs are acted upon.

C. Individual racism originates in the racist beliefs of a single person.

D. INSTITUTIONAL RACISM occurs when racist ideas and practices are embodied in the folkways, mores, or legal structures of a society’s institutions. The policy of apartheid in the Republic of South Africa is one of the most notorious examples of institutional racism.

E. Racism can take on many forms—separatism, segregation, subjugation, exploitation, expulsion, and others; the text focuses on the two most extreme forms: GENOCIDE and MASS EXPULSION.

1. GENOCIDE is the deliberate destruction of an entire race or ethnic group; the destruction of the Jews in Nazi Germany was the most heinous example of genocide in history, but it has been practiced at all times and in many parts of the world.

2. MASS EXPULSION is the practice of expelling racial or ethnic groups from their homeland. The United States routinely used expulsion to resolve conflicts with Native Americans.

F. Racist thinking and doctrine have declined since 1950, but they are still a serious problem in many parts of the world.

IV. Patterns of Group Interaction

Racial, ethnic, or minority stratification is not unique to the United States; examples can be found in Brazil, Great Britain, Israel, and other Middle Eastern countries and Yugoslavia.

A. Ethnic stratification: Inequality and interaction

1. In America, the predominant norms, values, beliefs, and ideals are those of the WASP majority; groups that diverge from these norms tend to have lower positions in the social hierarchy.

2. Noel contends that ethnocentrism, competition for scarce resources, and inequalities in power are prerequisites of ethnic stratification in a society; it is inequalities in power that permit one group to impose its will on the others.

3. Conflict theories argue that the relative powerlessness of minority groups provides a basis for exploitation and a pool of cheap labor for the ruling class.

4. As Table 9-1 indicates, African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanic Americans had the lowest median family incomes and lowest levels of education in 1980; Asian Americans have a higher college completion rate than other ethnic groups.

B. Ethnic antagonism

1. ETHNIC ANTAGONISM is mutual opposition, conflict, or hostility among different ethnic groups.

2. Bonacich’s theory of the SPLIT LABOR MARKET suggests that when the price of labor for the same work differs by ethnic group, a three-way conflict develops between business, higher-priced labor, and cheaper labor. Business aims at having as cheap and docile a labor force as possible.

3. If the higher-paid group has the power, they may attempt to keep the cheaper labor from entering the market, EXCLUSION, or implement a CASTE SYSTEM in which cheaper labor can only get low-paying jobs. DISPLACEMENT, in which higher-paid labor is replaced with cheaper labor, may also occur.

4. An alternative to the split labor market is RADICALISM, in which the different labor groups join together in a coalition against the capitalist class and present a united front.

5. Bonacich believes that as long as there is cheap labor anywhere in the world, there may not be a solution to a split labor market within a capitalist system.

C. Integration and assimilation

1. INTEGRATION occurs when ethnicity becomes insignificant and everyone can participate fully in the social, economic, and political mainstream of a society.

2. ASSIMILATION occurs when individuals and groups forsake their own cultural tradition to become part of a different group and tradition.

3. SOCIAL DISTANCE is the degree of intimacy and equality between two groups. It is measured by the degree of intimacy and equality between two groups.

4. In MELTING POT assimilation, each group contributes a bit of its own culture and absorbs aspects of other groups.

5. In ANGLO-CONFORMITY assimilation, the minority gives up its identity and conforms to that of the dominant WASP culture.

6. STRUCTURAL ASSIMILATION involves developing patterns of intimate contact between the “guest” and “host” groups in the clubs, organizations, and institutions of the host society.

7. Cultural assimilation generally precedes structural assimilation, although the two sometimes happen simultaneously; it has occurred on a large scale in American society, although the various minorities differed at the pace at which they were assimilated.

8. With white ethnics of European origin, cultural assimilation went hand in hand with AMALGAMATION, the biological mixing through large-scale intermarriage.

D. Segregation

1. SEGREGATION is the physical and social separation of groups of categories of people; the most significant segregation found today is the polarization of whites in the suburbs and blacks and other minorities in inner cities.

2. Although antidiscrimination legislation and government programs have decreased segregation, it still presents obstacles to many members of minority groups. RED LINING is the practice among mortgage-lending institutions of imposing artificial restrictions on housing loans for areas where minorities have started to buy.

3. Prior to the *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* decision of 1954, much of the South practiced DE JURE SEGREGATION, in which children were assigned to schools solely on the basis of race. More recently, especially in the North and West, attention has shifted to DE FACTO SEGREGATION, where blacks and whites attended different schools because they lived in different neighborhoods. This pattern led to legislation in many cities that bused blacks and whites out of their neighborhood schools for the purpose of achieving racial balance.

4. While it is unclear if present segregation is de jure or de facto, what is clear is that the vast majority of black children in many inner cities attend schools that are predominantly black.

E. Pluralism

1. MULTICULTURALISM or CULTURAL PLURALISM exists when the various racial, ethnic, or other minority groups in a society maintain their distinctive cultural patterns, subsystems, and institutions.

2. Several authorities believe that assimilation and pluralism are occurring simultaneously in American society today. For example, Gordon (1978) contends that assimilation of minorities is the trend in economic, political, and educational institutions, whereas cultural pluralism prevails in religion, the family, and recreation.

V. Major Racial, Ethnic, and Other Minority Groups in the United States

A. Hispanic Americans comprise the largest minority group in the United States.

1. As of 2000, there were about 33.3 million people claiming Hispanic origins (12.5 percent). While the U.S. population as a whole increased by about 10 percent in the past decade, the Hispanic American population has increased 53 percent.

2. Hispanic Americans include those who classify themselves as Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, and other Hispanics.

3. Mexican Americans, also called Chicanos, are the largest group.

a. Over one million are descendants of the native Mexicans who lived in the Southwest of what is now the United States.

b. Others came from Mexico since 1948 and can be divided into three types:

(1) Legal immigrants

(2) *Braceros* (temporary workers)

(3) Illegal aliens

c. The estimates are that between one and ten million illegal aliens from Mexico are in the United States today.

d. The extended family is the most important social institution in the Chicano community.

e. Mexican American families tend to be large, and family incomes are often low.

f. To improve educational and income level, several Mexican American social movements have emerged over the past three decades: one urged bilingual instruction; and another, led by Cesar Chavez, organized Mexican migrant farmworkers to strike against grape and lettuce growers and then later to boycott these products.

B. African Americans are the second largest racial minority in the United States (12.3 percent); they have been affected by five major social transitions.

1. The transition from freedom in Africa to slavery in the United States.

2. The transition from slavery to emancipation.

3. The transition from rural to urban areas and from Southern to Northern communities.

4. The transition from negative to positive social status.

5. The transition from negative to positive self-image.

C. Asian Americans

1. Asian Americans, the third largest minority group in the United States, are a very diverse group.

2. The most numerous groups are those with Chinese, Filipino, and Japanese heritages.

3. The Chinese were the first group to move to the United States in large numbers; they tend to resist assimilation.

4. Today, most Chinese live in large enclaves in major cities; in such areas, there are often problems with overcrowding, poverty, and inadequate care for the elderly.

5. The Japanese are more fully integrated into American life than the Chinese; because they came from a developing industrial nation, they used their international power as resources, and they arrived with their families.

6. During World War II, many Japanese were interned in “relocation camps” because the federal government was afraid they would work against the American war effort.

D. Native Americans

1. The Native American population of the United States is actually a varied group of tribes with many different customs and beliefs.

2. At the time of European invasion, about two hundred distinct groups existed that have been grouped into seven major geographical areas.

3. After declining steadily for many years, the Native American population began to increase in about 1900, passing the one million mark in the 1970s.

4. By the 1960s, more Native Americans became wards of the government and lived on reservations administered by the BIA.

5. Native Americans are among the most deprived American minority groups.

6. Since the 1960s and 1970s, many Native American tribes banded together to bargain more effectively with the federal government. They remain a subordinate group.

E. WASPS and white ethnic Americans

1. Most of the white population in the U.S. emigrated from northern and western European countries; later migration came more from southern and eastern countries.

2. WASPS in the U.S. are a minority in number, but a majority in terms of political and economic power.

3. Historically, WASP immigrants displayed what became known as the “Protestant Ethic” and pressured other groups to think and behave like the WASP.

4. Today, many American ethnic communities are reasserting not only their folk culture, but also their ethnic identities.

F. Jewish Americans

1. One of the predominant religious ethnic groups is the Jewish American. America has the largest Jewish population in the world with its estimated 6.5 million exceeding the approximately four million Jews in Israel.

2. The Jewish community today is bound together more by ethnic and cultural ties than by religious ties.

3. There is a long history of anti-Semitism in the United States and Europe; this anti-Semitism tends to unify Jewish Americans.

VI. The Future

For ethnic groups and integration in the United States, serious problems remain to be overcome.

A. Racism continues to play an important role in the lives of members of minorities, but most observers agree that the situation has improved in the past three decades.

B. The reduction of institutional racism has led to the “contact hypothesis.” The contact hypothesis” suggests that interracial contact leads to reductions in prejudice when the interaction is pleasant and the parties involved are of equal status.

C. Changes in the way minorities are portrayed in the mass media have reduced the levels of prejudice.

D. Frequent findings that the population of the United States is better educated all the time may be contributing to further reductions in prejudice and discrimination.

TOPICS FOR LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

1. To reinforce Learning Objective #1, which calls for students to differentiate the terms “racial group” and “ethnic group,” ask students to first define their own racial group. Next, have them define their own ethnic group affiliation, using the category of groups listed and discussed in the text. Discuss with them how that ethnic category developed in the United States and the circumstances under which it achieved or lost political power or political and social significance in our society. For those students who are of mixed racial or ethnic ancestry, ask which ancestry has had the greatest impact on their lives.

2. Using the “Thinking Sociologically” section in this chapter for a class lecture, compare and contrast the social experiences of African Hispanic and Asian Americans, as well as Native and White Ethnic Americans. Examine and explain those experiences. Examine why and how some groups assimilated much more readily than others.

3. Discuss the controversy surrounding the definition and use of “race” in the academic community and as used in our society. Is this a meaningful concept in which people can be identified? Do we need to continue to use this concept? Why? Why not? Include in your discussion the complications of the use of this social definition. Ask students to consider the concept of race and ask them to try to come up with an adequate definition. With each suggestion that they make, play devil’s advocate, and try to explain the shortcomings and/or potential problems of their definition.

4. Discuss with your students ways in which minorities are still being discriminated against in our society today. Provide some examples of your own. The following could serve as a point of departure for your discussion. A Federal Reserve Board study published in October 1992 found that millions of minority families are being denied the American dream of home ownership by discriminatory mortgage lenders who are condoned by federal regulators. According to the testimony about a Federal Reserve Board study, blacks and other minorities were denied home loans more than twice as often as whites with comparable incomes. The 9,300 financial institutions surveyed rejected 34 percent of blacks’ applications and 14 percent of whites. Two House Banking Subcommittees of Congress called for the report to be made public. Another example of discriminatory practice was the finding, released in May 1992 by a special Congressional investigative study, that blacks more likely than whites were rejected benefits under Social Security Disability Programs. Significant disparities were found for every year as far back as 1961 for the Disability Insurance Program, which began in 1956*.*

5. An interesting lecture on ethnicity could focus on the growing Hispanic American population and its manifestations for the future. A report issued by the Texas State Data Center on June 21, 2004, stated that current trends suggest that Texas will soon become a majority non-Anglo state and in twenty-five to thirty-five years a majority Hispanic state. All minority groups in Texas grew faster than the “white” population over the past decade. In 2000, according to the Census Bureau, Anglos accounted for 71percent of the population, down from 78.7 percent in 1980; Blacks accounted for 11.5 percent, down from 12 percent; and Hispanics accounted for 32percent, up from 21 percent. Discuss with your class some of the implications of these numbers. Hint: (1) The numbers suggest that Texas will be more than 50 percent minority in the next century; (2) minorities will play a much more important part in Texas’ economic, social, and political future; and (3) the need to provide additional socioeconomic opportunities for minorities, especially Hispanics, will continue to be an important factor for the state in coming decades.

6. Provide a mini-lecture related to the issue of Affirmative Action. An excellent lecture source could be the controversial Supreme Court case of Alan Bakke, an issue dealing with equality in higher education. The facts of the case are this: Alan Bakke, a white male applicant to the University of California Medical School at Davis, was denied admission (actually twice). Bakke sued on grounds that differential admissions procedures for minorities violated the Fourteenth Amendment (which guarantees equal protection under the law) and Title 6 of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 (which prohibits racial discrimination in federally funded institutions). Bakke claimed that he would have been admitted but for Davis’ policy of setting aside sixteen places for minority applicants. The court, split straight down the middle, rendered its decision in 1978. It affirmed race-conscious admissions policies, and rejected the strict use of quotas to achieve racial parity. In other words, race or minority status could be taken into consideration for admissions decisions in medical school, but it should be just one criterion among many. The Bakke decision understandably created some confusion. Some call it a great compromise; some call it a “cop-out.” Still others said it was the best decision that the Supreme Court could render.

7. Census reports show that Asians and Pacific Islanders living in this country have completed more years of school than the rest of the population, but they earn less than whites with comparable education. They do not get the same return for their education as whites do, according to the study. Experts responded that the discrepancy might be due to the younger average age in the Asian American population or that it may be part of a notion of a “glass ceiling,” wherein they are allowed to get good jobs but not to go up to top management. First, in class with students, locate the census reports that provide data on race/ethnicity and education and income. It will be helpful for students to have you work this through in class (with an overhead projector) so that they can get a sense of how to do research with census data. Then have your students respond to this information and discuss why the discrepancies in income and education.

8. An interesting (and fun) lecture could center on the contributions to our culture from the various ethnic groups. Ask your students for examples. You could begin your lecture by stating how difficult it is to find a morsel of food, an item of clothing, measure of music, or single word in the United States that doesn’t attest to our nation’s pervasive ethnic diversity. Some examples are (1) the “American” hot dog has its roots in the Frankfurt, Germany, of the Middle Ages; (2) blue jeans came from German immigrant Levi Strauss; (3) American jazz has its diverse origins melded from African and European cultures blended with American influences; and (4) our “English” language is really an outgrowth from almost every language around the world. According to the book, *The Story of English* by Robert McCrum, et al., probably no language has influenced American English more than Spanish. Such words as “cabana,” “chocolate,” “patio,” “plaza,” and “rancho” attest to that influence. On the other hand, from African Americans came a contribution of new shades of meanings to words already in the language (“blues,” “cool,” “hot,” “hip,” etc.); from Native Americans come words such as “opossum,” “sequoia,” and “succotash;” from Eskimo and Aleut come the words “igloo,” “kayak,” and “parka;” from Hawaiian language come the words “aloha,” “lanai,” “lei,” and “luau;” and lately, from the former Soviet Union comes the words “glasnost” and “perestroika.” Ask your class to provide further examples.

CLASS PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Have your students research the topic of the loss of native cultures occurring all around the world. Ask the question: “Can our world survive the loss of native cultures?” As tribal peoples abandon their ways, a trove of knowledge is being lost and tribal wisdom is vanishing. As the world’s various tribes and groups are dying out or being absorbed into modern civilization, so is their irreplaceable knowledge. Have your students research specific groups in a specific area of the world or in specific countries.

2. Tell students to keep a journal for one to two weeks, in which they record their observations of racial and ethnic stereotypes and prejudices. These can be things that they hear, witness, express personally themselves, or of which they may be the object. These instances of stereotyping and prejudice can occur in daily interpersonal interactions with friends, family, teachers and so on, in the media (TV, internet, music, magazines, newspapers, et), professional settings, etc. Have them record in their journal what they observed for each instance. Then have them discuss why they think each stereotype of prejudice exists. Tell them to think about whether or not they are based upon objective facts, subjective experiences or something else. They should use the theories of prejudice and discrimination found in the textbook to discuss some of the reasons why they think each of the observations they made exists. Finally, they should discuss some of the problems created by each of the stereotypes and prejudices that they observed. Note: This activity is also found in the student Study Guide.

3. As a research assignment, have your students investigate the arguments that raged around freeing of the slaves before, during, and after the Civil War. What arguments did those who opposed slavery and those who favored it use? Have them document some of the various arguments. Have them include in the paper arguments from both “Southerners” and “Northerners” for comparative purposes. Have them include arguments from both the northern and southern supporters and the opponents of slavery. Have them summarize their findings.

4. Have your students conduct an informal survey of ten people who appear to be an ethic or racial minority in our country. Have your students ask these specific questions and record the responses:

(1) Ask the respondent’s name, general address, and specific race or ethnicity. (2) Did you ever experience racism or bigotry or discrimination in some form in our society? (3) If so, what was it?

(4) Can you remember the first time you were hurt in some way? (5) Can you remember a more recent time? (6) How did you respond? (7) How would you like to have responded? Have your students provide any other questions they would like to ask and then provide a summary, conclusion, and evaluation of this project. NOTE: This project is also included in the student Study Guide as a class project and activity.

5. Have your students select one particular ethnic or racial minority group and observe how that group is portrayed by the mass media in America. You could select specific television programs or specific movies for them to view. Ask them to note specific exaggerated differences, stereotypical roles, and one-dimensional presentation of characters. This could serve as a written assignment.

6. Have your students research racial or ethnic antagonism as it exists for one racial or ethnic group, either in the United States or in another country. The topics may include the “Race Riot” of May 1992, in the United States in Los Angeles, or any number of global ethnic wars. Have students research the background leading to the antagonism, the result of the antagonism, and the reaction of the people involved. Anna Deavere Smith’s one-woman films *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *Fires in the Mirror: Crown Heights, Brooklyn and Other Identities* are compelling character studies of individuals involved in or who witnessed the race riots of New York and Los Angeles. Have students than conduct research on a fairly recent event (within the past ten years) that involved racial antagonisms and/or racial issues. One such topic could be the controversies that developed surrounding the failure of the government to act quickly during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Then have students compare the events of the past with the more recent events. Are these racial issues or do they have to do with other things, such as social class?

7. Have students examine their own ethnic or racial heritage, if known. If their ethnicity or race is mixed, have them select what they believe to be the most dominant heritage in their lives. If their ethnicity or race is unclear, or not known, have them examine their own socialization into an ethnic or racial group. Remind students that many people, because of adoption or other factors may not know their original ethnic heritage; they may, however, be able to identify their racial heritage. Have your students prepare a minimum five-page report on their experiences as a member of their particular group. Encourage them to gather as much background information as possible in exploring their own ethnic or racial heritage. If known, have them trace the ethnic history of their own family, such as the approximate date of their ancestors’ migration to the United States, the obstacles they faced, their cultural practices and experiences from their childhood, usual activities, and family experiences. Ask them to include activities with extended kin members, type of education received (if any), and church and neighborhood experiences. Have them record any other event or experience that influenced their identity and membership in the group. Ask students to provide a conclusion and evaluation of this project. NOTE: This project is also included in the student Study Guide as a class project and activity.