## Ethnic Communities in America

#### **Course Review**

# Introduction to the study of **Ethnic Communities** in the US

#### **Overview of US population**

- The formation of Ethnic Communities in America
- Ethnic groups: periods of immigration, population numbers

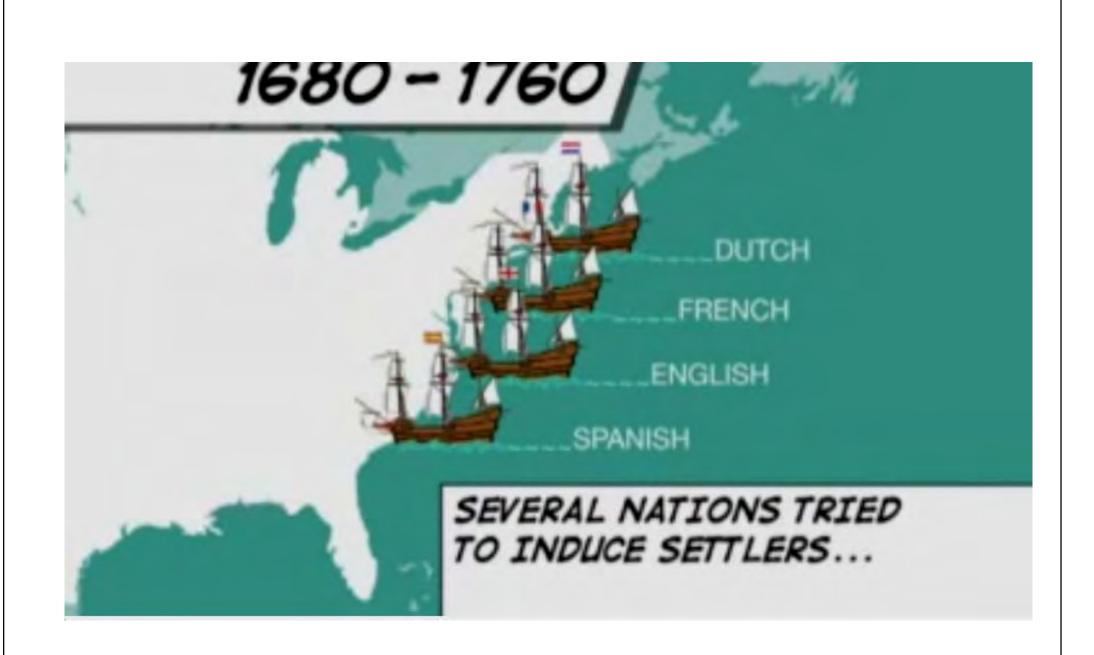
#### **Concepts:**

- immigration
- diversity
- ethnic experience
- ethnic identity
- ethnic community

Video

#### • **\*** The Changing State of US Ethnicity

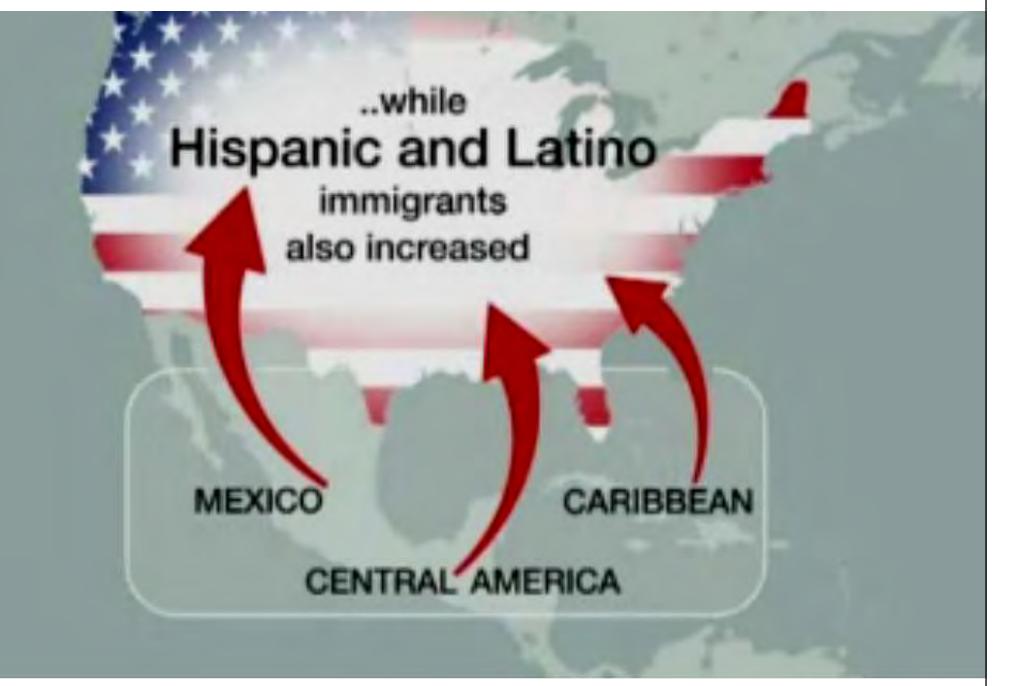












#### The Formation of Ethnic Communities in America

# Historical contexts, politics of race and ethnicity

### Next generations of immigrants

- becoming a US citizen
  - European C European American
  - African S African American
  - Asian C Asian American
  - South&Central American Section Hispanic American
- adapting to the American way of life
  - assimilation
  - resisting assimilation
- reconsidering/revalorizing the ethnic background

#### Concepts

- ancestries
- ethnic revival
- social-historical contexts that influenced the formation of ethnic communities in America
- politics of race and ethnicity immigration laws

## A cultural analysis of immigration to America

# Aspects of the evolution of ethnic communities

# A cultural analysis of immigration to America

- Aspects of the social evolution of ethnic communities
- concepts:
  - -race, ethnicity, minority
  - -assimilation, pluralism, multiculturalism
  - -segregation, discrimination, racism
- case studies:
  - -immigrant personal stories

#### **Online project:**

#### http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/usim.html

#### Destination America: US Immigration





Guatemala













Gualemaia
Ferdows Naficy & daughters
Iran
Gehlek Rimpoche
Tibet
Ilya & Emilia Kabakov
<ul> <li>Russia</li> </ul>
Fang-Yi Sheu
Taiwan
Manuel
<ul> <li>Mexico</li> </ul>

# Slavery and Racism

in America

#### Special course: Racism

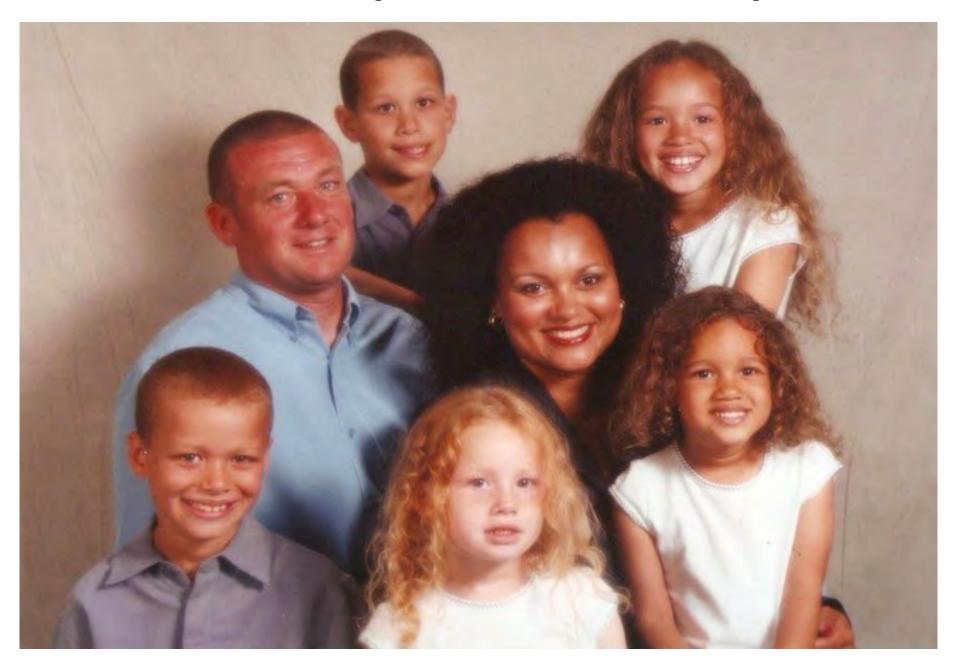
- The origins of slavery in America
- The impact of racism in the 20th century



## Major topics

- relationship between slavery and racism in America
- the construction of race and racism
- racially mixed families
- racial stereotypes
- racism today

#### Racially mixed family



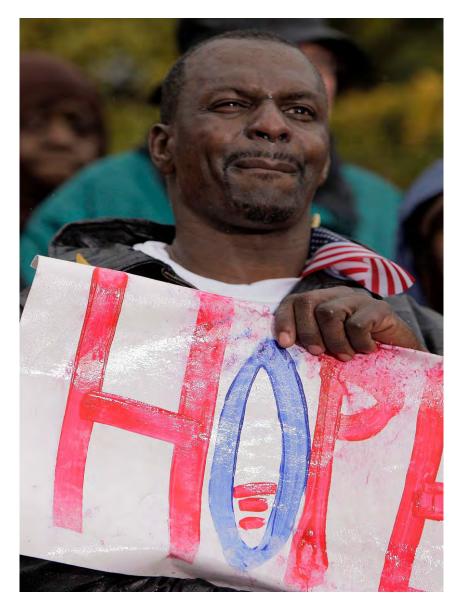
#### Who's **smarter**?



## TWINS !



#### Not **race**, but **discrimination** creates "inferior" categories!





#### Ethnic-racial groups in America

#### **General Structure**

- terminology
- a chronology of key historical events
- geographical distribution
- demographic characteristics
- political, economic and social-cultural aspects
- specific contemporary problems seen from the perspective of interethnic relations
- Case studies: ethnic-racial groups in America

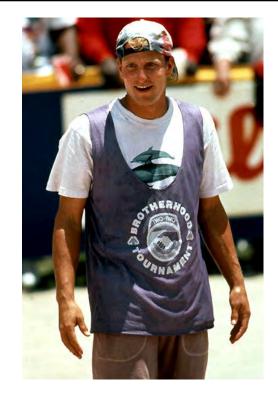
## **Native Americans**



- history, stereotypical images and clichés
- ethnic revival, American Indian identity today
- living in reservations
- Case studies:
- problems with Columbus
- cultural tourism, gambling industry
- naming athletic clubs and mascots

### **European Americans**

- colonization, immigration waves, dominant culture
- Caucasian race
- hegemony, Anglo-Protestant culture
- Case studies:
- ethnicity and religion
- white **minority**



### **African Americans**

- historical and contemporary aspects
- characteristics of Black community past and present
- Case studies:
- segregation and discrimination
- African-American cultural political and movements
  - Harlem Rennaissance (1920s)
  - Civil Rights Movement (1960s)



### **Asian Americans**

- historical and contemporary aspects
- the diversity of Asian American communities
- immigration and ethnic enclaves
- Case studies:
- Asian American diversity
- The Model Minority issues



### Hispanic Americans

- historical and contemporary aspects
- the diversity of Hispanic American communities
- recent immigration issues
- Case studies:
- ethnic enclaves
- Chicano culture



#### In Review: American Ethnic Experiences

How **social-political** and **social-cultural experiences** contribute to the maintaining of ethnic communities in the US

- Case studies:
- the illegal immigration
- ethnic festivals

#### Student Research Presentations

- Contemporary Issues Involving Native
   Americans
- Italian Mafia in America
- The Globalization of Hispanic Barrio
- L.A.'s Little Tokyo and Chinatown
- African American Music: The Blues

#### Student Research Presentations

- African American Slavery
- African American Segregation
- Harlem Renaissance
- Mexican Immigration Policies: Maquiladoras
- Jamaican Music: Reggae

#### Student Research Presentations

- Japanese Americans
- Eastern European Immigrants
- Little Italy in America
- Italian Restaurants in America
- African American Music: Rap
- African American Neighborhood
- Race Riots: Baltimore and LA riots

#### Conclusive discussion: American Ethnic Communities



# What keeps the **American ethnic communities** active and relevant?

#### <u>common histories</u>

- histories of *immigration*
- histories of discrimination
- histories of struggling against discrimination

#### <u>common forms of social organization and</u> <u>cultural practices</u>

- ethnic enclaves (ethnic institutions, businesses)
- ethnic shared practices (language, cuisine)
- ethnic revival practices (ethnic celebrations)

What keeps the **American ethnic communities** active and relevant?

- policies, ideologies and discourses of ethnic identity and diversity
  - affirmative action
  - multiculturalism
- <u>community</u> counsciousness and <u>activism</u>
  - community's *contribution* to American history, culture, society
  - community responses to actual or perceived new forms of discrimination

# READER

# ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

American Studies • 1st year Instructor: Şerban Văetiși, PhD Lecturer

# Content:

## Week 2:

**SOWELL:** The American Mosaic **SCHAEFER:** Understanding Race and Ethnicity

## Week 3:

SCHAEFER: Immigration and the United States

## Week 4:

HEALEY: The Origins of Slavery

## Week 5:

SCHAEFER: Native Americans GALE ENCYCLOPEDIA: Cherokees, Navajos

## Week 6:

GALE ENCYCLOPEDIA: Irish, Italians SCHAEFER: Jewish Americans SCHAEFER: Ethnicity and Religion

## Week 7:

**GALE ENCYCLOPEDIA:** African Americans **SCHAEFER**: The Making of African Americans **HEALEY:** From Segregation to Modern Racism

## Week 8:

SCHAEFER: Chinese and Japanese Americans SCHAEFER: Asian American Diversity HEALEY: Model Minorities

## Week 9:

**HEALEY:** Colonization, Immigration, Ethnic Enclaves **SCHAEFER:** Hispanic Americans **SCHAEFER:** Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans

## Week 10:

HAWKINS: Ethnic Festivals, Cultural Tourism and Pan-Ethnicity

# Week 2:

# SOWELL:

The American Mosaic

# SCHAEFER:

Understanding Race and Ethnicity

# Chapter 1 from *Ethnic America: A History* (1981)

# Thomas Sowell **"The American Mosaic"**

The peopling of America is one of the great dramas in all of human history. Over the years, a massive stream of humanity—45 million people—crossed every ocean and continent to reach the United States. They came speaking every language and representing every nationality, race, and religion. Today, there are more people of Irish ancestry in the United States than in Ireland, more Jews than in Israel, more blacks than in most African countries. There are more people of Polish ancestry in Detroit than in most of the leading cities in Poland, and more than twice as many people of Italian ancestry in New York as in Venice.

The sheer magnitude of American ethnic communities makes them autonomous cultures with lives of their own—neither copies of some "mainstream" model nor mere overseas branches of some other country's culture. Chow mein, the St. Patrick's Day parade, and the Afro hairdo all originated on *American* soil. Far from taking direction from overseas, American ethnic communities have supplied leadership to their countries of origin. The first president of Ireland, Eamon de Valera, was born in Brooklyn. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir was born in Milwaukee. Liberia was for more than a century ruled by the descendants of freed American Negro slaves.

The massive ethnic communities that make up the mosaic of American society cannot be adequately described as "minorities." There is no "majority." The largest single identifiable ethnic strain are people of British ancestry—who make up just 15 percent of the American population. They barely outnumber German Americans (13 percent) or blacks (11 percent). Millions of Americans cannot identify themselves at all ethnically, due to intermixtures over the generations.

The setting in which the history of all these peoples unfolded is no less impressive than the numbers and varieties of the peoples themselves. The United States is one of the largest culturallinguistic units in the history of the world. From San Francisco to Boston is the same distance as from Madrid to Moscow. Yet here there is one language, one set of laws, and one economy in an area that, in Europe, is fragmented into a multitude of nations, languages, and competing military and political blocs. The size and cohesion of the American society are all the more remarkable because of the diverse origins of the people who make it up. As a unified nation, the United States is older than Germany or Italy. As for size, Texas is larger than France, Colorado is larger than Great Britain, and Italy is only two-thirds the size of California. The United States as a whole is larger than the Roman Empire at its greatest expansion.

The mixture of unity and diversity runs through American history as through American society today. No ethnic group has been wholly unique, and yet no two are completely alike. Each group has its own geographic distribution pattern, reflecting conditions when they arrived on American soil and the evolution of the industries and regions to which they became attached. Even the ages of American ethnic groups vary widely. Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans have median ages of less than twenty years, while the average Irish American or Italian American is more than thirty years old, and Jewish Americans are over forty. These age differences reflect not only current fertility patterns—some groups are composed disproportionately of children— but also historic *changes* in fertility patterns that have caused the successive generations to be of drastically altered size in some groups.

Incomes, occupations, and unemployment rates differ substantially among American ethnic groups, as do rates of crime, fertility, and business ownership. The *explanation* of those differences is complex and in many ways surprising. None of the easy explanations fits all the

facts. Color has obviously played a major role in determining the fate of many Americans, and yet a black ethnic group like the West Indians earns more than a predominantly white ethnic group like the Puerto Ricans, and the Japanese earn more than whites in general. The initial wealth of a group and its time of arrival are obviously important, as many wealthy "old families" show, but the Jews arrived late and penniless in the nineteenth century and are now more affluent than any other ethnic group. [...]

Social attitudes about race and ethnicity have changed considerably over time, especially in the post-World War II era. Jews, who had been excluded from many top university faculties, came ultimately to be overrepresented on such faculties. Professional sports that had once excluded blacks came to be dominated by black athletes. Anti-Oriental laws, which had flourished for decades in California, were repealed in popular referendums. Intermarriage rates among people of Irish, German, and Polish ancestry exceeded 50 percent of all their marriages, with Italian intermarriage rates falling just below 50 percent and Japanese Americans not far behind. Attitude surveys and election results show similar patterns of growing mutual acceptance.

The road toward pluralism and cosmopolitanism has been long and rocky. The intergroup animosities of the nineteenth century—among European ethnic groups or between nativists and immigrants of European or Oriental ancestry—frequently erupted in violent confrontations in which the loss of life exceeded anything seen in mid-twentieth-century versions of "race riots."

An anti-immigrant political party called the Know-Nothings achieved a brief but spectacular success in the 1850s, electing six governors and dominating several state legislatures. Later revivals of the same intolerant spirit culminated in national legislation all but cutting off immigration in the 1920s. The tragic history of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and lynchings against blacks is all too familiar. Yet what is peculiar about the United States is not that these intergroup animosities have existed here—as they have existed for thousands of years elsewhere—but that their-intensity has lessened and in some respects disappeared.

Ethnic groups themselves have changed in ways that made their acceptance easier. The high rates of crime, disease, dependence on charity, and lack of personal hygiene that characterized many nineteenth-century immigrant groups passed with their acculturation to American norms and with the improvement of cities themselves, as sewer systems replaced backyard outhouses and eventually indoor plumbing brought running water into the tenements by the end of the nineteenth century (although bathtubs remained a rare luxury even then). Before that, the smells and diseases of the slums were overpowering realities. Moderate heat waves were literally fatal in tenements that were far more overcrowded and unventilated than the slums of today. People who could not speak English, or who could not read or write in any language, were far more common then. Religious animosities were so fierce as to retard the development of public education, as well as to provide the spark for riots and the fuel for long-smoldering political rivalries. Protestant-Catholic clashes led to fifty deaths in one day in 1871. In earlier times, there were similar antagonisms and violence against Mormons, Quakers, and others.

American pluralism was not an ideal with which people started but an accommodation to which they were eventually driven by the destructive toll of mutual intolerance in a country too large and diverse for effective dominance by any one segment of the population. The rich economic opportunities of the country also provided alternative outlets for energies, made fighting over the division of existing material things less important than the expansion of output for all, and rewarded cooperative efforts so well as to make it profitable to overlook many differences.

### **Time and Place**

The many ethnic groups that make up the American people did not arrive at the same time or locate in the same places. Each group typically had its own era during which its immigration to

America was concentrated. Irish immigration to the United States peaked about 1850, while Jewish immigration peaked half a century later, and Mexican-American immigration peaked half a century after that. Geographic distribution has been equally diverse. Scandinavians settled in the upper Midwest, Orientals along the West Coast, Cuban refugees in Florida, Mexican Americans in the Southwest, and the Scotch-Irish along the Appalachian region from western Pennsylvania down through the Carolinas. Those groups that arrived virtually penniless from Europe—the Irish, the Italians, and the Jews—settled right in the northeast ports where they arrived. Blacks were concentrated in the South.

Since each of these regions has its own characteristic economic activities, the fate of each of these groups became intertwined with the fate of wheat farming or steel production, railroading, cotton manufacturing, etc. Because economic conditions in the country as a whole were different in different eras, each group faced a different set of opportunities and constraints upon arrival. The subsequent economic history of each group reflected the influence of time and place, as well as the cultural heritage that it brought to America.

Present-day differences are still heavily influenced by location. The average family income of blacks in New York State is more than double that of blacks in Mississippi. Mexican Americans in the Detroit metropolitan area earn more than twice as much as Mexican Americans in the metropolitan areas of Laredo or Brownsville in Texas. American Indians in Chicago, Detroit, or New York City make more than double the income of Indians on reservations. These differences within the same ethnic group are greater than the differences between any ethnic group and the larger society.

The geographic distribution of ethnic groups affects not only their incomes but also their lifestyles in general. American Indians in the rural Midwest average about two children more per family than American Indians in the urban Northeast. Blacks outside the South have consistently had smaller families and higher IQs than blacks living in the South. Even within a given city, a given ethnic group has widely varying patterns of income, crime, broken homes, etc., by neighborhood—whether the ethnic group is Jewish, Italian, Mexican, etc., in origin. There are many historic reasons for differences in the geographic distribution patterns of American ethnic groups, and for their arrival at one period of history rather than another. The change from wind-driven ships to steam-powered ships caused a drastic change in the origins of immigrants to America. In the era of wind-driven ships, European immigrants came almost exclusively from northern and western Europe. With the advent of steam-powered ships, suddenly immigration was overwhelmingly from southern and eastern Europe—people with greater cultural and religious differences from the U.S. population, at a time when religious differences were of major social and political importance.

In the era of wind-driven ships, an ocean voyage on a passenger vessel was beyond the financial means of most immigrants. They could reach America only in the hold of a cargo vessel returning from its deliveries in Europe. This meant that mass immigration was possible only from areas with large-scale trade with the United States-northern and western Europe, but not eastern or southern Europe. American shipments to Europe were usually bulky agricultural cargoes and their imports were much smaller sized European manufactured goods, so that there was excess space on the return voyage. This space was where the immigrants were packed in, in makeshift quarters without adequate ventilation, toilet facilities, or enough food or water, in either quantity or quality. The voyage was long—and unpredictable. Depending upon the winds, it might take from one to three months. The longer the voyage took, the weaker the people became from inadequate food and water and the more susceptible they became to diseases that could spread quickly in the crowded hold of a cargo ship.

The routes traveled by cargo ships depended upon the pattern of trade. This meant that the immigrants did not select their destinations but landed wherever the ship was going. For example, the Irish came to America in vessels that carried lumber from the northeastern United States, so that is where they landed when the ships returned. Many Germans took cargo vessels

that carried cotton to Le Havre and returned to New Orleans—where empty space on Mississippi river-boats returning to northern cargo shipping points carried the Germans through the upper Mississippi Valley to settle in such places as Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. The American beer industry was created by the Germans in the latter two cities, with Budweiser originating in St. Louis and numerous other brands in Milwaukee.

The economic conditions that happened to exist in the region of settlement were particularly important for those groups too poor to relocate. For example, the Irish who landed in Boston found a city with very little industry or other opportunities for working-class people. Most American working-class groups avoided Boston for that reason, but this was where many of the Irish found themselves in the middle of the nineteenth century, and they suffered the economic consequences for years to come. The very large numbers of the Irish who arrived in a few northeastern cities (notably New York and Boston) within a very few years (the 1840s and 1850s), and most of them crowded into a single occupation (unskilled labor), created special problems of absorption into the economy and society. As canal and railroad building proceeded in the Northeast, poverty-stricken Irishmen took on the hard and dangerous jobs involved. Many settled in the cities and towns along the routes of the canals and railroads. Their present-day geographic distribution continues to reflect these early settlement patterns.

The change from wind-driven ships to steam ships drastically altered the pattern of American immigration. The time of the voyage shrank from a variable thirty to ninety days to a dependable ten days, and it now became economically feasible for working-class people to travel on ships specializing in passengers rather than cargo. No longer were immigration patterns tied to trade patterns. These developments changed both the size of the immigration and its origins. The number of immigrants rose from 5 million in the pre-Civil War era to 10 million in the next thirty years, and to 15 million in the next fifteen years. The change in countries of origin was equally dramatic: 87 percent of the immigrants were from northern and western Europe in 1882, but twenty-five years later, 81 percent were from southern and eastern Europe. Slavic, Jewish, and Mediterranean peoples became important elements of the American population for the first time.

Blacks were of course brought to the United States involuntarily, and their destinations were chosen by others, but it was not a random choice. Blacks were concentrated in the South, whose climate and soil were suited to the kinds of crops that could be produced under the restrictive conditions of slavery. After the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, slavery in the United States became overwhelmingly cotton-producing slavery, and the geographic distribution of the black population shifted even more so toward the South, concentrating in the cotton-growing lands of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and northern Louisiana. Even after the end of slavery, the concentration of blacks in a region that was to remain poorer than the rest of the country was an enduring economic handicap. Today, that half of the black population which lives outside the South earns about 50 percent higher income than the half still located in the South. Obviously, the income of the black population as a whole is lower because of its geographic distribution, aside from all other considerations.

Some immigrants to the United States simply settled in those parts of the country closest to their places of origin—the Orientals in Hawaii and on the West Coast, Mexican Americans in the Southwest, and Cubans in Florida. The concentrations of Puerto Ricans and West Indians in and around New York City reflect the accessibility of air and shipping routes in the twentieth century.

# Understanding Race and Ethnicity





## CHAPTER OUTLINE

What Is a Subordinate Group? Types of Subordinate Groups

**LISTEN TO OUR VOICES** *Problem of the Color Line* by W. E. B. Du Bois

Does Race Matter?

Sociology and the Study of Race and Ethnicity

The Creation of Subordinate-Group Status

The Consequences of Subordinate-Group Status

Who Am I?

**RESEARCH FOCUS** Measuring Multiculturalism

Resistance and Change Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/Critical Thinking/ Internet Connections—Research Navigator™



INORITY GROUPS ARE SUBORDINATED IN TERMS OF POWER and privilege to the majority, or dominant, group. A minority is defined not by being outnumbered but by five characteristics: unequal treatment, distinguishing physical or cultural traits, involuntary membership, awareness of subordination, and in-group marriage. Subordinate groups are classified in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, and gender. The social importance of race is derived from a process of racial formation; its biological significance is uncertain. The theoretical perspectives of functionalism, conflict theory, and labeling offer insights into the sociology of intergroup relations.

Immigration, annexation, and colonialism are processes that may create subordinate groups. Other processes such as expulsion may remove the presence of a subordinate group. Significant for racial and ethnic oppression in the United States today is the distinction between assimilation and pluralism. Assimilation demands subordinate-group conformity to the dominant group, and pluralism implies mutual respect between diverse groups.

# What Is a Subordinate Group?

Identifying a subordinate group or a minority in a society seems to be a simple enough task. In the United States, the groups readily identified as minorities—Blacks and Native Americans, for example—are outnumbered by non-Blacks and non–Native Americans. However, minority status is not necessarily the result of being outnumbered. A social minority need not be a mathematical one. A **minority group** is a subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over their own lives than do the members of a dominant or majority group. In sociology, *minority* means the same as *subordinate*, and *dominant* is used interchangeably with *majority*.

Confronted with evidence that a particular minority in the United States is subordinate to the majority, some people respond, "Why not? After all, this is a democracy, so the majority rules." However, the subordination of a minority involves more than its inability to rule over society. A member of a subordinate or minority group experiences a narrowing of life's opportunities—for success, education, wealth, the pursuit of happiness—that goes beyond any personal shortcoming he or she may have. A minority group does not share in proportion to its numbers what a given society, such as the United States, defines as valuable.

Being superior in numbers does not guarantee a group control over its destiny and ensure majority status. In 1920, the majority of people in Mississippi and South Carolina were African Americans. Yet African Americans did not have as much control over their lives as Whites, let alone control of the states of Mississippi and South Carolina. Throughout the United States today are counties or neighborhoods in which the majority of people are African American, Native American, or Hispanic, but White Americans are the dominant force. Nationally, 50.8 percent of the population is female, but males still dominate positions of authority and wealth well beyond their numbers.

A minority or subordinate group has five characteristics: unequal treatment, distinguishing physical or cultural traits, involuntary membership, awareness of subordination, and in-group marriage (Wagley and Harris 1958):

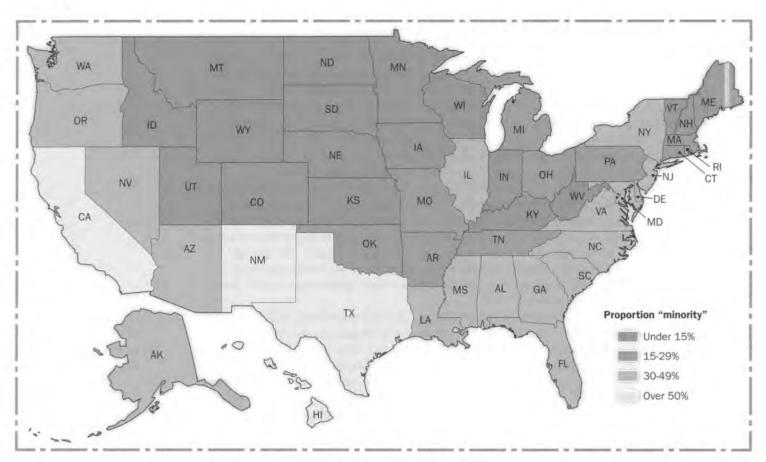
- Members of a minority experience unequal treatment and have less power over their lives than members of a dominant group have over theirs. Prejudice, discrimination, segregation, and even extermination create this social inequality.
- Members of a minority group share physical or cultural characteristics that distinguish them from the dominant group, such as skin color or language. Each society has its own arbitrary standard for determining which characteristics are most important in defining dominant and minority groups.
- Membership in a dominant or minority group is not voluntary: People are born into the group. A person does not choose to be African American or White.
- 4. Minority-group members have a strong sense of group solidarity. William Graham Sumner, writing in 1906, noted that people make distinctions between members of their own group (the in-group) and everyone else (the out-group). When a group is the object of long-term prejudice and discrimination, the feeling of "us versus them" often becomes intense.
- 5. Members of a minority generally marry others from the same group. A member of a dominant group often is unwilling to join a supposedly inferior minority by marrying one of its members. In addition, the minority group's sense of solidarity encourages marriage within the group and discourages marriage to outsiders.

Although "minority" is not about numbers, there is no denying that the majority is diminishing in size relative to the growing diversity of racial and ethnic groups. In Figure 1.2 we see that more and more states have close to a majority of non-Whites or Latinos and that several states have already reached that point today.

#### minority group

A subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over their own lives than do the members of a dominant or majority group.





#### FIGURE 1.2 Race and Ethnic Presence by State (Projected)

According to projections by the Census Bureau, the proportion of residents of the United States who are White and non-Hispanic will decrease significantly by the year 2050. By contrast, there will be a striking rise in the proportion of both Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans. *Source:* 2004 data released in 2005 by Bureau of the Census 2005b.

# Types of Subordinate Groups

There are four types of minority or subordinate groups. All four, except where noted, have the five properties previously outlined. The four criteria for classifying minority groups are race, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

#### Racial Groups

The term **racial group** is reserved for minorities and the corresponding majorities that are socially set apart because of obvious physical differences. Notice the two crucial words in the definition: *obvious* and *physical*. What is obvious? Hair color? Shape of an earlobe? Presence of body hair? To whom are these differences obvious, and why? Each society defines what it finds obvious.

In the United States, skin color is one obvious difference. On a cold winter day when one has clothing covering all but one's head, however, skin color may be less obvious than hair color. Yet people in the United States have learned informally that skin color is important and hair color is unimportant. We need to say more than that. In the United States, people have traditionally classified and classify themselves as either Black or White. There is no in-between state except for people readily identified as

#### racial group

A group that is socially set apart because of obvious physical differences. Native Americans or Asian Americans. Later in this chapter we will explore this issue more deeply and see how such assumptions have very complex implications.

Other societies use skin color as a standard but may have a more elaborate system of classification. In Brazil, where hostility between races is less than in the United States, numerous categories identify people on the basis of skin color. In the United States, a person is Black or White. In Brazil, a variety of terms, such as *cafuso, mazombo, preto*, and *escuro*, are applied to describe various combinations of skin color, facial features, and hair texture. In Chapter 16, we will be exploring how the people of Brazil consider racial issues there. What makes differences obvious is subject to a society's definition.

The designation of a racial group emphasizes physical differences as opposed to cultural distinctions. In the United States, minority races include Blacks, Native Americans (or American Indians), Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Arab Americans, Filipinos, Hawaiians, and other Asian peoples. The issue of race and racial differences has been an important one, not only in the United States but also throughout the entire sphere of European influence. Later in this chapter we will examine race and its significance more closely. We should not forget that Whites are a race, too. As we will consider in Chapter 5, who is White has been subject to change over time as certain European groups were felt historically not to deserve being considered White, but over time, partly to compete against a growing Black population, the "Whiting" of some European Americans has occurred.

Some racial groups may also have unique cultural traditions, as we can readily see in the many Chinatowns throughout the United States. For racial groups, however, the physical distinctiveness and not the cultural differences generally proves to be the barrier to acceptance by the host society. For example, Chinese Americans who are faithful Protestants and know the names of all the members of the Baseball Hall of Fame may be bearers of American culture. Yet these Chinese Americans are still part of a minority because they are seen as physically different.

#### Ethnic Groups

Ethnic minority groups are differentiated from the dominant group on the basis of cultural differences, such as language, attitudes toward marriage and parenting, and food habits. **Ethnic groups** are groups set apart from others because of their national origin or distinctive cultural patterns.

Ethnic groups in the United States include a grouping that we call Hispanics or Latinos, which includes Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other Latin Americans in the United States. Hispanics can be either Black or White, as in the case of a dark-skinned Puerto Rican who may be taken as Black in central Texas but be viewed as a Puerto Rican in New York City. The ethnic group category also includes White ethnics, such as Irish Americans, Polish Americans, and Norwegian Americans.

The cultural traits that make groups distinctive usually originate from their homelands or, for Jews, from a long history of being segregated and prohibited from becoming a part of the host society. Once in the United States, an immigrant group may maintain distinctive cultural practices through associations, clubs, and worship. Ethnic enclaves such as a Little Haiti or a Greektown in urban areas also perpetuate cultural distinctiveness.

Ethnicity continues to be important, as recent events in Bosnia and other parts of Eastern Europe have demonstrated. Almost a century ago, African American sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois, addressing in 1900 an audience at a world antislavery convention in London, called attention to the overwhelming importance of the color line throughout the world. In "Listen to Our Voices," we read the remarks of Du Bois, the first Black person to receive a doctorate from Harvard, who later helped to organize

#### ethnic group

A group set apart from others because of its national origin or distinctive cultural patterns.

# Voices Listen to Our Voices Listen to

## PROBLEM OF THE COLOR LINE

In the metropolis of the modern world, in this the closing year of the nineteenth century, there has been assembled a congress of men and women of African blood, to deliberate solemnly upon the present situation and outlook of the darker races of mankind. The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the



giving Negroes and other dark men the largest and broadest opportunity for education and self-development, then this contact and influence is bound to have a beneficial effect upon the world and hasten human progress. But if, by reason of carelessness, prejudice, greed and injustice, the black world is

of culture bends itself towards

W. E. B. Du Bois

color line, the question as to how far differences of race—which show themselves chiefly in the color of the skin and the texture of the hair—will hereafter be made the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization....

To be sure, the darker races are today the least advanced in culture according to European standards. This has not, however, always been the case in the past, and certainly the world's history, both ancient and modern, has given many instances of no despicable ability and capacity among the blackest races of men.

In any case, the modern world must remember that in this age when the ends of the world are being brought so near together, the millions of black men in Africa, America, and Islands of the Sea, not to speak of the brown and yellow myriads elsewhere, are bound to have a great influence upon the world in the future, by reason of sheer numbers and physical contact. If now the world to be exploited and ravished and degraded, the results must be deplorable, if not fatal not simply to them, but to the high ideals of justice, freedom and culture which a thousand years of Christian civilization have held before Europe....

Let the world take no backward step in that slow but sure progress which has successively refused to let the spirit of class, of caste, of privilege, or of birth, debar from life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness a striving human soul.

Let not color or race be a feature of distinction between white and black men, regardless of worth or ability....

Thus we appeal with boldness and confidence to the Great Powers of the civilized world, trusting in the wide spirit of humanity, and the deep sense of justice of our age, for a generous recognition of the righteousness of our cause.

Source: Du Bois 1900 [1969a]. From pp. 20–21, 23, in An ABC of Color, by W. E. B. Du Bois. Copyright 1969 by International Publishers.

the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Du Bois's observances give us a historic perspective on the struggle for equality. We can look ahead, knowing how far we have come and speculating on how much further we have to go.

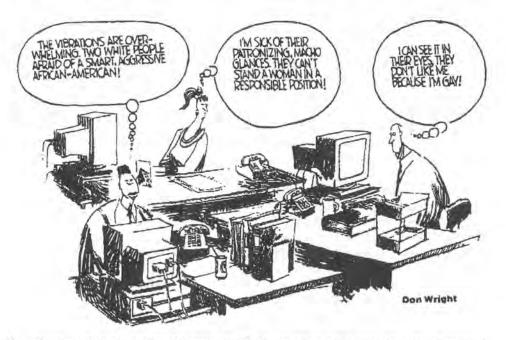
#### **Religious Groups**

Association with a religion other than the dominant faith is the third basis for minoritygroup status. In the United States, Protestants, as a group, outnumber members of all other religions. Roman Catholics form the largest minority religion. Chapter 5 focuses on the increasing Judeo-Christian-Islamic diversity of the United States. For people who are not a part of the Christian tradition, such as followers of Islam, allegiance to the faith often is misunderstood and stigmatizes people. This stigmatization became especially widespread and legitimated by government action in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Religious minorities include such groups as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons), Jehovah's Witnesses, Amish, Muslims, and Buddhists. Cults or sects associated with such practices as animal sacrifice, doomsday prophecy, demon worship, or the use of snakes in a ritualistic fashion would also constitute minorities. Jews are excluded from this category and placed among ethnic groups. Culture is a more important defining trait for Jewish people worldwide than is religious dogma. Jewish Americans share a cultural tradition that goes beyond theology. In this sense, it is appropriate to view them as an ethnic group rather than as members of a religious faith.

#### Gender Groups

Gender is another attribute that creates dominant and subordinate groups. Males are the social majority; females, although more numerous, are relegated to the position of the social minority, a subordinate status to be explored in detail in Chapter 15. Women are considered a minority even though they do not exhibit all the characteristics outlined earlier (e.g., there is little in-group marriage). Women encounter prejudice and discrimination and are physically distinguishable. Group membership is involuntary, and many women have developed a sense of sisterhood. Women who are members of racial and ethnic minorities face a special challenge to achieving equality. They suffer from greater inequality because they belong to two separate minority groups: a racial or ethnic group plus a subordinate gender group.



Given the diversity in the nation, the workplace is increasingly a place where intergroup tensions may develop.

Source: @ Tribune Media Services, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

#### Migration

People who emigrate to a new country often find themselves a minority in that new country. Cultural or physical traits or religious affiliation may set the immigrant apart from the dominant group. Immigration from Europe, Asia, and Latin America has been a powerful force in shaping the fabric of life in the United States. **Migration** is the general term used to describe any transfer of population. **Emigration** (by emigrants) describes leaving a country to settle in another; **immigration** (by immigrants) denotes coming into the new country. From Vietnam's perspective, the "boat people" were emigrants from Vietnam to the United States, but in the United States they were counted among this nation's immigrants.

Although people may migrate because they want to, leaving the home country is not always voluntary. Conflict or war has displaced people throughout human history. In the twentieth century, we saw huge population movements caused by two world wars; revolutions in Spain, Hungary, and Cuba; the partition of British India; conflicts in Southeast Asia, Korea, and Central America; and the confrontation between Arabs and Israelis.

In all types of movement, even the movement of a U.S. family from Ohio to Florida, two sets of forces operate: push factors and pull factors. Push factors discourage a person from remaining where he or she lives. Religious persecution and economic factors such as dissatisfaction with employment opportunities are possible push factors. Pull factors, such as a better standard of living, friends and relatives who have already emigrated, and a promised job, attract an immigrant to a particular country.

Although generally we think of migration as a voluntary process, much of the population transfer that has occurred in the world has been involuntary. The forced movement of people into another society guarantees a subordinate role. Involuntary migration is no longer common; although enslavement has a long history, all industrialized societies today prohibit such practices. Of course, many contemporary societies, including the United States, bear the legacy of slavery.

Migration has taken on new significance in the twenty-first century partly due to **globalization**. Globalization refers to the worldwide integration of government policies, cultures, social movements, and financial markets through trade and the exchange of ideas. The increased movement of people and money across borders has made the distinction between temporary and permanent migration less meaningful. Although migration has always been fluid, in today's global economy, people are connected across societies culturally and economically like they have never been before. Even after they have relocated, people maintain global linkages to their former country and with a global economy (Richmond 2002).

#### any transfer of population.

#### emigration

migration

Leaving a country to settle in another.

A general term that describes

#### immigration

Coming into a new country as a permanent resident.

#### globalization

Worldwide integration of government policies, cultures, social movements, and financial markets through trade, movements of people, and the exchange of ideas.

#### Annexation

Nations, particularly during wars or as a result of war, incorporate or attach land. This new land is contiguous to the nation, as in the German annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938 and 1939 and in the U.S. Louisiana Purchase of 1803. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ended the Mexican-American War in 1848 gave the United States California, Utah, Nevada, most of New Mexico, and parts of Arizona, Wyoming, and Colorado. The indigenous peoples in some of this huge territory were dominant in their society one day, only to become minority-group members the next.

When annexation occurs, the dominant power generally suppresses the language and culture of the minority. Such was the practice of Russia with the Ukrainians and Poles and of Prussia with the Poles. Minorities try to maintain their cultural integrity despite annexation. Poles inhabited an area divided into territories ruled by three countries but maintained their own culture across political boundaries.

# Who Am I?

When Tiger Woods first appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, he was asked whether it bothered him, the only child of a Black American father and a Thai mother, to be called an African American. He replied, "It does. Growing up, I came up with this name: I'm a Cabalinasian" (White 1997, 34). This is a self-crafted acronym to reflect that Tiger Woods is one-eighth Caucasian, one-fourth Black, one-eighth American Indian, one-fourth Thai, and one-fourth Chinese. Soon after he achieved professional stardom, another golfer was strongly criticized for making racist remarks based on seeing Woods only as African American. If Tiger Woods was not so famous, would most people, upon meeting him, see him as anything but an African American? Probably not. Tiger Woods's problem is really the challenge to a diverse society that continues to try to place people in a few socially constructed racial and ethnic boxes.

The diversity of the United States today has made it more difficult for many people to place themselves on the racial and ethnic landscape. It reminds us that racial formation continues to take place. Obviously, the racial and ethnic landscape, as we have seen, is constructed not naturally but socially and, therefore, is subject to change and different interpretations. Although our focus is on the United States, almost every nation faces the same problems.

The United States tracks people by race and ethnicity for myriad reasons, ranging from attempting to improve the status of oppressed groups to diversifying classrooms. But how can we measure the growing number of people whose ancestry is mixed by anyone's definition? In "Research Focus" we consider how the U.S. Census Bureau dealt with this issue.

Within little more than a generation, we have witnessed changes in labeling subordinate groups from Negroes to Blacks to African Americans, from American Indians to Native Americans or Native Peoples. However, more Native Americans prefer the use of their tribal name, such as *Seminole*, instead of a collective label. The old 1950s statistical term of "people with a Spanish surname" has long been discarded, yet there is disagreement over a new term: *Latino* or *Hispanic*. Like Native Americans, Hispanic Americans avoid such global terms and prefer their native names, such as *Puerto Ricans* or *Cubans*. People of Mexican ancestry indicate preferences for a variety of names, such as *Mexican American*, *Chicano*, or simply *Mexican*.



Celebrities such as Mariah Carey are unable to protect their privacy. Much has been made about her racial and ethnic identity. She told *Ebony* magazine that she is very aware of her African American heritage, "and I think sometimes it bothers people that I don't say, 'I'm black' and that's it . . . So when people ask, I say I'm, black, Venezuelan, and Irish, because that's who I am" (Carberry 2005, 5).

# Focus Research Focus Research Foc

## MEASURING MULTICULTURALISM

pproaching Census 2000, a movement was spawned by people who were frustrated by government questionnaires that forced them to indicate only one race. Take the case of Stacey Davis in New Orleans. The young woman's mother is Thai and her father is Creole, a blend of Black, French, and German. People seeing Stacey confuse her for a Latina, Filipina, or Hawaiian. Officially, she has been "White" all her life because she looked White. Congress was lobbied by groups such as Project RACE (Reclassify All Children Equally) for a category "biracial" or "multiracial" that one could select on census forms instead of a specific race. Race is only one of six questions asked of every person in the United States on census day every ten years. After various trial runs with different wordings on the race question, Census 2000 for the first time gave people the option to check off one or more racial groups. "Biracial" or "multiracial" was not an option because pretests showed very few people would use it. This meant that the government recognized in Census 2000 different social constructions of racial identity-that is, a person could be Asian American and White. Most people did select one racial category in Census 2000. Overall, about 7 million people, or 2.4 percent of the total population, selected two or more racial groups. This was a smaller proportion than many had anticipated. In fact, not even the majority of mixed-race couples identified their children with more than one racial classification. As shown in Figure 1.8, White and American Indian was the most common multiple identity, with about a million people selecting that response. As a group, American Indians were most likely to select a second category and Whites least likely. Race is socially defined.

Complicating the situation is that people are asked separately whether they are Hispanic or non-Hispanic. So a Hispanic person can be any race. In the 2000 Census 94 percent indicated they were one race but 6 percent indicated two or more races; this proportion was three times higher than among non-Hispanics. Therefore, Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanics to indicate a multiracial ancestry.

The Census Bureau's decision does not necessarily resolve the frustration of hun-

In the United States and other multiracial, multiethnic societies, panethnicity has emerged. **Panethnicity** is the development of solidarity between ethnic subgroups. The coalition of tribal groups as Native Americans or American Indians to confront outside forces, notably the federal government, is one example of panethnicity. Hispanics or Latinos and Asian Americans are other examples of panethnicity. Although it is rarely recognized by dominant society, the very term *Black* or *African American* represents the descendants of many different ethnic or tribal groups, such as Akamba, Fulani, Hausa, Malinke, and Yoruba (Lopez and Espiritu 1990).

Is panethnicity a convenient label for "outsiders" or a term that reflects a mutual identity? Certainly, many people outside the group are unable or unwilling to recognize ethnic differences and prefer umbrella terms such as *Asian Americans*. For some small groups, combining with others is emerging as a useful way to make themselves heard, but there is always a fear that their own distinctive culture will become submerged. Although many Hispanics share the Spanish language and many are united by Roman Catholicism, only one in four native-born people of Mexican, Puerto Rican,

#### panethnicity

The development of solidarity between ethnic subgroups, as reflected in the terms Hispanic or Asian American.

# Research Focus Research Focus Research

and Alaska Native"	15.9	
"White and Asian"	12.7	
"White and Black or African American"	11.5	
"Black or African American And American Indian and Alaska Native" All other combinations Of two races	2.7	50.5
Three or more races	6.7	
1.8 Multiple Race Choices		

Source: Grieco and Cassidy 2001.

dreds of thousands of people such as Stacey Davis who face on a daily basis people trying to place them in some racial or ethnic category convenient for them. However, it does underscore the complexity of social construction and trying to apply arbitrary definitions to the diversity of the human population.

Source: El Nasser 1997; Grieco and Cassidy 2001; Jones and Smith 2001; Tafoya, Johnson, and Hill 2004; K. Williams 2005.

or Cuban descent prefers a panethnic label to nationality or ethnic identity. Yet the growth of a variety of panethnic associations among many groups, including Hispanics, continued through the 1990s (de la Garza et al. 1992; Espiritu 1992).

Add to this cultural mix the many peoples with clear social identities who are not yet generally recognized in the United States. Arabs are a rapidly growing segment whose identity is heavily subject to stereotypes or, at best, is still ambiguous. Haitians and Jamaicans affirm that they are Black but rarely accept the identity of African American. Brazilians, who speak Portuguese, often object to being called Hispanic because of that term's association with Spain. Similarly, there are White Hispanics and non–White Hispanics, some of the latter being Black and others Asian (Bennett 1993; Omi and Winant 1994, 162).

Another challenge to identity is **marginality**, the status of being between two cultures, as in the case of a person whose mother is a Jew and whose father is a Christian. Du Bois (1903) spoke eloquently of the "double consciousness" that Black Americans feel—caught between the concept of being a citizen of the United States but viewed as

#### marginality

The status of being between two cultures at the same time, such as the status of Jewish immigrants in the United States. something quite apart from the dominant social forces of society. Incomplete assimilation by immigrants also results in marginality. Although a Filipino woman migrating to the United States may take on the characteristics of her new host society, she may not be fully accepted and may, therefore, feel neither Filipino nor American. The marginalized person finds himself or herself being perceived differently in different environments, with varying expectations (Billson 1988; Park 1928; Stonequist 1937).

As we seek to understand diversity in the United States, we must be mindful that ethnic and racial labels are just that: labels that have been socially constructed. Yet these social constructs can have a powerful impact, whether self-applied or applied by others.

# Resistance and Change

By virtue of wielding power and influence, the dominant group may define the terms by which all members of society operate. This is particularly evident in a slave society, but even in contemporary industrialized nations, the dominant group has a disproportionate role in shaping immigration policy, the curriculum of the schools, and the content of the media.

Subordinate groups do not merely accept the definitions and ideology proposed by the dominant group. A continuing theme in dominant–subordinate relations is the minority group's challenge to its subordination. We will see throughout this book the resistance of subordinate groups as they seek to promote change that will bring them more rights and privileges, if not true equality (Moulder 1996).

Resistance can be seen in efforts by racial and ethnic groups to maintain their identity through newspapers, organizations, and in today's technological age, cable television stations and Internet sites. Resistance manifests itself in social movements such as the civil rights movement, the feminist movement, and gay rights efforts. The passage of such legislation as the Age Discrimination Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act marks the success of oppressed groups in lobbying on their own behalf.

Resistance efforts may begin through small actions. For example, residents of a reservation question a second toxic waste dump being located on their land. Although it may bring in money, they question the wisdom of such a move. Their concerns lead to further investigations of the extent to which American Indian lands are used disproportionately to house dangerous materials. This action in turn leads to a broader investigation of the way in which minority-group people often find themselves "host-ing" dumps and incinerators. As we will discuss later, these local efforts eventually led the Environmental Protection Agency to monitor the disproportionate placement of toxic facilities in or near racial and ethnic minority communities. There is little reason to expect that such reforms would have occurred if we had relied on traditional decision-making processes alone.

Change has occurred. At the beginning of the twentieth century lynching was practiced in many parts of the country. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, laws punishing hate crimes were increasingly common and embraced a variety of stigmatized groups. Although this social progress should not be ignored, the nation needs to focus concern ahead on the significant social inequalities that remain (Best 2001).

An even more basic form of resistance is to question societal values. In this book, we avoid using the term *American* to describe people of the United States because geographically Brazilians, Canadians, and El Salvadorans are Americans as well. It is very easy to overlook how our understanding of today has been shaped by the way institutions and even the very telling of history have been presented by members of the dominant group. African American studies scholar Molefi Kete Asante (2000) has called

for an **Afrocentric perspective** that emphasizes the customs of African cultures and how they have pervaded the history, culture, and behavior of Blacks in the United States and around the world. Afrocentrism counters Eurocentrism and works toward a multiculturalist or pluralist orientation in which no viewpoint is suppressed. The Afrocentric approach could become part of our school curriculum, which has not adequately acknowledged the importance of this heritage.

The Afrocentric perspective has attracted much attention in colleges. Opponents view it as a separatist view of history and culture that distorts both past and present. Its supporters counter that African peoples everywhere can come to full self-determination only when they are able to overthrow White or Eurocentric intellectual interpretations (Early 1994).

In considering the inequalities present today, as we will in the chapters that follow, it is easy to forget how much change has taken place. Much of the resistance to prejudice and discrimination in the past, whether to slavery or to women's prohibition from voting, took the active support of members of the dominant group. The indignities still experienced by subordinate groups continue to be resisted as subordinate groups and their allies among the dominant group seek further change.

#### afrocentric perspective

An emphasis on the customs of African cultures and how they have pervaded the history, culture, and behavior of Blacks in the United States and around the world.

# Conclusion

ne hundred years ago, sociologist and activist W. E. B. Du Bois took another famed Black activist, Booker T. Washington, to task for saying that the races could best work together apart, like fingers on a hand. Du Bois felt that Black people had to be a part of all social institutions and not create their own. Today among African Americans, Whites, and other groups, the debate persists as to what form society should take. Should we seek to bring everyone together into an integrated whole? Or do we strive to maintain as much of our group identities as possible while working cooperatively as necessary?

In this first chapter, we have attempted to organize our approach to subordinate-dominant relations in the United States. We observed that subordinate groups do not necessarily contain fewer members than the dominant group. Subordinate groups are classified into racial, ethnic, religious, and gender groups. Racial classification has been of interest, but scientific findings do not explain contemporary race relations. Biological differences of race are not supported by scientific data. Yet as the continuing debate over standardized tests demonstrates, attempts to establish a biological meaning of race have not been swept entirely into the dustbin of history. However, the social meaning given to physical differences is very significant. People have defined racial differences in such a way as to encourage or discourage the progress of certain groups.

The oppression of selected racial and ethnic groups may serve some people's vested interests. However, denying opportunities or privileges to an entire group only leads to conflict between dominant and subordinate groups. Societies such as the United States develop ideologies to justify privileges given to some and opportunities denied to others. These ideologies may be subtle, such as assimilation (i.e., "You should be like us"), or overt, such as racist thought and behavior.

Subordinate groups generally emerge in one of three ways: migration, annexation, or colonialism. Once a group is given subordinate status, it does not necessarily keep it indefinitely. Extermination, expulsion, secession, segregation, fusion, and assimilation remove the status of subordination, although inequality still persists.

Subordinate-group members' reactions include the seeking of an alternative avenue to acceptance and success: "Why should we forsake what we are to be accepted by them?" In response to this question, there has been a resurgence of ethnic identification. Pluralism describes a society in which several different groups coexist, with no dominant or subordinate groups. The hope for such a society remains unfulfilled, except perhaps for isolated exceptions.

Race and ethnicity remains the single most consistent social indicator of where we live, whom we date, what media we watch, where we worship, and even how we vote (Younge 2004).



# Week 3:

# **SCHAEFER**: Immigration and the United States



# Immigration and the United States

# CHAPTER OUTLINE

mmigration: A Global Phenomenon Patterns of Immigration to the United

Today's Foreign-Born Population Early Immigration Restrictionist Sentiment Increases Contemporary Social Concerns Illegal Immigration

The Wall That Keeps Illegal Workers In by Douglas S. Massey

The Economic Impact of Immig RESEARCH FOCUS How Well Are Immigrants Doing?

Women and Immigration The Global Economy and Immigration Refugees

Conclusion Key Terms/Review Questions/ Critical Thinking/Internet Connections-Research Navigator™



HE DIVERSITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IS UNMISTAKABLE evidence of the variety of places from which immigrants have come. Yet each succeeding generation of immigrants found itself being reluctantly accepted, at best, by the descendants of earlier arrivals. The Chinese were the first immigrant group to be singled out for restriction with the passage of the 1882 Exclusion Act. The initial Chinese immigrants became scapegoats for America's sagging economy in the last half of the nineteenth century. Growing fears that too many non-American types were immigrating motivated the creation of the national origin system and the quota acts of the 1920s. These acts gave preference to certain nationalities until the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act in 1965 ended that practice. Many immigrants are transnationals who still maintain close ties to their country of origin, sending money back, keeping current with political

events, and making frequent return trips. Concern about both illegal and legal immigration has continued through today with increased attention in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Restrictionist sentiment has grown, and debates rage over whether immigrants, even legal ones, should receive services such as education, governmentsubsidized health care, and welfare. Controversy also continues to surround the policy of the United States toward refugees. wo very different experiences of coming of age in the United States point to the different lives of immigrants in the United States.

Growing up in Pennington, New Jersey, Pareha Ahmed watched Hollywood videos and enthusiastically attended with her parents the annual Pakistan Independence Day Parade in New York City. By middle school, however, such outward expressions of her Pakistani heritage had become uncool. She tried to fit in by dying her hair blonde, wearing hazel contact lenses, and even avoiding homecooked foods that might give her a distinctive odor. In college she began to embrace her heritage and the diversity of cultures of her fellow students. Now at age 23 she gets excited about not only celebrating her Pakistani heritage's special days but also those of her non-Asian friends, such as the Islamic holiday Id-al-Fitr and Christmas occasions never celebrated in her family's home.

The armed immigration agents arrived at the Petit Jean Poultry Plant in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, just before the 7:30 A.M. early morning shift break for breakfast. Half the shift, 119 workers, was taken away in plastic handcuffs to a detention center where all but six were sent back to Mexico. In the weeks following, the 10,000 residents of Arkadelphia were upset that their community had been disrupted. People they had known as classmates at the local community college, neighbors, customers, fellow churchgoers, and clients had disappeared. Although the people of this Arkansas town usually embrace law enforcement, they did not like what had happened. Some even went so far as to reach the deported workers in Mexico and try to arrange to bring them back to town by crossing the border illegally again (Chu and Mustafa 2006; Hennessy-Fiske 2006).

These dramas being played out in New Jersey and Arkansas illustrate the themes in immigration today. Immigrant labor is needed but concerns over illegal immigration persist and, even for those who arrive legally, the transition can be difficult. For the next generation it gets a little easier and, for some, perhaps too easy as they begin to forget their family's heritage. Many come legally, applying for immigrant visas, but others enter illegally. In the United States we may not like lawbreakers, but often we seek services and low-priced products made by people who come here illegally. How do we control this immigration without violating the principle of free movement within the nation? How do we decide who enters? And how do we treat those who come here either legally or illegally?

The diversity of ethnic and racial backgrounds of Americans today is the living legacy of immigration. Except for descendants of Native Americans or of Africans brought here enslaved, today's population is entirely the product of people who chose to leave familiar places to come to a new country.

The social forces that cause people to emigrate are complex. The most important have been economic: financial failure in the old country and expectations of higher incomes and standards of living in the new land. Other factors include dislike of new regimes in their native lands, racial or religious bigotry, and a desire to reunite families. All these factors push people from their homelands and pull them to other nations such as the United States. Immigration into the United States, in particular, has been facilitated by cheap ocean transportation and by other countries' removal of restrictions on emigration.



# **Immigration: A Global Phenomenon**

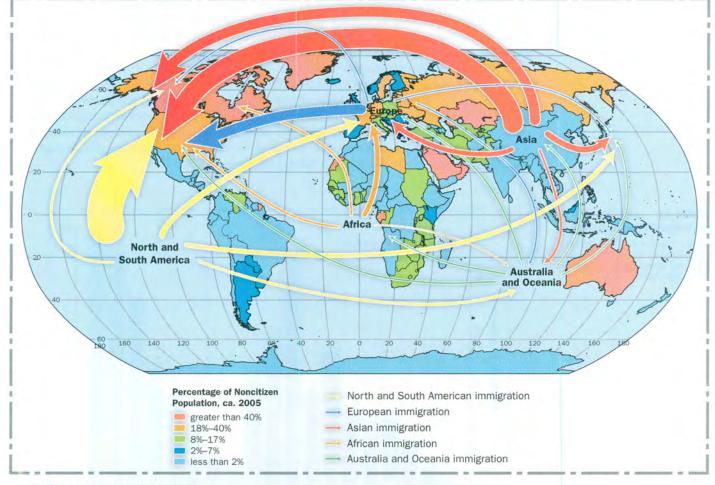
Immigration, as we noted in Chapter 1, is a worldwide phenomenon and contributes to globalization as more and more people see the world as their "home" rather than one specific country. As shown in Figure 4.1, people move across national borders throughout the world. Generally immigration is from countries with lower standards of living to those that offer better wages. However, wars and famine may precipitate hundreds of thousands of people moving into neighboring countries and sometimes resettling permanently.

Scholars of immigration often point to *push* and *pull* factors. For example, economic difficulties, religious or ethnic persecution, and political unrest may push individuals from their homelands. Immigration to a particular nation, the pull factors, may be a result of perceptions of a better life ahead or to join a community of their fellow nationals already established abroad.

A potent factor contributing to immigration anywhere in the world is **chain immigration**. Chain immigration refers to an immigrant who sponsors several other immigrants who, upon their arrival, may sponsor still more. Laws that favor people desiring to enter a

#### chain immigration

Immigrants sponsor several other immigrants who upon their arrival may sponsor still more.



#### FIGURE 4.1 International Migration

Source: Fernandez-Armesto 2007, 1006. Maps designed and produced by DK Education, a division of Dorling Kindersley Limited, 80 Strand London WC2R ORL. DK and the DK logo are registered trademarks of Dorling Kindersley Limited.



given country who already have relatives there or someone who can vouch for them financially may facilitate this sponsorship. But probably the most important aspect of chain immigration is that immigrants anticipate knowing someone who can help them adjust to their new surroundings and find a new job, place to live, and even where to find the kind of foods that are familiar to them. Later in this chapter we will revisit the social impact that immigration has worldwide.

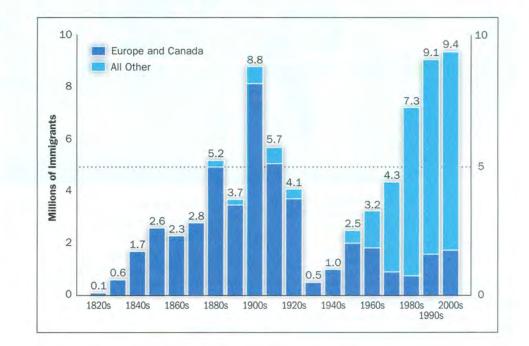
# Patterns of Immigration to the United States

There have been three unmistakable patterns of immigration to the United States: The number of immigrants has fluctuated dramatically over time largely due to government policy changes, settlement has not been uniform across the country but centered in certain regions and cities, and the source of immigrants has changed over time. We will first look at the historical picture of immigrant numbers.

Vast numbers of immigrants have come to the United States. Figure 4.2 indicates the high but fluctuating number of immigrants who arrived during every decade from the 1820s through the 1990s. The United States received the largest number of legal immigrants during the 1990s, but because the country was much smaller in the period from 1900 through 1910, the numerical impact was even greater then.

The reception given to immigrants in this country has not always been friendly. Open bloodshed, restrictive laws, and the eventual return of almost one-third of immigrants and their children to their home countries attest to the uneasy feeling toward strangers who want to settle here.

Opinion polls in the United States from 2000 through 2006 have never shown more than 17 percent of the public in favor of more immigration, and usually about 40 to 50 percent want less. Even a survey of Latinos found that only 24 percent wanted immigration increased, 35 percent wanted it left as is, and a sizable 36 percent advocated having immigration levels decreased. We want the door open until we get through, and then we want to close it (Gallup 2006; J. M. Jones 2003a).



# FIGURE 4.2 Legal Migration in the United States, 1820–2010

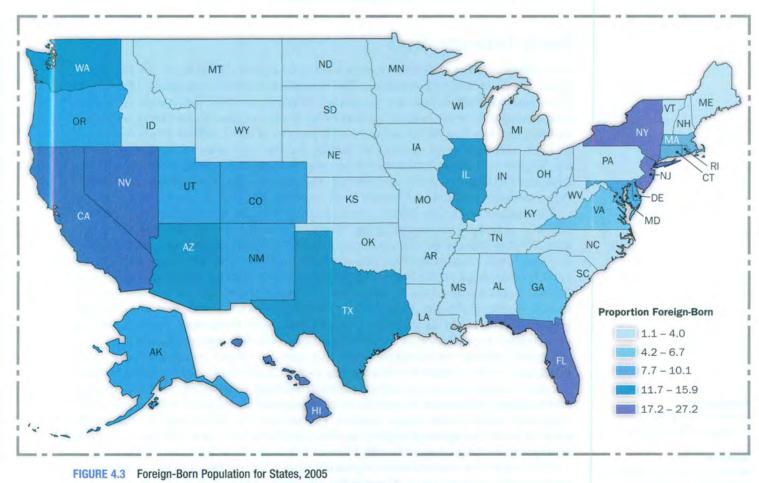
Source: Bureau of the Census 2005a:11; Immigration and Naturalization Services 2002; and estimates by the author for the period 2000-2010.

# **Today's Foreign-Born Population**

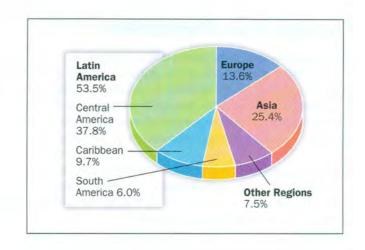
Before considering the sweep of past immigration policies, let's consider today's immigrant population. About 12 percent of the nation's people are foreign born; this proportion is between the high figure of about 15 percent in 1890 and a low of 4.7 percent in 1970. By global comparisons, the foreign-born population in the United States is large but not unusual. Whereas most industrial countries have a foreign population of around 5 percent, Canada's foreign population is 19 percent and Australia's is 25 percent.

As noted earlier, immigrants have not settled evenly across the nation. As shown in the map in Figure 4.3, the six states of California, New York, Florida, Texas, New Jersey, and Illinois account for 70 percent of the nation's total foreign-born population but less than 40 percent of the nation's total population.

Cities in these states are the focus of the foreign-born population. Almost half (43.3%) live in the central city of a metropolitan area, compared with about one-quarter (27.0%) of the nation's population. More than one-third of residents in the cities of Miami, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, and New York City are now foreign born (Bureau of Census 2005d; Gibson and Jung 2006;).



Source: Author's estimate based on Census Bureau data in the American Community Survey 2005.



The third pattern of immigration is that the source of immigrants has changed. As shown in Figure 4.4, the majority of today's 34.2 million foreign-born people are from Latin America. Primarily they are from Central America and, more specifically, Mexico. By contrast, Europeans, who dominated the early settlement of the United States, now account for less than one in seven of the foreign born today.

# **Early Immigration**

European explorers of North America were soon followed by settlers, the first immigrants to the Western Hemisphere. The Spanish founded St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565, and the English founded Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. Protestants from England emerged from the colonial period as the dominant force numerically, politically, and socially. The English accounted for 60 percent of the 3 million White Americans in 1790. Although exact statistics are lacking for the early years of the United States, the English were soon outnumbered by other nationalities, as the numbers of Scots-Irish and Germans, in particular, swelled. However, the English colonists maintained their dominant position, as Chapter 5 will examine.

Throughout American history, immigration policy has been politically controversial. The policies of the English king, George III, were criticized in the U.S. Declaration of Independence for obstructing immigration to the colonies. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the American republic itself was criticized for enacting immigration restrictions. In the beginning, however, the country encouraged immigration. At first, legislation fixed the residence requirement for naturalization at five years, although briefly, under the Alien Act of 1798, it was fourteen years, and so-called dangerous people could be expelled. Despite this brief harshness, immigration was unregulated through most of the 1800s, and naturalization was easily available.

Besides holding the mistaken belief that concerns about immigration are something new, we also assume that immigrants to the United States rarely reconsider their decision to come to a new country. Analysis of available records beginning in the early 1900s suggests that about 35 percent of all immigrants to the United States eventually emigrated back to their home country. The proportion varies, with the figures for some countries being much higher, but the overall pattern is clear: About one in three immigrants to this nation eventually chooses to return home (Wyman 1993).

The relative absence of federal legislation from 1790 to 1881 does not mean that all new arrivals were welcomed. **Xenophobia** (the fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners) led naturally to **nativism** (beliefs and policies favoring native-born citizens over

#### FIGURE 4.4 Foreign Born by World Regions of Birth

Source: Data for 2004 reported in 2005 in Bureau of the Census 2005d.

#### xenophobia

The fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners.

#### nativism

Beliefs and policies favoring native-born citizens over immigrants. immigrants). Roman Catholics in general and the Irish in particular were among the first Europeans to be ill-treated. We will look at how organized hostility toward Irish immigrants eventually gave way to their acceptance into the larger society in our next chapter.

However, the most dramatic outbreak of nativism in the nineteenth century was aimed at the Chinese. If there had been any doubt by the mid-1800s that the United States could harmoniously accommodate all and was indeed some sort of melting pot, debate on the Chinese Exclusion Act would negatively settle the question once and for all.

#### The Anti-Chinese Movement

Before 1851, official records show that only forty-six Chinese had immigrated to the United States. Over the next thirty years, more than 200,000 came to this country, lured by the discovery of gold and the opening of job opportunities in the West. Overcrowding, drought, and warfare in China also encouraged them to take a chance in the United States. Another important factor was improved oceanic transportation; it was actually cheaper to travel from Hong Kong to San Francisco than from Chicago to San Francisco. The frontier communities of the West, particularly in California, looked on the Chinese as a valuable resource to fill manual jobs. As early as 1854, so many Chinese wanted to emigrate that ships had difficulty handling the volume.

In the 1860s, railroad work provided the greatest demand for Chinese labor, until the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads were joined at Promontory, Utah, in 1869. The Union Pacific relied primarily on Irish laborers, but 90 percent of the Central Pacific labor force was Chinese because Whites generally refused to do the backbreaking work over the western terrain. Despite the contribution of the Chinese, White workers physically prevented them from attending the driving of the golden spike to mark the joining of the two railroads.

With the dangerous railroad work largely completed, people began to rethink the wisdom of encouraging Chinese to immigrate to do the work no one else would do. Reflecting their xenophobia, White settlers found the Chinese immigrants and their customs and religion difficult to understand. Indeed, few people actually tried to understand these immigrants from Asia. Although they had had no firsthand contact with Chinese Americans, Easterners and legislators were soon on the anti-Chinese bandwagon as they read sensationalized accounts of the lifestyle of the new arrivals.

Even before the Chinese immigrated, stereotypes of them and their customs were prevalent. American traders returning from China, European diplomats, and Protestant missionaries consistently emphasized the exotic and sinister aspects of life in China. The **sinophobes**, people with a fear of anything associated with China, appealed to the racist theory developed during the slavery controversy that non-Europeans were subhuman. Similarly, Americans were beginning to be more conscious of biological inheritance and disease, so it was not hard to conjure up fears of alien genes and germs. The only real challenge the anti-Chinese movement had was to convince people that the negative consequences of unrestricted Chinese immigration outweighed any possible economic gain. Perhaps briefly, racial prejudice had earlier been subordinated to industrial dependence on Chinese labor for the work that Whites shunned, but acceptance of the Chinese was short-lived. The fear of the "yellow peril" overwhelmed any desire to know more about Asian people and their customs (Takaki 1989).

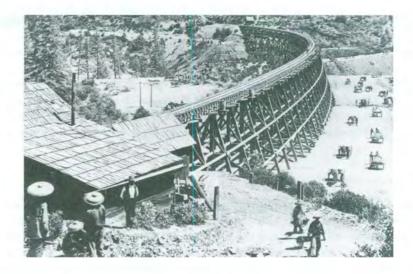
Another nativist fear of Chinese immigrants was based on the threat they posed as laborers. Californians, whose labor force felt the effects of the Chinese immigration first, found support throughout the nation as organized labor feared that the Chinese would be used as strikebreakers. By 1870, Chinese workers had been used for that



How did economic issues influence the move against Chinese immigration to the U.S.?

```
sinophobes
People with a fear of any-
thing associated with China.
```





purpose as far east as Massachusetts. When Chinese workers did unionize, they were not recognized by major labor organizations. Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), consistently opposed any effort to assist Chinese workers and refused to consider having a union of Chinese restaurant employees admitted into the AFL. Gompers worked effectively to see future Chinese immigration ended and produced a pamphlet titled "Chinese Exclusion: Meat vs. Rice: American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism—Which Shall Survive?" (Gompers and Gustadt 1908; Hill 1967).

Employers were glad to pay the Chinese low wages, but laborers came to direct their resentment against the Chinese rather than against their compatriots' willingness to exploit the Chinese. Only a generation earlier, the same concerns had been felt about the Irish, but with the Chinese, the hostility reached new heights because of another factor.

Although many arguments were voiced, racial fears motivated the anti-Chinese movement. Race was the critical issue. The labor market fears were largely unfounded, and most advocates of restrictions at the time knew that. There was no possibility that the Chinese would immigrate in numbers that would match those of Europeans at the time, so it is difficult to find any explanation other than racism for their fears (Winant 1994).

From the sociological perspective of conflict theory, we can explain how the Chinese immigrants were welcomed only when their labor was necessary to fuel growth in the United States. When that labor was no longer necessary, the welcome mat for the immigrants was withdrawn. Furthermore, as conflict theorists would point out, restrictions were not applied evenly: Americans focused on a specific nationality (the Chinese) to reduce the overall number of foreign workers in the nation. Because decision making at that time rested in the hands of the descendants of European immigrants, the steps to be taken were most likely to be directed against the least powerful: immigrants from China who, unlike Europeans seeking entry, had few allies among legislators and other policy makers.

In 1882 Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act, which outlawed Chinese immigration for ten years. It also explicitly denied naturalization rights to the Chinese in the United States; that is, they were not allowed to become citizens. There was little debate in Congress, and discussion concentrated on how suspension of Chinese immigration could best be handled. No allowance was made for spouses and children to be reunited with their husbands and fathers in the United States. Only brief visits of Chinese government officials, teachers, tourists, and merchants were exempted.

The rest of the nineteenth century saw the remaining loopholes allowing Chinese immigration closed. Beginning in 1884, Chinese laborers were not allowed to enter

Chinese workers, such as these pictured in 1844, played a major role in building railroads in the West.





Here women immigrants are undergoing a physical examination before being permitted to enter in 1910.

the United States from any foreign place, a ban that lasted ten years. Two years later, the Statue of Liberty was dedicated, with a poem by Emma Lazarus inscribed on its base. To the Chinese, the poem welcoming the tired, the poor, and the huddled masses must have seemed a hollow mockery.

In 1892 Congress extended the Exclusion Act for another ten years and added that Chinese laborers had to obtain certificates of residence within a year or face deportation. After the turn of the century, the Exclusion Act was extended again. Two decades later, the Chinese were not alone; the list of people restricted by immigration policy had expanded many times.

# **Restrictionist Sentiment Increases**

As Congress closed the door to Chinese immigration, the debate on restricting immigration turned in new directions. Prodded by growing anti-Japanese feelings, the United States entered into the so-called Gentlemen's Agreement, completed in 1908. Japan agreed to halt further immigration to the United States, and the United States agreed to end discrimination against the Japanese who had already arrived. The immigration ended, but anti-Japanese feelings continued. Americans were growing uneasy that the "new immigrants" would overwhelm the culture established by the "old immigrants." The earlier immigrants, if not Anglo-Saxon, were from similar groups such as the Scandinavians, the Swiss, and the French Huguenots. These people were more experienced in democratic political practices and had a greater affinity with the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, more and more immigrants were neither English speaking nor Protestant and came from dramatically different cultures.

In 1917 Congress finally overrode President Wilson's veto and enacted an immigration bill that included the controversial literacy test. Critics of the bill, including



Wilson, argued that illiteracy does not signify inherent incompetence but reflects lack of opportunity for instruction. Such arguments were not heeded, however. The act seemed innocent at first glance—it merely required immigrants to read thirty words in any language—but it was the first attempt to restrict immigration from Western Europe. The act also prohibited immigration from the South Sea islands and other parts of Asia not already excluded. Curiously, this law that closed the door on non– Anglo-Saxons permitted a waiver of the test if the immigrants came because of their home government's discrimination against their race (*New York Times* 1917a, 1917b).

#### The National Origin System

Beginning in 1921, a series of measures were enacted that marked a new era in American immigration policy. Whatever the legal language, the measures were drawn up to block the growing immigration from southern Europe, such as from Italy and Greece.

Anti-immigration sentiment, combined with the isolationism that followed World War I, caused Congress to severely restrict entry privileges not only of the Chinese and Japanese but of Europeans as well. The national origin system was begun in 1921 and remained the basis of immigration policy until 1965. This system used the country of birth to determine whether a person could enter as a legal alien, and the number of previous immigrants and their descendants was used to set the group's annual immigration cap.

To understand the effect of the national origin system on immigration, it is necessary to clarify the quota system. The quotas were deliberately weighted in favor of immigration from northern Europe. Because of the ethnic composition of the country in 1920, the quotas placed severe restrictions on immigration from the rest of Europe and from other parts of the world. Immigration from the Western Hemisphere (i.e., Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean) continued unrestricted. The quota for each nation was set at 3 percent of the number of people descended from each nationality recorded in the 1920 census. Once the statistical manipulations were completed, almost 70 percent of the quota for the Eastern Hemisphere went to just three countries: Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany.

The absurdities of the system soon became obvious, but it was nevertheless continued. British immigration had fallen sharply, so most of its quota of 65,000 went unfilled. However, the openings could not be transferred, even though countries such as Italy, with a quota of only 6,000, had 200,000 people who wanted to enter. However one rationalizes the purpose behind the act, the result was obvious: Any English person, regardless of skill and whether related to anyone already here, could enter the country more easily than, say, a Greek doctor whose children were American citizens. The quota for Greece was 305, with the backlog of people wanting to come reaching 100,000.

By the end of the 1920s, annual immigration had dropped to one-fourth of its pre—World War I level. The worldwide economic depression of the 1930s decreased immigration still further. A brief upsurge in immigration just before World War II reflected the flight of Europeans from the oppression of expanding Nazi Germany. The war virtually ended transatlantic immigration. The era of the great European migration to the United States had been legislated out of existence.

#### The 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act

The national origin system was abandoned with the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson at the foot of the Statue of Liberty. The primary goals of the act were to reunite families and protect the American labor market. The act also initiated restrictions on immigration from Latin America. After the act, immigration increased by one-third, but the act's influence was primarily on the composition rather than the size of immigration.



Who received preference in immigration from the 1920s through 1965?

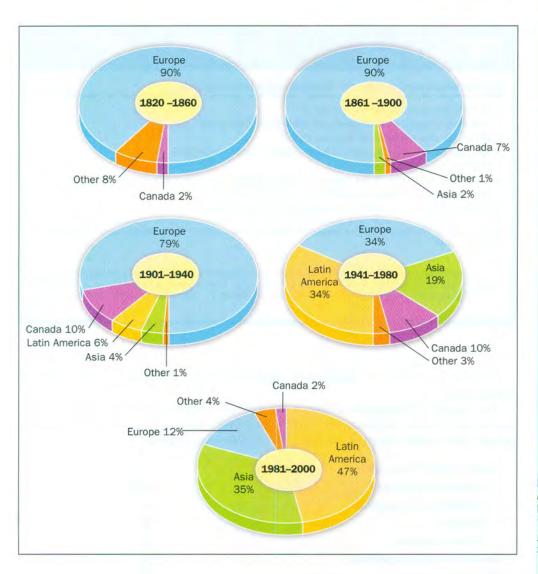


FIGURE 4.5 Legal Immigrants Admitted to the United States by Region of Last Residence, 1820–2000.

Source: Office of Immigration Statistics 2006, 10–13.

The sources of immigrants now included Italy, Greece, Portugal, Mexico, the Philippines, the West Indies, and South America. The effect is apparent when we compare the changing sources of immigration over the last 180 years, as shown in Figure 4.5. The most recent period shows that Asian and Latin American immigrants combined to account for 81 percent of the people who were permitted entry. This contrasts sharply with early immigration, which was dominated by arrivals from Europe.

As reflected in the title of this act, the law set down the rules for becoming a citizen. **Naturalization** is the conferring of citizenship on a person after birth. The general conditions for becoming naturalized in the United States are:

- 18 years of age
- Continuous residence for at least five years (three years for the spouses of U.S. citizens)
- Good moral character as determined by the absence of conviction of selected criminal offenses
- Ability to read, write, speak, and understand words of ordinary usage in the English language
- Ability to pass a test in U.S. government and history

**naturalization** Conferring of citizenship on a person after birth.

105

# TABLE 4.1 So You Want to Be a Citizen? Interse sample questions from the naturalization test (answers below). 1. What do the stripes on the flag represent? 2. How many changes, or amendments, are there to the Constitution? 3. Who is the chief justice of the Supreme Court? 4. What are some of the requirements to be eligible to become president? 5. What is the introduction to the Constitution called and what year was it written? 7. Name one right or freedom guaranteed by the First Amendment. 8. What group of essays supported passage of the U.S. Constitution? Source: Bureau of Citizenship and Immigrant Services (CIS) 2006 (September 15, 2006). Sample reflects changes proposed by CIS December 1, 2006.

In Table 4.1 we offer a sample of the type of questions immigrants face on the citizenship test.

1. The first 13 states; 2. 27; 3. John Roberts; 4. Candidates for president must be natural-born citizens, be at least 35 years old, and have lived in the United States for at least 14 years; 5. Individual rights that people are born with; 6. The Preamble and 1787;

RISWers:

The nature of immigration laws is exceedingly complex and is subjected to frequent, often minor, adjustments. In 2000 and 2004, between 850,000 and 1,100,000 people were legally admitted annually, for the following reasons:

Citizen family unification

Spouses of citizens	27%
Children and adoptees	11
Parents	8
Other residents	10
Spouses of legal residents	10
Employment based	16
Refugees/people seeking political asylum	7
Diversity (lottery among applications from nations	
historically sending few immigrants)	5
Other	6

Overall, two-thirds of the immigrants come to join their families, one-seventh because of skills needed in the United States, and one-twelfth because of special refugee status (Office of Immigration Statistics 2006).

We should note that not everything is as simple as suggested by these legal admission categories. A growing problem is families that are "mixed status." One or more members of an immediate family may be legal residents or even citizens but there also may be a member who is in the country illegally. There are almost 7 million families in which the head of the household or spouse is an illegal immigrant. Yet in about onethird of these families one or more of the children are U.S. citizens. This means that some of the issues facing illegal immigrants, whom we will discuss later, will also affect the citizens in the families because they are reluctant to bring attention to themselves for fear of revealing the legal status of their mother or father (Koch 2006a).

# **Contemporary Social Concerns**

Although our current immigration policies are less restrictive than other nations' restrictions, they are the subject of great debate. In Table 4.2, we summarize the benefits and concerns regarding immigration to the United States. We will consider three continuing criticisms of our immigration policy: the brain drain, population growth, and illegal immigration. All three, but particularly illegal immigration, have provoked heated debates and continuing efforts to resolve them with new policies. We will then consider the economic impact of immigration, followed by the nation's policy toward refugees, a group distinct from immigrants.

#### The Brain Drain

How often have you identified your science or mathematics teacher or your physician as someone who was not born in the United States? This nation has clearly benefited from attracting human resources from throughout the world, but this phenomenon has had its price for the nations of origin.

The **brain drain** is the immigration to the United States of skilled workers, professionals, and technicians who are desperately needed by their home countries. In the mid-twentieth century, many scientists and other professionals from industrial nations, principally Germany and Great Britain, came to the United States. More recently, however, the brain drain has pulled emigrants from developing nations, including India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and several African nations. They are eligible for what are referred to as H-1B visas qualifying for permanent work permits.

One out of four physicians in the United States is foreign born and plays a critical role in serving areas with too few doctors. Thousands of skilled, educated Indians now seek to enter the United States, pulled by the economic opportunity. The pay differential is so great that beginning in 2004, when foreign physicians were no longer favored with entry to the United States, physicians in the Philippines were retraining as nurses so that they could immigrate to the United States where, employed as nurses, they would make four times what they would as doctors in the Philippines (Mullan 2005; *New York Times* 2005b).

The brain drain controversy was evident long before the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act. However, the 1965 act seemed to encourage such immigration by placing the professions in one of the categories of preference. Various corporations, including Motorola and Intel, now find that one-third of their high-tech jobs are held by people born abroad, although many received their advanced education in the United States. Furthermore, these immigrants have links to their old countries and are boosting U.S. exports to the fast-growing economic regions of Asia and Latin America (Bloch 1996).

Potential Benefits	Areas of Concern
Provide needed skills	Drain needed resources from home country
Contribute to taxes	Send remittances (or migradollars) home
May come with substantial capital to start business	Less-skilled immigrants compete with those already disadvantaged
Diversify the population (intangible gain)	Population growth
Maintain ties with countries throughout the world	May complicate foreign policy by lobbying the government Illegal immigration

#### brain drain

Immigration to the United States of skilled workers, professionals, and technicians who are desperately needed by their home countries.



Even during times of strongest sentiment against immigration, provisions exist to allow legal entry to overseas technical workers who are in short supply in the United States.



Many foreign students say they plan to return home. Fortunately for the United States, many do not and make their talents available in the United States. One study showed that the majority of foreign students receiving their doctorates in the sciences and engineering are still here four years later. Yet critics note that this supply allows the country to overlook its minority scholars. Presently, for every two minority doctorates, there are five foreign citizens receiving this degree. In the physical sciences, for every doctorate issued to a minority citizen, eleven are received by foreign citizens. More attention needs to be given to encourage African Americans and Latinos to enter high-tech career paths (Hoffer et al. 2001; Wessel 2001).

Conflict theorists see the current brain drain as yet another symptom of the unequal distribution of world resources. In their view, it is ironic that the United States gives foreign aid to improve the technical resources of African and Asian countries while maintaining an immigration policy that encourages professionals in such nations to migrate to our shores. These are the very countries that have unacceptable public health conditions and need native scientists, educators, technicians, and other professionals. In addition, by relying on foreign talent, the United States does not need to take the steps necessary to encourage native members of subordinate groups to enter these desirable fields of employment.

#### **Population Growth**

The United States, like a few other industrial nations, continues to accept large numbers of permanent immigrants and refugees. Although such immigration has increased since the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, the nation's birthrate has decreased. Consequently, the contribution of immigration to population growth has become more significant.

Legal immigration accounted for about 45 to 60 percent of the nation's growth in the early years of the twenty-first century. To some observers, the United States is already overpopulated. The respected environmentalist group Sierra Club debated for several years on taking an official position favoring restricting immigration, recognizing that more people puts greater strain on the nation's natural resources. Thus far the majority of the members have indicated a desire to keep a neutral position rather than enter the politically charged immigration debate (Barringer 2004; Bean et al. 2004).

The patterns of uneven settlement in the United States are expected to continue so that future immigrants' impact on population growth will be felt much more in certain areas: say, California and New York, rather than Iowa or Massachusetts. Although

109

immigration and population growth may be viewed as national concerns, their impact is localized in certain areas such as southern California and large urban centers nationwide (Bean et al. 2004).

# **Illegal Immigration**

The most bitterly debated aspect of U.S. immigration policy has been the control of illegal or undocumented immigrants. These immigrants and their families come to the United States in search of higher-paying jobs than their home countries can provide.

In "Listen to Our Voices," sociologist Douglas Massey ponders the border militarization that has occurred amidst concerns over illegal immigration.

Since, by definition, illegal immigrants are in the country illegally, the exact number of these undocumented or unauthorized workers is subject to estimates and disputes. Based on the best available information, there are more than 11 million illegal immigrants in the United States and probably closer to 12 million. This compares to about 4 million in 1992. Today about 7.2 million are employed accounting for about 5 percent of the entire civilian labor force (Broder 2006; Passel 2006).

Illegal immigrants, and even legal immigrants, have become tied by the public to almost every social problem in the nation. They become the scapegoats for unemployment; they are labeled as "drug runners" and, especially since September 11, 2001, "terrorists." Their vital economic and cultural contribution to the United States is generally overlooked, as it has been for more than a hundred years.

The cost of the federal government's attempt to police the nation's borders and locate illegal immigrants is sizable. There are significant costs for aliens, that is, foreignborn noncitizens, and for other citizens as well. Civil rights advocates have expressed concern that the procedures used to apprehend and deport people are discriminatory and deprive many aliens of their legal rights. American citizens of Hispanic or Asian origin, some of whom were born in the United States, may be greeted with prejudice and distrust, as if their names automatically imply that they are illegal immigrants. Furthermore, these citizens and legal residents of the United States may be unable to find work because employers wrongly believe that their documents are forged.

In the context of this illegal immigration, Congress approved the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) after debating it for nearly a decade. The act marked a historic change in immigration policy compared with earlier laws, as summarized in Table 4.3. Amnesty was granted to 1.7 million illegal immigrants who could

TABLE 4.3           Major Immigration Policies					
Policy	Target Group	Impact			
Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882	Chinese	Effectively ended all Chinese immigration for more than 60 years			
National origin system, 1921	Southern Europeans	Reduced overall immigration and significantly reduced likely immigration from Greece and Italy			
Immigration and Naturalization Act, 1965	Western Hemisphere and the less skilled	Facilitated entry of skilled workers and relatives of U.S. residents			
Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986	Illegal immigration	Modest reduction of illegal immigration			
Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act of 1996	Illegal immigration	Greater border surveillance and increased scrutiny of legal immigrants seeking benefits			



## THE WALL THAT KEEPS ILLEGAL WORKERS IN

The Mexican-American border is not now and never has been out of control. The rate of undocumented migration, adjusted for population growth, to the United States has not increased in 20 years. That is, from 1980 to 2004 the annual likelihood that a Mexican will make his first illegal trip to

the United States has remained at about 1 in 100.

What has changed are the locations and visibility of border crossings. And that shift, more than anything, has given the public undue fears about waves of Mexican workers trying to flood into America.

Until the 1990s, the vast majority of undocumented Mexicans entered through either El Paso or San Diego. El Paso has around 700,000 residents and is 78 percent Hispanic, whereas San Diego County has three million residents and is 27 percent Hispanic. Thus the daily passage of even thousands of Mexicans through these metropolitan areas was not very visible or disruptive.

This all changed in 1992 when the Border Patrol built a steel fence south of San Diego from the Pacific Ocean to the port of entry at San Ysidro, Calif., where Interstate 5 crosses into Mexico. This fence, and the stationing of officers and equipment behind it, blocked one of the busiest illicit crossing routes and



Douglas S. Massey

channeled migrants toward the San Ysidro entry station, where their numbers rapidly built up to impossible levels.

Every day the same episode unfolded: the crowd swelled to a critical threshold, whereupon many migrants made what the local press called "banzai runs" into the United States, darting through traffic on the Interstate

and clambering over cars. Waiting nearby were Border Patrol

Waiting nearby were Border Patrol officers, there not to arrest the migrants but to capture the mayhem on video, which was later edited into an agency documentary. Although nothing had changed except the site of border crossings, the video gave the impression that the border was overwhelmed by a rising tide of undocumented migrants.

In response to the ensuing public uproar, the policy of tougher order enforcement was expanded to all of the San Diego and El Paso area in 1993 and 1994. So migrants began going to more remote locations along the border in Arizona. In 1989, two-thirds of undocumented migrants came in through El Paso or San Diego; but by 2004 two-thirds crossed somewhere else. (My statistics on Mexican immigration come from a study I have been undertaking with financing from the National Institutes of Health since 1982.)

document that they had established long-term residency in the United States. Under the IRCA, hiring illegal aliens became illegal, so that employers are subject to fines and even prison sentences. It appears that the act has had mixed results in terms of illegal immigration. According to data compiled by the U.S. Border Patrol, arrests along the border declined substantially in the first three years after the law took effect. However, illegal immigration eventually returned to the levels of the early 1980s.

Many illegal immigrants continue to live in fear and hiding, subject to even more severe harassment and discrimination than before. From a conflict perspective, these immigrants, primarily poor and Hispanic or Asian, are being firmly lodged at the bot-



# es Listen to Our Voices Listen to Our Voices

Unlike the old crossing sites, these new locations were sparsely settled, so the sudden appearance of thousands of Mexicans attracted considerable attention and understandably generated much agitation locally. Perceptions of a breakdown at the border were heightened by news reports of rising deaths among migrants; by redistricting flows into harsh, remote terrain the United States tripled the death rate during border crossing.

Less well known is that American policies also reduced the rate of apprehension, because those remote sectors of the border had fewer Border Patrol officers. My research found that during the 1980s, the probability that an undocumented migrant would be apprehended while crossing stood at around 33 percent; by 2000 it was at 10 percent, despite increases in federal spending on border enforcement.

Naturally, public perceptions of chaos on the border prompted more calls for enforcement and the hardening strategy was extended to other sectors. The number of Border Patrol officers increased from around 2,500 in the early 1980s to around 12,000 today, and the agency's annual budget rose to \$1.6 billion from \$200 million. The boundary between Mexico and the United States has become perhaps the most militarized frontier between two nations at peace anywhere in the world. Although border militarization had little

effect on the probability of Mexicans mi-

grating illegally, it did reduce the likelihood that they would return to their homeland. America's tougher line roughly tripled the average cost of getting across the border illegally; thus Mexicans who had run the gauntlet at the border were more likely to hunker down and stay in the United States. My study has shown that in the early 1980's, about half of all undocumented Mexicans returned home within 12 months of entry, but by 2000 the rate of return migration stood at just 25 percent.

The United States is now locked into a perverse cycle whereby additional border enforcement further decreases the rate of return migration, which accelerates undocumented population growth, which brings calls for harsher enforcement.

The only thing we have to show for two decades of border militarization is a larger undocumented population than we would otherwise have, a rising number of Mexicans dying while trying to cross, and a growing burden on taxpayers for enforcement that is counterproductive.

We need an immigration policy that seeks to manage the cross-border flows of people that are inevitable in a global economy, not to repress them through unilateral police actions.

From: Massey 2006a.

tom of the nation's social and economic hierarchies. However, from a functionalist perspective, employers, by paying low wages, are able to produce goods and services that are profitable for industry and more affordable to consumers. Despite the poor working conditions often experienced by illegal immigrants here, they continue to come because it is still in their best economic interest to work here in disadvantaged positions rather than to seek wage labor unsuccessfully in their home countries.

Little workplace enforcement occurs for the hiring of undocumented workers. Although never a priority, it has fallen to the point where only about five employers are fined annually involving 400 workers nationwide (Echaveste 2005).



Amidst heated debate Congress reached a compromise passed, called the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, which emphasized making more effort to keep immigrants from entering the country illegally. Illegal immigrants will not have access to such benefit programs as Social Security and welfare. For now, legal immigrants will be entitled to such benefits, although social service agencies are required to verify their legal status. Another significant element was to increase border control and surveillance.

The illegal aliens or undocumented workers are not necessarily transient. A 2006 estimate indicated 60 percent had been here for at least five years. Many have established homes, families, and networks with relatives and friends in the United States whose legal status might differ. These are the "mixed-status" households noted earlier. For the most part their lives are not much different from legal residents except when they seek services that require citizenship status to be documented (Passel 2006).

Policy makers continue to avoid the only real way to stop illegal immigration, which is to discourage employment opportunities. The public often thinks in terms of greater surveillance at the border. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, greater control of border traffic took on a new sense of urgency, even though almost all the men who took over the planes had entered the United States legally. It is very difficult to secure the vast boundaries that mark the United States on land and sea.

Reflecting the emphasis on heightened security, a potentially major shake-up recently took place. Since 1940, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) had been in the Department of Justice, but in 2003 it was transferred to the newly formed Department of Homeland Security (see Table 4.4). The various functions of the INS were split into three agencies with a new Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services and two other units separately concerned with customs and border protection. For years, immigrant advocates had argued to separate border enforcement from immigration, but the placement of immigrant services in the office responsible for protecting the United States from terrorists sends a chilling message to immigrants.

Numerous civil rights groups and migrant advocacy organizations have expressed alarm over the large number of people now crossing into the United States illegally who perish in their attempt. Death occurs to some in deserts, in isolated canyons, and

In 2006, despite public pressure to crack down on illegal immigrants and counterdemonstrations to make it easier for long-term undocumented workers to become legal, the only major proposal to make it through Congress was to create a wall of several hundred miles between the United States and Mexico.

# 113

## TABLE 4.4

**Transformation of Immigration Management** 

Following 9/11, management of immigration in the United States was reorganized, as of March 1, 2003, from INS in the Department of Justice to three new agencies in the new Department of Homeland Security.

Before	After Located in Department of Homeland Security		
Located in Department of Justice			
Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS)	INS dissolved		
Immigration services Naturalization (citizenship) Applications Visas	U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS)		
U.S. Border Patrol Inspections at border Deportations at border	U.S. Customs and Borders Protection (CBP)		
Immigration enforcement-interior (includes removals and detentions)	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)		

while concealed in containers or locked in trucks during smuggling attempts. Several hundred die annually in the Southwest, seeking more and more dangerous crossing points as border control has increased. However, this death toll has received little attention, causing one journalist to liken it to a jumbo jet crashing between Los Angeles and Phoenix every year without anyone giving it much notice (del Olmo 2003; K. Sullivan 2005).

What certainly was noticed was the public debate in 2006 over how to stop further illegal immigration and what to do about illegal immigrants already inside the United





States. Debate over hardening the border by erecting a 700-hundred-mile-long double concrete wall brought concerns that desperate immigrants would take even more chances with their lives in order to work in the United States. A Congressional proposal to make assisting an illegal immigrant already here a felony led to strong counter-demonstrations drawing tens of thousands of marchers in cities across the United States. Meanwhile the federal government, as it has for a century, struggled between the need to attract workers to do jobs many people here legally would not want to do against the desire to enforce the laws governing legal immigration (Tumulty 2006).

# The Economic Impact of Immigration

There is much public and scholarly debate about the economic effects of immigration, both legal and illegal. Varied, conflicting conclusions have resulted from research ranging from case studies of Korean immigrants' dominance among New York City greengrocers to mobility studies charting the progress of all immigrants and their children. The confusion results in part from the different methods of analysis. For example, the studies do not always include political refugees, who generally are less prepared than other refugees to become assimilated. Sometimes the research focuses only on economic effects, such as whether people are employed or on welfare; in other cases it also considers cultural factors such as knowledge of English.

Perhaps the most significant factor is whether a study examines the national impact of immigration or only its effects on a local area. Overall, we can conclude from the research that immigrants adapt well and are an asset to the local economy. In some areas, heavy immigration may drain a community's resources. However, it can also revitalize a local economy. Marginally employed workers, most of whom are either themselves immigrants or African Americans, often experience a negative impact by new arrivals. With or without immigration, competition for low-paying jobs in the United States is high, and those who gain the most from this competition are the employers and the consumers who want to keep prices down (Steinberg 2005).

According to survey data, many people in the United States hold the stereotypical belief that immigrants often end up on welfare and thereby cause increases in taxes. Economist David Card studied the 1980 "Mariel" boatlift that brought 125,000 Cubans into Miami and found that even this substantial addition of mainly low-skilled workers had no measurable impact on the wages or unemployment rates of low-skilled White and African American workers in the Miami area (Card et al. 1998; Lowenstein 2006).

About 70 percent of illegal immigrant workers pay taxes of one type or another. Many of them do not file to receive entitled refunds or benefits. For example, in 2005, the Social Security Administration identified thousands of unauthorized workers contributing to the fund about \$7 billion that could not be credited properly (E. Porter 2005).

Social science studies generally contradict many of the negative stereotypes about the economic impact of immigration. A variety of recent studies found that immigrants are a net economic gain for the population. But despite national gains, in some areas and for some groups, immigration may be an economic burden or create unwanted competition for jobs (Fix et al. 2001; Moore 1998; Smith and Edmonston 1997).

In "Research Focus," we consider the most recent research on how immigrants are doing in the United States.

One economic aspect of immigration that has received increasing attention is the effort to measure remittances. **Remittances** (or **migradollars**) are the monies that immigrants return to their country of origin. The amounts are significant and measure in the hundreds of millions of dollars flowing from the United States to a number of countries where they are a very substantial source of support for families and even venture capital for new businesses. Although some observers express concern over this

remittances (or migradollars) The monies that immigrants return to their country of origin.

# 115

# Focus Research Focus Research

## How Well Are Immigrants Doing?

n 2001, the respected Urban Institute released its comprehensive study of the progress immigrants are making in the United States, acknowledging that there is great diversity in the immigrant experience between nationality groups. Furthermore, even within the most successful immigrating groups, people have to confront the challenge of adapting to a society that rewards assimilation and typically punishes those who want to maintain cultural practices different from those that dominate society.

Considering contemporary immigrants as a group, we can make some conclusions, which show a mix of some success and evidence that adaptation typically is very difficult.

## LESS ENCOURAGING

- Although immigrants have lower divorce rates and are less likely to form single-parent households than natives, their rates equal or exceed these rates by the second generation.
- Children in immigrant families tend to be healthier than U.S.-born children, but the advantage declines.
- Immigrants are less likely to have health insurance.
- Immigrant children attend schools that are disproportionately attended by other

poor children and students with limited English proficiency, so they are ethnically, economically, and linguistically isolated.

#### **POSITIVE SIGNS**

- Immigrant families and, more broadly, noncitizen households are more likely to be on public assistance, but their time on public assistance is less and they receive fewer benefits. This is even true when considering special restrictions that may apply to noncitizens.
- Second-generation immigrants (i.e., children of immigrants) are overall doing as well as or better than White non-Hispanic natives in educational attainment, labor force participation, wages, and house-hold income.
- Immigrants overwhelmingly (65 %) continue to see learning English as an ethical obligation of all immigrants.

These positive trends diverge between specific immigrant groups, with Asian immigrants doing better than European immigrants, who do better than Latino immigrants.

Source: Capps et al. 2002; Farkas 2003; Fix et al. 2001; Myers et al. 2004.

outflow of money, others counter that it probably represents a small price to pay for the human capital that the United States is able to use in the form of the immigrants themselves. Immigrants in the United States send \$40 billion to their home countries and worldwide remittances bring \$232 billion to developing countries, easily surpassing all other forms of foreign aid.

Remittances are widely recognized as critical to the survival of millions of households worldwide. One estimate concluded that one out of every five people in Mexico regularly receives a payment from abroad. The monies also play a significant role in the financial health of many economies (Hagenbaugh 2006).

States have sought legal redress because the federal government has not seriously considered granting impact aid to heavily burdened states. In 1994, Florida joined California



in suing the U.S. government to secure strict enforcement of immigration laws and reimbursement for services rendered to illegal immigrants. As frustration mounted, California voters approved a 1994 referendum (Proposition 187) banning illegal immigrants from public schools, public assistance programs, and all but emergency medical care. Although the proposal was later found not to be constitutional, voters heavily favored the referendum. Subsequently, California and other states have tried to enact measures that would partially reflect this view, such as prohibiting illegal immigrants from getting driver's licenses. Only fourteen states knowingly issue driver's licenses to illegal immigrants, reasoning that it is better to regulate driving and document that drivers are insured (Katel 2005).

The concern about immigration today is both understandable and perplexing. The nation has always been uneasy about new arrivals, especially those who are different from the more affluent and the policy makers. Yet most of the last two decades have been marked by low unemployment, low inflation, and much-diminished anxiety about our economic future. This paradoxical situation—a strong economy and concerns about immigration framed in economic arguments—suggests that other concerns, such as ethnic and racial tensions, are more important in explaining current attitudes toward immigration in the United States.

# Women and Immigration

Immigration is presented as if all immigrants are similar with the only distinctions being made concerning point of origin, education, and employment prospects. Another significant distinction is whether immigrants travel with or without their families. We often think that historical immigrants to the United States were males in search of work. Men dominate much of the labor migration worldwide, but because of the diversified labor force in the United States and some policies that facilitate relatives coming, immigration to the United States generally has been fairly balanced. Actually most immigration historically appears to be families. For example, from 1870 through 1940 men entering the United States only exceeded women by about 10 to 20 percent. Since 1950 to the present women immigrants have actually exceeded men by a modest amount (Gibson and Jung 2006).

Remittances from immigrants and overseas relatives are a powerful economic force. As shown here in Mexico these migradollars helps to finance people's businesses and even assist them in buying homes.



What special challenges do women immigrants face?





Immigration is a challenge to all family members but immigrant women must not only navigate a new culture and a new country for themselves but also for their children; such as in this household in Colorado.

The second-class status women experience normally in society is reflected in immigration. Most dramatically women citizens who married immigrants who were not citizens actually lost their U.S. citizenship from 1907 through 1922 with few exceptions. However, policy did not apply to men (K. Johnson 2004).

Immigrant women, face all the challenges faced by immigrant men plus some additional ones. Typically they have the responsibility of navigating the new society when it comes to services for their family and, in particular, children. Many new immigrants view the United States as a dangerous place to raise a family and, therefore, remain particularly vigilant of what happens in their children's lives.

Male immigrants are more likely to be consumed with work leaving the women to navigate the bureaucratic morass of city services, schools, medical facilities, and even everyday concerns such as stores and markets. Immigrant women in need of special services for medical purposes or because they are victims of domestic violence are often reluctant to seek outside help. Yet immigrant women are more likely to be the liaison for the household including adult men to community associations and religious organizations (Honhagneu-Sotelo 2003).

Women play a critical role in overseeing the household and for immigrant women the added pressures of being in a new country and trying to move ahead in a different culture heighten this social role.

# The Global Economy and Immigration

Immigration exists because of political boundaries that bring the movement of peoples to the attention of national authorities. Within the United States, people may move their residence, but they are not immigrating. For residents in the member nations of the European Union, free movement of people within the union is also protected.

Yet increasingly people recognize the need to think beyond national borders and national identity. As was noted in Chapter 1, **globalization** is the worldwide integration of government policies, cultures, social movements, and financial markets through trade, movement of people, and the exchange of ideas. In this global framework, even immigrants are less likely to think of themselves as residents of only one country. For generations, immigrants have used foreign-language newspapers to keep in touch with

## globalization

Worldwide integration of government policies, cultures, social movements, and financial markets through trade, movements of people, and the exchange of ideas. events in their home country. Today, cable channels carry news and variety programs from their home country, and the Internet offers immediate access to the homeland and kinfolk thousands of miles away.

While bringing the world together, globalization has also sharpened the focus on the dramatic economic inequalities between nations. Today, people in North America, Europe, and Japan consume thirty-two times more resources than the billions of people in developing nations. Thanks to tourism, the media, and other aspects of globalization, the people of less-affluent countries know of this affluent lifestyle and, of course, often aspire to it (Diamond 2003).

**Transnationals** are immigrants who sustain multiple social relationships linking their societies of origin and settlement. Immigrants from the Dominican Republic identify with Americans but also maintain very close ties to their Caribbean homeland. They return for visits, send remittances (migradollars), and host extended stays of relatives and friends. Back in the Dominican Republic, villages reflect these close ties, as shown in billboards promoting special long-distance services to the United States and by the presence of household appliances sent by relatives. The volume of remittances—perhaps \$80 billion worldwide—is easily the most reliable source of foreign money going to poor countries, far outstripping foreign aid programs (Kapur and McHale 2003).

The growing number of transnationals, as well as immigration in general, directly reflects the world systems analysis we considered in Chapter 1. A global economic system that has such sharp contrasts between the industrial haves and the developing have-not nations only serves to encourage movement across borders. The industrial haves gain benefits from it even when they seem to discourage it. The movement back and forth only serves to increase globalization and the creation of informal social networks between people seeking a better life and those already enjoying increased prosperity.

## Refugees

**Refugees** are people living outside their country of citizenship for fear of political or religious persecution. Enough refugees exist to populate an entire "nation". There are approximately 12 to 14 million refugees worldwide. That makes the nation of refugees larger than Belgium, Sweden, or Cuba. The United States has touted itself as a haven for political refugees. However, as we shall see, the welcome to political refugees has not always been unqualified.

The United States makes the largest financial contribution of any nation to worldwide assistance programs. The United States resettles about 70,000 refugees annually and served as the host to a cumulative 1 million refugees between 1990 and 2003. The post-9/11 years have seen the procedures become much more cumbersome for foreigners to acquire refugee status and gain entry to the United States. Many other nations much smaller and much poorer than the United States have many more refugees than the United States., with Jordan, Iran, and Pakistan hosting over a million refugees each (Immigration and Refugee Services of America 2004; U.S. Committee for Refugees 2003).

The United States, insulated by distance from wars and famines in Europe and Asia, has been able to be selective about which and how many refugees are welcomed. Since the arrival of refugees uprooted by World War II, the United States through the 1980s had allowed three groups of refugees to enter in numbers greater than regulations would ordinarily permit: Hungarians, Cubans, and Southeast Asians. Compared with the other two groups, the nearly 40,000 Hungarians who arrived after the unsuccessful

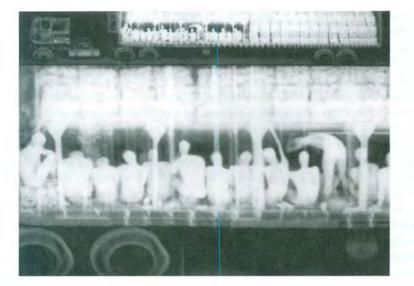
#### transnationals

Immigrants who sustain multiple social relationships linking their societies of origin and settlement.

#### refugees

People living outside their country of citizenship for fear of political or religious persecution.





revolt against the Soviet Union of November 1956 were few indeed. At the time, however, theirs was the fastest mass immigration to this country since before 1922. With little delay, the United States amended the laws so that the Hungarian refugees could enter. Because of their small numbers and their dispersion throughout this country, the Hungarians are in little evidence nearly 50 years later. The much larger and longer period of movement of Cuban and Southeast Asian refugees into the United States continues to have a profound social and economic impact.

Despite periodic public opposition, the U.S. government is officially committed to accepting refugees from other nations. According to the United Nations treaty on refugees, which our government ratified in 1968, countries are obliged to refrain from forcibly returning people to territories where their lives or liberty might be endangered. However, it is not always clear whether a person is fleeing for his or her personal safety or to escape poverty. Although people in the latter category may be of humanitarian interest, they do not meet the official definition of refugees and are subject to deportation.

Refugees are people who are granted the right to enter a country while still residing abroad. **Asylees** are foreigners who have already entered the United States and now seek protection because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution. This persecution may be based on the individual's race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Asylees are eligible to adjust to lawful permanent resident status after one year of continuous presence in the United States. The number of asylees is currently limited to 10,000 per year, but there is sharp debate over how asylum is granted.

Because asylees, by definition, are already here, the outcome is either to grant them legal entry or to return them to their home country. It is the practice of deporting people fleeing poverty that has been the subject of criticism. There is a long tradition in the United States of facilitating the arrival of people leaving Communist nations, such as the Cubans. Mexicans who are refugees from poverty, Liberians fleeing civil war, and Haitians running from despotic rule are not similarly welcomed. The plight of Haitians has become one of particular concern.

Haitians began fleeing their country, often on small boats, in the 1980s. The U.S. Coast Guard intercepted many Haitians at sea, saving some of these boat people from death in their rickety and overcrowded wooden vessels. The Haitians said they feared

Seen in this 1989 x-ray photo taken by Mexican authorities at the border are a wide shot, on top, and a close-up image of human forms. New technology is used to scan passing trucks to detect human cargo as well as drugs and weapons.

#### asylees

Foreigners who have already entered the United States and now seek protection because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution. detentions, torture, and execution if they remained in Haiti. Yet both Republican and Democratic administrations viewed most of the Haitian exiles as economic migrants rather than political refugees and opposed granting them asylum and permission to enter the United States. Once apprehended, the Haitians are returned. In 1993, the U.S. Supreme Court, by an 8–1 vote, upheld the government's right to intercept Haitian refugees at sea and return them to their homeland without asylum hearings.

African Americans and others denounce the Haitian refugee policy as racist. They contrast it to the "wet foot, dry foot" policy toward Cuban refugees. If the government intercepts Cubans at sea, they are returned; but if they escape detection and make it to the mainland, they may apply for asylum. About 75 percent of Cubans seeking asylum are granted refugee status, compared with only 22 percent of Haitians.

Even with only about a thousand Haitians successfully making it into the United States each year, there is an emerging Haitian American presence, especially in southern Florida. An estimated 60,000 immigrants and their descendants live in the Little Haiti portion of Miami, where per capita income is a meager \$5,700. Despite continuing obstacles, the community exhibits pride in those who have succeeded, from a Haitian American Florida state legislator to hip-hop musician Wyclef Jean (Dahlburg 2001; U.S. Committee for Refugees 2003).

# Conclusion

or its first hundred years, the United States allowed all immigrants to enter and become permanent residents. However, the federal policy of welcome did not mean that immigrants would not encounter discrimination and prejudice. With the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, discrimination against one group of potential immigrants became law. The Chinese were soon joined by the Japanese as peoples forbidden by law to enter and prohibited from becoming naturalized citizens. The development of the national origin system in the 1920s created a hierarchy of nationalities with people from northern Europe encouraged to enter, whereas other Europeans and Asians encountered long delays. The possibility of a melting pot, which had always been a fiction, was legislated out of existence.

In the 1960s and again in 1990, the policy was liberalized so that the importance of nationality was minimized, and a person's work skills and relationship to an American were emphasized. This liberalization came at a time when most Europeans no longer wanted to immigrate to the United States.

One out of ten people in the United States is foreign born; many are technical, professional, and craft workers. Also, 34 percent are household workers, and 33 percent of our farm laborers are foreign born. The U.S. economy and society are built on immigrant labor from farm fields to science laboratories (Parker 2001).

Throughout the history of the United States, as we have seen, there has been intense debate over the nation's immigration and refugee policies. In a sense, this debate reflects the deep value conflicts in the U.S. culture and parallels the "American dilemma" identified by Swedish social economist Gunnar Myrdal (1944). One strand of our culture, epitomized by the words "Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses," has emphasized egalitarian principles and a desire to help people in their time of need. At the same time, however, hostility to potential immigrants and refugees, whether the Chinese in the 1880s, European Jews in the 1930s and 1940s, or Mexicans, Haitians, and Arabs today, reflects not only racial, ethnic, and religious prejudice but also a desire to maintain the dominant culture of the in-group by keeping out those viewed as outsiders. The conflict between these cultural values is central to the American dilemma of the twenty-first century.

At present the debate about immigration is highly charged and emotional. Some people see it in economic terms, whereas others see the new arrivals as a challenge to the very culture of our society. Clearly, the general perception is that immigration presents a problem rather than a promise for the future.

Today's concern about immigrants follows generations of people coming to settle in the United States. This immigration in the past produced a very diverse



country in terms of both nationality and religion, even before the immigration of the last fifty years. Therefore, the majority of Americans today are not descended from the English, and Protestants are just over half of all worshipers. This diversity of religious and ethnic groups is examined in Chapter 5.

# **Key Terms**

asylees 119 brain drain 107 chain immigration 97 globalization 117 nativism 100 naturalization 105 refugees 118 remittances (or migradollars) 114 sinophobes 101

transnationals 118 xenophobia 100

## **Review Questions**

- 1. What are the functions and dysfunctions of immigration?
- 2. What were the social and economic issues when public opinion mounted against Chinese immigration to the United States?
- **3.** Ultimately, what do you think is the major concern people have about contemporary immigration to the United States: the numbers of immigrants, their legal status, or their nationality?
- 4. What principles appear to guide U.S. refugee policy?

# **Critical Thinking**

- 1. What is the immigrant root story of your family? Consider how your ancestors arrived in the United States and also how your family's past has been shaped by other immigrant groups.
- 2. Can you find evidence of the brain drain in terms of the professionals with whom you come in contact? Do you regard this as a benefit? What groups in the United States may not have been encouraged to fill such positions by the availability of such professionals?

## Internet Connections—Research Navigator™

Follow the instructions found on page 35 of this text to access the features of Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>. Once at the Web site, enter your Login Name and Password. Then, to use the ContentSelect database, enter keywords such as "remittances," "asylum," and "refugees," and the research engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.

# Week 4:

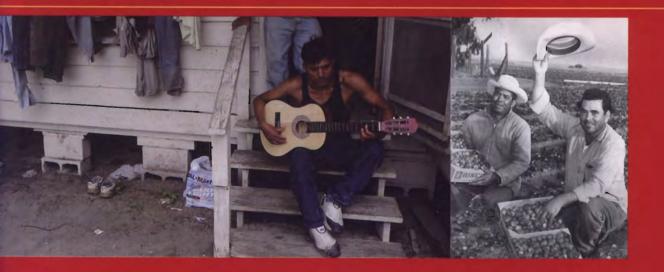
# **HEALEY:** The Origins of Slavery

# The Development of Dominant-Minority Group Relations in Preindustrial America

# CHAPTER 4

# The Origins of Slavery

rom the first settlements in the 1600s until the 19th century, most people living in what was to become the United States relied directly on farming for food, shelter, and other necessities of life. In an agricultural society, land and labor are central concerns, and the struggle to control these resources led directly to the creation of minority group status for three groups: African Americans, American Indians, and Mexican Americans. Why did the colonists create slavery? Why were Africans enslaved but not American Indians or Europeans? Why did American Indians lose their land and most of their population by the 1890s? How did the Mexican population in the Southwest become "Mexican Americans"? How did the experience of becoming a subordinated minority group vary by gender?



In this chapter, the concepts introduced in Part 1 will be used to answer these questions. Some new ideas and theories will also be introduced, and by the end of the chapter, we will have developed a theoretical model of the process that leads to the creation of a minority group. The creation of black slavery in colonial America, arguably the single most significant event in the early years of this nation, will be used to illustrate the process of minority group creation. We will also consider the subordination of American Indians and Mexican Americans—two more historical events of great significance—as additional case studies. We will follow the experiences of African Americans through the days of segregation (Chapter 5) and into the contemporary era (Chapter 6). The story of the development of minority group status for American Indians and Mexican Americans will be picked up again in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively.

Two broad themes underlie this chapter and, indeed, the remainder of the text:

1. The nature of dominant-minority group relations at any point in time is largely a function of the characteristics of the society as a whole. The situation of a minority group will reflect the realities of everyday social life and particularly the subsistence technology (the means by which the society satisfies basic needs such as food and shelter). As explained by Gerhard Lenski (see Chapter 1), the subsistence technology of a society acts as a foundation, shaping and affecting every other aspect of the social structure, including minority group relations.

2. The contact situation—the conditions under which groups first come together—is the single most significant factor in the creation of minority group status. The nature of the contact situation has long-lasting consequences for the minority group and the extent of racial or ethnic stratification, the levels of racism and prejudice, the possibilities for assimilation and pluralism, and virtually every other aspect of the dominant-minority relationship.

# The Origins of Slavery in America

By the beginning of the 1600s, Spanish explorers had conquered much of Central and South America, and the influx of gold, silver, and other riches from the New World had made Spain a powerful nation. Following Spain's lead, England proceeded to establish its presence in the Western Hemisphere, but its efforts at colonization were more modest than those of Spain. By the early 1600s, only two small colonies had been Established: Plymouth, settled by pious Protestant families, and Jamestown, populated primarily by males seeking their fortunes.

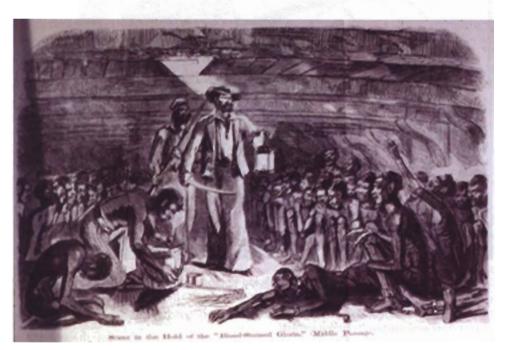
By 1619, the British colony at Jamestown, Virginia, had survived for more than a decade. The residents of the settlement had fought with the local natives and struggled continuously to eke out a living from the land. Starvation, disease, and death were frequent visitors, and the future of the enterprise continued to be in doubt.

In August of that year, a Dutch ship arrived. The master of the ship needed provisions and offered to trade his only cargo: about 20 black Africans. Many of the details of this transaction have been lost, and we probably will never know exactly how these people came to be chained in the hold of a ship. Regardless, this brief episode was a landmark event in the formation of what would become the United States. In combination with the strained relations between the English settlers and American Indians, the presence of these first few Africans



SLAVERS REVENSING THEIR LOSSES.

David Livingstone, The Last Journals of David Livingstone, in Central Africa, From 1865 to His Death, edited by Horace Waller (London: John Murray, 1874, p. 62; New York, Harper & Bros., 1875, p. 58).



Richard Drake, *Revelations of a Slave Smuggler* (New York: Robert M. Dewitt, 1860, p. 28). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62–30818.

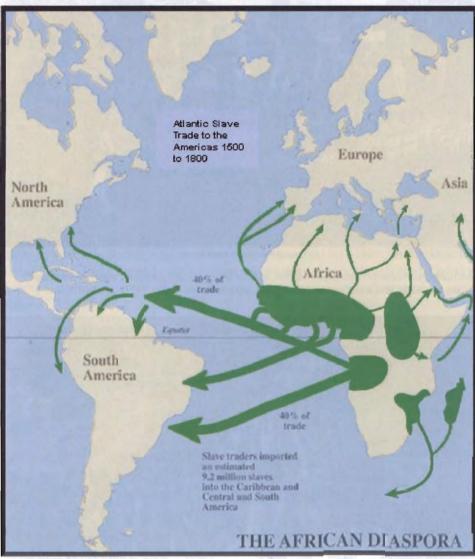
raised an issue that has never been fully resolved: How should different groups in this society relate to each other?

The colonists at Jamestown had no ready answer. In 1619, England and its colonies did not practice slavery, so these first Africans were probably incorporated into colonial society

## Photo 4.1 & 4.2

Slaves to provide labor for American plantations were kidnapped from their villages in Africa and marched to the sea, a journey that sometimes covered hundreds of miles. They were loaded aboard slave ships and packed tightly below decks. The "Middle Passage" across the Atlantic could take months.

# Exhibit 4.1 The African Diaspora



SOURCE: "The African Diaspora." (n.d.). Slave Trade and African American Ancestry. Retrieved December 4, 2007, from http://www.homestead.com/wysinger/mapofafricadiaspora.html.

NOTE: The size of the arrows is proportional to the number of slaves. Note that the bulk went to South America and that there were also flows to Europe and Asia.

as indentured servants, contract laborers who are obligated to serve a master for a specific number of years. At the end of the indenture, or contract, the servant became a free citizen. The colonies depended heavily on indentured servants from the British Isles for labor, and this status apparently provided a convenient way of defining the newcomers from Africa, who were, after all, treated as commodities and exchanged for food and water.

As slavery evolved in the colonies, the dominant group shaped the system to fit its needs. To solidify control of the labor of their slaves, the plantation elite designed and enacted an elaborate system of laws and customs that gave masters nearly total legal power over slaves. In these laws, slaves were defined as chattel, or personal property, rather than as persons, and they were accorded no civil or political rights. Slaves could not own property, sign contracts, bring lawsuits, or even testify in court (except against another slave). The masters were given the legal authority to determine almost every



aspect of a slave's life, including work schedules, living arrangements, diets, and even names (Elkins, 1959; Franklin & Moss, 1994; Genovese, 1974; Jordan, 1968; Stampp, 1956).

The law permitted the master to determine the type and severity of punishment for misbehavior. Slaves were forbidden by law to read or write, and marriages between slaves were not legally recognized. Masters could separate husbands from wives and parents from children if it suited them. Slaves had little formal decision-making ability or control over their lives or the lives of their loved ones.

In colonial America, slavery became synonymous with race. Race, slavery, inferiority, and powerlessness became intertwined in ways that, according to many analysts, still affect the ways black and white Americans think about one another (Hacker, 1992). Slavery was a **caste system**, or closed stratification system. In a caste system, there is no mobility between social positions, and the social class you are born into (your ascribed status) is permanent. Slave status was for life and was passed on to any children a slave might have. Whites, no matter what they did, could not become slaves.

Interaction between members of the dominant and minority groups in a paternalistic system is governed by a rigid, strictly enforced code of etiquette. Slaves were expected to show deference and humility and visibly display their lower status when interacting with whites. These rigid behavioral codes made it possible for blacks and whites to work together, sometimes intimately, sometimes for their entire lives, without threatening the power and status differentials inherent in the system. Plantation and farmwork required close and frequent contact between blacks and whites, and status differentials were maintained socially rather than physically.

The frequent but unequal interactions allowed the elites to maintain a pseudotolerance, an attitude of benevolent despotism, toward their slaves. Their prejudice and racism were often expressed as positive emotions of affection for their black slaves. The attitude of the planters toward their slaves was often paternalistic and even genteel (Wilson, 1973, pp. 52–55).

#### Photo 4.4

The prosperity of southern plantation owners was based on the labor of black slaves.

© Bettmann/Corbis.

For their part, black slaves often could not hate their owners as much as they hated the system that constrained them. The system defined slaves as pieces of property owned by their masters—yet they were, undeniably, human beings. Thus, slavery was founded, at its heart, on a contradiction.

The master learned to treat his slaves both as property and as men and women, the slaves learned to express and affirm their humanity even while they were constrained in much of their lives to accept their status as chattel. (Parish, 1989, p. 1)

The powerlessness of slaves made it difficult for them to openly reject or resist the system. Slaves had few ways in which they could directly challenge the institution of slavery or their position in it. Open defiance was ineffective and could result in punishment or even death. In general, masters would not be prosecuted for physically abusing their slaves.

One of the few slave revolts that occurred in the United States illustrates both the futility of overt challenge and the degree of repression built into the system. In 1831, in Southampton County, Virginia, a slave named Nat Turner led an uprising during which 57 whites were killed. The revolt was starting to spread when the state militia met and routed the growing slave army. More than 100 slaves died in the armed encounter, and Nat Turner and 13 others were later executed. Slave owners and white southerners in general were greatly alarmed by the uprising and consequently tightened the system of control over slaves, making it even more repressive (Franklin & Moss, 1994, p. 147). Ironically, the result of Nat Turner's attempt to lead slaves to freedom was greater oppression and control by the dominant group.

Others were more successful in resisting the system. Runaway slaves were a constant problem for slave owners, especially in the states bordering the free states of the North. The difficulty of escape and the low likelihood of successfully reaching the North did not deter thousands from attempting the feat, some of them repeatedly. Many runaway slaves received help from the Underground Railroad, an informal network of safe houses supported by African Americans and whites involved in abolitionism, the movement to abolish slavery. These escapes created colorful legends and heroic figures, including Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman. Narrative Portrait 1 in this chapter presents the experiences of two ex-slaves who eventually escaped to the North.

Besides running away and open rebellion, slaves used the forms of resistance most readily available to them: sabotage, intentional carelessness, dragging their feet, and work slowdowns. As historian Peter Parish (1989) points out, it is difficult to separate "a natural desire to avoid hard work [from a] conscious decision to protest or resist" (p. 73), and much of this behavior may fall more into the category of noncooperation than of deliberate political rebellion. Nonetheless, these behaviors were widespread and document the rejection of the system by its victims.

On an everyday basis, the slaves managed their lives and families as best they could. Most slaves were neither docile victims nor unyielding rebels. As the institution of slavery developed, a distinct African American experience accumulated, and traditions of resistance and accommodation developed side by side. Most slaves worked to create a world for themselves within the confines and restraints of the plantation system, avoiding the more vicious repression as much as possible while attending to their own needs and those of their families. An African American culture was forged in response to the realities of slavery and was manifested in folklore, music, religion, family and kinship structures, and other aspects of everyday life (Blassingame, 1972; Genovese, 1974; Gutman, 1976).

# The Dimensions of Minority Group Status

The situation of African Americans under slavery can be more completely described by applying some of the concepts developed in Part 1.

Power, Inequality, and Institutional Discrimination. The key concepts for understanding the creation of slavery are power, inequality, and institutional discrimination. The plantation elite used its greater power resources to consign black Africans to an inferior status. The system of racial inequality was implemented and reinforced by institutionalized discrimination and became a central aspect of everyday life in the antebellum South. The legal and political institutions of colonial society were shaped to benefit the landowners and give them almost total control over their slaves.

Prejudice and RaciSM. What about the attitudes and feelings of the people involved? What was the role of personal prejudice? How and why did the ideology of anti-black racism start? As we discussed in Chapter 3, individual prejudice and ideological racism are not so important as *causes* of the creation of minority group status but are more the *results* of systems of racial inequality (Jordan, 1968, p. 80; Smedley, 1999, pp. 94–111). The colonists did not enslave black indentured servants because they were prejudiced or because they disliked blacks or thought them inferior. The decision to enslave black Africans was an attempt to resolve a labor supply problem. The primary roles of prejudice and racism in the creation of minority group status are to rationalize and "explain" the emerging system of racial and ethnic advantage (Wilson, 1973, pp. 76–78).

Prejudice and racism help to mobilize support for the creation of minority group status and to stabilize the system as it emerges. Prejudice and racism can provide convenient and convincing justifications for exploitation. They can help insulate a system like slavery from questioning and criticism and make it appear reasonable and even desirable. Thus, the intensity, strength, and popularity of anti-black southern racism actually reached its height almost 200 years after slavery began to emerge. During the early 1800s, the American abolitionist movement brought slavery under heavy attack, and in response, the ideology of anti-black racism was strengthened (Wilson, 1973, p. 79). The greater the opposition to a system of racial stratification or the greater the magnitude of the exploitation, the greater the need of the beneficiaries and their apologists to justify, rationalize, and explain.

Once created, dominant group prejudice and racism become widespread and common ways of thinking about the minority group. In the case of colonial slavery, anti-black beliefs and feelings became part of the standard package of knowledge, understanding, and truths shared by members of the dominant group. As the decades wore on and the institution of slavery solidified, prejudice and racism were passed on from generation to generation. For succeeding generations, anti-black prejudice became just another piece of information and perspective on the world learned during socialization. Anti-black prejudice and racism began as part of an attempt to control the labor of black indentured servants, became embedded in early American culture, and were established as integral parts of the socialization process for succeeding generations (see Myrdal's "vicious cycle" in Chapter 3).

These conceptual relationships are presented in Exhibit 4.4. Racial inequality arises from the contact situation, as specified in the Noel hypothesis. As the dominant-minority relationship begins to take shape, prejudice and racism develop as rationalizations. Over time, a vicious

# A Slave's Life

The memoirs of two escaped slaves, Henry Bibb and Harriet Jacobs, illustrate some of the features of southern slavery. Bibb was married and had a child when he escaped to the North, where he spent the rest of his life working for the abolition of slavery. The passage printed here gives an overview of his early life and expresses his commitment to freedom and his family. He also describes some of the abuses he and his family suffered under the reign of a particularly cruel master. Bibb was unable to rescue his daughter from slavery and agonizes over leaving her in bondage.

Narrative

Portrait 1

Harriet Jacobs grew up as a slave in Edenton, North Carolina, and in this excerpt, she recounts some of her experiences, especially the sexual harassment she suffered at the hand of her master. Her narrative illustrates the dynamics of power and sex in the "peculiar institution" and the very limited options she had for defending herself from the advances of her master. She eventually escaped from slavery by hiding in her grandmother's house for nearly 17 years and then making her way to the North.

## Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb

## **Henry Bibb**

I was born May 1815, of a slave mother, in Shelby County, Kentucky, and was claimed as the property of David White. I was brought up... or, more correctly speaking, I was flogged up; for where I should have received moral, mental, and religious instruction, I received stripes without number, the object of which was to degrade and keep me in subordination.... The first time I was separated from my mother, I was young and small.... I was... hired out to labor for various persons and all my wages were expended for the education of [my master's daughter]. It was then I first commenced seeing and feeling that I was a wretched slave, compelled to work under the lash without wages, and often without clothes to hide my nakedness....

All that I heard about liberty and freedom ... I never forgot. Among other good trades I learned the art of running away to perfection. I made a regular business of it, and never gave it up, until I had broken the bands of slavery, and landed myself safely in Canada, where I was regarded as a man, and not a thing.

[Bibb describes his childhood and adolescence, his early attempts to escape to the North, and his marriage to Malinda.] Not many months [later] Malinda made me a father. The dear little daughter was called Mary Frances. She was nurtured and caressed by her mother and father.... Malinda's business was to labor out in the field the greater part of her time, and there was no one to take care of poor little Frances.... She was left at the house to creep under the feet of an unmerciful old mistress, Mrs. Gatewood (the owner's wife). I recollect that [we] came in from the field one day and poor little Frances came creeping to her mother smiling, but with large tear drops standing in her dear little eves.... Her little face was bruised black with the whole print of Mrs. Gatewood's hand.... Who can imagine the feelings of a mother and father, when looking upon their infant child whipped and tortured with impunity, and they placed in a situation where they could afford it no protection? But we were all claimed and held as property; the father and mother were slaves!

On this same plantation, I was compelled to stand and see my wife shamefully scourged and abused by her master; and the manner in which this was done was so violent and inhuman that I despair in finding decent language to describe the bloody act of cruelty. My happiness or pleasure was all blasted; for it was sometimes a pleasure to be with my little family even in slavery. I loved them as my wife and child. Little Frances was a pretty child; she was quiet, playful, bright, and interesting.... But I could never look upon the dear child without being filled with sorrow and fearful apprehensions, of being separated by slaveholders, because she was a slave, regarded as property.... But Oh! When I remember that my daughter, my only child, is still there, ... it is too much to bear. If ever there was any one act of my life as a slave, that I have to lament over, it is that of being a father and a husband to slaves. I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am the father of only one slave. She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; poor unfortunate child. She was the first and shall be the last slave that ever I will father, for chains and slavery on this earth.

SOURCE: Osofsky, Gilbert (1969). *Puttin' On Ole Massa*, pp. 54–65, 80–81. New York: Harper & Row.

## Life as a Slave Girl

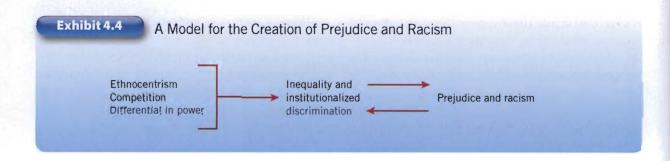
#### **Harriet Jacobs**

During the first years of my service in Dr. Flint's family, I was accustomed to share some indulgences with the children of my mistress. Though this seemed to me no more than right, I was grateful for it, and tried to merit the kindness by the faithful discharge of my duties. But I now entered on my fifteenth year—a sad epoch in the life of a slave girl. My master began to whisper foul words in my ear. Young as I was, I could not remain ignorant of their import. I tried to treat them with indifference or contempt. The master's age, my extreme youth, and the fear that misconduct would be reported to my grandmother made me bear this treatment for many months.

He was a crafty man, and resorted to many means to accomplish his purposes. Sometimes he had stormy, terrific ways, that made his victims tremble; sometimes he assumed a gentleness that he thought must surely subdue. Of the two, I preferred his stormy moods, although they left me trembling. He tried his utmost to corrupt the pure principles my grandmother had instilled. He peopled my young mind with unclean images, such as only a vile monster could think of. I turned from him with disgust and hatred. But he was my master. I was compelled to live under the same roof with him, where I saw a man forty years my senior daily violating the most sacred commandments of nature. He told me I was his property; that I must be subject to his will in all things. My soul revolted against the mean tyranny. But where could I turn for protection? No matter whether the slave girl be as black as ebony or as fair as her mistress. In either case, there is no shadow of law to protect her from insult, from violence, or even from death; all these are inflicted by fiends who bear the shape of men. The mistress, who ought to protect the helpless victim, has no other feelings towards her but those of jealousy and rage. The degradation, the wrongs, the vices that grow out of slavery, are more than I can describe. They are greater than you would willingly believe. Surely, if you credited on half the truths that are told you concerning the helpless millions suffering in this cruel bondage, you at the north would not help tighten the yoke. You surely would refuse to do for the master, on your own soil, the mean and cruel work which trained bloodhounds and the lowest class of whites do for him at the south.

SOURCE: Jacobs, Harriet (1987). Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself (Jean Yellin, Ed.), pp. 27–31. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Reprinted by the permission of the publishers from INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A SLAVE GIRL: WRITTEN BY HERSELF by Harriet Jacobs, edited and with an Introduction by Jean Fagan Yellin, pp. 27–31, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Copyright © 1987, 2000 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.



cycle develops as prejudice and racism reinforce the pattern of inequality between groups, which was the cause of prejudice and racism in the first place. Thus, the Blauner hypothesis states, the subordination of colonized minority groups is perpetuated through time.

Assimilation. There is an enormous literature on American slavery, and research on the nature and meaning of the system continues to this day. Many issues remain unsettled, however, and one of the more controversial, consequential, and interesting of these concerns the effect of slavery on the slaves.

Apologists for the system of slavery and some historians of the South writing early in the 20th century accepted the rationalizations inherent in anti-black prejudice and argued that slavery was actually beneficial for black Africans. According to this view, British-American slavery operated as a "school for civilization" (Phillips, 1918) that rescued savages from the jungles of Africa and exposed them to Christianity and Western civilization. Some argued that slavery was benevolent because it protected slaves from the evils and exploitation of the factory system of the industrial North. These racist views were most popular a century ago, early in the development of the social sciences. Since that time, scholars have established a number of facts (e.g., Western Africa, the area from which most slaves came, had been the site of a number of powerful, advanced civilizations) that make this view untenable by anyone but the most dedicated racist thinkers.

At the opposite extreme, slavery has been compared with Nazi concentration camps and likened to a "perverted patriarchy" that brainwashed, emasculated, and dehumanized slaves, stripping them of their heritage and culture. Historian Stanley Elkins provocatively argued this interpretation, now widely regarded as overstated, in his book *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (1959). Although his conclusions might be overdrawn, Elkins's argument and evidence are important for any exploration of the nature of American slavery. In fact, much of the scholarship on slavery since the publication of Elkins's book has been an attempt to refute or at least modify the points he made.

Still a third view of the impact of slavery maintains that through all the horror and abuse of enslavement, slaves retained a sense of self and a firm anchor in their African traditions. This point of view stresses the importance of kinship, religion, and culture in helping African Americans cope and has been presented most poignantly in Alex Haley's semifictional family history *Roots*, but it is also represented in the scholarly literature on slavery since Elkins (see Blassingame, 1972; Genovese, 1974).

The debate over the impact of slavery continues (see the Current Debates section at the end of this chapter), and we cannot hope to resolve the issues here. However, it is clear that African Americans, in Blauner's terms, were a "colonized" minority group who were extensively—and coercively—acculturated. Language acculturation began on the slave ships, where different tribal and language groups were mixed together to inhibit communication and lower the potential for resistance and revolt (Mannix, 1962).

The plantation elite and their agents needed to communicate with their workforce and insisted on using English. Within a generation or two, African language use died out. Some scholars argue that some African words and language patterns persist to the present day, but even if this is true, the significance of this survival is trivial compared with the coerced adoption of English. To the extent that culture depends on language, Africans under slavery experienced massive acculturation.

Acculturation through slavery was clearly a process that was forced on African Americans. Because they were a colonized minority group and unwilling participants in the system, they had little choice but to adjust to the conditions established by the plantation elite as best they could. Their traditional culture was suppressed, and their choices for adjustment to the system were sharply constrained. Black slaves developed new cultural forms and social relationships, but they did so in a situation with few options or choices (Blauner, 1972, p. 66). The extent to which any African cultural elements survived the institution of slavery is a matter of some controversy, but given the power differentials inherent in the system, African Americans had few choices regarding their manner of adjustment.

Gender Relations. Southern agrarian society developed into a complex social system stratified by race and gender as well as by class. The plantation elite, small in number but wealthy and politically powerful, was at the top of the structure. Most whites in the South were small farmers, and relatively few of them owned slaves. In 1860, for example, only 25% of all southern whites owned slaves (Franklin & Moss, 1994, p. 123).

The principal line of differentiation in the antebellum South was, of course, race, which was largely synonymous with slave versus nonslave status. Each of the racial groups was, in turn, stratified by gender. White women were subordinate to the males of the plantation elite, and the slave community echoed the patriarchal pattern of southern society, except that the degree of gender inequality among blacks was sharply truncated by the fact that slaves had little autonomy and few resources. At the bottom of the system were African American female slaves. Minority women are generally in double jeopardy, oppressed through their gender as well as their race. For black female slaves, the constraints were triple: "Black in a white society, slave in a free society, women in a society ruled by men, female slaves had the least formal power and were perhaps the most vulnerable group of antebellum America" (White, 1985, p. 15).

The race and gender roles of the day idealized southern white women and placed them on a pedestal. A romanticized conception of femininity was quite inconsistent with the roles women slaves were required to play. Besides domestic roles, female slaves also worked in the fields and did their share of the hardest, most physically demanding, least "feminine" farmwork. Southern ideas about feminine fragility and daintiness were quickly abandoned when they interfered with work and the profit to be made from slave labor (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 146). Reflecting their vulnerability and powerlessness, women slaves were sometimes used to breed more slaves to sell. They were raped and otherwise abused by the males of the dominant group. John Blassingame (1972) expresses their vulnerability to sexual victimization:

Many white men considered every slave cabin a house of ill-fame. Often through "gifts" but usually by force, white overseers and planters obtained the sexual favors of black women. Generally speaking, the women were literally forced to offer themselves "willingly" and receive a trinket for their compliance rather than a flogging for their refusal. (p. 83)

Note the power relationships implicit in this passage: Female slaves had little choice but to feign willing submission to their white owners.

The routines of work and everyday life differed for male and female slaves. Although they sometimes worked with the men, especially during harvest time, women more often worked in sex-segregated groups organized around domestic as well as farm chores. In addition to working in the fields, they attended the births and cared for the children of both races, cooked and cleaned, wove cloth and sewed clothes, and did the laundry. The women often worked longer hours than the men, doing housework and other chores long after the men retired (Robertson, 1996, p. 21; White, 1985, p. 122).

The group-oriented nature of their tasks gave female slaves an opportunity to develop same-sex bonds and relationships. Women cooperated in their chores, in caring for their children, in the maintenance of their quarters, and in myriad other domestic and family chores. These networks and interpersonal bonds could be used to resist the system. For example, slave women sometimes induced abortions rather than bring more children into bondage. They often controlled the role of midwife and were able to effectively deceive slave owners and disguise the abortions as miscarriages (White, 1985, pp. 125–126). The networks of relationships among the female slaves provided mutual aid and support for everyday problems, solace and companionship during the travails of a vulnerable and exploited existence, and some ability to buffer and resist the influence and power of the slave owners (Andersen, 1993, pp. 164–165).

Slaves in the American system were brutally repressed and exploited, but females were even more subordinated than males. Also, their oppression and exclusion sharply differentiated female slaves from white females. The white "Southern Belle," chaste, untouchable, and unremittingly virtuous, had little in common with African American women under slavery.

# The Creation of Minority Status for American Indians and Mexican Americans

Two other groups became minorities during the preindustrial period. In this section, we will review the dynamics of these processes and make some comparisons with African Americans. As you will see, both the Noel and Blauner hypotheses provide some extremely useful insights into these experiences.

# American Indians

As Europeans began to penetrate the New World, they encountered hundreds of societies that had lived on this land for thousands of years. American Indian societies were highly variable in culture, language, size, and subsistence technology. Some were small, nomadic hunter-gatherer bands, whereas others were more developed societies in which people lived in settled villages and tended large gardens. Regardless of their exact nature, the inexorable advance of white society eventually devastated them all. Contact began in the East and established a pattern of conflict and defeat for American Indians that continued until the last of the tribes were finally defeated in the late 1800s. The continual expansion of white society



into the West allowed many settlers to fulfill their dreams of economic self-sufficiency, but American Indians, who lost not only their lives and their land but also much of their traditional way of life, paid an incalculable price.

An important and widely unrecognized point about American Indians is that there is no such thing as the American Indian. Rather, there were—and are—hundreds of different tribes or nations, each with its own language, culture, home territory, and unique history. There are, of course, similarities from tribe to tribe, but there are also vast differences between, for example, the forest-dwelling tribes of Virginia, who lived in longhouses and cultivated gardens, and the nomadic Plains tribes, who relied on hunting to satisfy their needs. Each tribe was and remains a unique blend of language, values, and social structure. Because of space constraints, we will not always be able to take all these differences into account. Nonetheless, it is important to be aware of the diversity and sensitive to the variety of peoples and histories subsumed within the general category of American Indian.

A second important point is that many American Indian tribes no longer exist or are vastly diminished in size. When Jamestown was established in 1607, it is estimated that there were anywhere from 1 million to more than 10 million American Indians living in what became the United States. By 1890, when the Indian Wars finally ended, the number of American Indians had fallen to fewer than 250,000. By the end of the nearly 300-year-long "contact situation," American Indian populations had declined by 75% or more (Wax, 1971, p. 17; see also McNickle, 1973).

Very little of this population loss was due directly to warfare and battle casualties. The greatest part was caused by European diseases brought over by the colonists and by the destruction of the food supplies on which American Indian societies relied. American Indians died by the thousands from measles, influenza, smallpox, cholera, tuberculosis, and a variety of other infectious diseases (Wax, 1971, p. 17; see also Oswalt & Neely, 1996; Snipp, 1989). Traditional hunting grounds and garden plots were taken over by the

## Photo 4.5

Most American Indians lived in small bands and relied on hunting and gardening for their subsistence.

© Michael Lewis/Corbis.

expanding American society, and game such as the buffalo was slaughtered to the point of extinction. The result of the contact situation for American Indians very nearly approached genocide.

American Indians and the Noel and Blauner Hypotheses. We have already used the Noel hypothesis to analyze why American Indians were not enslaved during the colonial era. Their competition with whites centered on land, not labor, and the Indian nations were often successful in resisting domination (at least temporarily). As American society spread to the West, competition over land continued, and the growing power, superior technology, and greater resource base of the dominant group gradually pushed American Indians to near extinction.

Various attempts were made to control the persistent warfare, the most important of which occurred before independence from Great Britain. In 1763, the British Crown ruled that the various tribes were to be considered "sovereign nations with inalienable rights to their land" (see Lurie, 1982; McNickle, 1973; Wax, 1971). In other words, each tribe was to be treated as a nation-state, like France or Russia, and the colonists could not simply expropriate tribal lands. Rather, negotiations had to take place, and treaties of agreement had to be signed by all affected parties. The tribes had to be compensated for any loss of land.

This policy was often ignored but was continued by the newborn federal government after the American Revolution. The principle of sovereignty is important because it established a unique relationship between the federal government and American Indians. The fact that white society ignored the policy and regularly broke the treaties gives American Indians legal claims against the federal government that are also unique.

East of the Mississippi River, the period of open conflict was brought to a close by the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which dictated a policy of forced emigration to the tribes. The law required all eastern tribes to move to new lands west of the Mississippi. Some of the affected tribes went without resistance, others fought, and still others fled to Canada rather than move to the new territory. Regardless, the Indian Removal Act "solved" the Indian problem in the East. The relative scarcity of American Indians in the eastern United States continues to the present, and the majority of American Indians live in the western two thirds of the nation.

In the West, the grim story of competition for land accompanied by rising hostility and aggression repeated itself. Wars were fought, buffalo were killed, territory was expropriated, atrocities were committed on both sides, and the fate of the tribes became more and more certain. By 1890, the greater power and resources of white society had defeated the Indian nations. All of the great warrior chiefs were dead or in prison, and almost all American Indians were living on reservations controlled by agencies of the federal government. The reservations consisted of land set aside for the tribes by the government during treaty negotiations. Often, these lands were not the traditional homelands and were hundreds or even thousands of miles away from what the tribe considered to be "home." It is not surprising that the reservations were usually on undesirable, often worthless land.

The 1890s mark a low point in American Indian history, a time of great demoralization and sadness. The tribes had to find a way to adapt to reservation life and new forms of subordination to the federal government. Although elements of the tribal way of life have survived, the tribes were impoverished and without resources and had little ability to pursue their own interests. American Indians, in Blauner's terms, were a colonized minority group who faced high levels of prejudice, racism, and discrimination. Like African Americans, they were controlled by paternalistic systems (the reservations) and in a variety of ways were coercively acculturated. Furthermore, according to Blauner, the negative consequences of colonized minority group status will persist long after the contact situation has been resolved. As we will see in Chapter 8, there is a great deal of evidence to support this prediction.

Gender Relations. In the centuries before contact with Europeans, American Indian societies distributed resources and power in a wide variety of ways. At one extreme, some American Indian societies were highly stratified, and many practiced various forms of slavery. Others stressed equality, sharing of resources, and respect for the autonomy and dignity of each individual, including women and children (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 33). American Indian societies were generally patriarchal and followed a strict gender-based division of labor, but this did not necessarily mean that women were subordinate. In many tribes, women held positions of great responsibility and controlled the wealth. For example, among the Iroquois (a large and powerful federation of tribes located in the Northeast), women controlled the land and the harvest, arranged marriages, supervised the children, and were responsible for the appointment of tribal leaders and decisions about peace and war (Oswalt & Neely, 1996, pp. 404-405). It was not unusual for women in many tribes to play key roles in religion, politics, warfare, and the economy. Some women even became highly respected warriors and chiefs (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 36).

Gender relations were affected in a variety of ways during the prolonged contact period. In some cases, the relative status and power of women rose. For example, the women of the Navajo tribe (located mainly in what is now Arizona and New Mexico) were traditionally responsible for the care of herd animals and livestock. When the Spanish introduced sheep and goats into the region, the importance of this sector of the subsistence economy increased, and the power and status of women grew along with it.

In other cases, women were affected adversely. The women of the tribes of the Great Plains, for example, suffered a dramatic loss as a result of contact. The sexual division of labor in these tribes was that women were responsible for gardening, whereas men handled the hunting. When horses were introduced from Europe, the productivity of the male hunters was greatly increased. As their economic importance increased, males became more dominant and women lost status and power. Women in the Cherokee nation—a large tribe whose original homelands were in the Southeast—similarly lost considerable status and power under the pressure to assimilate. Traditionally, Cherokee land was cultivated, controlled, and passed down from generation to generation by the women. This matrilineal pattern was abandoned in favor of the European pattern of male ownership when the Cherokee attempted (futilely, as it turned out) to acculturate and avoid relocation under the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (Evans, 1989, pp. 12–18).

Summary. By the end of the contact period, the surviving American Indian tribes were impoverished, powerless, and clearly subordinate to white society and the federal government. Like African Americans, American Indians were sharply differentiated from the dominant group by race, and, in many cases, the tribes were internally stratified by gender. As was the case with African American slaves, the degree of gender inequality within the tribes was limited by their overall lack of autonomy and resources.

# **COMPARATIVE FOCUS**

## Hawaii

In 1788, while American Indians and whites continued their centuries-long struggle, white Europeans first made contact with the indigenous people of Hawaii. The contact situation and the



## Photo 4.6

A male dancer prepares for the Hula. Many elements of traditional Hawaiian culture survived the contact period.

© Richard A. Cooke/Corbis.

system of group relations that evolved on the island nation provide an interesting and instructive contrast with the history of American Indians.

In Hawaii, contact was not immediately followed by conquest and colonization. Early relations between Europeans and Hawaiians were organized around trade and commerce, not competition over the control of land or labor. Also, Hawaiian society was large and highly developed, and it had sufficient military strength to protect itself from the relatively few Europeans who came to the islands in the early days. Thus, two of the three conditions stated in the Noel hypothesis for the emergence of a dominantminority situation were not present in the early days of European-Hawaiian contact, and, consistent with the hypothesis, overt structures of conquest or dominance did not emerge until decades after first contact.

Contact with Europeans did bring other consequences, of course, including smallpox and other diseases to which native Hawaiians had no immunity. Death rates began to rise, and the population of native Hawaiians, which numbered about 300,000 in 1788, fell to less than 60,000 a century later (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 137). White Europeans gradually turned the land to commercial agriculture, and by the mid-1800s, white planters had established large sugar plantations, an enterprise that is extremely laborintensive and that has often been associated with systems of enforced labor and slavery (Curtin, 1990). By that time, however, there were not enough native Hawaiians to fill the demand for labor, and the planters began to recruit abroad, mostly in China, Portugal, Japan, Korea, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Native Hawaiians continued to shrink in numbers and were gradually pushed off their land and to the margins of the emerging society.

The white plantation owners came to dominate the island economy and political structure. Other groups, however, were not excluded from secondary structural assimilation. Laws banning entire groups from public institutions or practices such as school segregation are unknown in Hawaiian history. Americans of Japanese ancestry, for example, are very powerful in politics and have produced many of the leading Hawaiian politicians. Most other groups have taken advantage of the relative openness of Hawaiian society and have carved out niches for themselves in the institutional structure.

In the area of primary structural assimilation, rates of intermarriage among the various groups are much higher than on the mainland, reflecting an openness to intimacy across group lines that has characterized Hawaii since first contact. In particular, Native Hawaiians have intermarried freely with other groups (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 138–139).

Unlike the mainland society, Hawaii has no history of the most blatant and oppressive forms of group domination, racism, and legalized discrimination. Still, all is not perfect in this reputed racial paradise, and there is evidence of continuing ethnic and racial stratification, as well as prejudice and discrimination. In particular, Native Hawaiians today retain their minority group status. The group is quite small and numbers about 150,000, an increase from the historic lows of the 19th century but still only about 12% of the state's population and a tiny minority of U.S. population.

On the other hand, Native Hawaiians compare favorably with both American Indians and black Americans in terms of education, income, and poverty (see Exhibit 4.6). This relatively higher status today is consistent with both the Noel and Blauner hypotheses: They were not subjected to the harsh conditions (slavery, segregation, near genocide, and massive institutional discrimination) of the other two groups. Although they compare favorably to the two colonized and conquered groups, Native Hawaiians tend to be the poorest of the various ethnic and racial groups on the island, and a protest movement of Native Hawaiians that stresses selfdetermination and the return of illegally taken land has been in existence since at least the 1960s.



## Exhibit 4.6

Native Hawaiians Compared With Total Population, Black Americans, and American Indians, 2006

Indicator	Group			
	Total U.S. Population	Native Hawaiians	Black Americans	American Indians
High school graduate	84.1%	87.2%	79.6%	79.9%
College graduate	27.0%	14.1%	17.1%	15.7%
Median household income	\$48,451	\$50,877	\$32,465	\$36,011
Families in poverty	9.8%	12.4%	21.4%	19.2%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).

# Mexican Americans

As the population of the United States increased and spread across the continent, contact with Mexicans inevitably occurred. Spanish explorers and settlers had lived in what is now the south-western United States long before the wave of American settlers broke across this region. For example, Santa Fe, New Mexico, was founded in 1598, nearly a decade before Jamestown. As late as the 1820s, Mexicans and American Indians were almost the sole residents of the region.

In the early 1800s, four areas of Mexican settlement had developed, roughly corresponding to what was to become Texas, California, New Mexico, and Arizona. These areas were sparsely settled, and most Mexicans lived in what was to become New Mexico (Cortes, 1980,



p. 701). The economy of the regions was based on farming and herding. Most people lived in villages and small towns or on ranches and farms. Social and political life was organized around family and the Catholic Church and tended to be dominated by an elite class of wealthy landowners.

Texas. Some of the first effects of U.S. expansion to the West were felt in Texas early in the 1800s. Mexico was no military match for its neighbor to the north, and the farmland of East Texas was a tempting resource for the cotton-growing interests in the American South. Anglo-Americans began to immigrate to Texas in sizable numbers in the 1820s, and by 1835, they outnumbered Mexicans 6 to 1. The attempts by the Mexican government to control these immigrants were clumsy and ineffective and eventually precipitated a successful revolution by the Anglo-Americans, with some Mexicans also joining the rebels. At this point in time, competition between Anglos and Texans of Mexican descent (called Tejanos) was muted by the abundance of land and opportunity in the area. Population density was low, fertile

## Photo 4.7

A Mexican woman working in an onion field. Mexican labor has been vital for the development of the Southwest.

© Opbils.

land was readily available for all, and the "general tone of the time was that of inter-cultural cooperation" (Alvarez, 1973, p. 922).

Competition between Anglo-Texans and Tejanos became increasingly intense. When the United States annexed Texas in the 1840s, full-scale war broke out and Mexico was defeated. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, Mexico ceded much of the Southwest to the United States. In the Gadsden Purchase of 1853, the United States acquired the remainder of the territory that now composes the southwestern United States. As a result of these treaties, the Mexican population of this region had become, without moving an inch from their traditional villages and farms, both a conquered people and a minority group.

Following the war, intergroup relations continued to sour, and the political and legal rights of the Tejano community were often ignored in the hunger for land. Increasingly impoverished and powerless, the Tejanos had few resources with which to resist the growth of Anglo-American domination. They were badly outnumbered and stigmatized by the recent Mexican military defeat. Land that had once been Mexican increasingly came under Anglo control, and widespread violence and lynching reinforced the growth of Anglo dominance (Moquin & Van Doren, 1971, p. 253).

CalifOrnia. In California, the Gold Rush of 1849 spurred a massive population movement from the East. Early relations between Anglos and *Californios* (native Mexicans in the state)

had been relatively cordial, forming the basis for a multiethnic, bilingual state. The rapid growth of an Anglo majority after statehood in 1850 doomed these efforts, however, and the Californios, like the Tejanos, lost their land and political power.

Laws were passed encouraging Anglos to settle on land traditionally held by Californios. In such situations, the burden was placed on the Mexican American landowners to show that their deeds were valid. The Californios protested the seizure of their land but found it difficult to argue their cases in the English-speaking, Anglo-controlled court system. By the mid-1850s, a massive transfer of land to Anglo-American hands had taken place in California (Mirandé, 1985, pp. 20–21; see also Pitt, 1970).

Other laws passed in the 1850s made it increasingly difficult for Californios to retain their property and power as Anglo-Americans became the dominant group as well as the majority of the population. The area's Mexican heritage was suppressed and eliminated from public life and institutions such as schools and local government. For example, in 1855, California repealed a requirement in the state constitution that all laws be published in Spanish as well as English (Cortes, 1980, p. 706). Anglo-Americans used violence, biased laws, discrimination, and other means to exploit and repress Californios, and the new wealth generated by gold mining flowed into Anglo hands.

Arizona and New Mexico. The Anglo immigration into Arizona and New Mexico was less voluminous than that into Texas and California, and both states retained Mexican numerical majorities for a number of decades. In Arizona, most of the Mexican population were immigrants themselves, seeking work on farms, on ranches, in the mines, and on railroads. The economic and political structures of the state quickly came under the control of the Anglo population.

Only in New Mexico did Mexican Americans retain some political power and economic clout, mostly because of the relatively large size of the group and their skill in mobilizing for political activity. New Mexico did not become a state until 1912, and Mexican Americans continued to play a prominent role in governmental affairs even after statehood (Cortes, 1980, p. 706).

Thus, the contact situation for Mexican Americans was highly variable by region. Although some areas were affected more rapidly and more completely than others, the ultimate result was the creation of minority group status for Mexican Americans (Acuna, 1999; Alvarez, 1973; McLemore, 1973; McWilliams, 1961; Moore, 1970; Stoddard, 1973).

Mexican Americans and the Noel and Blauner Hypotheses. The causal model we have applied to the origins of slavery and the domination of American Indians also provides a way of explaining the development of minority group status for Mexican Americans. Ethnocentrism was clearly present from the very first contact between Anglo immigrants and Mexicans. Many American migrants to the Southwest brought with them the prejudices and racism they had acquired with regard to African Americans and American Indians. In fact, many of the settlers who moved into Texas came directly from the South in search of new lands for the cultivation of cotton. They readily transferred their prejudiced views to at least the poorer Mexicans, who were stereotyped as lazy and shiftless (McLemore, 1973, p. 664). The visibility of group boundaries was heightened and reinforced by physical and religious differences in skin color and other physical characteristics provided a convenient marker of group membership. In addition, the vast majority of Mexicans were Roman Catholic, whereas the vast majority of Anglo-Americans were Protestant.

Competition for land began with the first contact between the groups. However, for many years, population density was low in the Southwest, and the competition did not immediately or always erupt into violent domination and expropriation. Nonetheless, the loss of land and power for Mexican Americans was inexorable, although variable in speed.

The size of the power differential between the groups was variable and partly explains why domination was established faster in some places than others. In both Texas and California, the subordination of the Mexican American population followed quickly after a rapid influx of Anglos and the military defeat of Mexico. Anglo-Americans used their superior numbers and military power to acquire control of the political and economic structures and expropriate the resources of the Mexican American community. In New Mexico, the groups were more evenly matched in size, and Mexican Americans were able to retain a measure of power for decades.

Unlike the case of American Indians, however, the labor as well as the land of the Mexicans was coveted. On cotton plantations, ranches, and farms, and in mining and railroad construction, Mexican Americans became a vital source of inexpensive labor. During times of high demand, this labor force was supplemented by workers who were encouraged to emigrate from Mexico. When demand for workers decreased, these laborers were forced back to Mexico. Thus began a pattern of labor flow that continues to the present.

As in the case of African Americans and American Indians, the contact period clearly established a colonized status for Mexican Americans in all areas of the Southwest. Their culture and language were suppressed even as their property rights were abrogated and their status lowered. In countless ways, they, too, were subjected to coercive acculturation. For example, California banned the use of Spanish in public schools, and bullfighting and other Mexican sports and recreational activities were severely restricted (Moore, 1970, p. 19; Pitt, 1970). In contrast to African Americans, however, Mexican Americans were in close proximity to their homeland and maintained close ties with villages and families. Constant movement across the border with Mexico kept the Spanish language and much of the Mexican heritage alive in the Southwest. Nonetheless, 19th-century Mexican Americans fit Blauner's category of a colonized minority group, and the suppression of their culture was part of the process by which the dominant culture was established.

Anglo-American economic interests benefited enormously from the conquest of the Southwest and the colonization of the Mexican people. Growers and other businessmen came to rely on the cheap labor provided by Mexican Americans and immigrant and day laborers from Mexico. The region grew in affluence and productivity, but Mexican Americans were now outsiders in their own land and did not share in the prosperity. In the land grab of the 1800s and the conquest of the indigenous Mexican population lies one of the roots of Mexican Americans with the dominant U.S. society today.

Gender Relations. Prior to the arrival of Anglo-Americans, Mexican society in the Southwest was patriarchal and maintained a clear gender-based division of labor. These characteristics tended to persist after the conquest and the creation of minority group status.

Most Mexican Americans lived in small villages or on large ranches and farms. The women devoted their energies to the family, child rearing, and household tasks. As Mexican Americans were reduced to a landless labor force, women along with men suffered the economic devastation that accompanied military conquest by a foreign power. The kinds of jobs available to the men (mining, seasonal farmwork, railroad construction) often required them

to be away from home for extended periods of time, and women, by default, began to take over the economic and other tasks traditionally performed by males.

Poverty and economic insecurity placed the family structures under considerable strain. Traditional cultural understandings about male dominance and patriarchy became moot when the men were absent for long periods of time and the decision-making power of Mexican American women increased. Also, women were often forced to work outside the household for the family to survive economically. The economics of conquest led to increased matriarchy and more working mothers (Becerra, 1988, p. 149).

For Mexican American women, the consequences of contact were variable even though the ultimate result was a loss of status within the context of the conquest and colonization of the group as a whole. Like black female slaves, Mexican American women became the most vulnerable part of the social system.

# **Comparing Minority Groups**

American Indians and black slaves were the victims of the explosive growth of European power in the Western Hemisphere that began with Columbus's voyage in 1492. Europeans needed labor to fuel the plantations of the mid-17th-century American colonies and settled on slaves from Africa as the most logical, cost-effective means of resolving their labor supply problems. Black Africans had a commodity the colonists coveted (labor), and the colonists subsequently constructed a system to control and exploit this commodity.

To satisfy the demand for land created by the stream of European immigrants to North America, the threat represented by American Indians had to be eliminated. Once their land was expropriated, American Indians ceased to be of much concern. The only valuable resource they possessed—their land—was under the control of white society by 1890, and American Indians were thought to be unsuitable as a source of labor.

Mexico, like the United States, had been colonized by a European power, in this case, Spain. In the early 1800s, the Mexican communities in the Southwest were a series of outpost settlements, remote and difficult to defend. Through warfare and a variety of other aggressive means, Mexican citizens living in this area were conquered and became an exploited minority group

African Americans, American Indians, and Mexican Americans, in their separate ways, became involuntary players in the growth and development of European and, later, American economic and political power. None of these groups had much choice in their respective fates; all three were overpowered and relegated to an inferior, subordinate status. Many views of assimilation (such as the "melting pot" metaphor discussed in Chapter 2) have little relevance to these situations. These minority groups had little control over their destinies, their degree of acculturation, or even their survival as groups. These three groups were coercively acculturated in the context of paternalistic relations in an agaratian economy. Meaningful integration (structural assimilation) was not a real possibility, especially for African Americans and American Indians. In Milton Gordon's (1964) terms (see Chapter 2), we might characterize these situations as "acculturation without integration" or structural pluralism. Given the grim realities described in this chapter, Gordon's terms seem a little antiseptic, and Blauner's concept of colonized minority groups seems far more descriptive.

# CURRENT DEBATES

# How Did Slavery Affect the Origins of African American Culture?

A debate over the impact of slavery on African American culture began in the 1960s and continues to the present day. Stanley Elkins, in his 1959 book Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life, laid down the terms of the debate. Elkins concluded Ibat African American culture in the United States was created in response to the repressive plantation system and in the context of brutalization, total control of the slaves by their owners, and debumanization. He argued that black culture was "made in America." but in an abnormal, even pathological social setting. The plantation was a sick society that dominated and infantilized black slaves. The dominant reality for slaves-and the only significant other person in their lives-was the master. Elkins described the system as a "perverted patriarchy" that psychologically forced the slaves to identify with their oppressors and to absorb the racist values at the core of the structure.

Elkins's book bas been called "a work of great intellectual audacity, based on a metbodology which bas little connection with conventional historical research and arriving at conclusions which were challenging or outrageous, according to one's point of view" (Parish, 1989, p. 7). The book stimulated an enormous amount of controversy and research on the impact of slavery and the origins of African American culture. This body of research developed new sources of evidence and new perspectives and generally concluded that African American culture is a combination of elements, some from the traditional cultures of Africa and others fabricated on the plantation. The selection that follows the one by Elkins, from the work of bistorian William Piersen, illustrates this argument and focuses on West African and African American family customs.

A third view is presented in an excerpt from the writings of Deborab Gray White. She argues that most scholarly work on slavery is written from the perspective of the male slave only, to the point of excluding the Jemale experience. In the passage from her 1985 book Ar'n't 1 a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South, she also addresses the problems of research in the area of minority group females and summarizes some of what has been learned from recent scholarship on the impact of slavery.

All three of these views are consistent with Blauner's idea that the cultures of colonized minority groups are attacked and that the groups are forcibly acculturated. Elkins's argument is the most extreme in that it sees African American culture as fabricated entirely in response to the demands of enslavement and the fearful, all-powerful figure of the master.

## Slavery Created African American Culture

## STANLEY ELKINS

Both [the Nazi concentration camps and the American slave plantations] were closed systems from which all standards based on prior connections had been effectively detached. A working adjustment to either system required a childlike conformity, a limited choice of "significant other." Cruelty per se cannot be considered the primary key to this; of far greater importance was the simple "closedness" of the system, in which all lines of authority descended from the master and in which alternative social bases that might have supported alternative standards were systematically suppressed. The individual, consequently, for his very psychic security, had to picture his master in some way as the "good father," even when, as in the concentration camp, it made no sense at all.

For the Negro child, in particular, the plantation offered no really satisfactory father image other than the master. The "real" father was virtually without authority over his child, since discipline, parental responsibility, and control of rewards and punishments all rested in other hands; the slave father could not even protect the mother of his children.

From the master's viewpoint, slaves had been defined in law as property, and the master's power over his property must be absolute.... Absolute power for him meant absolute dependency for the slave—the dependency not of the developing child but of the perpetual child. For the master, the role most aptly fitting such a relationship would naturally be that of father.

SOURCE: Elkins, Stanley (1959). *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*, pp. 130–131. New York: Universal Library.

## African American Culture Was Created by an Interplay of Elements From Africa and America

## WILLIAM D. PIERSEN

In the colonial environment, ... [African and European] traditions were fused.... The result was an unprecedented and unintended new multicultural American way of life....

[Africans] had little choice [but this] adjustment was not as difficult ... as we might suppose: the cultures of Africa and Europe were both dominated by the rhythms and sensibilities of a premodern, agricultural way of life shaped more by folk religion than by science, and domestic responsibilities were relatively similar on both continents....

One of the greatest sacrifices that faced the new African Americans was the loss of the extended families that had structured most social relationships in Africa.... [African marriage customs were usually polygynous (permitting more than one wife) and patrilineal (tracing ancestry through the male side).] With marriage, most African Americans seem ... to have settled quickly into Euro-American style, monogamous nuclear families that trace inheritance bilaterally through the lines of both parents. Nonetheless, colonial naming choices show the continuing importance of African ideas of kinship among African Americans, for black children were more commonly ... named after recently deceased relatives, a practice rooted in the African belief of rebirth across generations....

African Americans ... tried to rebuild as best they could the social cohesion once provided by the now missing extended families of Africa. [They] tried to duplicate some of the kinship ... functions ... by forging close relationships with their countrymen and shipmates from the Middle Passage.... [Many] treated both the blacks and whites that lived with them ... as a kind of artificial kin....

In North America many white colonials soon gave up traditional European village residence patterns to move out individually on the land, but African Americans, when they had the choice, generally preferred to stay together.... Such communalism [was] a reflection of the value that Africans and African Americans put on collective living.

In West Africa kin groups gathered in their housing together in large compounds that featured centralized open spaces devoted to social functions and collective recreation. Husbands and wives within the compounds usually had their own separate family quarters.... In colonial African American housing the old ways were maintained....[In early-18th-century Virginia] most slaves lived in clusterings of more than 10 people. In these quarters, black social life was centered not on the interior of the small dark sleeping structures but outside on the common space devoted to social functions.

SOURCE: Piersen, William D. (1996). From Africa to America: African American History From the Colonial Era to the Early Republic, 1526–1790. New York: Twayne.

## The Experiences of Female Slaves Have Been Under-researched and Under-reported

## **DEBORAH GRAY WHITE**

Stanley Elkins began [the debate] by alleging that the American slave master had such absolute power and authority over the bondsman that the slave was reduced to childlike dependency. "Sambo," Elkins argued, was more than a product of Southern fantasy. He could not be dismissed as a "stereotype."

Elkins' thesis had a profound effect upon the research and writing of the history of slavery. The direction that the research took, however, was in large part predetermined because Elkins' slavery defined the parameters of the debate. In a very subtle way these parameters had more to do with the nature of male slavery than with female slavery....

John Blassingame's *The Slave Community* is a classic but much of it deals with male status. For instance, Blassingame stressed the fact that many masters recognized the male as the head of the family. He observed that during courtship, men flattered women and exaggerated their prowess. There was, however, little discussion of the reciprocal activities of slave women. Blassingame also

described how slave men gained status in the family and slave community, but did not do the same for women....

The reality of slave life gives us reason to suspect that we do black women a disservice when we rob them of a history that placed them at the side of their men in their race's struggle for freedom. The present study takes a look at slave women and argues that they were not submissive, subordinate, or prudish and they were not expected to be so. Women had different roles from those of men and they also had a great deal in common with their African foremothers, who held positions not inferior but complementary to those of men....

Source material on the general nature of slavery exists in abundance, but it is very difficult to find source material about slave women in particular. Slave women are everywhere, yet nowhere....

The source problem is directly related to what was and still is the black woman's condition. Every economic and political index demonstrated the black woman's virtual powerlessness in American society. A consequence of the double jeopardy and powerlessness is the black woman's invisibility....

The history of slavery has come a long way. We have learned that race relations were never so clear-cut as to be solely a matter of white over black, but that in the assimilation of culture, in the interaction of blacks and whites, there were gray areas and relationships more aptly described in terms of black over white. We have also begun to understand that despite the brutality and inhumanity, or perhaps because of it, a distinct African American culture based on close-knit kinship relationships grew and thrived, and that it was this culture that sustained black people through many trials before and after emancipation.

SOURCE: White, Deborah Gray (1985). Ar'n'11a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South, pp. 17–18. New York: Norton.

# Week 5:

# SCHAEFER:

Native Americans

# GALE ENCYCLOPEDIA:

Cherokees, Navajos





## CHAPTER OUTLINE

Early European Contacts Treaties and Warfare Ruling the Native Americans Reservation Life and Federal Policies Collective Action

Sovereignty

Native Americans Today

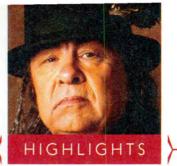
RESEARCH FOCUS Learning the Navajo Way

LISTEN TO OUR VOICES "The Scalpel and the Silver Bear"

by Lori Arviso Alvord

## Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/ Critical Thinking/Internet Connections— Research Navigator™



HE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF NORTH AMERICA WERE THE first to be subordinated by the Europeans. The Native Americans who survived contact with the Non-Indian people usually were removed, often far away, from their ancestral homes. The U.S. government weakened tribal institutions through a succession of acts, beginning with the Allotment Act of 1887. Even efforts to strengthen tribal autonomy, such as the 1934 Reorganization Act, did so by encouraging Native Americans to adopt White society's way of life. The modern period of Native American–Non-Indian relations is much the same, as shown by such measures as the Termination Act and the Employment Assistance Program. Today, the pan-Indian movements speak for a diverse Native American people with many needs: settlement of treaty violations, economic development, improved

educational programs, effective health care, religious and spiritual freedom, control over natural resources, and greater self-rule. he computer says "Zik" followed by "Cax sep." This is not the latest space adventure from the local arcade but instead the words for "squirrel" and "eagle" as spoken by a Ho-Chunk elder. Preschoolers gather around the computer at a Head Start program in Wisconsin, where Ho-Chunk children learn the language of their tribe. The Ho-Chunk, formerly known as the Winnebago tribe, are using modern technology to keep their language and, therefore, their culture alive. The challenge is immense, as Two Bears, an anthropologist who works at the tribe's cultural center, observes:

There was a whole generation by the 1980s that didn't know a word. Turning that around will be a long process—we figure it'll take two years to advance our language curriculum up one grade level in the schools that Ho-chunk kids attend. (Salopek 1996, 2)

It is critical to use schools to restore the Ho-Cak language of the Ho-Chunk people. Only 350 of the 6,200 tribal members speak their language fluently, and none of them have young children of their own (Kozlowicz 2001).

The concern of the Ho-Chunk tribal elders is also faced by most of the tribes in the United States. It is estimated that children are actively learning only 20 of the surviving 154 Native American languages. While much of the country debates the need for a larger percentage of new immigrants to master English, the first Americans' major concern is maintaining the tie to their linguistic past and making it a viable part of the present. In Chicago, adult students gather to learn the languages of their tribes, Kalota and Ojibwee, and in Window Rock, Arizona, the 1996 Super Bowl was broadcast in Navajo for the first time. All these efforts and many more are aimed at maintaining tribal identity within American society (Brooke 1998; Mitchel 1996; Reyhner 2001a).



Education on reservations stresses American Indian and tribal culture more than in the past. Pictured is a classroom on the Crow Reservation in Montana.



Although our focus in this chapter is on the Native American experience in the United States, the pattern of land seizure, subjugation, assimilation, and resistance to domination has been repeated with indigenous people in nations throughout the world. Indeed, in Chapter 16, we will consider the experiences of the tribal people in Mexico and Canada. Hawaiians, another native people who fell under the political, economic, and cultural control of the United States, are considered in Chapter 12. Indigenous peoples on almost every continent are familiar with the patterns of subjugation and the pressure to assimilate. So widespread is this oppression that the United Nations (1997) and even its precursor organization, the League of Nations, have repeatedly considered this issue.

The common term *American Indians* tells us more about the Europeans who explored North America than it does about the native people. The label reflects the initial explorers' confusion in believing that they had arrived in "the Indies" of the Asian continent. However, reference to the diversity of tribal groups either by American Indians or Native Americans comes as a result of the forced subordination to the dominant group.

It is estimated that there were 2,357,544 Native Americans/Alaskan natives in the United States in 2006. This represents an increase of about 40 percent over the 1990s. In addition to this 2.4 million people who gave American Indian or Alaskan Native as their sole racial identification, there were another 1.4 million people who listed multiple responses that included American Indian. As was shown in Figure 1.8, American Indian and White was the most common dual racial response given in Census 2000 (American Community Survey 2006).

# **Early European Contacts**

The Native Americans have been misunderstood and ill-treated by their conquerors for several centuries. Assuming that he had reached the Indies, Christopher Columbus called them "people of India." The European immigrants who followed Columbus did not understand them any more than the Native Americans could have anticipated the destruction of their way of life. But the Europeans had superior weaponry, and the diseases they brought wiped out huge numbers of indigenous people throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The first explorers of the Western Hemisphere came long before Columbus and Leif Eriksson. The ancestors of today's Native Americans were hunters in search of wild game, including mammoths and long-horned bison. For thousands of years, these people spread through the Western Hemisphere, adapting to its many physical environments. Hundreds of cultures evolved, including the complex societies of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec (Deloria 1995, 2004).

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe the many tribal cultures of North America, let alone the ways of life of Native Americans in Central and South America and the islands of the Caribbean. We must appreciate that the term *Indian culture* is a convenient way to gloss over the diversity of cultures, languages, religions, kinship systems, and political organizations that existed—and, in many instances, remain among the peoples referred to collectively as Native Americans or American Indians. For example, in 1500, an estimated 700 distinct languages were spoken in the area north of Mexico. For simplicity's sake, we will refer to these many cultures as Native American, but we must be always mindful of the differences this term conceals. Similarly, we will refer to non–Native Americans as Non-Indians recognizing in this context this term encompasses many groups, including Whites, African Americans, and Hispanics in some instances (J. Schwartz 1994; Swagerty 1983). Columbus commented in his diary, "It appears to me that the people [of the New World] are ingenious and would be good servants.... These people are very unskilled in arms.... With fifty men they could all be subjected to do all that one wishes" (Akwesasne Notes 1972, 22). The words of the first European explorer were prophetic. The period between initial European contact and the formation of the United States was characterized by cultural and physical conflict between Native Americans and Whites.

The number of Native Americans north of the Rio Grande, estimated at about 10 million in 1500, gradually decreased as their food sources disappeared and they fell victim to diseases such as measles, smallpox, and influenza. By 1800 the Native American population was about 600,000, and by 1900 it had been reduced to less than 250,000. This loss of human life can only be judged as catastrophic. The United States does not bear total responsibility. The pattern had been well established by the early Spaniards in the Southwest and by the French and English colonists who sought to gain control of the eastern seaboard. As Figure 6.1 reminds us, there were many tribal nations here for many centuries before European contact (Edmonds 1995).

Native Americans did have warfare between tribes, which presumably reduces the guilt for European-initiated warfare. However, their conflicts differed significantly from those of the conquerors. The Europeans launched large campaigns against the tribes, resulting in mass mortality. In contrast, in the Americas, the tribes limited warfare to specific campaigns designed for very specific purposes, such as recapturing a resource or avenging a loss.

Not all the initial contacts led to deliberate loss of life. Some missionaries traveled well in advance of settlement in efforts to Christianize the Native Americans before they came into contact with other less-tolerant Europeans. Fur trappers, vastly outnumbered by Native Americans, were forced to learn their customs, but these trappers established routes of commerce that more and more Whites were to follow (Snipp 1989; Swagerty 1983; Thornton 1991).

Gradually, the policies directed from Europe toward the indigenous peoples of North America resembled the approach described in the world systems theory. As introduced in Chapter 1, the **world systems theory** takes the view that the global economic system is divided between nations that control wealth and those that provide natural resources and labor. The indigenous peoples and, more important to the Europeans, the land they occupied were regarded as targets of exploitation by Spain, England, France, Portugal, and other nations with experience as colonizers in Africa and Asia (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1998).

# **Treaties and Warfare**

The United States formulated a policy during the nineteenth century toward Native Americans that followed the precedents established during the colonial period. The government policy was not to antagonize the Native Americans unnecessarily. Yet if the needs of tribes interfered with the needs, or even the whims, of Whites, Whites were to have precedence. For example, the exploits of the Forty-Niners, the nineteenth-century gold miners in northern California, have been long glorified. However, 150,000 native people inhabited the areas they entered near Sacramento. Authorities offered bounties to the settlers for the heads of American Indians, and the state spent about \$1 million to reimburse people for the bullets used to shoot them. Within twenty-five years, the native population had plummeted to about 30,000 (Ybarra 1996).

By this time, the tribes were viewed as separate nations, to be dealt with by treaties arrived at through negotiations with the federal government. Fair-minded as that policy might seem, it was clear from the very beginning that the Non-Indian people's gov-

#### world systems theory

A view of the global economic system as divided between nations that control wealth and those that provide natural resources and labor.





FIGURE 6.1 Eurocentric and Native American Views of Expansionism

Students typically are presented with a view that the United States gained its lands through settlement and from Mexico, Spain, France, and Great Britain. This depiction glosses over the land held by tribal groups.

Source: Maps from Atlas of American History, © 1993 by Rand McNally, R.L. #04-S-104. Reprinted by permission of Rand McNally.

ernment would deal harshly with the tribal groups that refused to agree to treaties. Federal relations with the Native Americans were the responsibility of the secretary of war. Consequently, when the Bureau of Indian Affairs was created in 1824 to coordinate the government's relations with the tribes, it was placed in the War Department. The government's primary emphasis was on maintaining peace and friendly relations along the frontier. Nevertheless, as settlers moved the frontier westward, they encroached more and more on land that Native Americans had inhabited for centuries.



By Jeff Kerr © 1999 Indian Country Today.

The Indian Removal Act, passed in 1830, called for the relocation of all Eastern tribes across the Mississippi River. The Removal Act was very popular with Whites because it opened more land to settlement through annexation of tribal land. Almost all Whites felt that the Native Americans had no right to block progress, defining progress as movement by White society. Among the largest groups relocated were the five tribes of the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Seminole, who were resettled in what is now Oklahoma. The movement, lasting more than a decade, has been called the Trail of Tears because the tribes left their ancestral lands under the harshest conditions. Poor planning, corrupt officials, little attention to those ill from a variety of epidemics, and inadequate supplies characterized the forced migration (Remini 2001).

The Removal Act disrupted Native American cultures but didn't move the tribes far enough or fast enough to stay out of the path of the ever-advancing White settlers. After the Civil War, settlers moved westward at an unprecedented pace. The federal government negotiated with the many tribes but primarily enacted legislation that affected them with minimal consultation. The government's first priority was almost always to allow the settlers to live and work regardless of Native American claims.

### The Case of the Sioux

The nineteenth century was devastating for every Native American tribe in the areas claimed by the United States. No tribe was the same after federal policy touched it. The treatment of the Great Sioux Nation was especially cruel and remains fresh in the minds of tribal members even today.

In an effort to safeguard White settlers, the United States signed the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 with the Sioux, then under the leadership of Red Cloud. The government agreed to keep Whites from hunting or settling on the newly established Great Sioux Reservation, which included all of the land that is now South Dakota west of the Missouri River. In exchange, the Sioux relinquished most of the remaining land they occupied at that time. The first few years saw relative peace, except for some raids by warrior bands under the leadership of medicine man Sitting Bull. Red Cloud even made a much-publicized trip to Washington and New York in 1870.

A flood of Non-Indian people eventually entered the Sioux territory, spurred on by Colonel George Custer's exaggerated 1874 reports of gold in the Black Hills. Hostilities followed, and bands of Native Americans were ordered to move during the winter, when travel was impossible. When the Sioux failed to move, Custer moved in to pacify them and the neighboring Cheyenne. Relying on Crow scouts, Custer underestimated the strength of the Sioux warriors under the leadership of Crazy Horse. The ensuing Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876 was the last great Sioux victory. After the battle, the large encampment of warriors scattered throughout the plains into small bands, which were defeated one by one by a Congress and an Army more determined than ever to subdue the Sioux.



In this famous Alexander Gardner photograph at the time of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty talks the military leaders are identified by name, shown sitting on chairs, and facing the camera. Reflecting the hierarchy of the situation, tribal leaders are not identified, seated on the ground and with their backs to the camera.

In 1876, the Sioux reluctantly sold the Black Hills and agreed to the reduction of the Great Sioux Reservation to five much smaller ones. The Sioux, unable to hunt game as they traditionally had, found life unbearable on the reservation. They sought escape through the supernatural: the Ghost Dance. The Ghost Dance was a religion that included dances and songs proclaiming the return of the buffalo and the resurrection of dead ancestors in a land free of Non-Indian people. The religion soon became what social scientists call a **millenarian movement**, a movement founded on the belief that a cataclysmic upheaval would occur in the immediate future, followed by collective salvation. The movement originated among the Paiutes of Nevada and, ironically, spread northward to the Plains Indians via the cornerstone of the government's assimilationist policy: the schools. The English that Native Americans learned in the mission or government schools gave them the means to overcome the barriers of tribal languages and communicate with one another. By 1890, about 65 percent of the tribes in the West, according to sociologist Russell Thornton (1981), were involved in this movement.

From a functionalist perspective, this millenarian movement can be viewed as a means of coping with the domination of Non-Indian intruders. Although the Ghost Dance was harmless to Whites, they feared that the new tribal solidarity encouraged by the movement would lead to renewed warfare. As a result, more troops were summoned to areas where the Ghost Dance had become popular.

In late December 1890, anticipating that a massive Ghost Dance would be staged, a cavalry division arrived at an encampment of Teton Sioux at Wounded Knee Creek on the Pine Ridge, South Dakota, reservation. When the soldiers began to disarm the warriors, a random shot was fired at the soldiers, touching off a close-range battle. The cavalry then turned its artillery on men, women, and children. Approximately 300 Sioux and 25 government soldiers were killed in the ensuing fighting, which is now called the Battle of Wounded Knee. One Sioux witness later recalled, "We tried to run, but they shot us like we were a buffalo. I know there are some good white people, but the soldiers must be mean to shoot children and women" (D. Brown 1971, 417).

For the federal government, what it considered the Indian problem remained. Despite the effects of disease and warfare, nearly 250,000 Indians still lived, according to the 1890 census. The reservation system constructed in the last decades of the nineteenth century to provide settlements for Native American peoples has formed the basis of the relationship of Native Americans to the government from then until the present. millenarian movements Movements, such as the Ghost Dance, that prophesy a cataclysm in the immediate future, to be followed by collective salvation.

### internal colonialism

The treatment of subordinate peoples as colonial subjects by those in power.

# **Ruling the Native Americans**

Along with the military defeat of the tribes, the federal government tried to limit the functions of tribal leaders. If tribal institutions were weakened, it was felt, the Native Americans would assimilate more rapidly. The government's intention to merge the various tribes into White society was unmistakably demonstrated in the 1887 Dawes, or General Allotment, Act. This failure to assist Native American people was followed by a somewhat more admirable effort: the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The Allotment Act and the Reorganization Act established the government's paternalistic approach.

The more significant federal actions that continue up to the present are summarized in Table 6.1.

These early policies also reflect the oppression of **internal colonialism**. As we presented in Chapter 1, internal colonialism is the treatment of subordinate groups like colonial subjects by those in power. Native Americans found themselves to be the subordinate group on land that they once occupied alone. Now they were being treated like a colonized people by the newly formed government, which itself had successfully broken from the colonial hold of Great Britain. Ironically, the former colony was practicing internal colonialism toward the indigenous people of the new land.

## The Allotment Act

The Allotment Act of 1887 bypassed tribal leaders and proposed to make individual landowners of tribal members. Each family was given up to 160 acres under the government's assumption that, with land, they would become more like the White homesteaders who were then flooding the not-yet-settled areas of the West.

The effect of the Allotment Act on the Native Americans was disastrous. To guarantee that they would remain homesteaders, the act prohibited their selling the land for 25 years. Yet no effort was made to acquaint them with the skills necessary to make the land productive. Many tribes were not accustomed to cultivating land and, if anything, considered such labor undignified, and they received no assistance in adapting to homesteading.

## TABLE 6.1

Year	Policy	Central Feature Relocated Eastern tribes westward			
1830	Removal Act				
1887	Allotment Act	Tribal lands subdivided into individual household plots			
1934	Reorganization Act	Required tribes to develop election-based governments and leaders			
1934	Johnson-O'Malley Act	Aid to public school districts with Native American enrollments			
1946	Indian Claims Commission	Adjudicates litigation by tribes against the federal government			
1952	Employment Assistance Program	Relocates reservation people to urban areas for jobs			
1953	Termination Act	Closes reservations and their federal services			
1971	Alaska Native Settlement Act	Recognizes legally the lands of tribal people			
1986	Indian Gaming Regulation Act	States can negotiate gaming rights to reservations			
1990	Native American Graves and Repatriation Act	Return of native remains to tribes with authentic claims			
1990	Indian Arts and Crafts Act	Monitors authenticity of crafts			
1994	American Indian Religious Freedom Act	Seeks to protect tribal spirituality including use of peyote			



173

Much of the land initially deeded under the Allotment Act eventually came into the possession of White landowners. The land could not be sold legally, but it could be leased with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) serving as the trustee. In this role, the federal government took legal title that included the duty to collect on behalf of the tribal members any revenues generated by non-Indians through mining, oil, timber operations, grazing, or similar activities. The failure of the government to carry this out has been an issue for well over a century.

Large parcels of land eventually fell into the possession of non-Indians. For Native Americans who managed to retain the land, the BIA required that, upon the death of the owner, the land be divided equally among all descendants, regardless of tribal inheritance customs. In documented cases, this division resulted in as many as 30 people trying to live off an 80-acre plot of worthless land. By 1934, Native Americans had lost approximately 90 million of the 138 million acres in their possession before the Allotment Act. The land left was generally considered worthless for farming and marginal even for ranching.

The sad legacy of the Allotment Act lives on in the *Corbell* lawsuit. This investigation into the government mishandling of billions of dollars of trust money will be considered later when we look at contemporary land claims (Blackfeet Reservation Development Fund 2006; Deloria and Lytle 1983).

## The Reorganization Act

The assumptions behind the Allotment Act and the missionary activities of the nineteenth century were that it was best for Native Americans to assimilate into the White society, and each individual was best considered apart from his or her tribal identity. Very gradually, in the twentieth century, government officials have accepted the importance of tribal identity. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, known as the Wheeler-Howard Act, recognized the need to use, rather than ignore, tribal identity. But assimilation, rather than movement toward a pluralistic society, was still the goal.

Many provisions of the Reorganization Act, including revocation of the Allotment Act, benefited Native Americans. Still, given the legacy of broken treaties, many tribes at first distrusted the new policy. Under the Reorganization Act, tribes could adopt a written constitution and elect a tribal council with a head. This system imposed foreign values and structures. Under it, the elected tribal leader represented an entire reservation, which might include several tribes, some hostile to one another. Furthermore, the leader had to be elected by majority rule, a concept alien to many tribes. Many full-blooded Native Americans resented the provision that mixed-bloods were to have full voting rights. The Indian Reorganization Act did facilitate tribal dealings with government agencies, but the dictating to Native Americans of certain procedures common to White society and alien to the tribes was another sign of forced assimilation.

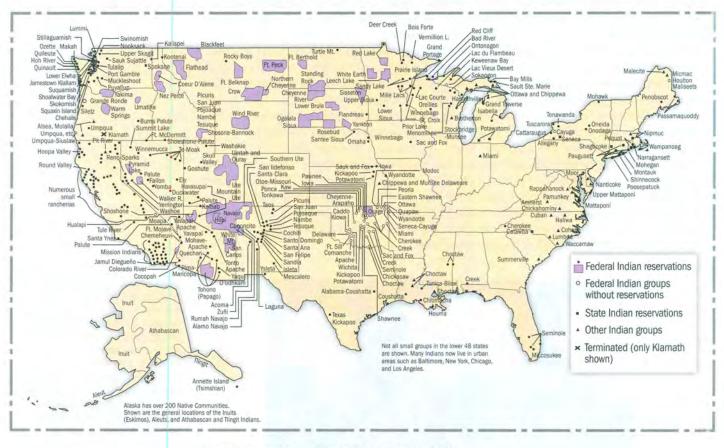


Tribal people have generally been supportive of a strong military. Fittingly, the first casualty of the War in Iraq was Lori Pestewa, shown on the right, a Hopi woman of Hispanic descent. On the left is her friend Jessica Lynch, whose capture and subsequent rescue made the headlines while Pestewa's death largely went unnoticed outside the Native American community. As had been true of earlier government reforms, the Reorganization Act sought to assimilate Native Americans into the dominant society on the dominant group's terms. In this case, the tribes were absorbed within the political and economic structure of the larger society. Apart from the provision about tribal chairmen who were to oversee reservations with several tribes, the Reorganization Act solidified tribal identity. Unlike the Allotment Act, it recognized the right of Native Americans to approve or reject some actions taken on their behalf. The act still maintained substantial non–Native American control over the reservations. As institutions, the tribal governments owed their existence not to their people but to the BIA. These tribal governments rested at the bottom of a large administrative hierarchy (Cornell 1984; Deloria 1971; McNickle 1973; Washburn 1984; Wax and Buchanan 1975).

In 2000, on the 175th anniversary of the BIA, its director, Kevin Guer, a Pawnee, declared that it was "no occasion for celebration as we express our profound sorrow for what the agency has done in the past." A formal apology followed (Stout 2000).

# **Reservation Life and Federal Policies**

Today, over one-third of Native Americans live on 557 reservations and trust lands in 33 states, which account for a bit more than 2 percent of the land throughout the United States. Even for those residing far away from the tribal lands, the reservations play a prominent role in the identity of the Native American peoples (Ogunwole 2006) (Figure 6.2).





Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs 1986, 12-13.

More than any other segment of the population, with the exception of the military, the reservation Native American finds his or her life determined by the federal government. From the condition of the roads to the level of fire protection to the quality of the schools, the federal government through such agencies as the BIA and the Public Health Service effectively controls reservation life. Tribes and their leaders are now consulted more than in the past, but the ultimate decisions rest in Washington, DC, to a degree that is not true for the rest of the civilian population.

As early as April 1954, an editorial in the *Washington Post* expressed approval of efforts of the federal government to "get out of the Indian business." Many of the policies instituted by the BIA in the 20th century have been designed with this purpose in mind. Most Native Americans and their organizations do not quarrel with this goal. They may only wish that the government and the White people had never gotten into Indian business in the first place. Disagreement between the BIA and the tribes and among Native Americans themselves has focused on how to reduce federal control and subsidies, not on whether they should be reduced. The government has taken three steps in this direction since World War II. Two of these measures have been the formation of the Indian Claims Commission and the passage of the Termination Act. The following section shows how the third step, the Employment Assistance Program, has created a new meeting place for Native Americans in cities, far from their native homelands and the reservations (Tyler 1973).

### Native American Legal Claims

Native Americans have had a unique relationship with the federal government. As might be expected, little provision was ever made for them as individuals or tribes to bring grievances against the government. From 1863 to 1946, Native Americans could bring no claim against the government without a special act of Congress, a policy that prevented most charges of treaty violations. Only 142 claims were heard during those 83 years. In 1946, Congress created the Indian Claims Commission, with authority to hear all tribal cases against the government. The three-member commission was given a five-year deadline. During the first five years, however, nearly three times as many claims were filed as had been filed during the 83 years of the old system. Therefore, the commission's term was extended and extended again, and its size was expanded. The commission was disbanded in 1978, with its cases now being heard by the U.S. Court of Claims. As of 1997, the commission and Court, over a period of more than 50 years, paid claims totaling an average of \$1,000 for each American Indian for all treaty violations and related claims. In 2006, Congress was still trying to settle cases still left over from the Commission almost thirty years after being disbanded, (Associated Press 2006; Drabelle 1997; Nagel 1996).

In 1986, a member of the Blackfeet tribe in Montana, Eloise Corbell, brought a class-action lawsuit on behalf of a half-million American Indians charging that the government had cheated them of about \$137 billion in royalties under the trust arrangements created by the Allotment Act of 1887. Annually the government pays beneficiaries about \$500 from the fund, which exceeds an estimated \$3 billion. Even by federal standards, this is all a lot of money and the Interior Department quickly defended itself that nothing was wrong. This has not proven to be true. The courts have found that the BIA and other government agencies had extremely poor records even from recent times much less going back in time. The judge presiding over the case has called the handling of the trust fund "The gold standard for mismanagement by the federal government for more than a century" (Files 2004, A17).

How bad has been the federal government defense in the *Corbell* case? The BIA has shut down its Web site for years over fear that any information it gives out about almost anything could be wrong. The Department of Interior by its own accounts is spending

# 😰 ASK Yourself

What is the importance of the Corbell case?

over \$100 million annually in attempts to clean up the record keeping in a manner that will allow it to defend itself in court eventually. Congressional sources estimate that just the cost of accounting, not including any payouts, will probably exceed \$3 billion. Efforts to get the *Corbell* case thrown out have failed. Therefore, the secretary of interior declared in 2006 that trust reform was her biggest priority. It is likely to have priority for many years to come before settlements are reached (Department of Interior 2005; IndianTrust 2006).

In specific land issues apart from the *Corbell* class action lawsuit, Native Americans often express a desire to recover their land rather than accept any financial settlements. After numerous legal decisions favoring the Sioux Indians, including a ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court, Congress finally agreed to pay \$106 million for the land that was illegally seized in the aftermath of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, described earlier in this chapter. The Sioux rejected the money and lobbied for measures such as the 1987 Black Hills Sioux Nation Act in Congress, to return the land to the tribe. No positive action has yet been taken on these measures. In the meantime, however, the original settlement, the subsequent unaccepted payments, and the interest brought the 1991 total of funds being held for the Sioux to more than \$330 million. Despite the desperate need for housing, food, health care, and education, the Sioux still would prefer to regain the land lost in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and, as of 2006, have not accepted payment.

## **The Termination Act**

The Termination Act of 1953 initiated the most controversial government policy toward reservation Native Americans in the twentieth century. Like many such policies, the act originated in ideas that were meant to benefit Native Americans. The BIA commissioner, John Collier, had expressed concern in the 1930s over extensive government control of tribal affairs. In 1947, congressional hearings were held to determine which tribes had the economic resources to be relieved of federal control and assistance. The policy proposed at that time was an admirable attempt to give Native Americans greater autonomy and at the same time to reduce federal expenditures, a goal popular among taxpayers.

The services the tribes received, such as subsidized medical care and college scholarships, should not have been viewed as special and deserving to be discontinued. These services were not the result of favoritism but merely fulfilled treaty obligations. The termination of the Native Americans' relationship to the government then came to be viewed by Native Americans as a threat to reduce services rather than a release from arbitrary authority. Native Americans might be gaining greater self-governance but at a high price.

Unfortunately, the Termination Act as finally passed in 1953 emphasized reducing costs and ignored individual needs. Recommendations for a period of tax immunity were dropped. According to the act, federal services such as medical care, schools, and road equipment were supposed to be withdrawn gradually. Instead, when the Termination Act's provisions began to go into effect, federal services were stopped immediately, with minimal coordination between local government agencies and the tribes to determine whether the services could be continued by other means. The effect of the government orders on the Native Americans was disastrous, with major economic upheaval on the affected tribes, who were unable to establish some of the most basic services—such as road repair and fire protection—which the federal government had previously provided. The federal government resumed these services in 1975 with congressional action that signaled the end of another misguided policy intended to be good for tribal peoples (Deloria 1969; Fixico 1988; Tyler 1973; Wax and Buchanan 1975).

## Employment Assistance Program

The depressed economic conditions of reservation life might lead one to expect government initiatives to attract business and industry to locate on or near reservations. The government could provide tax incentives that would eventually pay for themselves. However, such proposals have not been advanced. Rather than take jobs to the Native Americans, the federal government decided to lead the more highly motivated away from the reservation. This policy has further devastated the reservations' economic potential.

In 1952, the BIA began programs to relocate young Native Americans. One of these programs, after 1962, was called the Employment Assistance Program (EAP). Assistance centers were created in Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Jose, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Seattle. In some cities, the Native American population increased as much as fivefold in the 1950s, primarily because of the EAP. By 1968, more than 100,000 people had participated in the program, and 200,000, or one-fourth of the Native American population, had moved to urban areas. They have tended not to spread throughout urban areas but to remain somewhat segregated. Though not as segregated as African Americans or Hispanics, Native Americans often experience moderate segregation, similar to that of European ethnic groups (Bohland 1982).

The EAP's primary provision was for relocation, individually or in families, at government expense, to urban areas where job opportunities were greater than those on the reservations. The BIA stressed that the EAP was voluntary, but as Howard Bahr (1972, 408) correctly states, this voluntary aspect was "a fiction to the extent that the white man has structured the alternatives in such a way that economic pressures force the Indian to relocate." The program was not a success for the many Native Americans who found the urban experience unsuitable or unbearable. By 1965, one-fourth to one-third of the people in the EAP had returned to their home reservation. So great was the rate of return that in 1959 the BIA stopped releasing data on the percentage of returnees, fearing that they would give too much ammunition to critics of the EAP.

The movement of Native Americans into urban areas has had many unintended consequences. It has further reduced the labor force on the reservation. Because those who leave tend to be better educated, it is the Native American version of the brain drain described in Chapter 4. Urbanization unquestionably contributed to the development of an intertribal network or pan-Indian movement, described later in this chapter. The city became the new meeting place of Native Americans, who learned of their common predicament both in the city and on the federally administered reservations. Government agencies also had to develop a policy of continued assistance to nonreservation Native Americans; despite such efforts, the problems of Native Americans in cities persist.



Most reservations today have a measure of self-government through an elected tribal council. Pictured is the Apache tribal council at work.



Programs have emerged to meet the needs of city-dwelling Native Americans. Founded in 1975, the Native American Education Service College in Chicago is an independent, accredited college trying to partially provide for the education of that city's 10,000 Native Americans, who represent 100 tribes. It offers college degrees, with specialized courses in Native American language and history. The college emphasizes small classes and individualized instruction. This institution is unusual not only in higher education but also in offering urban Native Americans a pluralistic solution to being an American Indian in White America (Lauerman 1993).

# **Collective Action**

The growth of pan-Indian activism is an example of both panethnicity and social protest. As we noted in Chapter 1, the panethnic development of solidarity among ethnic subgroups has been reflected in terms such as Hispanic, Latino, and Asian American. **Pan-Indianism** refers to intertribal social movements in which several tribes, joined by political goals but not by kinship, unite in a common identity. Today, these pan-Indian efforts are most vividly seen in cultural efforts and political protests of government policies (Cornell 1996).

Proponents of this movement see the tribes as captive nations or internal colonies. They generally see the enemy as the federal government. Until recently, pan-Indian efforts usually failed to overcome the cultural differences and distrust between tribal groups. However, some efforts to unite have succeeded. The Iroquois made up a six-tribe confederation dating back to the seventeenth century. The Ghost Dance briefly united the Plains tribes in the 1880s, some of which had earlier combined to resist the U.S. Army. But these were the exceptions. It took nearly a century and a half of BIA policies to accomplish a significant level of unification.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), founded in 1944 in Denver, Colorado, was the first national organization representing Native Americans. The NCAI registered itself as a lobby in Washington, DC, hoping to make the Native American perspective heard in the aftermath of the Reorganization Act described earlier. Concern about "White people's meddling" is reflected in the NCAI requirement that White members pay twice as much in dues. The NCAI has had its successes. Early in its history, it played an important role in creating the Indian Claims Commission, and it later pressured the BIA to abandon the practice of termination. It is still the most important civil rights organization for Native Americans and uses tactics similar to those of the NAACP, although the problems facing African Americans and Native Americans are legally and constitutionally different.

A later arrival was the more radical American Indian Movement (AIM), the most visible pan-Indian group. The AIM was founded in 1968 by Clyde Bellecourt (of the White Earth Chippewa) and Dennis Banks (of the Pine Ridge Oglala Sioux), both of whom then lived in Minneapolis. Initially, AIM created a patrol to monitor police actions and document charges of police brutality. Eventually, it promoted programs for alcohol rehabilitation and school reform. By 1972, AIM was nationally known not for its neighborhood-based reforms but for its aggressive confrontations with the BIA and law enforcement agencies.

## **Protest Efforts**

**Fish-ins** began in 1964 to protest interference by Washington State officials with Native Americans who were fishing, as they argued, in accordance with the 1854 Treaty of Medicine Creek and were not subject to fine or imprisonment, even if they did violate White society's law. The fish-ins had protesters fishing en masse in restricted waterways. This protest was initially hampered by disunity and apathy, but several hundred

#### pan-Indianism

Intertribal social movements in which several tribes, joined by political goals but not by kinship, unite in a common identity.

#### fish-ins

Tribes' protests over government interference with their traditional rights to fish as they like.



Native Americans were convinced that civil disobedience was the only way to bring attention to their grievances with the government. Legal battles followed, and the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed the treaty rights in 1968. Other tribes continued to fight in the courts, but the fish-ins brought increased public awareness of the deprivations of Native Americans. One of the longest battles continues to the present: The Chippewas have rights to 50 percent of the fish, timber, and wildlife across the upper third of Wisconsin. In 1991, Wisconsin agreed with this long-standing treaty right, but Whites continue to demonstrate against what they feel is the unfair advantage extended to the Native Americans (Bobo and Tuan 2006; Jolidon 1991; Steiner 1968).

The fish-ins were only the beginning. After the favorable Supreme Court decision in 1968, other events followed in quick succession. In 1969, members of the San Francisco Indian Center seized Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. The 13-acre island was an abandoned maximum-security federal prison, and the federal government was undecided about how to use it. The Native Americans claimed "the excess property" in exchange for \$24 in glass beads and cloth, following the precedent set in the sale of Manhattan more than three centuries earlier. With no federal response and the loss of public interest in the demonstration, the protesters left the island more than a year later. The activists' desire to transform it into a Native American cultural center was ignored. Despite the outcome, the event gained international publicity for their cause. Red Power was born, and Native Americans who sympathized with the BIA were labeled "Uncle Tomahawks" or "apples" (red on the outside, white on the inside).

The federal government did not totally ignore calls for a new policy that involved Native Americans in its formulation. Nevertheless, no major breakthroughs came in the 1960s. One significant step was passage of the Alaska Native Settlement Act of 1971. Alaskan Native American people—the 100,000 Inuit Eskimo and other Aleuts—have maintained their claim to the land since Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867. The federal government had allowed the natives to settle on about one-third of the land they claimed but had not even granted them title to that land. The discovery of huge oil reserves in 1969 made the issue more explosive as the state of Alaska auctioned off mineral rights, ignoring Inuit occupation of the land.

The Alaskan Federation of Natives (AFN), the major native Alaskan group, which had been organized in 1967, moved quickly to stop "the biggest land grab in the history of the U.S.," as the AFN called it. An AFN-sponsored bill was revised, and a compromise, the Native Claims Settlement Act, was passed in late 1971. The final act, which fell short of the requests by the AFN, granted control and ownership of 44 million acres to Alaska's 53,000 Inuits, Aleuts, and other peoples and gave them a cash settlement of nearly \$1 billion. Given the enormous pressures from oil companies and conservationists, the Native Claims Settlement Act can be regarded as one of the more reasonable agreements reached between distinctive tribal groups of Native Americans and the government. Further reforms in 1988 helped to safeguard the original act, but as a major trade-off the Alaskan Native Americans surrendered future claims to all aboriginal lands (Cornell and Kalt 2003; Ogunwole 2002).

The most dramatic confrontation between Native Americans and the government came early the next year in the battle of Wounded Knee II. In January 1973, AIM leader Russell Means led an unsuccessful drive to impeach Richard Wilson as tribal chairman of the Oglala Sioux tribe on the Pine Ridge Reservation. In the next month, Means, accompanied by some 300 supporters, started a 70-day occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, site of the infamous cavalry assault in 1890 and now part of the Pine Ridge Reservation. The occupation received tremendous press coverage.

However, the coverage did not affect the outcome. Negotiations between AIM and the federal government on the occupation itself brought no tangible results. Federal prosecutions were initiated against most participants. AIM leaders Russell Means and Dennis Banks eventually faced prosecution on a number of felony charges, and both men were

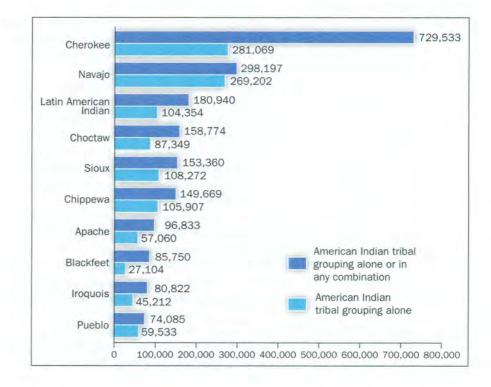
imprisoned. AIM had less visibility as an organization then. Russell Means wryly remarked in 1984, "We're not chic now. We're just Indians, and we have to help ourselves" (Hentoff 1984, 23; also see Nagel 1988, 1996; Smith and Warrior 1996; T. Johnson 1996).

The most visible recent AIM activity has been its efforts to gain clemency for one of its leaders, Leonard Peltier. Imprisoned since 1976, Peltier was given two life sentences for murdering two FBI agents the year before on the embattled Sioux reservation of Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Fellow AIM leaders such as Dennis Banks organized a 1994 Walk for Justice to bring attention in Washington, DC, to the view that Peltier is innocent. This view was supported in two 1992 movie releases: the documentary *Incident at Oglala*, produced by Robert Redford, and the more entertaining, fictionalized *Thunderheart*. To date, clemency appeals to the president to lift the federal sentence have gone unheeded, but this issue remains the rallying point for today's remnants of AIM (Matthiessen 1991).

## Pan-Indianism: An Overview

Pan-Indianism, an example of panethnicity, has created a greater solidarity among Native Americans as they seek solutions to common grievances with government agencies. Research shows that tribal people born since the collective action efforts of the 1960s are more likely to reject negative and stereotypic representations of American Indians than those born before the self-determination efforts. Whether through moderate groups such as the NCAI or the more activist AIM, these pan-Indian developments have awakened Whites to the real grievances of Native Americans and have garnered the begrudging acceptance of even the most conservative tribal members, who are more willing to cooperate with government action (Schulz 1998).

However, the results of pan-Indianism have not all been productive, even when viewed from a perspective sympathetic to Native American self-determination. The national organizations are dominated by Plains tribes, not only politically but culturally as well. Powwow styles of dancing, singing, and costuming derived from the Plains tradition are spreading nationwide as common cultural traits (see Figure 6.3 for the ten largest tribes).







The growing visibility of **powwows** is symbolic of Native Americans in the 1990s. The phrase *pau wau* referred to the medicine man or spiritual leader of the Algonquian tribes, but Europeans who watched medicine men dance thought that the word referred to entire events. Over the last hundred years, powwows have evolved into gatherings in which Native Americans of many tribes come to dance, sing, play music, and visit. More recently, they have become organized events featuring competitions and prizes at several thousand locations. The general public sees them as entertainment, but for Native Americans, they are a celebration of their cultures (Eschbach and Applbaum 2000).

# Sovereignty

Although the collective gathering of tribes in pan-Indian efforts cannot be minimized, there continues to be a strong effort to maintain tribal sovereignty. Simply put, **sovereignty** refers in this context to tribal self-rule. Supported by every U.S. president since the 1960s, sovereignty is recognition for tribes to have vibrant economic and cultural lives. At the same time, numerous legal cases, including many at the level of the Supreme Court, continue to clarify to what extent a recognized tribe may rule itself and to what degree it is subject to state and federal laws. In 2004, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 7–2 in *United States v. Lara* that a tribe has the inherent right to prosecute all American Indians, regardless of affiliation, for crimes that occur on the reservation. However, other cases in lower courts continue to chip away at tribal self-government (Indianz.com 2004).

This legal relationship can be quite complex. For example, tribal members always pay federal income, Social Security, unemployment, and property taxes but do not pay state income if they live and work only on the reservation. Whether tribal members on reservations pay sales, gasoline, cigarette, or motor vehicle taxes has been negotiated on a reservation-by-reservation basis in many sites.

Focused on the tribal group, sovereignty remains linked to both the actions of the federal government and the actions of individual American Indians. The government ultimately determines which tribes are recognized, and although tribal groups may argue publicly for their recognition, self-declaration carries no legal recognition. This has always been an issue, but given the rise of casino gambling to be discussed shortly, the determination of who constitutes a sovereign tribe and who does not may carry significant economic benefits.

Powwows such as this one in California have become important social, cultural, and economic events that bring together members of many different tribes.

#### Powwows

Native American gatherings of dancing, singing, music playing, and visiting, accompanied by competitions.

sovereignty Tribal self-rule.

# TABLE 6.2Urban Native Americans,2000

According to Census 2000, there are seven cities with more than 10,000 Native Americans. By comparison, there are only four reservations with that many residents. New York City 41,289 Los Angeles 29,412 Phoenix 26,696

New York City	41,289		
Los Angeles	29,412		
Phoenix	26,696		
Anchorage	18,941		
Tulsa	18,551		
Oklahoma City	17,743		
Albuquerque	17,444		
Tucson	11,038		
Chicago	10,290		

Source: Ogunwole 2002, 8.



Tribal groups and sympathetic others have questioned the appropriateness of creating mascots purporting to celebrate native tradition. Here Chief Illiniwek appears on behalf of the University of Illinois-Champaign Urbana. The NCAA has banned the mascot's appearance at its tournaments. The federal government takes this gatekeeping role of sovereignty very seriously the irony of the conquering people determining who are "Indians" is not lost upon many tribal activists. In 1978, the Department of the Interior established what it called the acknowledgment process to decide whether any more tribes should have a government-to-government relationship. They must show that they were a distinct group and trace continuity since 1900. Through 2004, 294 groups have sought sovereignty, with just 16 acknowledged and another 9 receiving it though special congressional action.

So sometimes entire tribes are declared not to be tribes. For recognized tribes, they did have to establish a standard of ancestry or descent to determine who is a tribal member. This causes some individuals or entire extended families to be disenrolled. Those disenrolled can appeal to U.S. courts but typically they are reluctant to interfere with the recognized tribes' authority to determine who is a member or not (Beiser 2006).

Individual American Indians play a role as well. For most, their tribal affiliation is fairly clear, but for others it may be more problematic. Certainly if they are members of a group that has yet to receive federal recognition, a long and often costly legal battle is ahead for them to receive the recognition they already feel is their right. For those who have close descendants of more than one tribe, they usually can elect which tribe to belong to legally. Although they may recognize the cultural heritage they have as belonging to more than one tribe, federal laws and most tribal governments require that they declare membership (sometimes also referred to as "enrollment" status) in one tribe (Kalt and Singer 2004; Martinez 2006a; A. Wagner 2004).

# Native Americans Today

The United States has taken most of the land originally occupied by or deeded to Native Americans; restricted their movement; unilaterally severed agreements; created a special legal status for them; and, after World War II, attempted to move them again. As a result of these efforts and generally poor economic conditions of most reservations, substantial numbers of Native Americans live in the nation's cities (Table 6.2).

How are Native Americans being treated today? A very public insult is the continuing use of American Indian names as mascots for athletic teams of schools, including colleges and many professional sports teams in the United States. Almost all American Indian organizations, including AIM, have brought attention to the use of Native Americans as the mascots of sports teams, such as the Washington Redskins, and to such spectator practices as the "Tomahawk chop" associated with the Atlanta Braves baseball team.

Many sports fans and college alumni find it difficult to understand why Native Americans take offense at a name such as "Braves" or even "Redskins" if it is meant to represent a team about which they have positive feelings. For Native Americans, however, the use of such mascots trivializes their past and their presence today. This at best puzzles if not infuriates most native people, who already face a variety of challenges today. The NCAA, which oversees college athletics, has asked colleges to "explain" their use of mascot names, nicknames, or logos such as savages, braves, warriors, chieftains, redmen, and Indians to name a few. In some cases, the NCAA has already banned the appearance of students dressed as such mascots in tournaments. Typically college alumni and most students wonder what the fuss is about, while most Native people question why should they be so "honored" if they don't want to be (NCAA 2003a, 2003b; Weiberg 2006).

Any discussion of Native American socioeconomic status today must begin with an emphasis on the diversity of the people. Besides the variety of tribal heritages already noted, the contemporary Native American population is split between those on and off reservations and those living in small towns and in central cities. Life in these contrasting social environments is quite different, but enough similarities exist to warrant some broad generalizations on the status of Native Americans in the United States today.

The sections that follow summarize the status of contemporary Native Americans in economic development, education, health care, religious and spiritual expression, and the environment.

## **Economic Development**

Native Americans are an impoverished people. Even to the most casual observer of a reservation, the poverty is a living reality, not merely numbers and percentages. Some visitors seem unconcerned, arguing that because Native Americans are used to hardship and lived a simple life before the Europeans arrived, poverty is a familiar and traditional way of life. In an absolute sense of dollars earned or quality of housing, Native Americans are no worse off now. But in a relative sense that compares their position with that of Whites, they are dismally behind on all standards of income and occupational status. A 1995 national survey showed that overall unemployment is more than 30 percent. Among those who do have jobs, a third earned less than \$10,000.

In 1997, the federal government introduced a welfare program that limited how long people can receive public assistance. This clearly will have impact on many tribal reservations, where high proportions of people depend on public assistance because of the lack of training or job opportunities. For example, in South Dakota, American Indians make up 7 percent of the population but account for 53 percent of the welfare recipients. State officials declared they could give five tribes a one-time infusion of start-up money, but after that they would be on their own (Belluck 1997; Egan 1998).

Given the lower incomes and higher poverty rates, it is not surprising that the occupational distribution of Native Americans is similarly bleak. Those who are employed are less likely to be managers, professionals, technicians, salespeople, or administrators. This pattern of low-wage employment is typical of many of the racial and ethnic minorities in the United States, but Native Americans differ in three areas: their roles in tourism, casino gambling, and government employment.

**Tourism** Tourism is an important source of employment for many reservation residents, who either serve the needs of visitors directly or sell souvenirs and craft items. Generally, such enterprises do not achieve the kind of success that improves the tribal economy significantly. Even if they did, sociologist Murray Wax (1971, 69) argued, "It requires a special type of person to tolerate exposing himself and his family life to the gaze of tourists, who are often boorish and sometimes offensively condescending in their attitudes."

Tourism, in light of exploitation of tribal people, is a complex interaction of the outside with the Native American. Interviews with tourists visiting museums and reservations found that, regardless of the presentation, many visitors interpreted their brief experiences to be consistent with their previously held stereotypes of and prejudices toward Native Americans. Yet, at the other extreme, some contemporary tourists conscious of the historical context are uncomfortable taking in native foods and purchasing crafts at tribal settlements despite the large economic need many reservations have for such commerce (Laxson 1991; Padget 2004).

Craftwork rarely realizes the profits most Native Americans desire and need. The trading-post business has also taken its toll on Native American cultures. Many craft workers have been manipulated by other Native Americans and Whites to produce what the tourists want. Creativity and authenticity often are replaced by mechanical duplication of "genuine Indian" curios. There continues to be concern and controversy surrounding art such as paintings and pottery that may not be produced by real

# **?** ASK Yourself

What special role does tourism play for Native Americans?



Native Americans. In 1935, the federal government had created the Indian Arts and Crafts Board to promote tribal arts. The influx of fraudulent crafts was so great that Congress added to its responsibilities the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, which severely punishes anyone who offers to sell an object as produced by a Native American artisan when it was not. The price of both economic and cultural survival is very high (McCoy 2004).

**Casino Gambling** A more recent source of significant income and some employment has been the introduction of gambling on reservations. Forms of gambling, originally part of tribal ceremonies or celebrations, existed long before Europeans arrived in the Western Hemisphere. Today, however, commercial gambling is the only viable source of employment and revenue available to several tribes.

Under the 1988 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, states must negotiate gambling agreements with reservations and cannot prohibit any gambling already allowed under state law. By 2006, in 30 states, 228 tribal governments were operating a variety of gambling operations, including off-track betting, casino tables such as blackjack and roulette, lotteries, sports betting, video games of chance, telephone betting, slot machines, and high-stakes bingo. The gamblers, almost all non–Native Americans, sometimes travel long distances for the opportunity to wager money. The actual casinos are a form of tribal government enterprise as opposed to private business operations.

The economic impact on some reservations has been enormous, and nationwide receipts amounted to \$22.6 billion in 2005 from reservation casino operations, compared to \$20 billion for all Nevada state casino operations. However, the wealth is uneven: About two-thirds of the recognized Indian tribes have no gambling ventures. A few successful casinos have led to staggering windfalls, such as the profits to the 820 members of the Connecticut Mashantucket Pequot Indians, whose Foxwoods Resort Casino, with gambling receipts annually well over \$1.5 billion, provides generous benefits to anyone who can establish that he or she is at least one-sixteenth Pequot. Gaming money from the about 25 very successful operations not only supports tribal members but has been used to buy back tribal lands and even to help underwrite the cost of the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, which opened in 2004 (Katel 2006; Werner 2006).

The more typical picture is of moderately successful gambling operations associated with tribes whose social and economic needs are overwhelming. Tribes that have

Gaming or gambling, whatever you call it, has become big business for a few of the nation's tribes. Shown here are patrons at Mystic Lake Casino operated by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux outside Minneapolis Minnesota. opened casinos have experienced drops in unemployment and increases in household income not seen on nongaming reservations. However, three important factors need to be considered.

- First, the tribes do pay taxes. They pay \$6 billion in gambling-generated taxes to local, state, and federal governments. That does still leave significant profits, which can be paid out to tribal members or reinvested in collective tribal operations.
- Second, nationwide the economic and social impact of this revenue is limited. The tribes that make substantial revenue from gambling are a small fraction of all Native American people.
- Third, even on the reservations that benefit from gambling enterprises, the levels of unemployment are substantially higher and the family income significantly lower than for the nation as a whole (Bartlett and Steele 2002; Katel 2006, 365; National Indian Gaming Association 2006; Sahagun 2004; Taylor and Kalt 2005).

Criticism is not hard to find, even among Native Americans, some of whom oppose gambling both on moral grounds and because it is marketed in a form that is incompatible with Native American cultures. Opponents are concerned about the appearance of compulsive gambling among some tribal members. The majority of the gamblers are not Native Americans, and almost all of the reservation casinos, though owned by the tribes, are operated by White-owned businesses. Some tribal members feel that the casinos trivialize and cheapen their heritage. The issue of who shares in gambling profits also has led to heated debates in some tribal communities about who is a member of the tribe. In addition, established White gaming interests lobby Congress to restrict the tribes, even though Native Americans generate only 23 percent of the nation's total of legal gambling revenue, including lotteries and racing (National Indian Gaming Association 2006).

Native Americans' voting clout is very weak compared to that of even African Americans and Latinos, but their lobbying power has become significant. Casino money fueled the 2006 scandal involving lobbyist Jack Abramoff, who cheated several tribes by pretending to lobby on their behalf. But although many of the political donations Native Americans make are aimed at protecting reservation casinos, federal grants for education, roads, housing, and other projects also occupy tribes' political agendas.

Although income from gambling has not dramatically changed the lifestyle of most Native Americans, it has been a magnet of criticism from outsiders. Critics question the special status being afforded to Native Americans and contend that there should be an even playing field. This view certainly would have been endorsed by tribal members, because most of what passed for government policies over the last 200 years placed tribes at a major disadvantage. Attention is drawn to some tribes that had made contributions to politicians involved in policies concerning gambling laws. Although some of these contributions may have been illegal, the national media attention was far more intense than was warranted in the messy area of campaign financing. It is another example of how the notion that Native Americans are now playing the White man's game of capitalism "too well" becomes big news (Drinkard 2006; Glionna 2004).

**Government Employment** Another major source of employment for Native Americans is the government, principally the BIA, but also other federal agencies, the military, and state and local governments. As recently as 1970, one of every four employed Native Americans worked for the federal government. More than half the BIA's employees have tribal ancestry. In fact, since 1854, the BIA has had a policy of giving employment preference to Native Americans over Whites. This policy has been questioned, but the U.S. Supreme Court (*Morton v. Mancari*) upheld it in 1974. Although this is a significant source of employment opportunity, other tribe members have leveled many criticisms at Native American government workers, especially federal employees.

These government employees form a subculture in Native American communities. They tend to be Christians, educated in BIA schools, and sometimes the third generation born into government service. Discrimination against Native Americans in private industry makes government work attractive, and once a person is employed and has seniority, he or she is virtually guaranteed security. Of course, this security may lead some people (whether Native Americans or Whites) to work inefficiently (Bureau of Indian Affairs 1970; Rachlin 1970).

We have examined the sources of economic development, such as tourism, government service, and legalized gambling, but the dominant feature of reservation life is, nevertheless, unemployment. A government report issued by the Full Employment Action Council opened with the statement that such words as *severe, massive*, and *horrendous* are appropriate to describe unemployment among Native Americans. Official unemployment figures for reservations range from 23 percent to 90 percent. It is little wonder that the 1990 census showed that the poorest county in the nation was wholly on tribal lands: Shannon County, South Dakota, of the Pine Ridge Reservation, had a 63 percent poverty rate. Unemployment rates for urban-based Indians are also very high; Los Angeles reports more than 40 percent, and Minneapolis, 49 percent (Cornell and Kalt 1990; Kanamine 1992; Knudson 1987; Sullivan 1986).

The economic outlook for Native Americans need not be bleak. A single program is not the solution; the diversity of both Native Americans and their problems demands a multifaceted approach. The solutions need not be unduly expensive; indeed, because the Native American population is very small compared with the total population, programs with major influence may be financed without significant federal expenditures. Murray Wax (1971) observed that reformers viewing the economically depressed position of Native Americans often seize on education as the key to success. As the next section shows, improving educational programs for Native Americans would be a good place to start.



Paul Moss is giving an Arapaho name to his newborn greatgrandson, Raphael, who lies in his arms. The name he chose to give the infant is the one his own deceased son held, Himookoonit, or Golden Eagle. At his feet are cloth goods and cash offerings given to the elder who has given the name.

## Education

Government involvement in the education of Native Americans dates as far back as a 1794 treaty with the Oneida Indians. In the 1840s, the federal government and missionary groups combined to start the first school for American Indians. By 1860, the government was operating schools that were free of missionary involvement. Today, laws prohibit federal funds for Native American education from going to sectarian schools. Also, since the passage of the Johnson-O'Malley Act in 1934, the federal government has reimbursed public school districts that include Native American children.

Federal control of the education of Native American children has had mixed results from the beginning. Several tribes started their own school systems at the beginning of the nineteenth century, financing the schools themselves. The Cherokee tribe developed an extensive school system that taught both English and Cherokee, the latter using an alphabet developed by the famed leader Sequoyah. Literacy for the Cherokees was estimated by the mid-1800s at 90 percent, and they even published a bilingual newspaper. The Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole also maintained school systems. But by the end of the nineteenth century, all these schools had been closed by federal order. Not until the 1930s did the federal government become committed to ensuring an education for Native American children. Despite the push for educational participation, by 1948 only a quarter of the children on the Navajo reservation, the nation's largest, were attending school (Pewewardy 1998).

Educational Attainment A serious problem in Native American education has been the unusually low level of enrollment. Many children never attend school, or they leave while in elementary school and never return. Enrollment rates are as low as 30 percent for Alaska Eskimos (or Inupiats). This high dropout rate is at least 50 percent higher than that of Blacks or Hispanics and nearly three times that of Whites. The term *dropout* is misleading because many tribal American schoolchildren have found their educational experience so hostile that they had no choice but to leave. In 2005 the South Dakota Supreme Court ruled that a school serving the Lakota Sioux tribe was routinely calling in the police to deal with the slightest misbehavior. The youth soon developed a juvenile record leading to what was termed "school-to-discipline pipeline" (Dell'Angela 2005; James et al. 1995).

Rosalie Wax (1967) conducted a detailed study of the education among the Sioux on the Pine Ridge Reservation of South Dakota. She concluded that terms such as **kickout** or **pushout** are more appropriate. The children are not so much hostile toward school as they are set apart from it; they are socialized by their parents to be independent and not to embarrass their peers, but teachers reward docile acceptance and expect schoolchildren to correct one another in public. Socialization is not all that separates home from school. Teachers often are happy to find parents not "interfering" with their job. Parents do not visit the school, and teachers avoid the homes, a pattern that only furthers the isolation of school from home. This lack of interaction results partly from the predominance of non–Native American teachers, many of who do not recognize the learning styles of American Indian students, although the situation is improving (Hilberg and Tharp 2002).

**Quality of Schooling** The quality of Native American education is more difficult to measure than is the quantity. How does one measure excellence? And excellence for what? White society? Tribal life? Both? Chapter 1 discussed the disagreement over measuring intellectual achievement (how much a person has learned) and the greater hazards in measuring intellectual aptitude (how much a person is able to learn). Studies of reservation children, using tests of intelligence that do not require a knowledge of English, consistently show scores at or above the levels of middle-class urban children.

kickouts or pushouts

Native American school dropouts who leave behind an unproductive academic environment.



#### crossover effect

An effect that appears as previously high-scoring Native American children score as below average in intelligence when tests are given in English rather than their native languages. Yet in the upper grades, a **crossover effect** appears when tests used assume lifelong familiarity with English. Native American students drop behind their White peers and so would be classified by the dominant society as underachievers (Bureau of Indian Affairs 1988; Coleman et al. 1966; Fuchs and Havighurst 1972).

Preoccupation with such test results perhaps avoids the more important question: educational excellence for what? It would be a mistake to assume that the tribal peoples have reached a consensus. However, they do want to see a curriculum that, at the very least, considers the unique aspects of their heritage. Charles Silberman (1971, 173) reported visiting a sixth-grade English class in a school on a Chippewa reservation where the students were all busily at work writing a composition for Thanksgiving: "Why We Are Happy the Pilgrims Came." A 1991 Department of Education report titled "Indian Nations at Risk" still found the curriculum presented from a European perspective. It is little wonder that in 2004, only 1 percent of Native American high school seniors even attempted the SATs compared to 63 percent of White seniors. In Figure 6.4 we compare educational attainment of the largest tribal groups with all non-Hispanic Whites (Henig 2006).

Tlingit-Haida	17.6	34.6	34.6		37.3	
Eskimo	29.7		40.9		23.	4 6.
Aleut	22.5		39.6		29.9	7,9
Alaska Athabascan	24.6		39.6		28.6	7.
Alaska Native 25.4		39.3			27.9	7.
Sioux	23.8		30.5		34.9	10.8
Pueblo	23.7	3	33.4		33.3	9.6
Navajo	37.3		27.7		28.1	6.
Lumbee	35.3		29.0		23.2	12.5
Iroquois	20.4	30.3	30.3		33.0	
Creek	18.1	30.1	30.1		34.6	
Choctaw	20.4	30.6	30.6		33.0	
Chippewa	22.1	31	31.7		35.9	
Cherokee	23.4	28	28.3		32.6	
Apache	31.0		29.0		31.5	
American Indian	27.4		29.0		31.5	12.1
American Indian and Alaska Native	29.1		29.2		30.2	11.5
population American Indian	11.4 29.1	33.1				8.7

#### FIGURE 6.4 Educational Attainment 2000

Source: Ogunwole 2006, 8. Data for non-Hispanic Whites from Current Population Reports 2001. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office: Table 10.

# Focus Research Focus Research

## LEARNING THE NAVAJO WAY

'hat leads to academic success? Often the answer is a supportive family, but this has not always been said about Native Americans. Educators rooted in the European education traditions often argue that American Indian families whose children are faithful to the traditional culture cannot succeed in schools. This assimilationist view argues that to succeed in larger White-dominated society, it is important to begin to shed the "old ways" as soon as possible. Interestingly, research done in the last ten years questions the assimilationist view and concludes that American Indian students can improve their academic performance through educational programs that are less assimilationist and use curricula that build on what the Native American youth learn in their homes and communities.

Representative of this growing research is the study completed by sociologist Angela A. A. Willeto among her fellow Navajo tribal people. She studied a random sample of 451 Navajo high school students from eleven different Navajo Nation schools. She examined the impact of the students' orientation toward traditional Navajo culture on their performance. Willeto acknowledges that the prevailing view has been that all that is inherently Navajo in a child must be eliminated and replaced with mainstream White society beliefs and lifestyles.

The Navajo tradition was measured by a number of indicators, such as participating in Navajo dances, consulting a medicine man, entering a sweat bath to cleanse oneself spiritually, weaving rugs, living in a traditional hogan, and using the Navajo language. School performance was measured by grades, commitment to school, and aspirations to attend college. She found that the students who lived a more traditional life among the Navajo succeeded in school just as well and were just as committed to success in school and college as high schoolers leading a more assimilated life.

These results are important because many Native Americans themselves accept an assimilationist view. Even within the Navajo Nation, where Navajo language instruction has been mandated in all reservation schools since 1984, many Navajos still equate learning only with the mastery of White society's subject matter.

Sources: Reyhner 2001b; Willeto 1999.

Some positive changes are occurring in education. At the beginning of the chapter, we noted the example of the Ho-Chunk preschoolers learning their native language. About 23 percent of the students in BIA-funded schools receive bilingual education. There is growing recognition of the need to move away from past policies that suppressed or ignored the native language and to acknowledge that educational results may be optimized when the native language is included. In "Research Focus: Learning the Navajo Way," we consider the importance of incorporating native teachings and cultures (Bureau of Indian Affairs 1988; James et al. 1995; Reese 1996; Wells 1991).

**Higher Education** The picture for Native Americans in higher education is decidedly mixed, with some progress and some promise. Enrollment in college increased steadily from the mid-1970s through the mid-1990s, but degree completion, especially the completion of professional degrees, may actually be declining. The economic and educational background of Native American students, especially reservation residents,

makes considering entering a predominantly White college a very difficult decision. Native American students may soon feel isolated and discouraged, particularly if the college does not help them understand the alien world of American-style higher education. Even at campuses with large numbers of Native Americans in their student bodies, few Native American faculty or advisors are present to serve as role models. About 53 percent of the students leave at the end of their first year (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 1990; Wells 1989).

Another encouraging development in higher education in recent years has been the creation of tribally controlled colleges, usually two-year community colleges. The Navajo Community College (now called Diné College), the first such institution, was established in 1968, and by 2006 there were thirty-four nationwide in thirteen states with over 27,000 students enrolled. Besides serving in some rural areas as the only educational institution for many miles, tribal colleges also provide services such as counseling and child care. Tribal colleges enable the students to maintain their cultural identity while training them to succeed outside the reservation (American Indian Higher Education Consortium 2006).

At higher levels, Native Americans largely disappear from the educational scene. In 2003, of the 34,398 doctorates awarded to U.S. citizens, 196 went to Native Americans, compared with more than 11,000 that went to citizens of foreign countries. This production of doctorates among Native Americans has not changed significantly since at least as far back as 1981 (Bureau of the Census 2005a, 186).

**Summary** "Dine bizaad beeyashti!" Unfortunately, this declaration, of "I speak Navajo!" is not commonly heard from educators. Gradually, schools have begun to encourage the preservation of native cultures. Until the 1960s, BIA and mission schools forbade speaking in the native languages, so it will take time to produce an educated teacher corps knowledgeable in and conversant with native cultures (Linthicum 1993).

As we have seen, there are many failures in our effort to educate, not just assimilate, the first Americans. The problems include:

- Underenrollment at all levels, from the primary grades through college
- The need to adjust to a school with values sometimes dramatically different from those of the home
- The need to make the curriculum more relevant
- The underfinancing of tribal community colleges
- The unique hardships encountered by reservation-born Native Americans who later live in and attend schools in large cities
- The language barrier faced by the many children who have little or no knowledge of English

Other problems include lack of educational innovation (the BIA had no kindergartens until 1967) and a failure to provide special education to children who need it.

#### Health Care

For Native Americans, "health care" is a misnomer, another broken promise in the array of unmet pledges the government has made. Native Americans compared to other groups are more likely to have poorer health and unmet medical needs and not be able to afford the care. They are more likely to have higher levels of diabetes, trouble hearing, and activity limitations and to have experienced serious psychological distress (Barnes et al. 2005).

In 1955, amidst criticism even then, the responsibility for health care through the Indian Health Service (IHS) transferred from the BIA to the Public Health Service.

# Voices Listen to Our Voices Listen to

## THE SCALPEL AND THE SILVER BEAR

knew that Navajo people mistrusted Western medicine, and that Navajo customs and beliefs, even Navajo ways of interacting with others, often stood in direct opposition to the way I was trained at Stanford to deliver medical care. I wanted to make a difference in the lives of my people, not only by providing surgery to heal

them but also by making it easier for them to understand, relate to, and accept Western medicine. By speaking some Navajo with them, by showing respect for their ways, and by being one of them, I could help them. I watched my patients. I listened to them. Slowly I began to develop better ways to heal them, ways that respected their culture and beliefs. I desired to incorporate these traditional beliefs and customs into my practice. . . .

Navajo patients simply didn't respond well to the brusque and distanced style of Western doctors. To them it is not acceptable to walk into a room, quickly open someone's shirt and listen to their heart with a stethoscope, or stick something in their mouth or ear. Nor is it acceptable to ask probing and personal questions. As I adapted my practice to my culture, my patients relaxed in situations that could otherwise have been highly stressful to them. As they became more comfortable and at ease, something even more remarkable astonishing, even—happened. When patients



Lori Arviso Alvord

deed true. Incorporating Navajo philosophies of balance and symmetry, respect and connectedness into my practice, benefited my patients and allowed everything in my two worlds to make sense.

were trusting and accepting be-

fore surgery, their operations

seemed to be more successful. If

they were anxious, distrustful,

and did not understand, or had

resisted treatment, they seemed

to have more operative or post-

operative complications. Could

this be happening? The more I

watched, the more I saw it was in-

Navajos believe in hózh ó or hózh óni— "Walking in Beauty"—a worldview in which everything in life is connected and influences everything else. A stone thrown into a pond can influence the life of a deer in the forest, a human voice and a spoken word can influence events around the world, and all things possess spirit and power. So Navajos make every effort to live in harmony and balance with everyone and everything else. Their belief system sees sickness as a result of things falling out of balance, of losing one's way on the path of beauty. In this belief system, religion and medicine are one and the same.

Source: Alvord and Van Pelt 1999, 13-14, 15. Excerpted from pp. 13, 14, 15 in *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear* by Lori Arviso Alvord, M.D., and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt. Copyright © 1999 by Lori Arviso Alvord and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt. Used by permission of Bantam Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

Although their health has improved markedly in absolute terms since the mid-1960s, their overall health is comparatively far behind all other segments of the population. The Commission on Civil Rights (2003) found that the federal per capita expenditure for health care of prison inmates was 50 percent higher than it was for Native Americans.

With the pressure to assimilate Native Americans in all aspects of their lives, there has been little willingness to recognize their traditions of healing and treating illnesses. Native treatments tend to be noninvasive, with the patient encouraged to contribute actively to the healing benefits and prevent future recurrence. In the 1990s, a pluralistic effort was slowly emerging to recognize alternative forms of medicine, including those practiced by Native Americans. In addition, reservation health care workers began to accommodate traditional belief systems as they administered the White culture's medicine (Angier 1993; Fox 1992; *Indian Country* 1999).

Some gifted health practitioners have been able to bridge the gap between the traditional Native American ways of healing and those developed out of the Western medical tradition. In "Listen to Our Voices," Dr. Lois Arviso Alvord, the first Navajo woman to become a surgeon, describes her effort to bridge the cultural gap. Dropping the impersonal clinical manner she had learned in medical school, Alvord reached out to her Navajo patients, acknowledging their faith in holistic healing practices.

Contributing to the problems of health care and mortality on reservations are often high rates of reported crime. Poverty and few job opportunities offer an excellent environment for the growth of youth gangs and drug trafficking. All the issues associated with crime can be found on the nation's reservations. There are 171 tribal enforcement agencies operating nearly 70 jails or detention facilities. As with other minority communities dealing with poverty, Native Americans strongly support law enforcement but at the same time contend their people are being abused by those very individuals selected to protect them. As with efforts for improving health care, the isolation and vastness of some of the reservations make them uniquely vulnerable to crime (Hickman 2003; Major et al. 2004; Minton 2002).

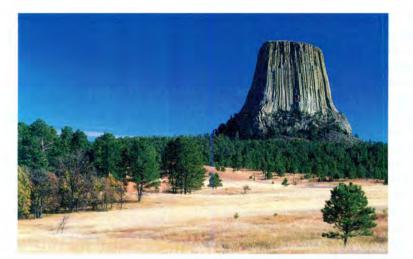
## Religious and Spiritual Expression

Like other aspects of Native American cultures, the expression of religion is diverse, reflecting the variety of tribal traditions and the assimilationist pressure of the Europeans. Initially, missionaries and settlers expected Native Americans simply to forsake their traditions for European Christianity, and, as in the case of the repression of the Ghost Dance, sometimes force was used to do so. Today, many Protestant churches and Roman Catholic parishes with large tribal congregations incorporate customs such as the sacred pipe ceremony, native incenses, sweat lodges, ceremonies affirming care for the earth, and services and hymns in native languages.

Whether traditional in nature or reflecting the impact of Europeans, native people typically embrace a broad world of spirituality. Whereas Christians, Jews, and Muslims adhere to a single deity and often confine spiritual expression to designated sites, traditional American Indian people see considerably more relevance in the whole of the world, including animals, water, and the wind.

After generations of formal and informal pressure to adopt Christian faiths and their rituals, in 1978 Congress enacted the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, which declares that it is the government's policy to "protect and preserve the inherent right of American Indians to believe, express, and practice their traditional religions." However, the act contains no penalties or enforcement mechanisms. For this reason, Hopi leader Vernon Masayesva (1994, 93) calls it "the law with no teeth." Therefore, Native Americans are lobbying to strengthen this 1978 legislation. They are seeking protection for religious worship services for military personnel and incarcerated Native Americans, as well as better access to religious relics, such as eagle feathers, and better safeguards against the exploitation of sacred lands (Burgess 1992; Deloria 1992; Friends Committee on National Legislation 1993).

A major spiritual concern is the stockpiling of Native American relics, including burial remains. Contemporary Native Americans are increasingly seeking the return of their ancestors' remains and artifacts, a demand that alarms museums and archeologists. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990 requires an inventory of such collections and provides for the return of materials



Efforts to keep sacred sites holy are difficult when they become popular tourist attractions, such as Devil's Tower National Monument in Wyoming.

if a claim can be substantiated. This has had significant impact on many anthropological and archaeological collections.

Many scholars believe the ancient bones and burial artifacts to be valuable clues to humanity's past. In part, however, this belief reflects a difference in cultural traditions. Yet the return, or repatriation, of these remains has been very uplifting to tribes and individual Native American families who often greet the arrival with elaborate and emotionally touching ceremonies (G. Johnson 2005).

In recent years, significant publicity has been given to an old expression of religion: the ritual use of peyote, which dates back thousands of years. The sacramental use of peyote was first observed by Europeans in the 1640s. In 1918, the religious use of peyote, a plant that creates mild psychedelic effects, was organized as the Native American Church (NAC). At first a Southwest-based religion, the NAC has spread since World War II among northern tribes. The use of the substance is a small part of a long and moving ritual. The exact nature of NAC rituals varies widely. Clearly, the church maintains the tradition of ritual curing and the seeking of individual visions. However, practitioners also embrace elements of Christianity, representing a type of religious pluralism of Indian and European identities.

Peyote is a hallucinogen, however, and the government has been concerned about NAC use of it. Several states passed laws in the 1920s and 1930s prohibiting the use of peyote. In the 1980s, several court cases involved the prosecution of Native Americans who were using peyote for religious purposes. Finally, in 1994, Congress amended the American Indian Religious Freedom Act to allow Native Americans the right to use, transport, and possess peyote for religious purposes (J. Martin 2001).

Today's Native Americans are asking that their traditions be recognized as an expression of pluralist rather than assimilationist coexistence. These traditions are also closely tied to religion. The sacred sites of Native Americans, as well as their religious practices, have been under attack. In the next section, we will focus on aspects of environmental disputes that are anchored in the spiritualism of Native Americans (Kinzer 2000; Mihesuah 2000).

### Environment

Environmental issues bring together many of the concerns we have previously considered surrounding Native Americans: land rights, environmental justice, economic development, and spiritualism. First, we can find in some of today's environmental literature stereotypes of native peoples as the last defense against the encroachment of "civilization." This image tends to trivialize native cultures, making them into what one author called a "New Age savage" (Waller 1996).

Second, many environmental issues are rooted in continuing land disputes arising from treaties and agreements more than a century old. Reservations contain a wealth of natural resources and scenic beauty. In the past, Native Americans often lacked the technical knowledge to negotiate beneficial agreements with private corporations, and when they did have this ability, the federal government often stepped in and made the final agreements more beneficial to the non-Native Americans than to the residents of the reservations. The native peoples have always been rooted in their land. It was their land that became the first source of tension and conflict with the Europeans. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is not surprising that land and the natural resources it holds continue to be major concerns. In 1967, the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) was formed by the leaders of twentyfive of the West's largest tribes. This new council reasoned that by organizing together it could ensure more revenue from the tribes' vast mineral resources. CERT, which by 2005 represented sixty tribes in the United States and Canada, has provided numerous services to tribes. Working with consultants, CERT helps them develop their resources by marketing natural gas more effectively and dealing with deregulation of utilities (Archuleta 1998; CERT 2006).

Third, environmental issues reinforce the tendency to treat the first inhabitants of the Americas as inferior. This is manifested in **environmental justice**—a term introduced in Chapter 3 describing efforts to ensure that hazardous substances are controlled so that all communities receive protection regardless of race or socioeconomic circumstances. Reservation representatives often express concern about how their lands are used as dumping grounds. For example, the Navajo reservation is home to almost 1,100 abandoned uranium mines. After legal action, the federal government finally provided assistance in 2000 to Navajos who had worked in the mines and were showing ill effects from radiation exposure. Although compensation has been less than was felt necessary, the Navajos continue to monitor closely new proposals to use their land. Few reservations have escaped negative environmental impact, and some observers contend that Native American lands are targeted for nuclear waste storage. Critics see this as a de facto policy of nuclear colonialism, whereby reservations are forced to accept all the hazards of nuclear energy, but the Native American people have seen few of its benefits (Daitz 2003).

Fourth, environmental concerns by American Indians often are balanced against economic development needs, just as they are in the larger society. On some reservations, authorization by timber companies to access hardwood forests led to very conflicted feelings among American Indians. However, such arrangements often are the only realistic source of needed revenue, even if they mean entering into arrangements that more affluent people would never consider. The Skull Valley Goshote tribe of Utah has tried to attract a nuclear waste dump over state government objections. Eventually, the federal government rejected the tribe's plans. Even on the Navajo reservation, a proposed new uranium mine has its supporters, those who consider the promises of royalty payments coupled with alleged safety measures sufficient to offset the past half-century of radiation problems (Bryan 2006; Foy 2006).

Fifth, spiritual needs must be balanced against demands on the environment. For example, numerous sacred sites lie in such public areas as the Grand Canyon, Zion, and Canyonlands National Parks that, though not publicized, are accessible to outsiders. Tribal groups have sought vainly to restrict entry to such sites. The

#### environmental justice

Efforts to ensure that hazardous substances are controlled so that all communities receive protection regardless of race or socioeconomic circumstances. San Carlos Apaches unsuccessfully tried to block the University of Arizona from erecting an observatory on their sacred Mt. Graham. Similarly, Plains Indians have sought to ban tourists from climbing Devil's Tower, long the site of religious visions, where prayer bundles of tobacco and sage were left behind by native peoples (Martin 2001).

# Conclusion

ative Americans have to choose between assimilating to the dominant White culture and maintaining their identity. In Figure 6.5 we revisit the continuum of intergroup relations as it relates to Native Americans. Recently there is evidence of pluralism, but the desire to improve themselves economically usually drives them toward assimilation.

It is not easy to maintain one's tribal identity outside a reservation. One has to consciously seek out one's cultural heritage amid the pressure to assimilate. Even on a reservation, it is not easy to integrate being Native American with elements of contemporary society. The dominant society needs innovative approaches to facilitate pluralism.

The reservations are economically depressed, but they are also the home of the Native American people spiritually and ideologically, if not always physically. Furthermore, the reservation's isolation means that the frustrations of reservation life and the violent outbursts against them do not alarm large numbers of Whites, as do disturbances in urban centers. Native Americans today, except in motion pictures, are out of sight and out of mind. Since the BIA was created in 1824, the federal government has had much greater control over Native Americans than over any other civilian group in the nation. For Native Americans, the federal government and White people are virtually synonymous. However, the typical White tends to be more sympathetic, if not paternalistic, toward Native Americans than toward African Americans.

Subordinate groups in the United States, including Native Americans, have made tremendous gains and will continue to do so in the years to come. But the rest of the population is not standing still. As Native American income rises, so does White income. As Native American children stay in school longer, so do White children. American Indian health care improves, but so does White health care. Advances have been made,

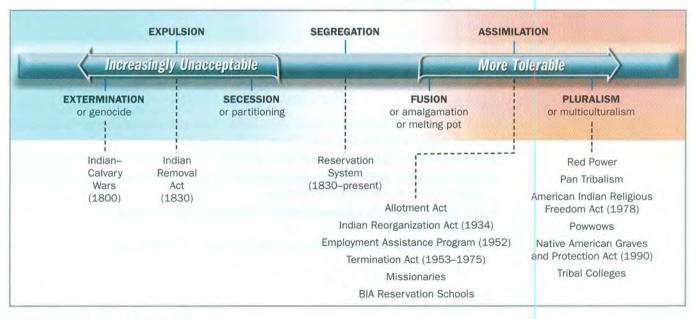


FIGURE 6.5 Intergroup Relations Continuum

but the gap remains between the descendants of the first Americans and those of later arrivals. Low incomes, inadequate education, and poor health care spurred relations between Native Americans and Whites to take a dramatic turn in the 1960s and 1970s, when Native Americans demanded a better life in America.

As Chapter 7 will show, African Americans have achieved a measure of recognition in Washington, DC, that Native Americans have not. Only 5 percent as numerous as the Black population, Native Americans have a weaker collective voice even with casino money fueling lobbying efforts. Only a handful of Native Americans have ever served in Congress, and many of the Whites representing states with large numbers of Native Americans have emerged as their biggest foes rather than their advocates.

The greatest challenge to and asset of the descendants of the first Americans is their land. Over 130 years after the Allotment Act, Native American peoples are still seeking what they feel is theirs through the *Corbell* lawsuit. The land they still possess, although only a small slice of what they once occupied, is an important asset. It is barren and largely unproductive agriculturally, but some of it is unspoiled and often rich in natural resources. No wonder many large businesses, land developers, environmentalists, and casino managers covet their land for their own purposes. For Native Americans, the land they still occupy, as well as much of that occupied by other Americans, represents their roots, their homeland.

One Thanksgiving Day, a scholar noted that, according to tradition, at the first Thanksgiving in 1621 the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag ate together. The descendants of these celebrants increasingly sit at distant tables with equally distant thoughts of equality. Today's Native Americans are the "most undernourished, most short-lived, least educated, least healthy." For them, "that long ago Thanksgiving was not a milestone, not a promise. It was the last full meal" (Dorris 1988, A23).

crossover effect 188 environmental justice 194 fish-ins 178 internal colonialism 172

# **Key Terms**

kickouts or pushouts 187 millenarian movements 171 pan-Indianism 178 powwows 181 sovereignty 181 world systems theory 168

# **Review Questions**

- 1. Identify three policies or actions taken by the federal government that have significant impact today in the daily lives of Native Americans.
- 2. How have land rights been a continuing theme in White-Native American relations?
- **3.** How much are Native Americans expected to shed their cultural heritage to become a part of contemporary society?
- **4.** Do casinos and other gaming outlets represent a positive force for Native American tribes today?
- 5. What challenges are there to reservation residents receiving effective health care?

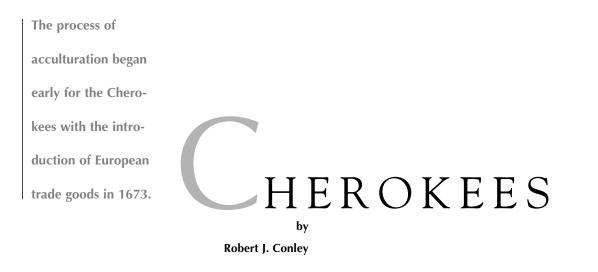


# **Critical Thinking**

- 1. Consider Independence Day and Thanksgiving Day. How do these national holidays remind Native Americans today of their marginal status?
- 2. Chronicle how aspects of leisure time from schoolyard games to Halloween costumes to team mascots trivialize Native Americans. What experience have you had with such episodes or seen in the mass media?
- **3.** Why do you think that many people in the United States hold more benevolent attitudes toward Native Americans than they do toward other subordinate groups such as African Americans and Latinos?

# Internet Connections—Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>

Follow the instructions found on page 35 of this text to access the features of Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>. Once at the Web site, enter your Login Name and Password. Then, to use the ContentSelect database, enter keywords such as "Trail of Tears," "Navajo," and "Apache," and the research engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.



# Overview

The Cherokee Nation today occupies all or part of 14 counties of what is now the northeastern portion of the state of Oklahoma. Not considered a reservation, the land falls under what has been called "a checkerboard jurisdiction," with one farm or acreage falling under tribal jurisdiction while its neighbor is under that of the state. A second and separate federally recognized tribal government for Cherokees, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokees in Oklahoma, exists in the same area. There is also a Cherokee reservation in North Carolina for the Eastern Band of Cherokees. In addition to the three federally recognized Cherokee governments, there are numerous groups throughout the United States who claim to be Cherokee bands or tribes. Although the Cherokee people today are divided geographically, culturally, and politically, about 165,000 are registered citizens of the Cherokee Nation. There are also thousands of individuals claiming Cherokee ancestry who are not associated with any group. The 1990 U.S. Census reported 369,000 people who identified themselves as Cherokee, up from 232,000 in 1980.

### HISTORY

The word Cherokee is believed to have evolved from a Choctaw word meaning "Cave People." It was picked up and used by Europeans and eventually accepted and adopted by Cherokees in the form of Tsalagi or Jalagi. Traditionally, the people now known as Cherokee refer to themselves as aniyun-wiya, a name usually translated as "the Real People," sometimes "the Original People." Earliest historical data locates the Cherokees in a vast area of what is now the southeastern United States, with about 200 towns scattered throughout the present states of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. Cherokee oral tradition tells of a time when the Cherokees were ruled over by a powerful priesthood called the ani-Kutani. When the priests took away a young man's wife, he organized a revolt and all the priests were killed. Since then, according to the tale, the Cherokees have had a democratic government.

The Cherokees' first experience with the invading white man was almost certainly a brief encounter with the deadly expeditionary force of Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto in 1540. English colonial traders began to appear among the Cherokees around 1673. Such interactions produced some mixed marriages, usually between a white trader and a Cherokee woman.

Three events mark Cherokee history during the eighteenth and nineteenth centures: war with the colonists (beginning in 1711); epidemics of European disease (primarily smallpox); and the continual cession of land (beginning in 1775). The Cherokees were forced to sign one treaty after another with the new United States government, each one giving away more land to the new nation. As early as 1803, President Thomas Jefferson planned to move all eastern Indians to a location west of the Mississippi River, and signed an agreement with the state of Georgia promising to accomplish that deed as soon as possible. Andrew Jackson actually set the so-called "Removal Process" in motion. In the meantime the government had been doing everything in its power to convince Cherokees to move west voluntarily, and the first to do so were the faction known as Chickamaugans. Other migrations followed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The vast majority of the Cherokees, however, remained in their ancestral homelands. In 1835 the United States Congress passed the Removal Act. The Cherokee Nation, by this time under the administration of Principal Chief John Ross, refused to recognize the validity or the legality of the Removal Act, and challenged it in court. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Cherokee Nation. President Jackson is reported to have said, "Justice Marshall has made his decision. Now let him enforce it." Jackson then sent negotiators into



the Cherokee Nation to secure a treaty whereby they would give up all of their land in the east for land out west. Since the government of the Cherokee Nation refused to negotiate, other Cherokees signed the treaty without authorization. The United States called the treaty a legal document and proceeded to force the Cherokees to live up to its terms.

Jackson ordered the U.S. Army to forcibly remove the Cherokees from their homelands in 1838. People were taken out of their homes and herded like cattle into stockades to await removal. Conditions were crowded and unsanitary, and many died in these prisons. The forced march began later that same year. Approximately 20,000 Cherokees were marched west over what would soon be known as the "Trail of Tears." Along the way, approximately 4,000 people died. A few managed to escape by hiding out in the mountains. In the west, the Cherokee divided into two major factions. The Cherokees who had signed the removal treaty and all of their friends, allies, and associates had become known as the Treaty Party. They had moved west voluntarily in 1835 after having signed the treaty. The followers of Chief John Ross, who had suffered the forced removal, were known as the Ross Party. These two factions started a civil war that lasted until 1843. At the end of this domestic strife the Cherokees started over and rebuilt their nation. Tahlequah was established as the capital city. They built new homes, schools, and churches, and even though they had a treaty with the United States, which promised that they would be left alone, that was not to be.

This young Cherokee woman demonstrates a method of fishing using a stick. The Cherokee Nation was dragged into the white man's Civil War. Chief John Ross begged the United States to send troops to protect its neutrality as promised in the treaty, but the troops never came. Under pressure from former Treaty Party members turned Confederate Cherokees, Ross was forced to sign a treaty with the Confederacy. Following the Civil War, the United States used that treaty as an excuse to punish the Cherokee Nation, forcing it to sign yet another treaty and to give up more land. Certain governmental powers were also taken away from the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee Nation, along with the Choctaw Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, the Creek Nation, and the Seminole Nation were organized into "Indian Territory."

Over the next half century, the powers of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes that made up the Indian Territory were further eroded by the United States. In 1907, against the wishes of nearly all of the traditional full-blood people of all five tribes, Indian Territory was combined with Oklahoma Territory to its west to form the new state of Oklahoma.

From the beginning, the United States had no intention of dealing with Indians in the new state. The tribal governments were all but abolished and likely would have been but for the complications of transferring land titles. The president of the United States began appointing chiefs for the five tribes when the government had need of a signature to make the transfers legal. Several appointments were made only long enough to obtain the desired signature and these appointees became known as "Chiefs for a day."

### MODERN ERA

In 1973, President Richard Nixon indicated that the Cherokees had the right to vote, revitalizing the Cherokee Nation. However, this created the uncomfortable situation of having two Cherokee (the other, the United Keetoowan Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, was founded in the 1950s) governments in the same location, with the same jurisdiction, and basically the same constituency. A conflict over political issues developed, with both sides claiming to be the only legal government for Cherokees in Oklahoma. Since then, the Cherokee Nation has grown and prospered, making its most impressive strides under the leadership of Principal Chief Wilma P. Mankiller (1945- ). Mankiller served as principal chief from 1987 to 1995. Joe Byrd succeeded Mankiller, but allegations of corruption and abuse of power plagued his four year term. In 1999, Cherokee voters elected Chad Smith principal chief in 1999.

The Cherokee Nation today operates under a new constitution ratified by Cherokee voters in 1976. The three-branch government is composed of a chief executive called the principal chief, a legislature called the Tribal Council, and a judicial branch called a tribunal made up of three tribal justices. From its humble condition in the 1970s, the Cherokee Nation has grown to massive proportions, employing 1,300 people, 85 percent of whom are Cherokees with a \$1.6 million monthly payroll.

# Acculturation and Assimilation

The process of acculturation began early for the Cherokees with the introduction of European trade goods in 1673. Steel pots and knives, tomahawks, glass beads, manufactured cloth, guns, and gunpowder gradually replaced traditional products of native manufacture. Trade with Europeans also changed hunting practices, calling for large numbers of pelts and quickly endangering the population of many game animals. Clothing styles changed.

Intermarriage with whites and blacks caused a drastic change in family structure for many Cherokees. The Cherokees have a matrilineal clan structure, a family in which descent is traced through the female line. This type of family structure was undermined by the insistence of white males to be considered heads of households, and to pass along their own surnames to their offspring. They were supported in this by the efforts of the missionaries.

When pressure for removal became intense in the 1820s and 1830s, a significant portion of the Cherokees, believing that their white neighbors wanted them removed because they were "savage," began a conscious effort to make themselves over and become "civilized." Part of this "civilizing" effort was an effort to eliminate illiteracy. To help accomplish this, the Cherokee Sequoyah developed a written language or syllabary, in 1821. The Cherokee also hired teachers from universities in the northeast and invited missionaries to come into the Cherokee country and teach and preach. These people became known as "Progressives," and their efforts, combined with the acculturation and assimilation process that had begun in 1673, accelerated and was tremendously successful in changing lifestyles.

The changes that occurred because of this effort were so pervasive that, following the Trail of Tears, with removal pressures no longer a factor, the Cherokees continued their new ways. In the West, they built homes more or less like the homes of white men. They built churches, divided the new country into voting districts, and wrote a new constitution.



The Cherokee tradition involves participation in rituals and celebrations at a young age.

Many Cherokees became farmers, ranchers, merchants, bankers, and lawyers. In many ways, the Cherokee Nation mirrored the larger United States. Some have said that the Cherokee Nation imitated the United States and then improved on it. The largest single item on the national budget was education. Cherokee legislators could not vote themselves a raise. The Cherokee Nation established the first free, compulsory public school system, established the first institution of higher learning west of the Mississippi River, and installed the first telephone west of the Mississippi. So successful was the Cherokee Nation and impressive were its accomplishments along these lines, that people have been heard to say that "the Cherokees all became white," or "everybody in Oklahoma is part Indian, usually Cherokee." Yet, age-old Cherokee beliefs and customs survived in traditional full-blood communities in remote locations in the Midwest and Southeast almost completely unknown to the outside world.

### TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS, AND BELIEFS

Some Cherokees today are almost indistinguishable from white people, and their customs, habits, and

beliefs reflect those of mainstream America. But traditional Cherokees gather at various "stomp grounds," which are consecrated, ceremonial grounds. Each ground has its own set of religious leaders. The ceremony performed there is a series of dances, done in a counter-clockwise direction around the sacred fire all night long. Attendance at the stomp grounds declined for many years, but since the 1970s it seems to have been increasing. Although stomp dancers were very secretive for years, there are now some groups who perform publicly to educate the general population, Cherokee and others, regarding traditional Cherokee ways and beliefs.

### INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Because of the long history of intermarriage, and because of the nature of the division of land in eastern Oklahoma, Cherokees have long been used to interacting with non-Cherokees. In fact, Cherokees always seem to have been willing to accept outsiders into their ranks, some might say, too willingly. Tahlequah, for example, appears to have a large white population, but much of that population consists of old mixed-blood families, and many of them are officially tribal members. There are also Indians from other tribes who have moved into Tahlequah: Creeks, Kiowas, Osages, and even Navajos. Some of that is the result of intermarriage, some is not. There is a significant Hispanic population in Tahlequah today, and a small black population. Both of these groups have had trouble fitting in. They have not been readily accepted by the Cherokees, full- or mixed-blood, nor by the local whites, although there is seldom any overt racism displayed.

Cherokee interaction with blacks dates back to the late 1700s and early 1800s. In an attempt to adapt to white lifestyles, many Cherokees became affluent southern plantation slave owners, although others were intensely anti-slavery. According to historical author Jim Stebinger, Cherokees held an estimated 1,600 black slaves. In contrast to white plantation owners, Cherokee plantation owners worked alongside their slaves and interracial marriage was permitted. However, full-blooded Cherokees, blacks and whites, often shunned those who intermarried.

### EDUCATION

Before Oklahoma statehood took over or closed down almost all of its institutions, the Cherokee Nation had its own school system. The Cherokee Nation had produced more college graduates than its neighboring states of Arkansas and Texas combined. Oklahoma statehood and the state's public school system changed all that. According to the 1970 census, the average adult Cherokee had only five and one-half years of school. Fewer than 70 years of Oklahoma public schools had been devastating for Cherokees. Up until very recent times, Cherokee students, upon being enrolled in the first grade, were automatically placed in slow-learner classrooms. Cherokee high school students were not encouraged to apply for college and were not taken on trips with the white students to visit college campuses. Some Cherokee students attended government boarding schools for Indians, but the majority were in public schools.

Since the revitalization of the Cherokee Nation, there has been gradual, steady improvement in the area of education. Programs have been instituted in the public schools for Cherokee students because of pressures from the Cherokee Nation and because of the availability of federal funds for such programs. The Cherokee Nation has taken over Sequoyah High School, a former federally run boarding school, and is operating it for Indian students in Tahlequah. The Cherokee Nation also has established a complete pre-school program for Cherokee children from age three until they are ready to enter the first grade. There is also a Cherokee Nation higher education program to assist Cherokees in attending college. Many of the public schools that formerly discouraged Cherokee students now have Cherokee teachers, counselors, administrators, and other personnel on their staffs. Most Cherokees still attend public schools (several of which have up to 90 percent Cherokee enrollment), but over the last 20 years or so, the situation there for Cherokees has greatly improved.

### CUISINE

Cherokees were traditionally an agrarian people, maintaining a town garden and individual garden plots. The women did most of the tending of crops, but then the women owned the gardens and the homes. They planted a wide variety of beans, pumpkins, squash, and corn. In addition to the growing of crops, women gathered many wild plants for food, including wild onions and greens, mushrooms, berries, grapes, and nuts.

Deer was the main animal hunted for meat, but bear, buffalo, elk, squirrel, rabbit, opossum, and other animals were also killed for food. Early on, the Cherokees began raising cattle, hogs, chickens, and other domesticated animals acquired from Europeans. The contemporary Cherokee diet is not that much different from that of the general population of the United States, although at special gatherings one will find wild onions and eggs, bean bread, fry bread, grape dumplings, and possibly fried crawdads (crayfish). A special treat is *kanuche*, made by pounding whole hickory nuts, boiling them in water and straining the hulls out, resulting in a rich broth. *Kanuche* may be mixed with hominy, corn, or rice.

### TRADITIONAL COSTUMES

Cherokee men once wore only a breechcloth and moccasins in warm weather. In colder weather they added leggings and a fringed hunting jacket. Chiefs and priests wore long, full cloaks made of feathers and feather caps (not the traditional and popular plains Indian headdress). The men shaved their heads, leaving a topknot (sometimes called a scalplock), which they allowed to grow long, and often their bodies and faces were tattooed. In warm weather women wore only a short skirt and added a poncho-like top during the winter. Styles changed in the early nineteenth century as a result of trade with Europeans. Women began to make and wear

366

long dresses and blouses of manufactured trade cloth, and men began wearing shirts and jackets of cloth. They also added colorful turbans. By the 1880s, most of that distinctive clothing had been abandoned and Cherokees dressed mostly like frontier whites.

Today, for special occasions, some Cherokee men will don ribbon shirts, a contemporary pan-Indian item. A few may even dress up in hunting jackets and turbans. Women may wear traditional "tear dresses," so named because the pattern calls for tearing the fabric along straight lines rather than cutting with scissors.

### DANCES AND SONGS

The stomp dance, which has already been discussed, is a religious activity. No Cherokee social dances have survived, but some Cherokees have joined in the pan-Indian practice of powwow dancing. When Cherokee singing is announced, it is almost always gospel singing in the Cherokee language. It is possible today, though, to hear stomp dance songs sung without actually attending a stomp dance. At least one old Cherokee lullaby has survived. Barbara McAlester, a Cherokee opera singer, sometimes performs it as part of her concerts.

### HOLIDAYS

Traditionally, certain ceremonies were performed at specific times of the year, and they included songs and dances. The largest of these was the Green Corn Dance, celebrating the beginning of spring. Today, the Cherokee Nation observes one annual holiday on September 6, which marks the anniversary of the adoption of the new constitution following the Trail of Tears. It reunited those Cherokees who had moved west on their own before the Trail of Tears with the main body of the Cherokees under the administration of Chief John Ross. For convenience, this holiday is celebrated over the Labor Day weekend in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and is attended each year by thousands of people from all over the world. Activities include a parade through downtown Tahlequah, a state of the nation address by the principal chief, traditional games, concerts, and arts and crafts shows.

### **HEALTH ISSUES**

A traditional Cherokee says that there was a time long ago when there was no disease in the world. Then human beings developed weapons. When the Cherokee got these new weapons, bows and arrows especially, they were able to kill many more animals than before. One day the animals called a council to discuss this problem. They all agreed that the people had to kill animals in order to obtain food for their survival but they also agreed that the Cherokees were killing too many animals too casually. They decided that a hunter should have to take his killing more seriously. He should pray, fast, and go through a prescribed ritual. He should kill only what he needed and then apologize to the spirit of the slain animal. If a hunter failed to show the proper respect and neglected to do any of these prescribed things, the animal spirits would strike him with some dreadful disease. Some of the diseases the animals came up with were so horrible that the plants, having overheard the council, each decided to provide a cure for one of the specific diseases that the animals had proposed.

Traditional Cherokee healers, like those of other American Indian tribes, have always been expert at the medicinal use of plants. But a traditional Cherokee cure almost always involves more than just the use of the plant medicine. It involves the ritualistic use of words and sometimes specific actions. Many traditional Cherokees still go to these Indian doctors to cure their ills.

With the arrival of Europeans came European diseases that the Cherokee doctors did not know how to cure. A belief developed that it takes a white doctor to cure a white man's disease. Missionaries, school systems, government programs, and intermarriage also undermined Indian beliefs. Many Cherokees began to depend for health care, either exclusively or in part, on white doctors.

For many years, the health of American Indians was in the hands of the United States government through its Indian Health Service (IHS). In recent years, however, tribes have begun contracting with the IHS to administer these services themselves. There are still two IHS hospitals in the Cherokee Nation, one in Claremore, Oklahoma, and one in Tahlequah. In addition, the Cherokee Nation has its own health division, which operates five rural health clinics and a number of other health programs.

Cherokees, like other American Indians, generally face the same health problems as anyone else. Cherokees have a high occurrence of diabetes, perhaps as a result of dietary habits fostered by outside influences such as government boarding schools and the government's food distribution program for Indians. Other major health problems for the Cherokee are high rates of alcoholism, suicide, obesity, and childhood injuries. Many Cherokee leaders believe alcoholism is the primary problem facing the tribe, and that it directly impacts other issues, including health, unemployment, poverty, and crime.

## LANGUAGE

The Cherokee language belongs to the Iroquoian family of languages and is therefore related to Mohawk, Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, and Tuscarora, among others. It is a complex and difficult language; in his Cherokee-English Dictionary, for example, Durbin Feeling lists 126 forms of a single verb. Cherokee has been a written language at least since 1821, when Sequovah (c. 1770-1843), a Cherokee, produced a syllabary for that purpose. (A syllabary is a writing system in which each symbol stands for an entire syllable. In the Cherokee syllabary, for instance, the symbol "A" stands for the sound "go.") Although Sequoyah is credited with inventing the syllabary, some Cherokees have taken exception with that claim, maintaining that the syllabary is an ancient Cherokee writing system which was kept secret until Sequoyah decided to make it public. Soon afterward, almost the entire Cherokee population became literate, and in 1828, the Nation began publishing a bilingual newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix.

Today, the Cherokee language is still in wide use. It is used in the Indian churches and at the stomp grounds, and many children still grow up with Cherokee as their first language, learning English when they go to school. Bilingual education programs in the public schools also encourage continued use of the language.

### GREETINGS AND OTHER POPULAR EXPRESSIONS

Osiyo or 'siyo is usually translated as "hello" and it may be followed by *Tohiju*?-How are you? (Are you well?). One response is *tohigwu*-I am well. *Wado* is "thank you." *Howa* means all right, or okay. "Man" is *asgaya*; "boy" is *achuja*. "Woman" is *agehyuh* and "girl," *agehyuja*. "Cherokee Nation" is translated as *Chalagihi* Ayehli (or *Jalagihi* Ayehli), using the "Cherokeeized" version of the word *Cherokee* (with the place ending "hi") and the versatile word *ayehli*, which can mean "center," "soul," or "nation."

## Religion

The ancient Cherokee belief system described a world that was flat and floating on water. This is the world that we live on. Above it is a Sky Vault made of stone, which might be pictured as a bowl turned upside down over a saucer. The original life forms, all spirit beings, and the souls of the departed live on top of the Sky Vault. Life up there is like that down here.

There is a world underneath the one we inhabit. It is the opposite of this one. When it is winter on earth, it is summer down there. When it is night here, it is daytime there. There are also many powerful and potentially destructive spirit forces below.

It would be a mistake to see these two Cherokee spirit worlds as heaven and hell. They are not defined as good and evil, although the one below is seen as tremendously chaotic. They are thought of simply as being opposed to one another. We live our lives between them in a constant state of precarious balance. Because of this dangerous situation, the most important aspect of life in this traditional Cherokee view is to maintain balance and harmony. Almost all old habits, rituals, and ceremonies are designed and practiced to that end. The world is seen as existing in pairs of opposites: light and dark; day and night; summer and winter; male and female; earth and sky; fire and water. All things must be kept in their proper place and in balance with their opposites. A mixture of opposites results in pollution and to avoid disaster, they must be followed by some sort of cleansing ceremony.

If the Cherokees are Christian, they might be Methodist, Presbyterian, Unitarian, or any other Christian denomination. Among the more traditional Cherokees is a large group of Cherokee Baptists. Cherokee Baptists attend what are called "Indian churches," in which they make use of a Cherokee-language New Testament and a Cherokee-language hymnal. Services are conducted in the Cherokee language. In fact, the Cherokee Baptist church has been credited with saving the Cherokee language from extinction, and although the truth of that claim is subject to debate, certainly the church has played a significant role in that area. Very often, when Cherokees talk about traditional people, they are talking about Cherokee Baptists.

# Employment and Economic Traditions

This discussion will focus on the more traditional Cherokees, those who live in Cherokee communities and are visibly Indian. Employment opportunities are limited for these people because they tend to stay at home. They would rather be around their families and friends and remain a part of their community than seek better opportunities elsewhere. For these Cherokees, unemployment figures are high. Major employers in the area are large nurseries in Cherokee County, Oklahoma, and large chicken processing plants in Arkansas. The Cherokee Nation also has become a major employer in the area. But there still are not enough jobs to go around. Low-income people living in rural areas often lack dependable transportation, so even if they can secure jobs, they may not be able to hold on to them. U.S. Census figures show Cherokees had a median family income of \$24,907 in 1989, high compared to other Native American tribes, but \$10,000 less than the national average. Also, 22 percent of Cherokees live at or below the poverty level.

The Cherokee Nation offers job training programs, but once an individual is trained for a job, if there is no such opening in the area and he/she does not want to move, he/she is no better off than before. Some people have gone through several job training programs, becoming qualified carpenters, plumbers, and electricians, and yet remain unemployed. Many people mow lawns, cut firewood, and accept various odd jobs in order to support their families. They still hunt, and they still gather wild food plants.

# Politics and Government

The governmental structure of the Cherokee Nation already has been described. This section will focus on political issues. Because membership in the Cherokee Nation has no blood percentage requirement but is based strictly on lineal descent from any person listed as Cherokee on the so-called Dawes Roll (the roll prepared by the United States government's Dawes Commission for purposes of land allotment in preparation for Oklahoma statehood) many Cherokees complain that too many white people (usually Cherokees with less than one-fourth Cherokee blood) take advantage of Cherokee programs.

The Indian Self-determination Act, known as PL 93-638, allows Indian tribes to contract with the federal government either through the Bureau of Indian Affairs or Indian Health Service to operate programs for themselves, which have been previously operated by either of these two government bureaus.

The Cherokee Nation has been taking advantage of this law since the 1970s and has contracted nearly all of the available government programs. There has been discussion for several years about the possibility of the Cherokee Nation's contracting to run the Indian hospitals within its jurisdiction. Some Cherokees, including some hospital employees, are strongly opposed to such a move, saying that the Cherokee Nation is not prepared to run the hospitals.

State governments seem to be almost constantly making attempts to encroach into the area of tribal jurisdiction. They want to impose state hunting and fishing regulations on tribal members. They want to collect various kinds of taxes from tribal members or from the tribes themselves. Indians do not pay income tax, federal or state, unless their income is derived strictly from business activity that takes place on land that is still held in trust by the federal government for the Indian owner. Issues of state infringement on tribal sovereignty, in which the Cherokee Nation has been involved in recent years, includes the state's attempt to tax tobacco sales at Indian smoke shops, and the state's attempt to regulate Indian gaming. The Cherokee Nation operates high stakes Bingo parlors.

In terms of American politics, there are Cherokee Democrats and Cherokee Republicans. There were Cherokee supporters of H. Ross Perot and, very likely, there are Cherokee Populists and Cherokee Anarchists. Cherokees are seldom if ever of one mind on any given issue. When it comes to national politics they will only come close to a consensus if the issue at hand is one of tribal sovereignty. For example, every so often a congressman will introduce a bill to abrogate all Indian treaties and terminate all tribal governments. Most likely, nearly all Cherokees would unite in opposing such a bill.

# Individual and Group Contributions

Although the Cherokee Nation is but one of over 300 American Indian tribes in the United States, the Cherokees have produced a significant number of prominent people in various areas. In addition to those individuals listed below, any number of other prominent Americans, and at least one Englishman, have claimed Cherokee descent at one time or another: Tom Mix, Monte Blue, John Nance Garner, Iron Eyes Cody, Walter Brennan, Johnny Cash, Burt Reynolds, James Garner, Willie Nelson, Oral Roberts, Cher, Anita Bryant, Loretta Lynn, Kevin Costner, Sir Winston Churchill, and President Bill Clinton (who claims to be one-sixteenth Cherokee, although no documentation has been found to support this).

### ART

Cherokee artists and artists of Cherokee descent include Cecil Dick (1915-1992); George Cochran (1911-1992); Willard Stone (1916-1990); Anna Mitchell; Bill Glass, Sr.; Bill Glass, Jr. (1950-); Virginia Stroud (1949- ), painter and illustrator; Jeanne Walker Rorex (1951- ); Bill Rabbit (1946- ); Robert Annesley (1943- ); Jane Osti; Bert Seabourne (1931- ); Joan Hill (1930- ); Murv Jacob (1945- ); Janna Jacob (1976- ); and Jimmie Durham (1940- ), sculptor, performance artist and poet.

### FILM, TELEVISION, AND THEATER

Frank Boudinot (d. circa 1864) moved to New York City in the first half of the nineteenth century to become a professional actor; he used the stage name of Frank Starr; during the Civil War, he was an officer in the Union Army and died of wounds received during that conflict. Victor Daniels (1899-1955), using the professional name Chief Thundercloud, was a successful film actor for over 20 years; among other roles, he played Tonto in the early Lone Ranger films and Chiricahua Apache tribal leader Geronimo in a 1939 version of that story. Clu Gulager (1928- ), whose first name is a version of *tlu-tlu*, the Cherokee word for a purple martin, is a veteran film and television actor, perhaps best remembered for his role of Deputy, later Sheriff, Ryker on the long-running television series The Virginian, his first series was The Tall Man, in which he played Billy the Kid, and his films include The Killers and The Last Picture Show. Wes Studi (1947-), full-blood Cherokee, has received critical acclaim for his portrayals of Magua in The Last of the Mohicans, and (1992) Geronimo in the 1994 film Geronimo: An American Legend. He appeared in the film Mystery Men in 1999. Arthur Junaluska (1918-), Eastern Cherokee, was an actor, playwright, and theatrical director. Dennis Weaver (1924-), film and television actor, known for his Emmy-winning role as Chester on the long-running television series Gunsmoke, and McCloud in the television series by that same name. Will Rogers (1879-1935) could be categorized in any number of ways; he was a performer in Wild West shows and on stage, later becoming a film actor, radio personality, and nationally syndicated newspaper columnist; during his lifetime, he was probably the best loved man in America, if not in the entire world; and Gary Robinson (1950-), writer, producer and director.

### LITERATURE

Sequoyah (c. 1770-1843), inventor of the Cherokee syllabary, was born in the old Cherokee country of what is now Tennessee and moved west before the Trail of Tears. He apparently died somewhere in Mexico. Cherokee writers include John Rollin Ridge (1827-1867), editor of the Sacramento Bee and

author of The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta, the Celebrated California Bandit and John Milton Oskison (1874-1947), editor of the New York Evening Post and Colliers' Weekly, and author of Brothers Three and Black Jack Davy; Norman H. Russell (1921-), poet and educator, author of Indian Thoughts; Robert J. Conley (1940-), the award-winning author of Mountain Windsong, Nickajack, The Real People series of novels, The War Trail Northand others; Marilou Awiakta (1936-), poet, storyteller, and author of Abiding Appalachia, Rising Fawn and the Fire Mystery, and Selu: Seeking the Corn Mother's Wisdom; Diane Glancy (1941-), poet and novelist, and author of Firesticks, Flutie, and The Only Piece of Furniture in the House; Jean Hager (1932-), award-winning author of Grandfather Medicine, Night Walker, and others; Carroll Arnette (Gogisgi) (1927-1997), poet, and teacher, author of Rounds, Tsalagi, South Line, Engine, and others; Robin Coffee (1955-), poet, and author of Voices of the Heart, Sacred Seasons, and others; Ralph Salisbury (1924-), poet, teacher, and author of A White Rainbow, Spirit Beast Chant, One Indian and Two Chiefs, Pointing at the Rainbow, and others; Gladys Cardiff (1942-), Eastern Cherokee poet and author of To Frighten a Storm; Ron Rogers (1948- ), poet and writer of short fiction; Thomas King (1943-), screenwriter, novelist, and author of Green Grass, Running Waterand Medicine Rites; Rayna Diane Green (1942-), writer, folklorist, and editor of That's What She Said: Contemporary Poetry and Fiction by Native American Women; Geary Hobson (1941-), educator, writer, critic, author of Deer Hunting and Other Poems, and editor of The Remembered Earth: An Anthology of Contemporary American Indian Literature; Lynn Riggs (1899-1954), playwright, and author of Green Grow the Lilacs, which later became the Rogers and Hammerstein musical, Oklahoma; Betty Louise Bell (1949-), author of Faces in the Moon; and Robert Franklin Gish (1940-), author of Dreams of Quivira and When Coyote Howls: A Lavaland Tale.

### ACADEMIA

Carolyn Attneave (1920-1992) is a psychologist and educator. She is also the author of several books, including *Family Networks* and *Beyond Clinic Walls*.

### MILITARY

Admiral Joseph James (Jocko) Clark (1893-1971), a World War II naval hero, was commander of the seventh fleet during the Korean conflict.

### MUSIC

Jack F. Kilpatrick (1915-1967) was a noted composer and long-time professor of musicology at Southern Methodist University; in addition, with his wife Anna, Kilpatrick wrote several books dealing with Cherokee tales and Cherokee language texts. Barbara McAlester is an opera singer who was born in Oklahoma and currently lives in New York City; she has performed around the world.

# Media

### The Cherokee Advocate.

The official newspaper of the Cherokee Nation since its founding in 1977. Monthly with a circulation of 95,000.

Contact: Lynn M. Howard, Editor. Address: P.O. Box 948, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465. Telephone: (918) 456-0671. Fax: (918) 456-6485. E-mail: tfiedler@cherokee.

### Cherokee Observer.

Independent monthly newspaper.

**Contact:** David Cornsilk, Managing Editor.

Address: P.O. Box 1301, Jay, Oklahoma 74346-1301.
Telephone: (918) 540-2924.
E-mail: dcwy@galaxy.galstar.com

### The Cherokee One-Feather.

The official publication of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians featuring news of interest to the local Cherokee tribe and to American Indians in general.

Contact: Richard L. Welch, Editor. Address: P.O. Box 501, Cherokee, North Carolina 28719. Telephone: (704) 497-5513. Fax: (704) 497-4810.

### Cherokee Tribune.

Community weekly newspaper founded in 1934.

Contact: Otis Brumby Jr., Publisher. Address: Neighbor Newspaper, Inc. P.O. Box 449, Marietta, Georgia 30061. Telephone: (404) 428-9411.

### Journal of Cherokee Studies.

Covers historical and cultural research of Cherokees.

Contact: Duane H. King, Editor. Address: Museum of the Cherokee Indian, P.O. Box 770A, Cherokee, North Carolina 28719. Telephone: (704) 497-3481.

### Twin Territories.

Privately published, it deals largely with historical material on the so-called Five Civilized Tribes.

Address: P.O. Box 1426, Muskogee, Oklahoma 74402.

### UKB News.

Monthy publication of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians of Oklahoma.

**Contacts:** Emma Holand and Anita Ross, Editors. **Address:** P.O. Box 746, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464.

# Organizations and Associations

### Cherokee Cultural Society.

The purpose is to build community, preserve Cherokee heritage, and perpetrate the culture. Publishes a monthly email newsletter *Cherokee Messenger*.

Address: P.O. Box 23187, Houston, Texas 77228. Telephone: (713) 866-4085.

# The Cherokee Nation.

**Contact:** Chad Smith, Principal Chief. **Address:** P.O. Box 948, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465.

### Cherokee Nation of New Jersey.

Founded in 1997. Seeks to educate people about the American Indian who is of African, Hispanic, Asian, and European mix, and to foster goodwill.

Contact: Chief C.W. Longbow. Address: c/o C. W. Longbow, 1164 Stuyvesant Avenue, Irvington, New Jersey 071112392. Telephone: (201) 374-1021.

### The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Address: P.O. Box 455, Cherokee, North Carolina 28719.
Contact: Joyce Dugan, Principal Chief.
Telephone: (704) 497-2772.
Fax: (704) 497-2952.

371

The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokees in Oklahoma. Contact: Jim Ross, Chief. Address: 2450 South Muskogee Avenue, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464. Telephone: (918) 456-5491. Fax: (918) 456-9601.

# Museums and Research Centers

### Cherokee National Museum.

Also houses the Cherokee Heritage Center.

Address: Willis Road, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464. Telephone: (918) 456-6007.

### Cherokee National Historical Society (CNHS).

Seeks to interest the public in Cherokee history; operates Cherokee Heritage Center, which includes the Cherokee National Museum, and Cherokee Arboretum and Herb Garden (including trees and plants used traditionally by Cherokees for food, fiber, and medicines). Publishes quarterly newsletter *Columns* 

Contact: Mac R. Harris, Executive Director. Address: P.O. Box 515, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465. Telephone: (918) 456-6007. Fax: (918) 456-6165. Email: tsalagi@netsites.net.

### The Five Civilized Tribes Museum.

Preserves and encourages the continuation of the cultures and traditions of "The Five Civilized Tribes." Holds artifacts and artworks. Includes a research library.

Address: 1109 Honor Heights Drive, Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401.
Telephone: (918) 683-1701.
Fax: (918) 683-3070.
E-mail: the5tribesmuseum@azalea.net.
Online: http://www.fivetribes.com/.

### Museum of the Cherokee Indian.

Located on the Cherokee reservation at Highway 441 North and Drama Road in Cherokee, North Carolina. Offers dramatic presentations of Cherokee history and language. Maintains artifact exhibits. Received a \$3 million renovation in 1998 to include a walk along the Trail of Tears.

Address: P.O. Box 1599, Cherokee North Carolina 28719. Telephone: (704) 497-3481.

# Sources for Additional Study

Bird, Traveller. *Tell Them They Lie: The Sequoyah* Myth. Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1971.

Brown, John P. Old Frontiers: The Story of the Cherokee Indians from Earliest Times to the Date of Their Removal to the West, 1838. Kingsport, Tennessee: Southern Publishers, 1938.

Collier, Peter. When Shall They Rest? The Cherokees' Long Struggle with America. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973.

Conley, Robert J. The Witch of Goingsnake and Other Stories. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

Cunningham, Frank H. General Stand Watie's Confederate Indians. San Antonio: Naylor Company, 1959.

Feeling, Durbin. *Cherokee-English Dictionary*. Tahlequah, Oklahoma: The Cherokee Nation, 1975.

Fogelson, Raymond D. The Cherokees: A Critical Bibliography. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978.

Foreman, Grant. Indians and Pioneers. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1930.

Kilpatrick, Jack Frederick, and Anna Gritts. Walk in Your Soul: Love Incantations of the Oklahoma Cherokees. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1964.

Mankiller, Wilma P., and Michael Wallis. Mankiller: A Chief and Her People. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.

Mooney, James. Myths of the Cherokee. Washington, D.C.: Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1891.



Because they have remained relatively isolated from the centers of European population, because they have been able to hold onto a large part of their ancestral homeland, and because of the great distances and poor roads within the region, Navajos have been more successful than most Native Americans in retaining their culture, language, and customs.

# Overview

The Navajo Nation covers a territory larger than the combined states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. It is the largest reservationbased Indian nation within the United States, both in land area and population. More than 200,000 Navajos live on the 24,000 square miles of the Navajo Nation. The Navajos' name for themselves is *Diné*, meaning "the people." The Spanish and Mexicans called them "Apaches de Navajo": "Navajo" is a modified Tewa word meaning "planted fields" and "Apache" is the Spanish version of the Zuñi word for "enemies." In 1969 the Navajo Tribal Council officially designated the nation the "Navajo Nation."

### HISTORY

In the early nineteenth century, Navajos lived in what is now New Mexico in an area that was under Spanish colonial rule. Navajos lived too far from the colonists, who were concentrated in the upper Rio Grande Valley, to be subjected to the disruption of their lives that the Pueblos suffered at the hands of the Spanish. At times the Navajos were allied with the Spanish against other Indians, principally the Utes; other times the Spanish joined forces with the Utes and fought the Navajos. For the Navajos, the most important by-product of Spanish colonization in New Mexico was the introduction of horses and

sheep; the smooth, long-staple, non-oily wool of the Spanish churro sheep would prove ideal for weaving. When the United States claimed that it had acquired an interest in Navajo land by virtue of having won a war with Mexico in 1848, the Navajos were not particularly impressed. But when the U.S. Army arrived in force at the conclusion of the American Civil War, matters took a grim turn for the Navajo. In the army's scorched-earth campaign, led by Colonel Kit Carson, the Navajo homeland was devastated. Half of the Navajos, demoralized and starving, surrendered to the army and were marched 370 miles to the Bosque Redondo concentration camp on the Pecos River, where many of them died-2,000 of them in one year alone from smallpox. After four years of imprisonment they were allowed to return to their homeland in 1868, now reduced to one-tenth its original size by treaty that same year. They began rebuilding their lives and their herds, virtually unnoticed in an area that most Americans considered worthless desert wasteland.

### **MODERN ERA**

Modern Navajos remain in their ancestral homelands in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. In both the 1980 and 1990 census, Arizona and New Mexico ranked third and fourth, respectively, for the largest number of Native American residents within each state. The contemporary government of the Navajos is the Navajo Nation in Window Rock, Arizona. The Navajo Nation comprises approximately 16 million acres, mostly in northeastern Arizona, but including portions of northwestern New Mexico and southeastern Utah. It is a land of vast spaces and only a few all-weather roads. Eighty-eight percent of the reservation is without telephone service and many areas do not have electricity.

The local unit of Navajo government is called the Chapter. There are more than one hundred Chapter Houses throughout the nation, which serve as local administrative centers for geographical regions. Before the 1990 tribal elections, the tribal council system of government was reorganized into executive, legislative, and judicial branches. In 1990 Navajos elected a tribal president for the first time, rather than a tribal chairman. The tribal budget exceeds \$100 million annually, with much of the revenue coming from mineral leases.

The Navajo reservation, as created by treaty in 1868, encompassed only about ten percent of the ancestral Navajo homeland. The land base soon tripled in size, largely by the addition of large blocks of land by executive orders of presidents of the United States during the late nineteenth century, when Americans still considered most of the desert Southwest to be undesirable land. Dozens of small increments were also added by various methods until the middle of the twentieth century.

Navajos of the mid-1990s were still adjusting the boundaries of their nation, especially by trading land in an attempt to create contiguous blocks in an area called the Checkerboard, which lies along the eastern boundary of the Navajo Nation. More than 30,000 Navajos live in this 7,000 square-mile area of northwestern New Mexico. They are interspersed with Anglo and New Mexican stock raisers and involved in a nightmare of legal tangles regarding title to the land, where there are 14 different kinds of land ownership. The problems originated in the nineteenth century, when railroad companies were granted rights of way consisting of alternating sections of land. They were complicated by partial allotments of 160-acre parcels of land to some individual Navajos, the reacquisition of some parcels by the federal government as public domain land, and other factors. Crownpoint is the home of the Eastern Navajo Agency, the Navajo administrative headquarters for the Checkerboard. As recently as 1991 the Navajos were still attempting to consolidate the Checkerboard, exchanging 20,000 acres in order to achieve 80,000 acres of consolidation.

There are three isolated portions of the nation in New Mexico-satellite reservations known as the Ramah Navajo, the Cañoncito Navajo, and the Alamo Navajo. Canoncito was first settled around 1818. Ramah and Alamo had their origins in the late 1860s when some Navajos settled in these areas on their way back toward the Navajo homeland from imprisonment at the U.S. Army concentration camp at Bosque Redondo; approximately half the Navajos had been incarcerated there. Ramah is rural and is a bastion of traditional Navajo life. More than 1,500 Navajos live at Ramah, which is between the pueblos of Zuñi and Acoma, near the El Malpais National Monument. More than 1,700 Navajos live at Canoncito, which is to the east of Mt. Taylor near the pueblos of Laguna and Isleta, and more than 2,000 live at Alamo, which is south of the pueblos of Acoma and Laguna.

### THE FIRST NAVAJOS IN AMERICA

Navajos and Apaches, as members of the Athapaskan language family, are generally believed to have been among the last peoples to have crossed the land bridge from Siberia to Alaska thousands of years ago during the last Ice Age. The Athapaskan language family is one of the most widely dispersed language families in North America, and most of



its members still reside in the far north in Alaska and Canada.

### SETTLEMENT

It is not known, and will probably never be known, exactly when the Navajos and Apaches (Southwestern Athapaskans) began migrating from the far north to the Southwest or what route they took. Linguists who study changes in language and then estimate how long related languages have been separated have offered the year 1000 A.D. as an approximate date for the beginning of the migration. It is clear, however, that the Southwestern Athapaskan did not arrive in the Southwest until at least the end of the fourteenth century. Until that time what is now known as the Navajo homeland was inhabited by one of the most remarkable civilizations of ancient people in North America, the Ancestral Puebloans. Ancestral Puebloan ruins are among the most spectacular ruins in North America-especially their elaborate cliff dwellings, such as the ones at Mesa Verde National Park, and such communities as Chaco Canyon, where multistory stone masonry

apartment buildings and large underground kivas can still be seen today.

Members of the

Navajo tribe sit

together in this

1939 photograph.

Scholars originally thought that the arrival of the Southern Athapaskan in the Southwest was a factor in the collapse of the Ancestral Puebloan civilization. It is now known that the Ancestral Puebloans expanded to a point where they had stretched the delicate balance of existence in their fragile, arid environment to where it could not withstand the severe, prolonged droughts that occurred at the end of the fourteenth century. In all likelihood, the Ancestral Puebloans had moved close to the more dependable sources of water along the watershed of the upper Rio Grande River and had reestablished themselves as the Pueblo peoples by the time the Navajos entered the Southwest. The Navajos then claimed this empty land as their own. They first settled in what they call Dinetah, which means "homeland of the Diné," in the far northwestern corner of what is now New Mexico. After they acquired sheep and horses from the Spanish-which revolutionized their lives-and acquired cultural and material attributes from the Pueblos-which further enhanced their ability to adjust to the environment

of the Southwest—the Navajos then spread out into all of *Diné Bikeyah*, "the Navajo country."

# Acculturation and Assimilation

Because they have remained relatively isolated from the centers of European population, because they have been able to hold onto a large part of their ancestral homeland, and because of the great distances and poor roads within the region, Navajos have been more successful than most Native Americans in retaining their culture, language, and customs. Until early in the twentieth century Navajos were also able to carry out their traditional way of life and support themselves with their livestock, remaining relatively unnoticed by the dominant culture. Boarding schools, the proliferation of automobiles and roads, and federal land management policies—especially regarding traditional Navajo grazing practices-have all made the reservation a different place than what it was in the late nineteenth century. As late as 1950 paved roads ended at the fringes of the reservation at Shiprock, Cameron, and Window Rock. Even wagons were not widely used until the early 1930s. By 1974, however, almost two-thirds of all Navajo households owned an automobile. Navajos are finding ways to use some changes to support traditional culture, such as the adult education program at Navajo Community College, which assists in teaching the skills that new Navajo medicine men must acquire in order to serve their communities. Bilingual education programs and broadcast and publishing programs in the Navajo language are also using the tools of change to preserve and strengthen traditional cultural values and language.

### TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS, AND BELIEFS

Navajo traditional life has remained strong. In 1941 an anthropologist interviewed an entire community of several hundred Navajos and could not find even one adult over the age of 35 who had not received traditional medical care from a "singer," a Navajo medicine man called a *Hataali*. Today, when a new health care facility is built on the reservation it includes a room for the traditional practice of medicine by members of the Navajo Medicine Man's Association. Virtually all of the 3,600 Navajos who served in World War II underwent the cleansing of the Enemyway ceremony upon their return from the war. There are 24 chantway ceremonies performed by singers. Some last up to nine days and require the assistance of dozens of helpers, especially dancers. Twelve hundred different sandpainting designs are available to the medicine men for the chantways.

Large numbers of Navajos also tend to identify themselves as Christians, with most of them mixing elements of both traditional belief and Christianity. In a 1976 survey, between 25 and 50 percent called themselves Christians, the percentage varying widely by region and gender. Twenty-five thousand Navajos belong to the Native American Church, and thousands more attend its peyote ceremonies but do not belong to the church. In the late 1960s the tribal council approved the religious use of peyote, ending 27 years of persecution. The Native American Church had originally gained a stronghold on the Ute Mountain Reservation, which adjoins the Navajo Nation on the northeast. In 1936 the church began to spread to the south into the Navajo Nation, and it grew strong among the Navajos in the 1940s.

### HOLIDAYS

The premier annual events open to visitors are the Navajo Fairs. One of the largest is the Northern Navajo Fair, ordinarily held on the first weekend in October, at Shiprock, New Mexico. The dance competition powwow draws dancers from throughout the continent. Another large Navajo Fair is held annually at Window Rock, usually during the first week in July. Other Navajo fairs are also held at other times during the year. All-Indian Rodeos are also popular, as are competition powwows.

### NAVAJO DANCES AND SONGS

Except for powwow competition dances and singing, most Navajo traditional dances and songs are a part of healing ceremonies, at which visitors are allowed only with the permission of the family. Photography and video or tape recording of the ceremonies are not permitted without the express authorization of the healers. Charlotte Heth of the Department of Ethnomusicology, University of California, Los Angeles, noted in a chapter of Native America: Portrait of the Peoples, that "Apache and Navajo song style are similar: tense, nasal voices; rhythmic pulsation; clear articulation of words in alternating sections with vocables. Both Apache Crown Dancers and Navajo Yeibichei (Night Chant) dancers wear masks and sing partially in falsetto or in voices imitating the supernaturals."

### **HEALTH ISSUES**

The suicide rate among Navajos is 30 percent higher than the national average. Another severe prob-

1262

lem is alcoholism. Both of these problems are exacerbated by poverty: more than half of all Navajos live below the poverty line.

Four full-service Indian hospitals are located in northwestern New Mexico. The one at Gallup is the largest in the region. The others are at Crownpoint, Shiprock, and Zuñi. In northern Arizona, full-service Indian hospitals are located at Fort Defiance, Winslow, Tuba City, and Keams Canyon. Indian Health Centers (facilities staffed by health professionals, open at least 40 hours per week, and catering to the general public) are located at Ft. Wingate and Tohatchi in northwestern New Mexico and at Greasewood, Toyei, Dilkon, Shonto, Kayenta, Many Farms, Teec Nos Pos, and Chinle in Arizona. Indian Health Stations (facilities staffed by health professionals and catering to the general public, but open only limited hours, often only one day per week) are located at Toadlena, Naschitti, Navajo, Pinedale, Pueblo Pintado, Ojo Encino, Torreon, Rincon, and Bacca in northwestern New Mexico and at Gray Mountain, Pinon, Dinnebito Dam, Red Lake, Page, Coppermine, Kaibito, Dinnehotso, Rock Point, Rough Rock, and Lukachukai in Arizona. Indian School Health Centers (facilities meeting the same criteria as Indian Health Centers, but catering primarily to school populations) are located at Crownpoint, Sanostee, and Shiprock in northwestern New Mexico and at Leupp, Tuba City, Holbrook, and Chinle in Arizona. Additionally, non-Indian hospitals are located in Flagstaff, Winslow, and Holbrook in Arizona, in Gallup, Rehoboth, Grants, and Farmington in New Mexico, in Durango and Cortez in Colorado, and in Goulding, Utah. In keeping with the recent trend throughout the United States, Navajos are now administering many of their own health care facilities, taking over their operation from the Public Health Service. The Navajo Tribal Health Authority also plans to develop an American Indian medical school at Shiprock, New Mexico.

Traditional Navajo healers are called *Hataali*, or "singers". Traditional Navajo medical practice treats the whole person, not just the illness, and is not conducted in isolation but in a ceremony that includes the patient's relatives. The ceremony can last from three to nine days depending upon the illness being treated and the ceremony to be performed. Illness to the Navajos means that there is disharmony in the universe. Proper order is restored with sand paintings in a cleansing and healing ceremony. There are approximately 1,200 designs that can be used; most can be created within the size of the average hogan floor, about six feet by six feet, though some are as large as 12 feet in diameter and some as small as one foot in diameter. The *Hataali*  may have several helpers in the creation of the intricate patterns. Dancers also assist them. In some ceremonies, such as the nine-day Yei-Bei-Chei, 15 or 16 teams of 11 members each dance throughout the night while the singer and his helpers chant prayers. When the painting is ready the patient sits in the middle of it. The singer then transforms the orderliness of the painting, symbolic of its cleanliness, goodness, and harmony, into the patient and puts the illness from the patient into the painting. The sand painting is then discarded. Many years of apprenticeship are required to learn the designs of the sand paintings and the songs that accompany them, skills that have been passed down through many generations. Most Hataali are able to perform only a few of the many ceremonies practiced by the Navajos, because each ceremony takes so long to learn. Sand painting is now also done for commercial purposes at public displays, but the paintings are not the same ones used in the healing rituals.

## LANGUAGE

The Athapaskan language family has four branches: Northern Athapaskan; Southwestern Athapaskan; Pacific Coast Athapaskan; and Eyak, a southeast Alaska isolate. The Athapaskan language family is one of three families within the Na-Dene language phylum. (The other two, the Tlingit family and the Haida family, are language isolates in the far north, Tlingit in southeast Alaska, and Haida in British Columbia.) Na-Dene is one of the most widely distributed language phyla in North America. The Southwestern Athapaskan language, sometimes called Apachean, has seven dialects: Navajo, Western Apache, Chiricahua, Mescalero, Jicarilla, Lipan, and Kiowa-Apache. In 1987 approximately 125,000 Navajos on the reservation still spoke Navajo fluently.

# Family and Community Dynamics

No tribe in North America has been more vigorously studied by anthropologists than the Navajos. When a man marries, he moves into the household of the wife's extended family. The Navajos joke that a Navajo family consists of a grandmother, her married daughters and their husbands, her daughters' children, and an anthropologist. A Navajo is "born to" the mother's clan and "born for" the father's clan. The importance of clans, the membership of which is dispersed throughout the nation for each clan, has gradually diminished in favor of the increasingly important role of the Chapter House, the significance of which is based on the geographical proximity of its members. Traditional prohibitions against marrying within one's own clan are beginning to break down. The girl's puberty ceremony, her *kinaalda*, is a major event in Navajo family life. Navajos maintain strong ties with relatives, even when they leave the reservation. It is not uncommon for Navajos working in urban centers to send money home to relatives. On the reservation, an extended family may have only one wage-earning worker. Other family members busy themselves with traditional endeavors, from stock tending to weaving.

From the late 1860s until the 1960s, the local trading post was the preeminent financial and commercial institution for most Navajos, serving as a local bank (where silver and turquoise could be pawned), a post office, and a store. One of the most famous, Hubbell's Trading Post, is now a national monument. Traders served the community as interpreters, business managers, funeral directors, grave diggers, and gossip columnists. The automobile and big discount stores in the urban centers at the fringes of the nation have greatly diminished the role of the trading posts.

### TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

Navajo jewelry, especially work done in silver and turquoise, is internationally famous. Navajo silversmithing dates from 1853, when a Mexican silversmith arrived at Fort Defiance in what is now Arizona. The Navajo 'Atsidi Sani learned the craft from him and taught it to others. By 1867 several Navajos were working with silver, and by 1880 they had begun to combine turquoise with their designs. At the turn of the century the Fred Harvey Company asked Navajo silversmiths to make lighter pieces for the tourist trade and guaranteed them a sales outlet. Today silversmithing is a widespread craft practiced by many Navajos.

Weaving is also an important economic activity throughout the nation. Navajo weaving has undergone many changes in designs. Navajos are continually creating new ones, and various locations within the nation have become famous for particular types of rugs and patterns. Weaving underwent a revival in the 1920s, when Chinle weavers introduced the multicolored Wide Ruins, Crystal, and Pine Springs patterns. The rug weavers auction at Crownpoint is known worldwide. The Navajo Nation owns the Navajo Nation Arts and Crafts Enterprise at Window Rock, where customers can be assured of purchasing authentic Indian crafts made by Indian people.

### EDUCATION

An 1868 treaty provided for schools for Navajo children. The number of schools increased greatly after compulsory school attendance was mandated in 1887. In 1907 a Navajo headman in Utah was imprisoned without trial for a year and a half for speaking out against forced removal of local children to the Shiprock Boarding School. Others were strongly in favor of schools, especially after 19 influential Navajo headmen were exposed to the outside world at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

Until 1896 Navajo schools were operated by missionaries, who were frequently more interested in attempting to eradicate the Navajo religion, culture, and language than in educating their charges. The establishment of boarding schools far from Navajo homes, subjected Navajo children to the trauma of being removed from their families and their cultures for extended periods of time. Instruction was conducted only in English. With the secularization of the federally maintained Navajo public school system in 1896 civil servants replaced the missionaries, but lack of understanding and appreciation of Navajo culture-and instruction only in English-continued to be the norm. Some religious-affiliated schools continue to the present day, but they display a greater appreciation for Navajo culture and traditions than their nineteenth-century predecessors. By 1958, 93 percent of Navajo children were in school.

In the 1960s Navajos began to exercise much stronger management of their children's education with the establishment of community-controlled contract schools. The Rough Rock Demonstration School was the first of these schools. It introduced bilingual education for young children, the adult training of Navajo medicine men, and other innovative programs based on the perceived needs of the local community. It should be pointed out that the bilingual education introduced was, and is, to teach Navajo language, not to transition into English. This is not an additional tool of assimilation, but rather a reinforcement of traditional language and culture.

In 1969 the Navajo established Navajo Community College, the first college operated by Indians. At first located at Many Farms High School, it moved to Tsaile, Arizona, with the opening of its new campus in 1974; there is a branch campus in Shiprock, New Mexico. In 1972 the College of Ganado, a junior college in Ganado, Arizona, was incorporated as a successor to the Ganado Mission School. Following the lead of the Navajos, there are now a total of 29 Indian institutions of higher edu-



The Coalition of Navajo Liberation is a strong voice for Navajo affairs. Over 350 Navajo protestors marched on Window Rock, Arkansas to present grievances to tribal officials in 1976.

cation in the United States, all members of an American Indian higher education consortium. Navajo Community College Press is a leading native-owned academic press. A number of state supported baccalaureate institutions are located near the Navajo Nation. These include branch campuses of the University of New Mexico at Gallup and Farmington, Northern Arizona University at Flagstaff, and Ft. Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. In 1987 more than 4,000 Navajos were attending college.

# Employment and Economic Traditions

Nearly every Navajo extended family has members who engage in silversmithing and weaving as a matter of occasional economic enterprise. Farming and stock raising are still important in the economic life of the nation. But the largest employers of Navajo people are the federal and tribal governments. The Navajos have their own parks and recreation department, fish and wildlife department, police department, educational programs, and health service, as well as many other jobs in tribal government and administration. Many federal agencies have offices either on or near the reservation. Other Navajos are employed at the tribally operated electronics plant at Fort Defiance, Arizona, and at the Navajo Forest Products Industry, an \$11 million sawmill also run by the tribe. It is located at Navajo, New Mexico, the only industrial town on the reservation, which was created and planned to serve the needs of its industry.

Until the early twentieth century Navajos were able to continue deriving their livelihood from their traditional practices of stockraising. Since the 1920s fewer and fewer Navajos have been able to maintain themselves in this manner. Chronic high rates of unemployment and dependency on governmental assistance have gradually replaced the traditional way of life. In 1941 Navajos had earned only \$150,000 from industry, but World War II was a boom time for the economy, giving the Navajos a taste for money and what it could buy. More than half the Navajos 19 and older had wartime jobs; in 1943 they earned \$5 million. After the war in the late 1940s the annual family income averaged \$400.

By 1973 a study released by the Navajo Office of Program Development found that only 20,000 people were employed on the reservation, of which 71 percent were Navajos. Nine communities were found to account for 84 percent of the jobs held by Navajo people: Shiprock, 3,616; Chinle, 2,284; Window Rock, 2,100; Ft. Defiance, 1,925; Tuba City, 1,762; Crownpoint, 1,149; Navajo, 697; Kayenta, 571; and Ganado, 311. Public service jobs-health, education, and government-were found to account for nearly three-fourths of all employment on the reservation. In 1975 the Navajo unemployment rate was 67 percent. Median Navajo annual household income declined during the 1970s, standing at \$2,520 in 1979. In 1991 the unemployment rate was 36 percent and remained at about that level in 1999.

Since the late 1960s, developing projects have been diversifying employment within the Navajo

Nation. The Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP) is projected to irrigate 110,000 acres of cropland from water impounded in the upper San Juan River basin, using open canals, pipelines, lift stations, and overhead sprinkler systems. The Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI), a tribal enterprise, manages the program. It includes agribusiness plant sites, grazing lands and a feedlot for cattle production, and an experimental research station. Instituted by act of Congress in 1962, the first 10,000 acres were brought into irrigation in 1976, producing crops of barley and cabbage. By 1981 the total irrigated acreage had increased to 40,000 acres, and crop diversification had added alfalfa, pinto beans, corn, and milo. In 1982 a cattle feedlot operation began to make use of grain and forage crop production. NAPI showed its first profit in 1986. By 1991 more than half of the projected acreage had been brought under irrigation. A coal-gasification plant near Burnham and Navajo-Exxon uranium leases, along with the irrigation project, are making northwestern New Mexico and the eastern portion of the Navajo reservation the focus of new economic activity. Uranium mining, however, has produced health risks, including alarmingly high rates of cancer. In 1979 a broken tailings dam belonging to United Nuclear Corporation at Church Rock, New Mexico, discharged 100 million gallons of radioactive water into the Puerco River-the largest release of radioactivity in United States history.

Because of their legal status, Navajo businesspeople must deal with state and federal agencies as well as Navajo officials and must pay both state and Navajo taxes. In addition, complicated paperwork requirements for obtaining business licenses and land leases for businesses hamper start-up. IINA (which means "life" in Navajo), an initiative started by Navajo Duane "Chili" Yazzi, is currently underway, and is aimed at reducing red tape by delegating control to local tribal chapters. Another objective is to use part of the nation's assets, some \$1.2 billion, as venture capital for Navajo entrepreneurs.

The Navajo people's biggest economic ventures have been coal leases. By 1970 the Navajo Nation had the largest coal mine in the world. The 1964 and 1966 Black Mesa coal leases to Peabody Coal Company have become a source of controversy within the nation, as more and more Navajos decry the scouring of their land, the displacement of families for the sake of mining activity, and the threat to sacred places posed by mining operations.

Little has been done to develop tourism, despite its potential as a source of income. Only four motels exist on the reservation, in contrast with neighboring Gallup, New Mexico, which has more than 35. The Navajo Nation maintains four campgrounds: Monument Valley, Four Corners, Tsaile South Shore south of Lukachukai, and Little Colorado River. Other economic ventures under way include shopping centers and motels. Hunting and fishing provide economic activity and jobs in the portion of the reservation lying in northwestern New Mexico, where 16 lakes offer fishing for trout, channel catfish, bass, northern pike, and bluegill. Hunting permits may be obtained for deer, turkey, bear, and small game.

# Politics and Government

The basic unit of local government in the Navajo Nation is the Chapter, each with its own Chapter House. The Chapter system was created in 1922 as a means of addressing agricultural problems at a local level. Before the 1920s, the nation had no centrally organized tribal government. Like many other Indian nations, the tribe was forced to create a central authority by the United States. For the Navajos, the seminal event was the discovery of oil on the reservation in 1921, after which the United States desired some centralized governmental authority for the Navajos for the purpose of executing oil leases, largely for the benefit of non-Navajos. At first the Bureau of Indian Affairs appointed three Navajos to execute mineral leases. In 1923 this arrangement gave way to a plan for each of several Navajo agencies to provide representatives for the Navajo government. After World War II the Navajo Tribal Council became recognized as the Navajo government.

### MILITARY

Navajos have served with distinction in the armed forces of the United States in every war in the twentieth century, including World War I, even though they—and other reservation Indians—did not become citizens of the United States until citizenship was extended to them by an act of Congress in 1924. Their most heralded service, however, came during World War II in the U.S. Marine Corps, when they employed the Navajo language for military communication in the field as the Marines stormed Japanese-held islands in the Pacific. They have become known to posterity as the Navajo Code Talkers.

Philip Johnson, born to missionaries and raised on the Navajo reservation, is credited with a leading role in the formation of the Navajo Code Talkers. As a child he learned fluent Navajo, as well as Navajo culture and traditions. At the age of nine he served as interpreter for a Navajo delegation that traveled to Washington, D.C., to present Navajo grievances to President Theodore Roosevelt. After serving in World War I, Johnson was a civil engineer in California. When war broke out with Japan in 1941, Johnson learned that the military hoped to develop a code using American Indians as signalmen. He met with Marine Corps and Army Signal Corps officers and arranged a demonstration of Navajo as a code language. The demonstration took place on February 28, 1942, at Camp Elliott with the cooperation of four Navajos from Los Angeles and one who was in the Navy in San Diego.

Within a year the Marine Corps authorized the program, which at first was classified as top secret. Johnson, though over age, was allowed to enlist in the Corps and was assigned to help supervise the establishment of the program at Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, California. In May 1942 the Marine Corps, with the approval of the Navajo Tribal Council, began recruiting Navajo men at Window Rock, Arizona, for the program. The first group to receive training consisted of 29 Navajos who underwent basic boot camp training at the San Diego Marine Corps Recruit Depot. They were then sent for four weeks to the Field Signal Battalion Training Center at Camp Pendleton, where they received 176 hours of instruction in basic communications procedures and equipment. They were later deployed to Guadalcanal, where their use of the Navajo language for radio communication in the field proved so effective that recruitment for the program was expanded. Eventually, approximately 400 Navajo Code Talkers saw duty in the Pacific in the Marine Corps. By the end of the war they had been assigned to all six Marine divisions in the Pacific and had taken part in every assault-from Guadalcanal in 1943 to Okinawa in 1945. Today the surviving Navajo Code Talkers maintain an active veterans' organization. In 1969, at the Fourth Marine Division Association reunion in Chicago, they were presented with a medallion specially minted in commemoration of their services.

### **RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES**

Much friction has resulted between the Navajos and the United States over the management of Navajo livestock grazing. The original Navajo Reservation in 1868 encompassed only a small portion of the ancestral Navajo rangelands. The size of the reservation tripled between 1868 and the mid-1930s by 14 additions of blocks of land from 1878 to 1934. This would give the appearance of a rapidly expanding amount of rangeland available to the Navajos. In fact, just the opposite was true.

When the Navajos returned to their homeland from the Bosque Redondo in 1869, the government issued them 1,000 goats and 14,000 sheep to begin replacing the herds that the U.S. Army and New Mexico militia had either slaughtered or confiscated. In 1870 the Navajos were issued an additional 10,000 sheep. With practically no Anglo encroachment on their ancestral rangeland, reservation boundaries had little meaning. The Navajos spread out over their old estate and their herds began increasing. The Bureau of Indian Affairs forbade the selling of breeding stock, eager to see the Navajos regain self-sufficiency. The Navajo population increased steadily, from an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 in 1868 to nearly 40,000 by 1930, and their herds increased accordingly, though there were large fluctuations in the numbers year by year due to occasional drought and disease. At the same time the appropriation of the ancestral rangelands outside the reservation boundaries by Anglo cattle operations and other interests had accelerated, forc-

# **C** n the wind-beaten plains once lived my ancestors. / In the days of peaceful moods, / they wandered and hunted.... / Now, from the wind-beaten plains, only their dust rises."

From the poem "Ancestors" by Grey Cohoe, on the rising consciousness of the American Indian.

ing the Navajos onto an ever smaller amount of range. By the 1920s a serious soil erosion problem on the reservation was being blamed on overgrazing. The Navajos tried to alleviate the problem by seeking more land and renewed access to the ancestral rangelands from which they had gradually been forced off. The United States believed that a solution to the problem was to force Navajo livestock reductions by killing the animals it deemed to be unnecessary. Thus began a 20-year conflict between the Navajos and the United States, in which the U.S. government, in attempting to implement its policies, found itself disrupting traditional Navajo economic, social, and political life to a far greater extent than at any time in the past.

The tool of the government in this matter was the creation of land management districts, first established in 1936 and adjusted to their preset boundaries in 1955. In attempting to change Navajo livestock practices, the U.S. government subverted and altered Navajo culture in the process. Today the federal land management districts on the reservation are still important factors in Navajo livestock practices. The grazing committees of the Navajo Chapter Houses must work closely with the districts to set the herd size for each range. The extreme turmoil that the stock reduction crisis caused in traditional Navajo life—and the tactics used by the U.S. government to subvert traditional Navajo culture and government during the height of the crisis in the 1930s and 1940s—are the subject of an extensive, detailed study by Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos.* 

Indians in Arizona and New Mexico were not allowed to vote in state and national elections until 1948. In 1957 Utah finally allowed Indians living on reservations to vote—the last remaining state to do so. It required a 1976 U.S. Supreme Court ruling to force Apache County, Arizona, where the population was 70 percent Navajo, to allow Navajos to serve on its board of supervisors. As of 1984 no Native American had ever been elected to public office in Utah. In that year the U.S. Department of Justice ordered San Juan County, Utah, where the population was 50 percent Navajo, to redistrict. The next year a Navajo was elected county commissioner.

The most divisive issue among the Navajos in recent years, and the cause of the greatest strain in relations with the United States, has been the socalled "Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute," in which thousands of Navajos have been forced to relocate from lands that were jointly held by the two tribes since 1882. Many prominent Navajos and some prominent Hopis believe that the relocation of the Navajos and the division of the 1882 Joint Use Area has been undertaken by the U.S. government for the benefit of the American extraction industry, so that valuable mineral deposits within the area can be strip-mined.

# Individual and Group Contributions

### ACADEMIA

Among the first Navajos to earn a Ph.D., Ned Hatathli (1923-1972) was the first president of the Navajo Community College—the first college owned and operated by the Navajo people. Annie Dodge Wauneka (1910–) is a public health educator responsible for largely eliminating tuberculosis among the Navajo Indians. Wauneka was later elected to the Navajo Tribal Council and was the first Native American to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Peterson Zah (1937–) is an educator and leader who has devoted his life to serving the Navajo people and retaining Navajo culture, especially among young people. In 1990 Zah was elected the first president of the Navajo people; he was later awarded the Humanitarian Award from the City of Albuquerque and an honorary doctorate from Santa Fe College.

### ART

Harrison Begay (1917-) is one of the most famous of all Navajo painters. Noted for their sinuous delicacy of line, meticulous detail, restrained palette, and elegance of composition, his watercolors and silkscreen prints have won 13 major awards. Carl Nelson Gorman (1907-) is a prominent Navajo artist whose oil paintings and silk screening have won acclaim for their divergence from traditional Indian art forms. His contributions to Navajo and Native American art and culture inspired the dedication of the Carl Gorman Museum at Tecumseh Center at the University of California at Davis. Rudolpf Carl Gorman (1931-) is one of the most prominent contemporary Native American artists of the twentieth century. His art combines the traditional with the nontraditional in style and form.

### LITERATURE

Navajo author Vee Browne has achieved national recognition with her retellings of Navajo creation stories. Her books have included Monster Slayer and Monster Birds, a children's biography of Osage international ballet star Maria Tallchief, and a volume in a new series of Native American animal stories from Scholastic books. Her honors include the prestigious Western Heritage Award from the Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center in 1990. A guidance counselor by training, Browne is active in helping emerging Native American writers hone their skills and find outlets for their work, serving as a mentor in the Wordcraft Circle of Native American Mentor and Apprentice Writers. She has also served on the 1994-1996 National Advisory Caucus for Wordcraft Circle.

Elizabeth Woody (1959–), born on the Navajo Nation but raised mostly in the Pacific Northwest, has been influenced by the Pacific Northwest tribes as well as her Navajo heritage. She returned to the Southwest to study poetry and art at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Her first volume of poetry, *Hand Into Stone*, published in 1988, won the American Book Award. Her other books include *Luminaries of the Humble* and *Seven Hands*, *Seven Hearts*. Woody's

1268

poetry has been anthologized in *Returning the Gift* and *Durable Breath*; her short fiction, "Home Cooking," has been anthologized in *Talking Leaves*; her nonfiction, "Warm Springs," has been anthologized in *Native America*. Woody now teaches at the Institute of American Indian Arts. Her illustrations can be found in Sherman Alexie's Old Shirts & New Skins, and her art has been the subject of a fiveweek exhibit at the Tula Foundation Gallery in Atlanta, Georgia.

Actress/writer Geraldine Keams has appeared in several films, including *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, and has been published in *Sun Tracks* and *The Remembered Earth*. Jean Natoni has published her work in *The Remembered Earth*, as have Aaron Yava, a Navajo/Hopi, and Genevieve Yazzie. Yava's drawing have appeared in *Border Towns of the Navajo Nation*, *Man to Send Rain Clouds*, and A *Good Journey*. Yazzie's work is also featured in *New America*, and she worked on the Navajo-English dictionary project.

Rex Jim, a highly regarded medicine man, is the first author to have published a volume of poetry in Navajo, with no translation, with a major university press (*Ahi'Ni'Nikisheegiizh*, Princeton University Press). Jim's fiction and nonfiction have also been published by Rock Point Community School in the Navajo Nation and include such works as "Naakaiiahgoo Tazhdiya" and "Living from Livestock."

Laura Tohe's volume of poetry, Making Friends with Water, was published by Nosila Press, and her poetry and nonfiction have appeared in such publications as Nebraska Humanities, Blue Mesa Review, and Platte Valley Review. Tohe received her Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Nebraska and teaches at the University of Arizona. Tohe's latest project is a children's play for the Omaha Emmy Gifford Children's theater. Like Vee Browne, Tohe is a mentor in the Wordcraft Circle program and is also a member of its 1994-1996 National Advisory Caucus.

Lucy Tapahonso (1953–) is the author of four books of poetry, including *Saanii Dahataa*. She is an assistant professor at the University of Kansas at Lawrence. Della Frank lives and works on the Navajo Nation. Her poetry has appeared in such publications as *Blue Mesa Review* and *Studies in American Indian Literature* and has been anthologized in *Neon Powwow* and *Returning the Gift*. She is co-author of *Duststorms: Poems From Two Navajo Women*. Rachael Arviso (Navajo and Zuñi) lives and works on the Navajo Reservation; her short fiction has been anthologized in *Neon Powwow*. Esther G. Belini's poetry also appeared in *Neon Powwow*; she received her B.A. degree from the University of California at Berkeley.

Other Navajos whose work has been anthologized in Neon Powwow include Dan L. Crank, Nancy Maryboy, Irvin Morris, Patroclus Eugene Savino, Brent Toadlena, Gertrude Walters, and Floyd D. Yazzie. Aaron Carr (Navajo and Laguna Pueblo) has published poetry and short stories in The Remembered Earth anthology, in Sun Tracks, and in Planet Quarterly. Bernadette Chato's work has appeared in New America and The Remembered Earth. Grey Cohoe's work has appeared in several anthologies, including Whispering Wind, The Remembered Earth, and The American Indian Speaks. Larry Emerson's column "Red Dawn" appeared in a number of Indian newspapers, and his work has been anthologized in New America and The Remembered Earth. Nia Francisco, who has taught at the Navajo Community College, has been published in Southwest: A Contemporary Anthology, College English, The Remembered Earth, Cafe Solo, New America, and Southwest Women's Poetry Exchange.

### SCIENCE

Nuclear physicist and educator Fred Begay (1932–) has served as a member of the technical staff at the Los Alamos National Laboratory since 1971. His research is directed primarily toward the use of laser, electron, and ion beams to demonstrate the application of thermonuclear fusion; this technique will provide future economical and environmentally safe and clean power sources.

# Media

### PRINT

### Bear Track.

Address: 1202 West Thomas Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85013.

### Diné Baa-Hani'.

Address: Box 527, Ft. Defiance, Arizona 86504.

### Dinehligai News. Address: P.O. Box 1835, Tuba City, Arizona 86045.

### DNA in Action.

Address: DNA Legal Services, Window Rock, Arizona 86515.

### Four Directions.

Address: 1812 Las Lomas N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131.

### Indian Arizona.

Address: 4560 North 19th Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix, Arizona 85015-4113.

### Kachina Messenger.

Address: P.O. Box 1210, Gallup, New Mexico 87301.

### Navajo.

Covers history, art, culture, events, and people relevant to the Navajo Indians.

Contact: Michael Benson, Editor. Address: Box 1245, Window Rock, Arizona 86515. Telephone: (602) 729-2233.

Navajo Assistance. Address: P.O. Box 96, Gallup, New Mexico 87301.

### Navajo-Hopi Observer.

Weekly newspaper in English. Founded in 1981.

Contact: Jay Lape, Publisher; Tanya Lee, Editor.
Address: 2608 North Stevens Boulevard, Flagstaff, Arizona 86004.
Telephone: (520) 526-3115.
E-mail: observer@infomagic.com.
Online: http://www.navajohopiobserver.com.

### Navajo Nation Enquiry.

Address: P.O. Box 490, Window Rock, Arizona 86515.

### Navajo Times.

Weekly newspaper that contains articles of interest to the American Indian community and the Navajo people.

Contact: Tom Arviso Jr., Editor. Address: P.O. Box 310, Window Rock, Arizona 86515-0310. Telephone: (602) 871-6641. Fax: (602) 871-6409.

Tsa'aszi'. Address: P.O. Box 12, Pine Hill, New Mexico 87321.

### Uts'ittisctaan'i.

Address: Northern Arizona University, Campus Box 5630, Flagstaff, Arizona 86011.

### RADIO

The following radio stations are owned by the Navajo Broadcasting Company: KDJI-AM (1270); KZUA-FM (92.1); KTNN-AM (660); KNMI-FM (88.9); KPCL-FM (95.7); KABR-AM (1500); and KTDB-FM (89.7).

### TELEVISION

### KOBF-TV (Channel 12).

Broadcasts "Voice of the Navajo" on Sunday mornings.

Address: 825 W. Broadway, Box 1620, Farmington, New Mexico 87401.
Telephone: (505) 326-1141.
Fax: (505) 327-5196.
E-mail: shkobf@cyberport.com.

# Organizations and Associations

Arizona Commission for Indian Affairs.
Contact: Eleanor Descheeny-Joe, Executive Director
Address: 1400 West Washington, Suite 300, Phoenix, Arizona 85007.
Telephone: (602) 542-3123.
Fax: (602) 542-3223.

### Diné CARE Citizens Against Ruining our Environment.

Environmental activism group.

Address: 10A Town Plaza, Suite 138, Durango, Colorado 81301. Telephone: (970) 259-0199.

### Navajo Code Talkers Association.

Contact: Dr. Samuel Billison, President. Address: 1182, Window Rock, Arizona 86515-1182. Telephone: (520) 871-5468.

Navajo Nation. Address: P.O. Box 308, Window Rock, Arizona 86515. Telephone: (602) 871-6352. Fax: (602) 871-4025. Online: http://www.navajo.org.

Navajo Tourism Office. Address: P.O. Box 663, Window Rock, Arizona 86515.



**Telephone:** (602) 871-6436. **Fax:** (602) 871-7381.

Navajo Way, Inc. United Way for the Navajo Nation.

Address: P.O. Box 309, Window Rock, Arizona 86515. Telephone: (520) 871-6661. Fax: (520) 871-6663.

### New Mexico Commission on Indian Affairs.

Address: 330 East Palace Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501.

New Mexico Indian Advisory Commission. Address: Box 1667, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107.

### Tseyi Heritage Culture Center.

Contact: Jim Claw Sr., President.
Address: P.O. Box 1952, Chinle, Navajo Nation, Arizona 86503.
Telephone: (520) 674-5664.
Fax: (520) 674-5944.
Online: http://www.navajoland.com/nn/Tseyi/.

# Museums and Research Centers

Albuquerque Museum and Maxwell Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico; American Research Museum, Ethnology Museum, Fine Arts Museum, Hall of the Modern Indian, Institute of American Indian Arts, and Navajo Ceremonial Arts Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Art Center in Roswell, New Mexico; Black Water Draw Museum in Portales, New Mexico; Coronado Monument in Bernalillo, New Mexico; Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site in Ganado, Arizona; Heard Museum of Anthropology in Phoenix, Arizona; Milicent Rogers Museum in Taos, New Mexico; Navajo National Monument in Tonalea, Arizona; Navajo Tribal Museum in Window Rock, Arizona; Northern Arizona Museum in Flagstaff; and the State Museum of Arizona in Tempe.

# Sources for Additional Study

Bailey, Garrick, and Roberta Glenn Bailey. A History of the Navajos: The Reservation Years. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1986.

Benedek, Emily. The Wind Won't Know Me: A History of the Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.

Correll, J. Lee. Through White Men's Eyes: A Contribution to Navajo History (A Chronological Record of the Navajo People from Earliest Times to the Treaty of June 1, 1968), six volumes. Window Rock, Arizona: Navajo Heritage Center, 1979.

Forbes, Jack D. Apache, Navaho, and Spaniard. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969; with new introduction, 1994.

Goodman, James M. The Navajo Atlas: Environments, Resources, People, and History of the Dine Bikeyah, drawings and cartographic assistance by Mary E. Goodman. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982.

Iverson, Peter. *The Navajos: A Critical Bibliography.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

*Navajo History*, Vol. 1, edited by Ethelou Yazzie. Many Farms, Arizona: Navajo Community College Press for the Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1971.

Navajo: Walking in Beauty. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1994.

Simonelli, Jeanne M. Crossing Between Worlds: The Navajos of Canyon De Chelly. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1997.

Thompson, Gerald. *The Army and the Navajo*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1976.

Trimble, Stephen. *The People: Indians of the American Southwest*. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Sar Press, 1993.

*Warriors: Navajo Code Talkers*, photographs by Kenji Kawano, foreword by Carl Gorman, introduction by Benis M. Frank. Flagstaff, Arizona: Northland Publishing, 1990.

White, Richard. The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983.

# Week 6:

# GALE ENCYCLOPEDIA:

Irish, Italians

**SCHAEFER**: Jewish Americans

**SCHAEFER**: Ethnicity and Religion been present in the United States for hundreds of years and, accordingly, have had more opportunity than many other ethnic groups to assimilate to the wider society. Each successive generation has become more integrated with the dominant culture.

The Irish have

RISH AMERICANS

# Overview

The island of Ireland lies west of Great Britain across the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel. It is divided into two separate political entities: the independent Republic of Ireland, and Northern Ireland, a constituent of the United Kingdom. Dublin is the capital of the former, Belfast of the latter. The country is divided into four provinces: Leinster, Munster, Connaught, and Ulster. All of the first three and part of the fourth are situated within the Republic of Ireland. Ulster is made up of nine counties; the northeastern six constitute Northern Ireland. The area of the Republic of Ireland is 27,137 square miles, that of Northern Ireland is 5,458 square miles. The entire island, with a total area of 32,595 square miles, is a little larger than the state of Maine. The population of the Republic of Ireland in 1991 was approximately 3,523,401, that of Northern Ireland 1,569,971. About 95 percent of the Republic's population is Roman Catholic; most of the rest are Protestant. Over 25 percent of Northern Ireland's population is Roman Catholic; about 23 percent is Presbyterian; about 18 percent belong to the Church of Ireland; the rest are members of other churches or of no stated denomination.

### HISTORY

Ireland was occupied by Celtic peoples, who came to be known as Gaels, sometime between 600 and

400 B.C. The Romans never invaded Ireland so the Gaels remained isolated and were able to develop a distinct culture. In the fifth century A.D. St. Patrick came to Ireland and introduced the Gaels to Christianity. Thus began a great religious and cultural period for the country. While the rest of Europe was swiftly declining into the Dark Ages, Irish monasteries-preserving the Greek and Latin of the ancient world-not only became great centers of learning, but also sent many famous missionaries to the Continent. Toward the end of the eighth century Vikings invaded Ireland and for over two centuries battled with the Irish. Finally in 1014 the Irish under King Brian Boru soundly defeated the Viking forces at the Battle of Clontarf. An important legacy of the Viking invasion was the establishment of such cities as Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick, and Wexford. In the second half of the twelfth century King Henry II began the English Lordship of Ireland and the challenge of the Anglo-Norman Conquest commenced. By the close of the medieval period many of the Anglo-Norman invaders had been absorbed into the Gaelic population.

English kings traveled to Ireland on several occasions to effect order and increase allegiance to the Crown. The English were generally too occupied with the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) and with the War of the Roses (1455-1485) to deal adequately with the Irish, however. By the sixteenth century English control over Ireland was limited to a small area of land surrounding Dublin. Consequently, Henry VIII and his successors endeavored to force the Irish to submit through military incursions and by "planting" large areas of Ireland with settlers loyal to England. A forceful resistance to the English reconquest of Ireland was led by the Northern chieftain Hugh O'Neill at the end of the sixteenth century. Following O'Neill's defeat in 1603 and his subsequent flight to the Continent, the Crown commenced the large-scale plantation of Ulster with English; Scottish Presbyterians soon followed. During the seventeenth century Ireland, continuing its steady decline, came increasingly under England's rule. In 1641 the Irish allied themselves to the Stuart cause; however, after the defeat and execution of King Charles I in 1649 Cromwell and his Puritans devastated much of Ireland, massacred thousands, and parceled out vast tracts of land to their soldiers and followers. Hoping to regain some of their property, the Catholic Irish sided with the Catholic James II of England but their fortunes further declined when James was defeated by William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. To keep the Irish subservient and powerless the English enacted a series of brutal penal laws, which succeeded so well that eighteenth century Catholic Ireland was economically and socially wasted.

In 1800, two years after the defeat of the rebellion of Protestant and Catholic United Irishmen led by Wolfe Tone, the Act of Union was passed, combining Great Britain and Ireland into one United Kingdom. The Catholic Emancipation Act followed in 1829 chiefly due to the activities of the Irish politician Daniel O'Connell. During the 1830s and 1840s a new nationalist movement, Young Ireland, arose. A rebellion that it launched in 1848, however, was easily defeated. The second half of the 1840s was one of the grimmest periods in Irish history. Due to the great famine caused by the crop failure of Ireland's staple food-the potato-millions died or emigrated. The second half of the nineteenth century saw increased nationalistic demands for self-government and land reform, most notably in the activities of the Home Rule Movement under the leadership of Charles Stewart Parnell. Though home rule was finally passed in 1914, it was deferred because of the onset of World War I. On Easter Monday in 1916 a small force of Irish nationalists rebelled in Dublin against British rule. The rising was a military failure and had little support among the public. However, the harsh response of the British government and particularly its execution of the rising's leaders won many over to the cause. After the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in 1921, the Irish Free State, whose constitutional status was tied to the British Commonwealth and required allegiance to the Crown, was established. The Free State was composed of 26 of Ireland's 32 counties; the other six remained part of Britain. In 1949 the 26 counties became the Republic of Ireland, an independent nation. Although the Republic has consistently maintained its claim over the six counties of the U.K.'s Northern Ireland and declared its wish to reunite the whole island into a sovereign nation, in recent decades it has placed more emphasis on economic and social rather than nationalistic issues. Nevertheless, the status of the six counties of Northern Ireland remains a highly critical concern for politicians in Dublin, Belfast, and London.

### **IRISH EMIGRATION**

The Irish like to boast that St. Brendan sailed to America almost a millennium before Christopher Columbus; but even if St. Brendan did not make it to the New World, Galway-born William Ayers was one of Columbus's crew in 1492. During the seventeenth century the majority of the Irish immigrants to America were Catholics. Most were poor, many coming as indentured servants, others under agreeThis 1929

photograph shows an Irish family after their arrival in New York City.



ments to reimburse their fare sometime after arrival, a minority somehow managing to pay their own way. A small number were more prosperous and came seeking adventure. Still others were among the thousands who were exiled to the West Indies by Cromwell during the 1640s and later made their way to America. There was an increase in Irish immigration during the eighteenth century, though the numbers were still relatively small. Most of the century's arrivals were Presbyterians from the northern province of Ulster who had originally been sent there from Scotland as colonists by the British crown. Many of these, dissenters from the established Protestant church, came to America fleeing religious discrimination. In later years, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was common to assign the term Scotch-Irish to these Ulster Protestant immigrants, although they thought of themselves as strictly Irish. There were also numerous Irish Quaker immigrants, as well as some Protestants from the south. A significant minority of eighteenth century immigrants were southern Catholics. Most of these were escaping the appalling social and economic conditions as well as the draconian penal laws enacted by the British to annihilate the Celtic heritage and the religion of the Catholic majority. Some of these Catholic arrivals in America in time converted to Protestantism after encountering severe anti-papist discrimination as well as an absence of Catholic churches and priests. The preferred destinations of most of the eighteenth century Irish immigrants were New England, Maryland, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas, and Virginia.

### IMMIGRATION UNTIL THE FAMINE YEARS

In the early years of the nineteenth century Protestants, many of whom were skilled tradesmen, continued to account for the majority of Irish immigrants. There were also numerous political refugees especially after the abortive United Irishmen uprising of 1798. However, by the 1820s and 1830s the overwhelming majority of those fleeing the country were unskilled, Catholic, peasant laborers. By this time Ireland was becoming Europe's most densely populated country, the population having increased from about three million in 1725 to over eight million by 1841. The land could not support such a number. One of the main problems was the absence of the practice of primogeniture among the Irish. Family farms or plots were divided again and again until individual allotments were often so smallperhaps only one or two acres in size-that they were of little use in raising a family. Conditions worsened when, in the wake of a post-Napoleonic Wars agricultural depression, many Irish were evicted from the land they had leased as tenants because the landlords wanted it used for grazing. The concurrent great rise in population left thousands of discontented, landless Irish eager to seek new horizons. Moreover, the increase in industrialization had all but ended the modest amount of domestic weaving and spinning that had helped to supplement the income of some families. In addition, famine was never distant-a number of severe potato failures occurred during the 1820s and 1830s before the major famine of the 1840s.

As the passage from Britain to the Canadian Maritimes was substantially cheaper than that to the United States, many Irish immigrants came first to Canada, landing at Quebec, Montreal, or Halifax, and then sailed or even walked down into America. After about 1840, however, most immigrants sailed from Ireland to an American port. Whereas most of the Irish Catholic immigrants during the eighteenth century became engaged in some sort of farming occupation, those in the subsequent century tended to remain in such urban centers as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia or in the textile towns where their unskilled labor could be readily utilized. The immigrants were impoverished but usually not as destitute as those who came during the famine. Many readily found jobs building roads or canals such as the Erie. Still, times were tough for most of them, especially the Catholics who frequently found themselves a minority and targets of discrimination in an overwhelmingly Protestant nation.

### FROM FAMINE YEARS TO THE PRESENT

It was the cataclysmic Potato Famine of 1845-1851, one of the most severe disasters in Irish history, that initiated the greatest departure of Irish immigrants to the United States. The potato constituted the main dietary staple for most Irish and when the blight struck a number of successive harvests social and economic disintegration ensued. As many as 1.5 million individuals perished of starvation and the diverse epidemics that accompanied the famine. A great number of the survivors emigrated, many of them to the United States. From the beginning of the famine in the mid-1840s until 1860 about 1.7 million Irish immigrated to the United States, mainly from the provinces of Connaught and Munster. In the latter part of the century, though the numbers fell from the highs of the famine years, the influx from Ireland continued to be large. While families predominated during the Famine exodus, single people now accounted for a far higher proportion of the immigrants. By 1880 more single women than single men were immigrants. It has been estimated that from 1820 to 1900 about four million Irish immigrated to the United States.

Though the majority of Irish immigrants continued to inhabit urban centers, principally in the northeast but also in such cities as Chicago, New Orleans, and San Francisco, a significant minority went further afield. Only a small number went west to engage in farming, however. Most Irish immigrants were indeed peasants, but few had the money to purchase land or had sufficient skill and experi-

**"T**he first time I saw the Statue of Liberty all the people were rushing to the side of the boat. 'Look at her, look at her,' and in all kinds of tongues. 'There she is, there she is,' like it was somebody who was greeting them."

Elizabeth Phillips in 1920, cited in *Ellis Island: An Illustrated History of the Immigrant Experience,* edited by Ivan Chermayeff et al. (New York: Macmillan, 1991).

ence to make a success of large-scale agriculture. Still, despite the great exploitation, oppression, and hardships suffered by many nineteenth-century Irish immigrants, the majority endured and their occupational mobility began to improve slowly. Their prowess and patriotic fervor in the Civil War helped to diminish anti-Irish bigotry and discrimination. As the years went by, the occupational caliber of Irish immigrants gradually improved in line with the slow amelioration of conditions in Ireland. By the end of the century a high proportion were skilled or semi-skilled laborers or had trades. Moreover, these immigrants were greatly aided by the Irish American infrastructure that awaited them. While life was still harsh for most immigrants, the parochial schools, charitable societies, workers' organizations, and social clubs aided their entry into a society that still frequently discriminated against Irish Catholics. Furthermore, the influx of even poorer southern and eastern European immigrants helped the Irish attain increased status.

In the twentieth century immigration from Ireland has ebbed and flowed. After World War I Irish

immigration to the United States was high. After Congress passed legislation limiting immigration during the 1920s, however, the numbers declined. Numbers for the 1930s were particularly low. After World War II numbers again increased; but the 1960s saw emigration from Ireland falling dramatically as a result of new quota laws restricting northern Europeans. Accordingly, the number of Irishborn legal residents now in the United States is far lower than it was in the mid-twentieth century. From the 1980s onward, however, there has been an unprecedented influx of undocumented Irish immigrants, especially to such traditionally Irish centers as New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. These have been mainly young, well-educated individuals who have left an economically troubled country with one of the highest rates of unemployment in the European Community (EC). They prefer to work illegally in the United States, frequently in Irish-owned businesses, as bartenders, construction workers, nannies, and food servers, exposed to the dangers of exploitation and apprehension by the law, rather than remain on the dole at home. Their number is unknown, though the figure is estimated to be between 100,000 and 150,000.

# Acculturation and Assimilation

The Irish have been present in the United States for hundreds of years and, accordingly, have had more opportunity than many other ethnic groups to assimilate into the wider society. Each successive generation has become more integrated with the dominant culture. In the eighteenth century the Protestant Irish relatively easily became acculturated and socially accepted. However, it was far more difficult for the vast numbers of Catholic Irish who flooded into the United States in the post-famine decades to coalesce with the mainstream. Negative stereotypes imported from England characterizing the Irish as pugnacious, drunken, semi-savages were common and endured for at least the rest of the nineteenth century. Multitudes of cartoons depicting the Irish as small, ugly, simian creatures armed with liquor and a shillelagh pervaded the press; and such terms as "paddy-wagons," "shenanigans," and "shanty Irish" gained popularity. Despite the effects of these offensive images, compounded by poverty and ignorance, the Irish Catholic immigrants possessed important advantages. They arrived in great numbers, most were able to speak English, and their Western European culture was similar to American culture. These factors clearly allowed the Irish Catholics to blend in far more easily than some other ethnic groups. Even their Catholicism, once disdained by so many, came to be accepted in time. Though some prejudices still linger, Catholicism is now an important part of American culture.

Today it is no longer easy to define precisely what is meant by an Irish American ethnic identity. This is especially so for later generations. Intermarriage has played a major role in this blurring of ethnic lines. The process of assimilating has also been facilitated by the great migration in recent decades of the Irish from their ethnic enclaves in the cities to the suburbs and rural regions. Greater participation in the multicultural public school system with a corresponding decline in parochial school attendance has played a significant role as well; another major factor has been the great decrease of immigrants from Ireland due to immigration laws disfavoring Europeans. Today, with 38,760,000 Americans claiming Irish ancestry (according to the 1990 census), American society as a whole associates few connotations-positive or negative-with this group. Among these immigrants and their ancestors, however, there is still great pride and a certain prestige in being Irish.

Still, there exists in some circles the belief that the Irish are less cultured, less advanced intellectually, and more politically reactionary and even bigoted than some other ethnic groups. The results of numerous polls show, however, that Catholic Irish Americans are among the best educated and most liberal in the United States. Moreover, they are well represented in law, medicine, academia, and other prestigious professions, and they continue to be upwardly socially mobile. Traditionally prominent in the Democratic ranks of city and local politics, many, especially since the Kennedy presidency, have now attained high positions in the federal government. Countless more have become top civil servants. Irish acceptability has also grown in line with the greater respect afforded by many Americans to the advances made by the Republic of Ireland in the twentieth century.

### DANCES AND SONGS

Ireland's cultural heritage, with its diverse customs, traditions, folklore, mythology, music, and dance, is one of the richest and most distinctive in Europe. Rapid modernization and the extensive homogenization of western societies, however, has rendered much of this heritage obsolete or, at best, only vaguely perceived in contemporary Ireland. With their extensive assimilation into American culture there has been a decline in continuity and appreciation of the domestic cultural heritage among Irish Ameri-



Irish step dancers prance along the parade route during a south Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade in 1997.

941

cans as well. Nevertheless, there exist many elements in the Irish American culture that are truly unique and lend this group a distinct cultural character.

Irish music and song brought to America by generations of immigrants have played a seminal role in the development of America's folk and country music. Elements of traditional Irish ballads introduced during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are easily discernible in many American folk songs. Irish fiddle music of this period is an important root of American country music. This earlier music became part of a rural tradition. Much of what was carried to America by the great waves of Irish immigration during the nineteenth century, on the other hand, became an important facet of America's urban folk scene. With the folk music revival of the 1960s came a heightened appreciation of Irish music in both its American and indigenous forms. Today Irish music is extremely popular not only among Irish Americans but among many Americans in general. Many learn to play such Irish instruments as the pipes, tin whistle, flute, fiddle, concertina, harp, and the bodhrán. Many also attend Irish céilithe and dance traditional reels and jigs to hornpipes.

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY

March 17 is the feast of St. Patrick, the most important holiday of the year for Irish Americans. St. Patrick, about whose life and chronology little definite is known, is the patron saint of Ireland. A Romano-Briton missionary, perhaps from Wales, St. Patrick is honored for spreading Christianity throughout Ireland in the fifth century. Though Irish Americans of all creeds are particularly prominent on St. Patrick's Day, the holiday is now so ubiquitous that individuals of many other ethnic groups participate in the festivities. Many cities and towns hold St. Patrick's Day celebrations, parties, and, above all, parades. One of the oldest observances in the United States took place in Boston in 1737 under the auspices of the Charitable Irish Society. It was organized by Protestant Irish. Boston, especially in the districts of South Boston, still holds great celebrations each year, though the holiday is now more closely identified with Catholic Irish. The largest and most famous parade is held in New York City, with the first parade in that city dating back to 1762. In the early years this parade was organized by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick; in 1838 the Ancient Order of Hibernians became sponsor and still holds the sponsorship today. New York's main cathedral is dedicated to St. Patrick. Most people celebrating St. Patrick's Day strive to wear something green, Ireland's national color. Green dye is often put in food and drink. The mayor of Chicago regularly has the Chicago River dyed green for the day. If people cannot find a shamrock to wear they carry representations of that plant. According to legend the shamrock, with its three leaves on the single stalk, was used by St. Patrick to explain the mystery of the Christian Trinity to the pagan Irish. In Ireland St. Patrick's Day, though still celebrated with enthusiasm, tends to be somewhat more subdued than in the United States due to a greater appreciation of the religious significance of the feast.

**Irish Americans** 

celebrate in New York City's annual St. Patrick's Day

parade.



### TRADITIONAL COSTUMES

Hardly any true folk costume is still worn in Ireland. The brat, a black hooded woolen cloak, is sometimes seen on old women in County Cork. During the nineteenth century the shawl was found by many women to be a cheaper substitute for the cloak and even today older rural women might be shawled. The heavy white báinín pullovers, traditionally worn in the west and northwest of Ireland by fishermen whose sweaters each bore a unique and identifiable cable pattern, is now frequently seen throughout the nation. Traditional homespun tweed trousers are still sometimes worn by Aran Islander men. In America the Irish rarely wear any traditional costume. The main exception is the kilt which is sometimes worn by members of céilí bands and traditional Irish dancers. This plaid skirt is actually Scottish, however, and was adopted in the early twentieth century during the Gaelic Revival.

### CUISINE

For the most part Irish Americans eat generic American food as well as the cuisine of other ethnic groups. Many Irish Americans do cook some of the dishes that make up the distinctive Irish cuisine, which is frequently served in Irish restaurants and pubs throughout America. There is a good market for the many shops in America that sell such Irish favorites as rashers (bacon), bangers (sausages), black and white pudding, and soda bread. Potatoes have traditionally constituted the staple of the Irish diet. The Irish also consume such dairy products as butter, milk, and cheese in large quantities. Many eat oatmeal stirabout or porridge for breakfast. Irish stew is a favorite dish. Smoked Irish salmon, imported from Ireland, is a popular delicacy. Other traditional foods include: soda bread, made with flour, soda, buttermilk, and salt (sometimes with raisins); coddle, a dish originating in Dublin that is prepared with bacon, sausages, onions, and potatoes; and drisheens, made from sheep's blood, milk, bread crumbs, and chopped mutton suet. Corned beef and cabbage, sometimes served with juniper berries, was a traditional meal in many parts of Ireland on Easter Sunday and is still consumed by many Irish Americans on this and other days. Boxty bread, a potato bread marked with a cross, is still eaten by some on Halloween or the eve of All Saint's Day. Also on the table at Halloween are colcannon, a mixture of cabbage or kale and mashed potatoes with a lucky coin placed inside, and barmbrack, an unleavened cake made with raisins, sultanas, and currants. A ring is always placed inside the barmbrack. It is said that whoever receives the slice containing the ring will be married within the year. Tea, served at all times of the day or night, is probably the most popular Irish beverage. Irish coffee, made from whiskey and coffee, is truly an Irish American invention and is not drunk much in Ireland. Though Scotch and whiskey are synonymous to many in other countries, the Irish believe that their whiskey, uisce beatha (the water of life), is a finer drink. Irish stout, particularly the Guinness variety, is well-known throughout the world.

### PROVERBS

Sceitheann fíon fírinne (Wine reveals the truth); Níl aon tinteán mar do thinteán féin (There's no fireside

like your own fireside); Más maith leat tú a cháineadh, pós (Marry, if you wish to be criticized); Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí (Give praise to the young and they will flourish); An té a bhíos fial roinneann Dia leis (God shares with the generous); Is maith an scáthán súil charad (The eye of a friend is a good mirror); Is fada an bóthar nach mbíonn casadh ann (It's a long road that has no turn); Giorraíonn beirt bóthar (Two people shorten the road).

### **HEALTH ISSUES**

The health of Irish Americans is influenced by the same factors affecting other ethnic groups in the western world: old age, pollution, stress, excessive use of tobacco and alcohol, overly rich diet, employment and other economic problems, discord in marriage and personal relationships, and so on. The chief cause of death is heart-related diseases, exacerbated by the Irish fondness for a rich diet traditionally high in fat and caloric content. Alcohol plays a strong role in Irish American social life, and alcohol-related illnesses are common—the rate of alcoholism is high. Irish Americans also have an above-average rate of mental health diseases, with organic psychosis and schizophrenia being particularly prevalent.

In the earlier days of emigration the Irish, like numerous other groups, brought their folk medical remedies to America. Most of these, especially those associated with herbs, are unknown to the majority of contemporary Irish Americans; however, a number of traditional medical beliefs survive. In order to maintain good health and prevent illness many Irish recommend wearing holy medals and scapulars, blessing the throat, never going to bed with wet hair, never sitting in a draft, taking laxatives regularly, wearing camphor about the neck in influenza season, taking tonics and extra vitamins, enjoying bountiful exercise and fresh air, and avoiding physicians except when quite ill. Some traditional treatments are still used, such as painting a sore throat with iodine or soothing it with lemon and honey, putting a poultice of sugar and bread or soap on a boil, drinking hot whiskeys with cloves and honey for coughs or colds, and rubbing Vicks on the chest or breathing in hot Balsam vapors, also for coughs and colds.

Just as other groups in America, the Irish worry about the ever rising cost of medical care. Many would like improved medical insurance plans, whether national or private. The thousands of undocumented Irish throughout the United States who are not medically insured are particularly apprehensive of the frequently high expense of medical treatment.



### LANGUAGE

Irish is a Celtic language of Indo-European origin, related to the ancient language of the Gauls. Linguistic scholars usually consider at least four distinct stages in the development of Irish: Old Irish (c. 600-900); Middle Irish (c. 900-1400); Early Modern Irish (c.1400-1600); and Modern Irish (c.1600-present). There are three fairly distinct dialects, those of Ulster, Munster, and Connaught. Beginning in the nineteenth century, Irish-until then widely spoken throughout Ireland-began a rapid decline mainly due to the Anglicization policies of the British government. Since the founding of the Irish Free State in 1921, however, the authorities have made great efforts to promote the widespread usage of Irish. Under the Constitution of the Republic of Ireland, Irish is decreed as the official language, though special recognition is given to English. Irish is still extensively taught in most schools. The result is that competence in Irish-as well as general interest in the language-is higher today than at any time in the Republic's history. Nevertheless, despite all efforts to render Irish a living national language, it is clear that it remains the daily language of communication for only about four percent of the population, most of whom live in small Gaeltacht (southwest, west, and northwest) areas. Only a tiny number of Northern Ireland's population speak Irish.

The decline in the usage of Irish and the triumph of English as the first language for most Irish throughout the nineteenth century, though undoubtedly a great loss for nationalistic and cultural reasons, proved to be a boon to Irish immigrants to the United States. Almost alone among new immigrants, apart from those from the British Isles, most spoke the language of their adopted country. Today, there is a resurgence of interest in the Irish language among many Irish Americans. In cities such as New York, Chicago, Boston, and San Francisco, classes in learning Irish are extremely popular. A growing number of American colleges and universities now offer courses in Irish language.

### GREETINGS AND OTHER COMMON EXPRESSIONS

Dia dhuit ("dee-ah guit")-Hello; Conas atá tú? ("kunus ah-thaw thoo")-How are you; Fáilte romhat! ("fawilteh rowth")—Welcome; Cad as duit? ("kawd oss dit")-Where are you from; Gabh mo leithscéal ("gauw muh leshgale")-Excuse me; Le do thoil ("leh duh hull")—Please; Tá dhá thaobh ar an scéa ("thaw gaw havv air un shgale")-There's something to be said on both sides; Más toil le Dia ("maws tule leh dee-ah")-God willing; Tá sé ceart to leor ("thaw shay k-yarth guh lore") It's all right; Beidh lá eile ag an bPaorach! ("beg law eleh egg un fairoch")-Better luck next time; Buíochas le Dia ("bu-ee-kus leh dee-ah")-Thank God; Is fusa a rá ná a dhéanamh ("iss fusa ah raw naw ah yeaanav")-Easier said than done; Go raibh míle maith agat ("guh row meela moh ugut")—Thank you very much; Slán agat go fóill ("slawn ugut guh fowil")-Good-bye for the present.

# Family and Community Dynamics

It is difficult to discuss the Irish American family in isolation from the broader society. Irish assimilation into the American culture has been occurring for a long time and has been quite comprehensive.

### MARRIAGE

Traditionally the average age of marriage for the Irish was older than for numerous other groups. Many delayed getting married, wishing first to attain a sufficient economic level. Large numbers did not marry at all, deciding to remain celibate, some for religious reasons, others, it has been suggested, due to a certain embarrassment about sex. Today delayed marriages are less common and there is probably less sexual dysfunction both within and outside marriage. Furthermore, those Irish whose families have long been established in America tend to have a more accepting attitude towards divorce than do the more recently arrived Irish. Many young Irish Americans are more inclined than their elders to look favorably on divorce. The negative attitude of the Catholic church toward divorce still affects perceptions, however. Many Irish Americans, even those who obtain a civil divorce, seek to procure a church annulment of their marriages so that they may remarry within Catholicism. Though Irish Americans frequently intermarry with other groups there remains a strong leaning toward marrying within one's own religion.

### WAKES

In remote times in Ireland the Irish generally treated death in a boisterous and playful manner. It is possible that the storytelling, music playing, singing, dancing, feasting, and playing of wake diversions during the two or three days the dead person was laid out prior to burial owed something to pre-Christian funeral games. Such activity may also have stemmed in part from a welcoming of death by an exploited and destitute people. Today, however, wakes among Irish Americans are much more sedate and respectable and generally last only one night. The main purpose of a wake is for relatives, neighbors, and friends to visit in order to pay their respects to the dead person and to offer condolences to the family. Though food and drink are still invariably offered to visitors, the traditional over-indulgence of eating and drinking rarely occurs. In years past the dead body was laid out on a bed in the person's own house. Today the wake often takes place in a funeral home with the body lying in a casket. Catholic dead often have rosary beads entwined in their crossed hands, and some are dressed in the brown habit or shroud of the Franciscan Third Order. Flowers and candles are usually placed about the casket. The laid-out corpse always has somebody standing beside it. This is mainly out of respect for the dead person. Many years ago, however, there was a practical reason for watching the body, namely to guard it from the predations of body-snatchers who would sell it to medical schools. The caoine or keening of women over the corpse is no longer heard in America. This custom has also, except for rare occasions, died out in Ireland. It is common for visitors to a wake to say a short silent prayer for the soul of the dead person.

### THE ROLE OF WOMEN

The traditional Irish American mother remained at home to take care of the household. Female dominance of domestic life was common and the mother generally played a disproportionate role in raising

the children. Not all Irish women were tied to the house, however. Many were also active in community oriented projects, such as charity activities, parochial work, and caring for the old and sick. In addition, many others displayed great independence and resolve last century when, fleeing the famine and terrible conditions in Ireland, they emigrated alone to the United States, a bold act for women of the period. This will and determination remains one of the most dominant character traits of contemporary Irish American females. Modern Irish American women are as likely, if not more so, to be as successful as their peers from other groups. Few today are content to devote their lives to traditional housework, with the great majority working in either parttime or full-time jobs. Great numbers have thrived in such professional spheres as academia, law, business, politics, and a variety of other occupations.

### CHILDREN

Irish American families have traditionally been large. Today many families still tend to produce an above-average number of children. This may be due in part to the continued adherence of many Irish to the teachings of the Catholic church on contraception. How Irish Americans rear their children depends to a great extent on the socio-economic background of the family. Generally, however, children are treated firmly but kindly. They are taught to be polite, obey their parents, and defer to authority. The mother often plays the dominant role in raising children and imparting values; the father is frequently a distant figure. In many families negative reinforcement, such as shaming, belittling, ridiculing, and embarrassing children, is as common as positive reinforcement. There has always been a tendency to imbue children with a strong sense of public respectability. It even has been argued that this desire to be thought respectable has deterred many Irish from taking chances and has impeded their success. Overt affection displayed by parents toward their children is not as prevalent as in some other ethnic groups.

### **EDUCATION**

In earlier generations, often more attention was paid to the education of sons than to that of daughters. It was generally thought that girls would become homemakers and that even if some did have a job such work would be considered secondary to their household duties. Today, however, though some Irish parents, particularly mothers, still "spoil" or indulge their sons, the education of daughters is a major concern.

Irish American families encourage achievement in school. In this they follow the traditional respect of the Irish for education. This dates back to when Irish monks helped preserve Latin and Greek learning in Europe, as well as the English language itself, by copying manuscripts during the fifth through eighth centuries when Ireland attained the name of "Island of Saints and Scholars." In addition, Irish Americans well understand that academic success facilitates achievement in wider social and economic spheres. The result is that Irish Catholics are among the top groups in the United States for educational attainment. They are more likely than any other white gentile ethnic group to go to college and are also more likely than most other ethnic groups to pursue graduate academic and professional degrees. While many Irish attend public schools, colleges, and universities, numerous others go to Catholic educational institutions. During the nineteenth century, however, many Irish parochial schools placed a greater emphasis on preventing Irish children from seduction by what many felt to be the Protestant ethos of the public schools. There is strong evidence that attendance at today's Catholic educational institutions, many of which have high standards, facilitates high levels of educational achievement and upward social mobility. Contrary to some beliefs, they are not deterrents to either academic or economic success. Among the most renowned Catholic universities attended by Irish Americans are Boston College and the University of Notre Dame.

# Religion

Some early Catholic Irish immigrants converted to the pervasive Protestantism in America. However, the vast majority of subsequent Catholic immigrants, many holding their religion to be an intrinsic part of their Irish heritage as well as a safeguard against America's Anglo establishment, held steadfastly to their faith and, in so doing, helped Roman Catholicism grow into one of America's most powerful institutions. Since the late eighteenth century many aspects of American Catholicism have possessed a distinctly Irish character. A disproportionate number of Irish names may be found among America's past and present Catholic clergy. Scores of Irish laymen have been at the forefront of American Catholic affairs. The Irish have been particularly energetic supporters of the more concrete manifestations of their church and have established throughout America great numbers of Catholic schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, community centers, and orphanages, as well as churches, cathedrals, convents, and seminaries.

Until the mid-twentieth century, the life of Catholic Irish Americans revolved around their parish. Many children went to parochial schools, and the clergy organized such activities as sports, dances, and community services. There was little local politics without the participation of the priests. The clergy knew all the families in the community and there was great pressure to conform to the norms of the tightly knit parish. The parish priest, generally the best-educated individual of the congregation, was usually the dominant community leader. At a time when there were far fewer social workers, guidance counselors, and psychologists, parishioners flocked to their priest in times of trouble. Today the typical parish is less closed mainly due to the falling off in religious practice over the last decades of the twentieth century and the increased mainstreaming of parishioners. Nevertheless, there still remains a strong identification of many Catholic Irish with their parish.

The American Catholic church has undergone great changes since the 1960s, due largely to the innovations introduced by the Second Vatican Council. Some Catholic Irish Americans, wishing to preserve their inherited church practices, have been dismayed by the transformation. Some, alienated by the modernization of the liturgy, have been offended by what they consider a diminution of the mystery and venerability of church ritual with respect to the introduction of the vernacular, new hymns, and guitar playing at services. Some have attempted to preserve the traditional liturgy by joining conservative breakaway sects, and others have adopted different branches of Christianity.

Most Irish Americans have embraced the recent developments, however. The traditional Irish obedience to ecclesiastical authority is no longer certain as Rome asserts an uncompromising stance on many issues. Many Irish Catholics are now far more inclined to question doctrines and take issue with teachings on such subjects as abortion, contraception, divorce, priestly celibacy, and female priests. Certain members of the clergy have shown discontent; priests, nuns, and brothers have been leaving their orders in large numbers and there has been a concurrent decline in Irish vocations to the religious life. The numbers of Irish receiving the sacraments and attending mass and other church services have substantially declined; and many have abandoned puritan attitudes toward lifestyle issues, especially sex. Nevertheless, most Irish American Catholics are still faithful to many teachings of their church, and continue to identify as Catholics despite some disagreements with Vatican teachings.

# Employment and Economic Traditions

The great majority of Catholic Irish immigrants in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century languished at the bottom of America's economic ladder as unskilled laborers. Though some were farm workers, many more worked in such areas as mining, guarrying, bridge and canal building, and railway construction. So many Irish were killed working on the railroad that it was commonly speculated that "there was an Irishman buried under every tie." Others were dockworkers, ironworkers, factory-hands, bartenders, carters, street cleaners, hod-carriers, and waiters. Irish women generally worked in menial occupations. Multitudes were employed as domestic servants in Anglo-Protestant households, while others worked as unskilled laborers in New England textile mills. Some Irish became quite successful but their numbers were few. The handful who attained white-collar status were frequently shopkeepers and small businessmen. There was an exceedingly meager number of Irish professionals. Those Irish who made the long trip to the western states tended to have somewhat more prestigious jobs than their compatriots in the East and North. This is due in part to the large numbers of Chinese in the West who did much of the manual laboring work. Many Irish participated in the California Gold Rush.

In the years after the Civil War the occupational lot of the Irish began to improve as more entered skilled trades. Many moved into managerial positions in the railroad, iron, construction, and other industries. Some went into business for themselves, especially in the building and contracting sectors. Numerous others became police officers, firefighters, streetcar conductors, clerks, and postoffice workers. The Irish held many leadership positions in the trade union movement. Entertainment and athletics were other fields in which they began to attain greater recognition. It was more difficult for Irish women to move into higher prestige jobs, as there were far fewer opportunities for women in general at this time. Still, many attained upward occupational mobility by becoming teachers, nurses, and secretaries. Many Irish American nuns held positions of responsibility in hospitals, schools, and other Catholic social institutions.

By the beginning of the twentieth century Catholic Irish Americans were clearly ascending the occupational ladder. Though most remained members of the working class, large numbers moved into the ranks of the lower middle classes. Throughout the century this improvement in socioeconom-

946

ic status has continued. Today the Irish are well represented in academia, medicine, law, government service, politics, finance, banking, insurance, journalism, the entertainment industry, the Catholic clergy, and most other professions.

# Politics and Government

The vast majority of Irish Catholic immigrants to the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries arrived as Democrats, a political stance imbued by years of oppression at the hands of the British. Not surprisingly, most favored the democratic policies of Thomas Jefferson and their vote greatly assisted his election to the presidency in 1801. Their political inclinations were again manifest in 1829 in their support for the populist politics of Democrat Andrew Jackson, America's seventh president and the nation's first of Irish (Protestant) background. Understanding that they were clearly unable to match the Anglo-Protestant establishment in the world of business and economics, Irish Catholics, many of whom entered the United States with fundamental political experience gained through mass agitation movements at home, realized that politics would provide them with a potent vehicle for attaining influence and power. In the years after the Civil War the Irish metier for political activity became increasingly evident. To many today the Irish control of New York's Tammany Hall, the center of the city's Democratic Party, is a resolute symbol of their powerful and sometimes dubious involvement in American urban politics. Though graft, cronyism, and corruption were once an integral part of many of their political "machines" in New York and other cities, Irish politicians were frequently more successful than their Anglo-Protestant counterparts in reaching the people, feeding the poor, helping the more unfortunate obtain jobs, and organizing other practical social welfare activities. The Irish political "machine" generally had a strong democratic, reformist, and pragmatic agenda, which frequently extended to Jews, Italians, Germans, Poles, and other nationalities.

The phenomenon of Irish domination of the political life of numerous cities continued well into the twentieth century. Two extremely influential and powerful figures of the old "machine" style were James Michael Curley (1874-1958), mayor of Boston for four terms, and Richard J. Daley, mayor of Chicago from 1954 to 1976. Irish involvement in both state and national politics also gained prominence in the twentieth century. Alfred Emanuel Smith (1873-1944), the grandson of Irish immi-

grants, was the first Irish Catholic to receive the nomination of a major party (Democratic) in a presidential election; he was defeated by Herbert Hoover. An Irish Catholic reached the White House in 1960 with the election of the Democrat John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who was assassinated in 1963. His brother, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, another prominent Democratic politician who served as attorney general in the Kennedy administration, was assassinated in 1968. A third brother, Edward, has been one of the most liberal and effective champions of social reform in the history of the Senate. Two other twentieth century Presidents, Richard M. Nixon and Ronald Reagan (both Republicans) were of Irish Protestant background. Numerous other Irish American politicians have gained state and national attention in recent decades. Both Mike Mansfield and George J. Mitchell were Senate majority leaders. Thomas O'Neill and Thomas S. Foley both served as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Another influential politician and 1976 presidential candidate was Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota.

Despite the notable presence this century of such influential reactionaries as the demagogue Father Charles Coughlin and the communist-baiter Senator Joseph McCarthy, Catholic Irish Americans are among the most likely to advocate the right of free speech. They also tend to be more supportive of liberal issues than many other white ethnic groups. For example, they have traditionally promoted such causes as racial equality, welfare programs, environmental issues, and gun control. Irish Americans have been and still are among the most stalwart supporters of the Democratic Party. Beginning in the late twentieth century, however, there has been a movement by some toward the Republican Party.

# ARMED FORCES

The Irish, either as regulars or as volunteers, have served in all of America's wars. They fought with distinction in the Revolutionary War, most siding with Washington. It is estimated that as many as 38 percent of Washington's army was composed of Irish Americans, even though they made up only 10 percent of the population. Of the generals, 26 were Irish, 15 of whom were born in Ireland. In the Civil War most Irish sided with the Union and great numbers fought in the Yankee armies. "The Fighting 69th" was probably the most famous Irish regimental unit, though 38 other Union regiments had "Irish" in their names. The contribution of the Irish to the Confederate cause was also significant. As many as 40,000 Confederate soldiers were born in Ireland and numerous others were of Irish ancestry. Irish Americans continued to fight in America's armies in subsequent wars and were particularly prominent, with many gaining decorations, in the two World Wars, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Their ready and distinguished participation in America's military conflicts has helped the Irish to gain respectability in the eyes of generations of other Americans and to assimilate into mainstream American life.

# LABOR MOVEMENT

The Irish have contributed greatly to the labor movement in America. Their struggle for American workers' rights began as an outgrowth of their fight against oppression in Ireland. American capitalist injustice in industry was not too different in principle from persecution by English landlords at home. Even in the antebellum years the Irish were active in workers' organizations, many of which were clandestine, but it was during the second half of the nineteenth century that their involvement in labor activities became especially prominent. Particularly well known are the activities of the Molly Maguires, anthracite coal miners of Pennsylvania who in the 1860s and 1870s violently resisted the mostly English, Scottish, and Welsh mine bosses. Found guilty of nine murders, ten Mollies were hanged in 1876. This did not deter Irish involvement in American labor activities, however. Terrence V. Powderly (1849-1924), the son of an Irish immigrant, was for years leader of the Knights of Labor, the first national labor organization, which was founded in 1869. He later became commissioner general of immigration. Peter James McGuire (1852-1906), a carpenter, was another leading union activist. A founder of the American Federation of Labor, he was its secretary and first vice-president. He is perhaps best known today as the "Father of Labor Day." Irish women have also been prominent in America's labor movement. The Cork-born Mary Harris ("Mother") Jones (1830-1930), after losing all her possessions in the Chicago fire of 1871 began a 50year involvement in organizing labor unions and in striving to improve workers' conditions and wages throughout the United States. Today, a nationally circulated magazine devoted to liberal issues bears her name. Another famous Irish female in the labor movement was Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (1890-1964) who co-founded the American Civil Liberties Union in 1920 and later became head of the United States Communist party. Kerry-born Michael Joseph Quill (1905-1966) founded the Transport Workers Union of America in 1934 and was its first president. In 1937 Joe Curran became the National Maritime Union's first president. George Meany (1894-1979), grandson of an Irish immigrant, was president of the combined American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) from 1955 to 1979. Irish American participation in America's unions and labor movement has been and continues to be of vital importance and benefit to the well-being of American society.

# NORTHERN IRELAND

The attention of many Irish Americans of different generations has been sharply focused on the political affairs of Ireland ever since the Catholic civil rights movement began in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s. This movement was a response to decades of institutionalized and private discrimination against Catholics in this region since the creation of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom in 1921. This discrimination by the Protestant majority was pervasive in such spheres as voting, housing, and employment. For the past three decades Northern Ireland has been convulsed by political upheaval, the frequently controversial tactics of an occupying force of British soldiers, Protestant and Catholic paramilitary activity, riots, killings, bombings, hunger strikes, internment without trial, and patent violations of human rights. The reactions of numerous Irish Americans have been forceful. In 1970 the Northern Ireland Aid Committee (NORAID) was formed to provide material help to Catholics in Northern Ireland. The Irish National Caucus, a Washington-based lobbying group, has been vociferous in its call for a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland and for a reunification of the whole nation. Many Irish American politicians have campaigned intensely to find a settlement to Northern Ireland's problems. Among the most prominent have been Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, Senator Daniel P. Moynihan of New York, former Speaker of the House of Representatives Tip O'Neill, and former Governor of New York Hugh Carey. These and other Irish American politicians and lobbying groups have consistently exerted pressure on successive administrations to use their influence with London, Belfast, and Dublin to help amend human rights abuses in Northern Ireland and to aid in the provision of social and economic justice in that region. After the Anglo-Irish Agreement was reached in England in November 1985 Congress, responding in part to pressure from Irish Americans, passed a multi-billion-dollar aid bill for Northern Ireland. The future of this region is by no means clear, despite the recent cease-fire by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), but it is expected that

Irish Americans will continue influence the policy of the major players in this conflict.

# Individual and Group Contributions

It would constitute a thoroughly invidious task to provide a comprehensive record of the vast number of Irish Americans who have attained prominence over the past few centuries. The following list is necessarily selective, and countless other individuals might also have been named.

# ART

There have been numerous Irish Americans who have achieved prominence in the arts. In the fine arts, for example, the following three achieved particular fame: Mathew Brady (1823-1896), Civil War photographer; James E. Kelly (1855-1933), sculptor; Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), painter. Others include: Mathew Carey (1760-1839), author, book publisher, and political economist; Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), one of the greatest figures in American literature; Ring Lardner (1885-1933), short story writer and sports journalist; Mary O'Hara Alsop (1885-1980), popular novelist who focused on animal life; Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953), one of America's most eminent playwrights; F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940), popular novelist and short story writer; James T. Farrell (1904-1979), author whose work, notably his Studs Lonigan trilogy, centered on working-class Irish American families on Chicago's South Side; John O'Hara (1905-1970), novelist and short story writer; Mary McCarthy (1912-1989), novelist and critic; Mary Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964), novelist and short story writer of the American South; and William F. Buckley (1925-), editor, critic, commentator, novelist.

# **BUSINESS AND FINANCE**

Numerous Irish Americans have made their mark in the world of business and finance: William Russell (1812-1872), founder of the Pony Express; William Russell Grace (1832-1904), entrepreneur and first Roman Catholic mayor of New York; John Philip Holland (1840-1914), Clare-born father of the modern submarine; Anthony Nicholas Brady (1843-1913), wealthy industrialist whose interests extended from railroads to electric companies; Andrew Mellon (1855-1937), banker, art collector, and philanthropist; Samuel S. McClure (18571949), leading journalist and newspaper publisher; Henry Ford (1863-1947), auto manufacturer; James A. Farrell (1863-1943), head of United States Steel Corporation; and Howard Hughes (1905-1976), wealthy and eccentric industrialist, aerospace manufacturer, and movie maker.

# **EDUCATION**

John R. Gregg (1867-1948), inventor of the Gregg system of shorthand; and William Heard Kilpatrick (1871-1965), philosopher and leader in the Progressive Education movement, are among prominent Irish American educators.

# ENTERTAINMENT

A great number of Irish Americans have attained distinction in the entertainment industry: Victor Herbert (1859-1924), Dublin-born conductor and popular composer of operettas; Will Rogers (1879-1935), humorist and actor; John McCormack (1884-1945), popular Westmeath-born tenor; Buster Keaton (1895-1966), famous silent film comedian; Emmett Kelly (1898-1979), well-known circus clown; James Cagney (1899-1986), movie actor; film director John Ford (born Sean Aloysius O'Feeny; 1895-1973); Spencer Tracy (1900-1967), movie actor; Ed Sullivan (1901-1974), newspaper columnist and television personality; Bing Crosby (1901-1977), singer and movie and radio actor; Pat O'Brien (1900-1983), movie, radio, and television actor; John Huston (1906-1987), film director; John Wayne (1907-1979), movie actor; Errol Flynn (1909-1959), movie actor; Maureen O'Sullivan (1911–), movie actor; Gene Kelly (1912–), dancer, actor, singer; Tyrone Power (1913-1958), movie actor; Mickey Rooney (1920-), movie actor; Maureen O'Hara (1920-), movie actor; Carroll O'Connor (1924-), television actor; Grace Kelly (1929-1982), movie actor and later Princess of Monaco; Jack Nicholson (1937-), movie actor; and Mia Farrow (1945-), movie actor.

# LABOR

Activists in the labor movement not mentioned already include: Leonora Barry (1849-1923), feminist and activist for women's suffrage; Mary Kenney O'Sullivan (1864-1943), active labor organizer; and Daniel Tobin (1875-1955), president of the Teamsters Union and a leader of the American Federation of Labor.

### MILITARY

Several Irish Americans who have won renown in the military field have been mentioned. Others include: Lydia Barrington Darragh (1729-1789), Dublin-born heroine of the Revolutionary War and spy for George Washington; John Barry (1745-1803), Wexford-born "Father of the American Navy"; Margaret Corbin (1751-1800), heroine of the Revolutionary War; General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964), leader of the Allied forces in the Pacific during World War II; William J. Donovan (1883-1959), World War I hero and later founder of the Office of Strategic Services; and Audie Murphy (1924-1971), the United States's most decorated soldier of World War II who later became a movie actor.

# POLITICS AND LAW

The fields of politics and law have had more than their share of eminent Irish Americans; the following few may be added to those named earlier: Sir Thomas Dongan (1634-1715), Irish-born governor of New York in 1682; Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), army officer and superintendent of Indian Affairs; Pierce Butler (1744-1822), Carlow-born American political leader who signed the U.S. Constitution; Nellie Tayloe Ross (1876-1977), first female governor (of Wyoming 1925-1927) and first female director of the Mint (1933-1953); Sandra Day O'Connor (1930–), the first female Supreme Court Justice; William G. Brennan (1906–), Supreme Court Justice.

# RELIGION

Famous Irish American religious leaders include: Archbishop John Joseph Hughes (1797-1864), first Roman Catholic archbishop of New York; John McCloskey (1810-1885), first American cardinal of the Roman Catholic church; James Gibbons (1834-1921), Francis Joseph Spellman (1889-1967), Richard J. Cushing (1895-1970), and Terence Cooke (1921-1983), all Roman Catholic cardinals; Archbishop Fulton John Sheen (1895-1979), charismatic Roman Catholic church leader; Father Andrew Greeley (1928- ), priest, sociologist, and novelist. Two famous humanitarians are Father Edward Joseph Flanagan (1886-1948), Roman Catholic priest who worked with homeless boys and who founded Boys Town in Nebraska; and Thomas A. Dooley (1927-1961), medical doctor who performed great humanitarian work in southeast Asia.

# SPORTS

Irish Americans have been eminent in sports as well, including: John L. Sullivan (1858-1918), James John "Gentleman Jim" Corbett (1866-1933), Jack Dempsey (1895-1983), and Gene Tunney (1898-1978), all heavyweight boxing champions; Babe Ruth (1895-1948), baseball player; Ben Hogan (1912–), golfer; Maureen "Little Mo" Connolly (1934-1969), tennis star who won the U.S. women's singles championship three times; and Jimmy Connors (1952–), another famous tennis player.

# Media

# PRINT

# Gryfons Publishers and Distributors.

Publisher specializing in new and reprinted works on Irish history and culture, particularly focusing on Gaelic royalism and heritage.

Contact: David Wooten.
Address: P.O. Box 1899, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-1899.
Telephone: (501) 834-4038.
Fax: (501) 834-4038.
E-mail: ballywoodn@aol.com.
Online: http://gryfons.hypermart.net.

# Irish America Magazine.

Established in 1984, the magazine publishes information about Ireland and Irish Americans, including book, play, and film reviews.

Address: Irish America, Inc., 432 Park Avenue South, No. 1000, New York, New York 10016-8013.

### Irish Echo.

Established in 1928, this publication contains articles of interest to the Irish community.

Contact: Jane M. Duffin, Editor.
Address: 803 East Willow Grove Avenue, Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania 19038.
Telephone: (215) 836-4900.
Fax: (215) 836-1929.

### Irish Herald.

Established in 1962, this newspaper covers Irish American interests.

Contact: John Whooley, Editor.

Address: Irish Enterprises, 2123 Market Street, San Francisco, California 94114.

### Stars and Harp.

Carries profiles of Irish Americans and their contributions to the formation of the United States.

Contact: Joseph F. O'Connor, Editor. Address: American Irish Bicentennial Committee, 3917 Moss Drive, Annandale, Virginia 22003. Telephone: (703) 354-4721.

# The World of Hibernia.

Upscale lifestyle magazine devoted to Irish American culture and notable Irish Americans.

Contact: Thomas P. Farley, Editor.
Address: 217 First St., Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey 07423.
E-mail: hibernia@interport.net.
Online: http://www.twoh.com.

# RADIO

# WFUV-FM (90.7).

"Míle Fáilte" presented by Séamus Blake, Saturdays 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.; "A Thousand Welcomes" presented by Kathleen Biggins, Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; "Ceol na nGael" presented by Eileen Fitzsimons and Marianna McGillicuddy, Sundays 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Contact: Chuck Singleton, Program Director.
Address: Fordham University, Bronx, New York 10458.
Telephone: (718) 817-4550.
Fax: (718) 365-9815.

### WGBH-FM (89.7).

Celtic program presented by Brian O'Donovan, Sundays 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Contact: Martin Miller, Programming Director.
Address: 125 Western Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02134.
Telephone: (617) 492-2777.
Fax: (617) 787-0714.

# WNTN-AM (1550).

"The Sound of Erin," Saturdays 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Contact: John Curran or Bernie McCarthy. Address: P.O. Box 12, Belmont, Massachusetts 02178. Telephone: (617) 484-2275 (John Curran); (617)

326-4159 (Bernie McCarthy).

# WPNA-AM (1490).

Irish programming each Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Contact:** Bud Sullivan, the Hagerty Family, Mike O'Connor, Mike Shevlin, or Joe Brett.

- Address: Alliance Communications, Inc., Radio Station WPNA, 408 South Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60302.
- Telephone: (708) 974-0108 (Bud Sullivan); (708) 834-8110 (the Hagerty Family); (708) 771-2228 (Mike O'Connor); (708) 282-7035 (Mike Shevlin); (312) 746-4561 (Joe Brett).

# Organizations and Associations

# American Irish Historical Society (AIHS).

The goal of the AIHS is to promote awareness among Americans of Irish descent of their history, culture, and heritage. To attain that end the AIHS presents lectures, readings, musical events, and art exhibitions. Each year the Society awards its gold medal to an individual who best reflects the Society's ideals. The Society's journal, *The Recorder*, is published semi-annually in the winter and summer, and contains articles on a wide range of Irish American and Irish topics with a primary focus on the contribution of the Irish in American history.

Contact: Thomas Michael Horan, Executive Director.
Address: 991 5th Ave., New York, New York 10028.
Telephone: (212) 288-2263.
Fax: (212) 628-7927.
E-mail: amerirish@earthlink.net.
Online: http://www.aihs.org.

Ancient Order of Hibernians in America (AOH). Founded in Ireland in the early sixteenth century the AOH established its first American branch in New York City in 1836. Today the AOH, its membership almost 200,000, is the largest Irish American organization with divisions throughout the country. Originally founded to protect the Catholic faith of its members, the AOH still has this as one of its chief aims. It also seeks to promote an awareness throughout America of all aspects of Irish life and culture. The AOH publishes a bimonthly newspaper, *The National Hibernian Digest*.

Contact: Thomas D. McNabb, Secretary. Address: 31 Logan Street, Auburn, New York 13021. Telephone: (315) 252-3895.

**Irish American Cultural Association (IACA).** Promotes the study and appreciation of Irish culture. Contact: Thomas R. McCarthy, President. Address: 10415 South Western, Chicago, Illinois 60643. Telephone: (773) 238-7150.

### Irish American Cultural Institute (IACI).

Founded in 1962 this non-profit foundation, whose purposes are non-political and non-religious, fosters the exploration of the Irish experience in Ireland and America. Among its programs are: Irish Perceptions, which facilitates tours and presentations in America of leading Irish actors, lecturers, musicians, and artists; Irish Way, which takes American high school students on a summer educational tour of Ireland; Art and Literary Awards, which provides grants aimed at stimulating the arts in Ireland; and the Irish Research Fund, which supports scholarly work by citizens of any country that illuminates the Irish American experience. IACI also awards a visiting fellowship in Irish Studies at University College, Galway, and scholarships for American undergraduate students to the University of Limerick. IACI publishes Éire-Ireland, a quarterly scholarly journal of Irish studies, and Dúcas, a bimonthly newsletter. The Institute has 15 chapters throughout the United States.

**Contact:** James S. Rogers, Director of Operations. **Address:** University of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit

Avenue, Mail No. 5026, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105-1096.

**Telephone:** (612) 962-6040. **Fax:** (612) 962-6043.

### Irish American Partnership.

Individuals and organizations promoting stronger cultural ties between the United States and the Republic of Ireland. Encourages participation in the unique cultural practices and appreciation of the histories of both countries.

Contact: Joe Leary, President.
Address: 33 Broad Street, 9th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02109.
Telephone: (617) 723-2707.
Fax: (617) 723-5478.
E-mail: iap@irishap.org.

**Irish Genealogical Society (IGS).** Promotes and encourages the study of Irish genealogy and other types of Irish studies.

Contact: Joseph M. Glynn, Jr., Director. Address: 21 Hanson Avenue, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143. Telephone: (617) 666-0877.

### Irish Heritage Foundation (IHF).

Promotes Irish heritage and cultural awareness in the United States.

Contact: John Whooley, President.Address: 2123 Market Street, San Francisco, California 94114.Telephone: (415) 621-2200.

## Irish National Caucus.

Founded in 1974, the Irish National Caucus, with a membership of about 200,000 Irish Americans, is a powerful lobbying group that seeks to publicize the violations of human rights in Ireland. Though it does not support any specific solution to the Irish problem, its ultimate objective is to achieve, by political, legal, and non-violent means, a peaceful Ireland free of British rule.

Contact: Fr. Sean McManus, President.

Address: 413 East Capitol Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. Telephone: (202) 544-0568. Fax: (202) 543-2491.

### Irish Institute (II).

Founded in 1950. Formerly known as Irish Feis Institute. Provides financial support for cultural projects in Ireland and the United States for U.S. citizens of Irish birth or extraction.

Contact: Kevin Morrissey, President. Address: c/o Kevin Morrissey, P.O. Box 173, Woodside, New York 11377. Telephone: (718) 721-3363. Fax: (718) 721-3805.

# Museums and Research Centers

# American Conference for Irish Studies. Founded in 1962.

Contact: Dr. Lucy McDiarmid, President.
Address: 1931 Panama Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103.
Telephone: (215) 545-3015.
Fax: (215) 545-3015.
E-mail: mcdiarmid@acis.vill.edu.

# American Irish Historical Society.

The library of the AIHS contains more than 30,000 volumes together with major manuscript and archival collections. It is probably the premier repos-

itory of library materials on the Irish in America. The library is open to the public by appointment.

Contact: Alec Ormsby.
Address: 991 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10028.
Telephone: (212) 288-2263.
Fax: (212) 628-7927.
E-mail: amerirish@earthlink.net.
Online: http://www.aihs.org.

An Claidheamh Soluis-The Irish Arts Center.

Aims to develop an understanding of Irish culture and arts among the Irish, Americans, and others. It offers a variety of courses in such subjects as Irish language, history, literature, dance, and traditional music. It has an excellent resident theater company. It also sponsors Irish dances, poetry-readings, lectures, and concerts. In addition, the Center publishes the monthly newsletter Irish Arts—Ealaíona Éireannacha.

Contact: Nye Heron, Executive Director. Address: 553 West 51st Street, New York, New York 10019. Telephone: (212) 757-3318. Fax: (212) 247-0930.

### Boston Public Library.

With more than 6,000,000 volumes, this library is one of the nation's major research libraries. It has particularly strong holdings, including numerous important manuscript and archival collections, relating to many aspects of the national and local history of the Irish in America. Irish American literature and music are also well represented.

**Contact:** Gunars Rutkovskis, Assistant Director, Resources and Research Library Services.

Address: Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02117-0286.

Telephone: (617) 536-5400.

# Georgetown University, Joseph Mark Lauinger Library, Special Collections.

**Contact:** George M. Barringer, Head of Special Collections Division; or Nicholas B. Scheetz, Manuscript Librarian.

Address: 3700 O Street N.W., D.C. 20057-1006. Telephone: (202) 687-7444. Fax: (202) 687-7501.

# Irish American Heritage Museum.

The exhibits, artifacts, and archives of this museum's collection cover many aspects of the Irish American experience from the earliest immigrants up to the present. There are plans to move the museum's research library of Irish American material from its present location at The College of St. Rose in Albany, New York, to the museum itself.

Contact: Monique Desormeau. Address: Route 145, East Durham, New York 12423. Telephone: (518) 634-7494.

# John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Special Collections and Archives.

The Irish collection at Boston College's Burns Library is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive collections of its kind outside of Ireland. Burns is also recognized for its extensive and important holdings in materials relating to Irish America. Included in the collection are papers of former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill, the archives of the Charitable Irish Society (1889-present), the Eire Society of Boston (founded 1937), and the George D. Cahill (some 600 letters and ephemera, 1857-1900) and Patrick A. Collins (some 100 letters, 1880-1882) collections. Numerous other books and periodicals and several more manuscript collections relate to the history of the Irish, particularly in Boston.

Contact: Robert K. O'Neill, Burns Librarian. Address: Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts 02167. Telephone: (617) 552-3282. Fax: (617) 552-2465.

St. John's University, Special Collections.
Contact: Szilvia E. Szmuk, Special Collections Librarian.
Address: Grand Central and Utopia Pkwys, Jamaica, New York 11439.
Telephone: (718) 990-6737.
Fax: (718) 380-0353.

# Sources for Additional Study

Blessing, Patrick J. The Irish in America: A Guide to the Literature and the Manuscript Collections. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1992.

Bradley, Ann Kathleen. *History of the Irish in America*. Secaucus, New Jersey: Chartwell, 1986.

Eleuterio-Comer, Susan K. Irish American Material Culture: A Directory of Collections, Sites, and Festivals in the United States and Canada. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1988.

Feagin, Joe R., and Clairece Booher Feagin. "Irish
Americans," in their Racial and Ethnic Relations,
fourth edition. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Pren-
tice Hall, 1993; pp. 85-114.

Greeley, Andrew M. That Most Distressful Nation: The Taming of the American Irish. Chicago: Quadrangle, 1972.

Griffin, William D. The Book of Irish Americans. New York: Times Books, 1990.

Horgan, Ellen Somers. "The American Catholic Irish Family," in *Ethnic Families in America: Patterns*  and Variations, third edition, edited by Charles H. Mindel, Robert W. Habenstein, and Roosevelt Wright, Jr. New York: Elsevier, 1988; pp. 45-75.

The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation and Impact, Volume 4 of Irish Studies, edited by P. J. Drudy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

McCaffrey, Lawrence J. *Textures of Irish America*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1992.

Shannon, William V. *The American Irish*. New York: Macmillan, 1963.

The family (*la famiglia*) rested at the heart of **Italian society. Family** solidarity was the major bulwark from which the rural population confronted **George Pozzetta** a harsh society, and the family unit (including blood relatives and relatives by marriage) became the center

by

of allegiances.

# ALIAN AMERICANS

# **Overview**

Moored by Alpine mountains in the north, the boot-shaped Italian peninsula juts into the central Mediterranean Sea. Along its European frontier, Italy shares borders with France, Switzerland, Austria, and Slovenia. The nation's land mass, which includes the two major islands of Sicily and Sardinia and numerous smaller ones, measures 116,324 square miles (301,200 square kilometers)-almost exactly double the size of the state of Florida. Italy's population in 1991 stood at 57.6 million. With the exception of the broad north Italian Plain at the foot of the Alps, the peninsula is crosscut through much of its length by the Apennine mountain chain. The obstacles created by the highlands, valleys, and gorges found in the mountain regions fostered strong cultural and linguistic differences.

# HISTORY

Italy's modern state traces its mythological roots to the founding of the city of Rome in 753 B.C. More historically verified is the fact that the Romans engaged in territorial expansion and conquest of neighboring lands, devising effective colonization policies that ultimately sustained a widespread realm. By 172 B.C., Rome controlled all of the Italian peninsula and began moving outward into the Mediterranean basin. At its peak, the Roman empire extended from the British Isles to the



Italian American immigrant laborers pose with the "first train" over the Trolley Road during the construction of the New Troy, Rensselaer & Pittsfield Electric Railway, through Lebanon Valley, New York.

Euphrates River. The *Pax Romana* began to crumble, however, by the end of the first century A.D. The sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410 A.D. presaged the more complete disintegration of the empire in the later fifth and sixth centuries. With its political integration shattered, the country remained fragmented until the late nineteenth century. Italy was, in the view of many Europeans, a "mere geographic expression."

Italy is a relatively young nation state, achieving full unification only during the Risorgimento of 1860-1870. Prior to this, the peninsula consisted of often mutually antagonistic kingdoms, duchies, city-states, and principalities. Some of these regions had a history of autonomous rule, while others came under the periodic control of foreign powers as a result of recurrent wars and shifting political alliances. Over the centuries, therefore, powerful regional loyalties emerged, and persisted well after unification. Although local cultural variations remained notable, the most significant internal distinctions have been those stemming from the contrast between a relatively prosperous, cosmopolitan, urban North and a socially backward, economically depressed, agricultural South.

Southern Italy (*Mezzogiorno*), the source of more than 75 percent of immigration to the United States, was an impoverished region possessing a highly stratified, virtually feudal society. The bulk of the population consisted of artisans (*artigiani*), petty landowners or sharecroppers (*contadini*), and farm laborers (*giornalieri*), all of whom eked out meager existences. For reasons of security and health, residents typically clustered in hill towns situated away from farm land. Each day required long walks to family plots, adding to the toil that framed daily lives. Families typically worked as collective units to ensure survival. Angelo Pellegrini, who became a successful immigrant, remembered his sharecropping family: "The central, dominating fact of our existence was continuous, inadequately rewarded labor.... Education beyond the third grade was out of the question.... At eight or nine years of age, if not sooner, the peasant child is old enough to bend his neck to the yoke and fix his eyes upon the soil in which he must grub for bread. I did not know it then, but I know it now, that is a cruel, man-made destiny from which there is yet no immediate hope of escape." (Angelo Pellegrini, Immigrant's Return. New York: Macmillan, 1952; pp. 11, 21.)

The impact of unification on the South was disastrous. The new constitution heavily favored the North, especially in its tax policies, industrial subsidies, and land programs. The hard-pressed peasantry shouldered an increased share of national expenses, while attempting to compete in markets dominated more and more by outside capitalist intrusions. These burdens only exacerbated existing problems of poor soil, absentee landlords, inadequate investment, disease, and high rates of illiteracy. With cruel irony, as livelihoods became increasingly precarious, population totals soared. Italy jumped from 25 million residents in 1861 to 33 million in 1901 to more than 35 million in 1911, despite the massive migration already underway.

### An Italian

immigrant family arrives at Ellis

Island, New York.



# EARLY IMMIGRATION

An exodus of southerners from the peninsula began in the 1880s. Commencing in the regions of Calabria, Campania, Apulia, and Basilicata, and spreading after 1900 to Sicily, Italian emigration became a torrent of humanity. From 1876-1924, more than 4.5 million Italians arrived in the United States, and over two million came in the years 1901-1910 alone. Despite these massive numbers, it should be noted that roughly two-thirds of Italian migration went elsewhere, especially to Europe and South America. Immigration to the United States before and after this period accounted for approximately one million additional arrivals-a considerable movement in its own right-but the era of mass migration remains central to the Italian immigrant experience.

Yet, there were important precursors. Italian explorers and sailors venturing outward in the employ of other nations touched America in its earliest beginnings. The most famous was, of course, Christopher Columbus, a Genoese mariner sailing for Spain. Other seafarers such as John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto), Giovanni da Verrazzano, and Amerigo Vespucci, and important missionaries such as Eusebio Chino and Fra Marco da Nizza, also played roles in early exploration and settlement.

After the American Revolution, a small flow of largely northern-Italian skilled artisans, painters, sculptors, musicians, and dancers came to the new nation, filling economic niches. With the failure of the early nineteenth-century liberal revolutions, these immigrants were joined by a trickle of political refugees, the most famous of whom was Giuseppe Garibaldi. By the second half of the century, American cities also typically included Italian street entertainers, tradesmen, statuette makers, and stone workers, who often established the first beachheads of settlement for the migrations to come. Many of these pioneers were merely extending generationsold migratory patterns that had earlier brought them through Europe. An old Italian proverb instructed: Chi esce riesce (He who leaves succeeds).

This initial Italian movement dispersed widely throughout America, but its numbers were too small to constitute a significant presence. By 1850, the heaviest concentration was in Louisiana (only 915 people), the result of Sicilian migration to New Orleans and its environs. Within a decade, California contained the highest total of any state—a mere 2,805—and New York, soon to become home to millions of Italian immigrants, counted 1,862.

Everything changed with mass migration, the first phase of which consisted primarily of temporary migrants-"sojourners"-who desired immediate employment, maximum savings, and quick repatriation. The movement was predominately composed of young, single men of prime working age (15-35) who clustered in America's urban centers. Multiple trips were commonplace and ties to American society, such as learning English, securing citizenship, and acquiring property, were minimal. With eyes focused on the old-world paese (village), a total of at least half of the sojourners returned to Italy, although in some years rates were much higher. Such mobility earned Italians the sobriquet "birds of passage," a label that persisted until women and families began to migrate and settlement became increasingly permanent in the years following 1910.

Migrants brought with them their family-centered peasant cultures and their fiercely local identifications, or campanilismo. They typically viewed themselves as residents of particular villages or regions, not as "Italians." The organizational and residential life of early communities reflected these facts, as people limited their associations largely to kin and *paesani* fellow villagers. The proliferation of narrowly based mutual aid societies and festas (feste, or feast days) honoring local patron saints were manifestations of these tendencies. Gradually, as immigrants acclimated to the American milieu, in which others regarded them simply as Italians, and as they increasingly interacted with fellow immigrants, campanilismo gave way to a more national identity. Group-wide organization and identity, nonetheless, have always been difficult to achieve.

### THE EMERGENCE OF "LITTLE ITALIES"

In terms of settlement, immigrants were (and are) highly concentrated. Using kin and village-based chain migration networks to form "Little Italies," they clustered heavily in cities in the Northeast region (the Mid-Atlantic and New England states) and the Midwest, with outposts in California and Louisiana. More than 90 percent settled in only 11 states—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, and Louisiana—and approximately 90 percent congregated in urban areas. These patterns largely hold true today, although immigrants have branched out to locations such as Arizona and Florida. In every settlement area, there has been, over time, a slow but steady shift from central cities to suburbs.

Immigrants often sought out Little Italies as a result of the hostility they encountered in American society. As a despised minority rooted in the working class and seemingly resistant to assimilation, Italians suffered widespread discrimination in housing and employment. American responses to the immigrants occasionally took uglier forms as Italians became the victims of intimidation and violence, the most notorious incident being the 1890 lynching of 11 Italians in New Orleans. Italian mass migration coincided with the growth of a nativism that identified southern and eastern Europeans as undesirable elements. Inspired by the pseudo-scientific findings of eugenics and social Darwinism, turn-of-the-century nativists often branded southern Italians as especially inferior. Powerful stereotypes centering on poverty, clannishness, illiteracy, high disease rates, and an alleged proclivity toward criminal activities underscored the view that southern Italians were a degenerate "race" that should be denied entry to America. Criticism of Italians became integral to the successful legislative drives to enact the nativist Literacy Test in 1917 and National Origins Acts in 1921 and 1924.

Within Little Italies, immigrants created New World societies. A network of Italian language institutions-newspapers, theaters, churches, mutual aid societies, recreational clubs, and debating societieshelped fuel an emerging Italian-American ethnic culture. Aspects of the folk, popular, and high culture intermixed in this milieu yielding an array of entertainment options. Saloons or club buildings in larger urban centers often featured traditional puppet and marionette shows while immigrant men sipped wines and played card games of mora, briscola, and tresette. By the early 1900s, a lively Italian language theater brought entertainment to thousands and sustained the careers of professional acting troupes and noted performers such as the comedic genius Eduardo Migliacco, known as "Farfariello." On a more informal level, Italian coffee houses often presented light comedies, heroic tragedies, and dialect plays sponsored by drama clubs. Italian opera was a staple in most American urban centers, and working-class Italian music halls attracted customers by offering renditions of Neapolitan or Sicilian songs and dances. Band performances and choral recitals were regularly staged on the streets of Italian settlements. Although illiteracy rates among immigrants often ran well above 50 percent, newcomers in larger cities had access to Italian language bookstores stocked with poetry, short stories, novels, and nonfiction. In 1906 one New York bookseller published a catalogue of 176 pages to advertise his merchandise.

The cultural patterns of Little Italies were constantly evolving, providing for a dynamic interplay between older forms brought from Italy and new inventions forged in the United States. Many immigrants attempted to recreate old-world celebrations and rituals upon arrival in the United States, but those that directly competed with American forms soon fell away. The celebration of Epiphany (January 6), for example, was the principal Christmas time festivity in Italy, featuring the visit of *La Befana*, a kindly old witch who brought presents for children. In the United States the more popular Christmas Eve and Santa Claus displaced this tradition.

Even those cultural forms more sheltered from American society were contested. Immigrant settlements were not homogenous entities. Various members of the community fought for the right to define the group, and the ongoing struggle for dominance invariably employed cultural symbols and events.

# \*\* My first impression when I got there, I tell you the God's truth, you're in a dream. It's like in heaven. You don't know what it is. You're so happy there in America."

Felice Taldone in 1924, cited in *Ellis Island: An Illustrated History of the Immigrant Experience,* edited by Ivan Chermayeff et al. (New York: Macmillan, 1991).

The commercial and political elites (*prominenti*) usually aided by the Italian Catholic clergy—sought to promote Italian nationalism as a means of selfadvancement. These forces invested great energy in celebrations of Italian national holidays (such as *venti di settembre*, which commemorated Italian unification), and in the erection of statues of such Italian heroes as Columbus, the poet Dante, and military leader Giuseppe Garibaldi.

These activities were challenged by a variety of leftist radicals (*sovversivi*), who sought very different cultural and political goals. Anarchists, socialists, and syndicalists such as Carlo Tresca and Arturo Giovannitti considered Italian Americans as part of the world proletariat and celebrated holidays (*Primo Maggio*—May Day) and heroes (Gaetano Bresci, the assassin of Italian King Umberto) reflecting this image. These symbols also played roles in mass strikes and worker demonstrations led by the radicals. Meanwhile, the majority of Italian Americans continued to draw much of their identity from the peasant cultures of the old-world *paese*. Columbus Day, the preeminent Italian American ethnic celebration, typically blended elements of all these components, with multiple parades and competing banquets, balls, and public presentations.

World War I proved an ambiguous interlude for Italian immigrants. Italy's alliance with the United States and the service of many immigrants in the U.S. military precipitated some level of American acceptance. The war also produced, however, countervailing pressures that generated more intense nationalism among Italians and powerful drives toward assimilation—"100 percent Americanism"—in the wider society. Immigration restrictions after 1924 halted Italian immigration, although the foreign-born presence remained strong (the 1930 census recorded 1,623,000 Italian-born residents the group's historic high). As new arrivals slowed and the second generation matured during the 1920s and 1930s, the group changed.

Several critical developments shaped the character of Italian America during the interwar years. National prohibition provided lucrative illegal markets, which some Italian Americans successfully exploited through bootlegging operations. During the 1920s, the "gangster" image of Italians (exemplified by Al Capone) was perpetuated through films and popular literature. The celebrated case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti further molded the group's national image, underwriting the conception of Italians as dangerous radicals.

The Great Depression overshadowed earlier economic gains, often forcing Italian Americans back into their family-centered ethnic communities. Here, the emerging second generation found itself in frequent conflict with the first. Heavily influenced by the traditional contadino culture passed on from their parents, the second generation uneasily straddled two worlds. Traditional notions of proper behavior, stressing collective responsibilities toward the family, strict chastity and domestic roles for females, rigid chaperonage and courting codes, and male dominance, clashed with the more individualist, consumer-driven American values children learned in schools, stores, and on the streets. Problems of marginality, lack of self-esteem, rebellion, and delinquency were the outcomes.

Partly because of these dynamics, the community structures of Little Italies began to change. The more Americanized second generation began to turn away from older, Italian-language institutions founded by immigrants, many of which collapsed during the depression. Italian theaters and music halls, for example, largely gave way to vaudeville, nickelodeons, organized sports, and radio programming. During the 1920s and 1930s, these transformations were also influenced by Benito Mussolini's fascist regime, which sponsored propaganda campaigns designed to attract the support of Italian Americans. The *prominenti* generally supported these initiatives, often inserting fascist symbols (the black shirt), songs ("Giovinezza"—the fascist anthem), and holidays (the anniversary of the March on Rome) into the ichnography and pageantry of America's Little Italies. A small, but vocal, anti-fascist element existed in opposition, and it substituted counter values and emblems. Memorials to Giacomo Matteotti, a socialist deputy murdered by fascists, and renditions of *Bandiera Rossa* and *Inno di Garibaldi* became fixtures of antifascist festivities. Thus, the cultural world of Italian America remained divided.

Any questions concerning loyalties to the United States were firmly answered when Italy declared war on the United States in 1941, and Italian Americans rushed to aid the American struggle against the Axis powers. More than 500,000 Italian Americans joined the U.S. military, serving in all theaters, including the Italian campaign. The war effort and ensuing anti-communist crusade stressed conformity, loyalty, and patriotism, and in the 1940s and 1950s it appeared that Italian Americans had comfortably settled into the melting pot. The second generation especially benefited from its war service and the postwar economic expansion as it yielded new levels of acceptance and integration. In the 1950s, they experienced substantial social mobility and embraced mass consumerism and middle-class values.

Since the end of World War II, more than 600,000 Italian immigrants have arrived in the United States. A large percentage came shortly after passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, at which time yearly totals of Italian immigrants averaged about 23,000. Beginning in 1974, the numbers steadily declined as a result of improved economic conditions in Italy and changing policies in other immigrantreceiving nations. In 1990 only 3,300 Italian immigrants were admitted to the United States, but 831,922 Italian-born residents remained in the country, guaranteeing that Italian language and culture are still part of the American cultural mosaic.

# Acculturation and Assimilation

Assimilation takes place at many different levels, but for the individual, it is likely that few captured the essence of the experience better than Rosa Cavalleri. Cavalleri came from the Italian town of Cuggiono in 1884 as a frightened young woman, joining her husband in a mining camp in remote Missouri. After undergoing numerous tribulations, Cavalleri settled in Chicago, where she cleaned floors and bathrooms, while remarrying and successfully raising a family. As Cavalleri neared death in 1943, she mused: "Only one wish more I have: I'd love to go in Italia again before I die. Now I speak English good like an American I could go anywhere—where millionaires go and high people. I would look the high people in the face and ask them questions I'd like to know. I wouldn't be afraid now—not of anybody. I'd be proud I come from America and speak English. I would go to Bugiarno [Cuggiono] and see the people and talk to the bosses in the silk factory.... I could talk to the Superiora now. I'd tell her, `Why you were so mean—you threw me out that poor girl whose heart was so kind toward you? You think you'll go to heaven like that?' I'd scold them like that now. I wouldn't be afraid. They wouldn't hurt me now I come from America. Me, that's why I love America. That's what I learned in America: not to be afraid." (Marie Hall Ets, Rosa: The Life of an Italian Immigrant. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1970; p. 254.)

The integration of Italians like Cavalleri into American life was a result of changes in both the group and the larger society. Italians were beginning to make a commitment to permanent settlement. This process was substantially underway by 1910, cresting in the 1920s when new immigration fell off. After this, perpetuation of the old-world public culture became increasingly difficult, although the family-based value structure was more resilient. During the 1920s and 1930s, the second generation continued to display many of its hallmarks: children of immigrants still held largely blue-collar occupations and were underrepresented in schools, tied to Little Italy residences, and attracted to in-group marriages-choices that demonstrated the continuing power of parental mores.

Changing contexts, however, diminished the "social distance" separating Italians from other Americans. In the 1930s, second-generation Italian Americans joined forces with others in labor unions and lobbied for benefits. They also began to make political gains as part of the Democratic Party's New Deal coalition. Also for the first time, the national popular culture began to include Italian Americans among its heroes. In music, sports, politics, and cinema the careers of Frank Sinatra, Joe DiMaggio, Fiorello LaGuardia, Frank Capra, and Don Ameche suggested that national attitudes toward Italians were in transition.

World War II was a critical benchmark in the acceptance of Italian Americans. Their wholeheart-

ed support of America's cause and their disproportionately high ratio of service in the military legitimized them in American eyes. The war also transformed many Little Italies, as men and women left for military service or to work in war industries. Upon their return, many newly affluent Italian Americans left for suburban locations and fresh opportunities, further eroding the institutions and *contadino* culture that once thrived in ethnic settlements.

The Cold War pushed the group further into the mainstream as Italian Americans joined in the anti-communist fervor gripping the nation. Simultaneously, structural changes in the economy vastly expanded the availability of white collar, managerial positions, and Italian Americans jumped to take advantage. Beginning in the 1950s, they pursued higher education in greater numbers than ever before, many receiving aid as a result of the G.I. Bill. Such developments put them into more immediate and positive contact with other Americans, who exhibited greater acceptance in the postwar years.

Ironically, a resurgent Italian American ethnicity emerged at the same time, as the group experienced increasing integration into the larger society. Italian Americans were active participants in the ethnic revival of the 1960s and 1970s. As American core values came under assault in the midst of Vietnam, Watergate, and the rising counterculture, and the nation's urban centers became torn by riots and civil protest, Italian Americans felt especially vulnerable and besieged. Unlike other ethnic groups, they had remained in urban enclaves, manifesting high rates of home ownership, where they now found themselves in contact and conflict with African Americans. Many interpreted the ensuing clashes in cultural terms, seeing themselves as an embattled minority defending traditional values in the face of new compensatory government programs. In response, ethnic traditions surrounding family, neighborhood, and homes gained heightened visibility and strength. New Italian American organizations and publications fostering ethnic identity came into being, and many old rituals experienced a resurgence, most notably the celebration of the feste.

Intermarriage rates increased after the 1950s, especially among the third and fourth generations who were now coming of age. By 1991, the group's overall in-marriage rate was just under 33 percent, above the average of 26 percent for other ethnic groups. But among those born after 1940—by now a majority—the rate was only 20 percent, and these marriages crossed both ethnic and religious lines. Once a marginalized, despised minority, Italian Americans are now among the most highly accepted groups according to national surveys measuring "social distance" indicators (Italians ranked fourteenth in 1926, but fifth in 1977). All of the statistical data point to a high level of structural assimilation in American society, although Italian American ethnicity has not disappeared.

That Italian American identity has lost much of its former negative weight is suggested further by recent census figures for ancestry group claiming. The 1980 census recorded 12.1 million individuals who claimed Italian ancestry (5.4 percent of national population). By 1990 this figure had risen to 14.7 million (5.9 percent), indicating that ethnicity remains an important and acceptable component of self-identification for substantial numbers of Italian Americans.

Despite strong evidence of integration, Italian Americans retain distinguishing characteristics. They are still geographically concentrated in the old settlement areas, and they display a pronounced attachment to the values of domesticity and family loyalty. Italian Americans still rely heavily on personal and kin networks in residential choices, visiting patterns, and general social interaction. Perhaps most distinctive, the group continues to suffer from stereotypes associating it with criminal behavior, especially in the form of organized crime and the mafia. These images have persisted despite research documenting that Italian Americans possess crime rates no higher than other segments of American society and that organized crime is a multi-ethnic enterprise. Television and film images of Italian Americans continue to emphasize criminals, "lovable or laughable dimwits" who engage in dead-end jobs, and heavy-accented, obese "Mamas" with their pasta pots.

These representations have influenced the movement of Italian Americans into the highest levels of corporate and political life. The innuendos of criminal ties advanced during Geraldine Ferraro's candidacy for vice-president in 1984 and during Mario Cuomo's aborted presidential bids illustrate the political repercussions of these stereotypes, and many Italian Americans believe that bias has kept them underrepresented in the top echelons of the business world. Since the 1970s, such organizations as the Americans of Italian Descent, the Sons of Italy in America, and the National Italian American Foundation have mounted broad-based anti-defamation campaigns protesting such negative imagery.

# HOLIDAYS

The major national holidays of Italy—Festa della Republica (June 5), Festa dell'Unità Nazionale (November 6), and Festa del Lavoro (May 1)—are no longer occasions of public celebration among Italian Americans. Some religious holidays, such as *Epifania di Gesù* (January 6), receive only passing notice. Most Italian Americans celebrate Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Easter Day, but usually without any particular ethnic character. The principal occasions of public celebration typically revolve around Columbus Day, the quintessential Italian American national holiday, and the *feste* honoring patron saints. In both cases, these events have, in general, become multi-day celebrations virtually devoid of any religious or Italian national connotation, involving numerous non-Italians.

In New Orleans, Louisiana, St. Joseph's Day (March 19) is celebrated by some members of the Italian-American community. The tradition began in Sicily, the origin of much of New Orleans' Italian-American population. The day was commemorated by the building of temporary three-tiered alters, loaded with food offerings for the saint. The alters were found in private homes, churches, some restaurants, and public places associated with Italians, with the general public invited. Visitors to the alters are often given *lagniappe* (a sack of cookies and fava beans, a good luck charm) to take home.

Preparations for St. Joseph's Day began several weeks in advance with baking of cookies, breads and cakes. Cookies, such as twice-baked biscotti and sesame-seed varieties, could be shaped into forms with religious significance. Bread, cannoli, seafood and vegetable dishes are also found on the alter. Such dishes include *forschias* and pasta Milanese covered with *mudriga*. Mudriga was also called St. Joseph's sawdust, made of bread crumbs and sugar. No meat was found because the holiday almost always falls during Lent. In addition to food, the alter often had an image of St. Joseph, home grown flowers, candles and palm branches.

Italian immigrants utilized traditional costumes, folk songs, folklore, and dances for special events, but like many aspects of Italian life, they were so regionally specific that they defy easy characterization. Perhaps the most commonly recognized folk dance, the *tarantella*, for example, is Neapolitan, with little diffusion elsewhere in the peninsula.

# CUISINE

The difficult conditions of daily life in Italy dictated frugal eating habits. Most peasants consumed simple meals based on whatever vegetables or grains (lentils, peas, fava beans, corn, tomatoes, onions, and wild greens) were prevalent in each region. A staple for most common folk was coarse black bread. Pasta was a luxury, and peasants typically ate meat only two or three times a year on special holidays. Italian cuisine was—and still is—regionally distinctive, and even festive meals varied widely. The traditional Christmas dish in Piedmont was *agnolotti* (ravioli), while *anguille* (eels) were served in Campania, *sopa friulana* (celery soup) in Friuli, and *bovoloni* (fat snails) in Vicenza.

In the United States, many immigrants planted small backyard garden plots to supplement the table and continued to raise cows, chickens, and goats whenever possible. Outdoor brick ovens were commonplace, serving as clear ethnic markers of Italian residences. With improved economic conditions, pastas, meats, sugar, and coffee were consumed more frequently. One New York City immigrant remembered asking, "Who could afford to eat spaghetti more than once a week [in Italy]? In America no one starved, though a family earned no more than five or six dollars a week.... Don't you remember how our *paesani* here in America ate to their hearts delight till they were belching like pigs, and how they dumped mountains of uneaten food out the window? We were not poor in America; we just had a little less than others." (Leonard Covello, The Social Background of the Italo-American School Child. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972; p. 295.)

"Italian cooking" in the United States has come to mean southern-Italian, especially Neapolitan, cuisine, which is rich in tomato sauces, heavily spiced, and pasta-based. Spaghetti and meatballs (not generally known in Italy) and pizza are perhaps the quintessential Italian dishes in the United States. More recently, northern Italian cookingcharacterized by rice (risotto) and corn (polenta) dishes and butter-based recipes-has become increasingly common in homes and restaurants. Garlic (aglio), olive oil (olio d'oliva), mushrooms (funghi), and nuts (nochi) of various types are common ingredients found in Italian cooking. Wine (vino), consumed in moderate amounts, is a staple. Overall, Italian dishes have become so popular that they have been accepted into the nation's dietary repertoire, but not in strictly old-world forms. Americanized dishes are generally milder in their spicing and more standardized than old-world fare.

# HEALTH ISSUES

A number of Italian American organizations have supported the Cooley's Anemia Foundation to fund research into Thalassemia, once thought to be a sickle cell anemia confined to persons of Mediterranean ancestry. Recent research has demonstrated the fallacy of this belief, however, and contributions have largely ceased.

# LANGUAGE

Italian is a Romance language derived directly from Latin; it utilizes the Latin alphabet, but the letters "j," "k," "w," "x," and "y" are found only in words of foreign origin. "Standard" Italian—based on the Tuscan dialect—is a relatively recent invention, and was not used universally until well into the twentieth century. Numerous dialects were the dominant linguistic feature during the years of mass immigration.

Italian dialects did not simply possess different tonalities or inflections. Some were languages in their own right, with separate vocabularies and, for a few, fully developed literatures (e.g., Venetian, Piedmontese, and Sicilian). Italy's mountainous terrain produced conditions in which proximate areas often possessed mutually unintelligible languages. For example, the word for "today" in standard Italian is oggi, but ancheuj in Piedmontese, uncuó in Venetian, ste iorne in Sicilian, and oji in Calabrian. Similarly, "children" in Italian is bambini, but it becomes cit in Piedomontese, fruz in Friulian, guagliuni in Neapolitan, zitedi in Calabrian, and picciriddi in Sicilian. Thus, language facilitated campanilismo, further fragmenting the emerging Italian American world.

Very soon after the Italians' arrival, all dialects became infused with Americanisms, quickly creating a new form of communication often intelligible only to immigrants. The new patois was neither Italian nor English, and it included such words as giobba for job, grossiera for grocery, bosso for boss, marachetta for market, baccausa for outhouse, ticchetto for ticket, bisiniss for business, trocco for truck, sciabola for shovel, loffare for the verb to loaf, and carpetto for carpet. Angelo Massari, who immigrated to Tampa, Florida, in 1902, described preparations in his Sicilian village prior to leaving it: "I used to interview people who had returned from America. I asked them thousands of questions, how America was, what they did in Tampa, what kind of work was to be had .... One of them told me the language was English, and I asked him how to say one word or another in that language. I got these wonderful samples of a Sicilian-American English from him: tu sei un boia, gud morni, olraiti, giachese, misti, sciusi, bred, iessi, bud [you are a boy, good morning, alright, jacket, mister, excuse me, bread, yes, but]. He told me also that in order to ask for work, one had to say, `Se misti gari giobbi fo mi?' [Say, mister got a job for me?]." (Angelo Massari, The Wonderful Life of Angelo Massari, translated by Arthur Massolo. New York: Exposition Press, 1965; pp. 46-47.)

Italian proverbs tend to reflect the conditions of peasant and immigrant lives: Work hard, work always, and you will never know hunger; He who leaves the old way for the new knows what he loses but knows not what he will find; Buy oxen and marry women from your village only; The wolf changes his skin but not his vice; The village is all the world; Do not miss the Saint's day, he helps you and provides at all times; Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you what you are; He who respects others will be respected.

# Family and Community Dynamics

The family (*la famiglia*) rested at the heart of Italian society. Family solidarity was the major bulwark from which the rural population confronted a harsh society, and the family unit (including blood relatives and relatives by marriage) became the center of allegiances. Economically and socially, the family functioned as a collective enterprise, an "allinclusive social world" in which the individual was subordinated to the larger entity. Parents expected children to assist them at an early age by providing gainful labor, and family values stressed respect for the elderly, obedience to parents, hard work, and deference to authority.

The traditional Italian family was "fatherheaded, but mother-centered." In public, the father was the uncontested authority figure and wives were expected to defer to their husbands. At home, however, females exercised considerable authority as wives and mothers, and played central roles in sustaining familial networks. Still, male children occupied a favored position of superiority over females, and strong family mores governed female behavior. Women's activities were largely confined to the home, and strict rules limited their public behavior, including access to education and outside employment. Formal rituals of courting, chaperonage, and arranged marriages strictly governed relations between the sexes. Above all, protection of female chastity was critical to maintaining family honor.

Family and kin networks also guided migration patterns, directing precise village flows to specific destinations. During sojourner migrations, the work of women in home villages sustained the family well-being in Italy and allowed male workers to actively compete in the world labor market. In America, the extended family became an important network for relatives to seek and receive assistance. Thus, migration and settlement operated within a context of family considerations.

Attempts to transfer traditional family customs to America engendered considerable tension between generations. More educated and Americanized children ventured to bridge two worlds in which the individualist notions of American society often clashed with their parents' family-centered ethos. Still, strong patterns of in-marriage characterized the second generation, and many of their parents' cultural values were successfully inculcated. These carryovers resulted in a strong attachment to neighborhoods and families, consistent deference to authority, and blue-collar work choices. The second generation, however, began to adopt American practices in terms of family life (seen, for example, in smaller family size and English language usage), and the collective nature of the unit began to break down as the generations advanced.

# EDUCATION

The peasant culture placed little value on formal instruction, seeking instead to have children contribute as soon as possible to family earnings. From the peasant perspective, education consisted primarily of passing along moral and social values through parental instruction (the term buon educato means "well-raised or behaved"). In southern Italy, formal education was seldom a means of upward mobility since public schools were not institutions of the people. They were poorly organized and supported, administered by a distrusted northern bureaucracy, and perceived as alien to the goals of family solidarity. Proverbs such as "Do not let your children become better than you" spoke to these perceptions, and high rates of illiteracy testified to their power.

These attitudes remained strong among immigrants in America, many of whom planned a quick repatriation and saw little reason to lose children's wages. Parents also worried about the individualist values taught in American public schools. The saying "America took from us our children" was a common lament. Thus, truancy rates among Italians were high, especially among girls, for whom education had always been regarded as unnecessary since tradition dictated a path of marriage, motherhood, and homemaking.

Antagonism toward schools was derived not only from culture, but also from economic need and realistic judgments about mobility possibilities. Given the constricted employment options open to immigrants (largely confined to manual, unskilled labor), and the need for family members to contribute economically, extended schooling offered few rewards. From the parental viewpoint, anything threatening the family's collective strength was dangerous. Generations frequently clashed over demands to terminate formal education and find work, turn over earnings, and otherwise assist the family financially in other ways. Prior to World War I, less than one percent of Italian children were enrolled in high school.

As the second generation came of age in the 1920s and 1930s and America moved toward a service economy, however, education received greater acceptance. Although the children of immigrants generally remained entrenched in the working class (though frequently as skilled workers), they extended their education, often attending vocational schools, and could be found among the nation's clerks, bookkeepers, managers, and sales personnel. The economic downturn occasioned by the depression resulted in increased educational opportunities for some immigrants since job prospects were limited.

Italian Americans were well situated in post-World War II America to take advantage of the national expansion of secondary and higher education. They hastened to enroll in G.I. Bill programs and in the 1950s and 1960s began to send sons and daughters to colleges. By the 1970s, Italian Americans averaged about 12 years of formal education; in 1991 the group slightly surpassed the national mean of 12.7 years.

# Religion

Although Italian immigrants were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, their faith was a personal, folk religion of feast days and peasant traditions that often had little to do with formal dogma or rituals. As such, its practices differed greatly from those encountered in America's Irish-dominated Catholic Church. Unlike Irish Americans, most Italians possessed no great reverence for priests (who had sometimes been among the oppressors in Italy) or the institutions of the official Church, and they disliked what they regarded as the impersonal, puritanical, and overly doctrinal Irish approach to religion. As in Italy, men continued to manifest anticlerical traditions and to attend church only on selected occasions, such as weddings and funerals.

For their part, the Irish clergy generally regarded Italians as indifferent Catholics—even pagans and often relegated them to basement services. The Irish American hierarchy agonized over the "Italian Problem," and suspicion and mistrust initially characterized relations between the groups, leading to defections among the immigrant generation and demands for separate parishes. A disproportionately **Italian Americans** 

honor St. Amato in this Queens, New York, parade.



low presence of Italian Americans in the church leadership today is at least partially a legacy of this strained relationship. Protestant missionaries were not unaware of these developments. Many attempted to win converts, but met with very little success. With the establishment of "national parishes," however, the Catholic Church hit firmer ground, and Italian parishes proliferated after 1900. In many settlements, parish churches became focal points providing a sense of ethnic identity, a range of social services, and a source of community adhesion.

Italian immigrant Catholicism centered on the local patron saints and the beliefs, superstitions, and practices associated with the feste. The feste not only assisted in perpetuating local identities, but they also served as a means for public expression of immigrant faith. In the early years, feast days replicated those of the homeland. Festivals were occasions for great celebration, complete with music, parades, dancing, eating, and fireworks displays. At the high point, statues of local saints such as San Rocco, San Giuseppe, or San Gennaro, were carried through the streets of Little Italies in a procession. New Yorker Richard Gambino, in Blood of My Blood, recalled the feast days of his youth: "Not long ago there were many such street feste. Their aromas of food, the sight of burly men swaying from side to side and lurching forward under the weight of enormous statues of exotic Madonnas and saints laden with money and gifts, the music of Italian bands in uniforms with dark-peaked caps, white shirts, and black ties and the bright arches of colored lights spanning the city streets.... True to the spirit of campanilismo, each group of paesani in New York had its festa. Three feste were larger than the others. Sicilians, especially from the region of Agrigento, went all out for the huge September festival of San Gandolfo. In July, thousands turned out to honor the Madonna del Carmine. And in the fall, Neapolitans paid their respect to the patron of their mother city, San Gennaro."

Worshippers lined the streets as processions moved toward the parish church, and they vied to pin money on the statue, place gifts on platforms, or make various penances (walking barefoot, crawling, licking the church floor [*lingua strascinuni*], reciting certain prayers). Irish prelates frequently attempted to ban such events, viewing them as pagan rituals and public spectacles. A cluster of beliefs focusing on the folk world of magic, witches, ghosts, and demons further estranged Italians from the church hierarchy. Many immigrants were convinced, for example, of the existence of the evil eye (*malocchio* or *jettatura*), and believed that wearing certain symbols, the most potent of which were associated with horns (*corni*) or garlic amulets, provided protection from its power.

As the second and subsequent generations grew to maturity, most strictly old-world forms of religious observance and belief were discarded, leading to what some have called the "hibernization" of Italian American Catholicism. Many feast day celebrations remain, although, in some cases, they have been transformed into mass cultural events which draw thousands of non-Italians. The San Gennaro *feste* in Manhattan's Little Italy is a case in point: once celebrated only by Neapolitans, it now attracts heterogeneous crowds from hundreds of miles away.

# Employment and Economic Traditions

Throughout the years of mass migration, Italians clustered heavily in the ranks of unskilled, manual labor. In part, this seems to have resulted from cultural preference-men favored outdoor jobs dovetailing old-world skills-and immigrant strategies that sought readily available employment in order to return quickly to Italy with nest eggs. But American employers also imposed the choice of positions since many regarded Italians as unsuited for indoor work or heavy industry. Immigrants thus frequently engaged in seasonal work on construction sites and railroads and in mines and public works projects. Male employment often operated under the "boss system" in which countrymen (padroni) served as middlemen between gangs of immigrant workers and American employers. Married women generally worked at home, either concentrating on family tasks or other home-based jobs such as keeping

boarders, attending to industrial homework, or assisting in family-run stores. In larger urban centers, unmarried women worked outside the home in garment, artificial flower, and costume jewelry factories, and in sweatshops and canneries, often laboring together in all-Italian groups.

Some Little Italies were large enough to support a full economic structure of their own. In these locations, small import stores, shops, restaurants, fish merchants, and flower traders proliferated, offering opportunities for upward mobility within the ethnic enclave. In many cities, Italians dominated certain urban trades such as fruit and vegetable peddling, confectioniering, rag picking, shoe-shining, icecream vending, and stevedoring. A portion of the immigrants were skilled artisans who typically replicated their old-world crafts of shoemaking and repairing, tailoring, carpentry, and barbering.

The dense concentration of Italian Americans in blue-collar occupations persisted into the second generation, deriving from deliberate career choices, attitudes toward formal education, and the economic dynamics of the nation. Italians had begun to make advances out of the unskilled ranks during the prosperous 1920s, but many gains were overshadowed during the Great Depression. Partially in response to these conditions, Italians-both men and women-moved heavily into organized labor during the 1930s, finding the CIO industrial unions especially attractive. Union memberships among Italian Americans rose significantly; by 1937, the AFL International Ladies Garment Workers Union (with vice president Luigi Antonini) counted nearly 100,000 Italian members in the New York City area alone. At the same time, women were becoming a presence in service and clerical positions.

The occupational choices of Italian Americans shifted radically after World War II, when structural changes in the American economy facilitated openings in more white collar occupations. Italian Americans were strategically situated to take advantage of these economic shifts, being clustered in the urban areas where economic expansion took place and ready to move into higher education. Since the 1960s, Italian Americans have become solidly grounded in the middle-class, managerial, and professional ranks. As a group, by 1991 they had equalled or surpassed national averages in income and occupational prestige.

# Politics and Government

Italians were slow to take part in the American political process. Due to the temporary nature of

early migration, few took the time to achieve naturalization in order to vote. Anti-government attitudes, exemplified in the *ladro governo* ("the government as thief") outlook, also limited participation. Hence, Italian voters did not initially translate into political clout. Early political activity took place at the urban machine level, where immigrants typically encountered Irish Democratic bosses offering favors in return for support, but often blocking out aspiring Italian politicians. In such cities, those Italians seeking office frequently drifted to the Republican Party.

Naturalization rates increased during the 1920s, but the next decade was marked by a political watershed. During the 1930s, Italian Americans joined the Democratic New Deal coalition, many becoming politically active for the first time in doing so. The careers of independent/sometime-Republican Fiorello LaGuardia and leftist Vito Marcantonio benefited from this expansion. As a concentrated urban group with strong union ties, Italians constituted an important component of President Franklin Roosevelt's national support. The Democratic hold on Italians was somewhat shaken by Roosevelt's "dagger in the back" speech condemning Italy's attack on France in 1940, but, overall, the group maintained its strong commitment to the Party. In the early 1970s, only 17 percent of Italian Americans were registered Republicans (45 percent were registered Democrats), although many began to vote Republican in recent presidential elections. Both President Ronald Reagan and President George Bush were supported by strong Italian-American majorities. Overall, the group has moved from the left toward the political center. By 1991, Italian American voter registrations were 35 percent Republican and 32 percent Democratic.

The political ascent of Italian Americans came after World War II with the maturation of the second and third generations, the acquisition of increased education and greater wealth, and a higher level of acceptance by the wider society. Italian Americans were well-represented in city and state offices and had begun to penetrate the middle ranks of the federal government, especially the judicial system. By the 1970s and 1980s, there were Italian American cabinet members, governors, federal judges, and state legislators. Only four Italian Americans sat in Congress during the 1930s, but more than 30 served in the 1980s; in 1987 there were three U.S. Senators. The candidacy of Geraldine Ferraro for the Democratic vice presidency in 1984, the high profile of New York governor Mario Cuomo in American political discourse, and the appointment of Antonin Scalia to the Supreme Court are indicative of the group's political importance.

Since World War II, most Italian Americans have remained largely uninvolved in—even ignorant of—the political affairs of Italy, no doubt a legacy of World War II and the earlier brush with fascism. They have been very responsive, however, to appeals for relief assistance during periodic natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes.

# Individual and Group Contributions

Italians constitute such a large and diverse group that notable individuals have appeared in virtually every aspect of American life.

# ACADEMIA

Lorenzo Da Ponte (1747-1838), taught courses on Italian literature at Columbia University and sponsored the first Italian opera house in Manhattan in the 1830s. Prior to becoming president of Yale University in 1977, A. Bartlett Giamatti (1938-1989) was a distinguished scholar of English and comparative literature. He resigned his presidency to become the commissioner of the National Baseball League. Peter Sammartino (1904-1992) taught at the City College of New York and Columbia University before founding Fairleigh Dickinson University. He published 14 books on various aspects of education.

# BUSINESS

Amadeo P. Giannini (1870-1949) began a storefront bank in the Italian North Beach section of San Francisco in 1904. Immediately after the 1906 earthquake he began granting loans to residents to rebuild. Later, Giannini pioneered in branch banking and in financing the early film industry. Giannini's Bank of America eventually became the largest bank in the United States. Lido Anthony "Lee" Iacocca (1924- ) became president of Ford Motor Company in 1970. Iacocca left Ford after eight years to take over the ailing Chrysler Corporation, which was near bankruptcy. He rescued the company, in part through his personal television ads which made his face instantly recognizable. Iacocca also spent four years as chairman of the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Foundation, which supported the refurbishment of these national monuments.

# FILM, TELEVISION, AND THEATER

Frank Capra (1897-1991) directed more than 20 feature films and won three Academy Awards for

Best Director. His films, stamped with an upbeat optimism, became known as "Capra-corn." Capra won his Oscars for It Happened One Night (1934), Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936), and You Can't Take It With You (1938), but he is also well known for Lost Horizon (1937), Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939), and It's a Wonderful Life (1947). In addition to directing, Capra served four terms as president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and three terms as president of the Screen Directors Guild. Francis Ford Coppola (1939-) earned international fame as director of The Godfather (1972), an adaptation of Mario Puzo's best selling novel. The film won several Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Among numerous other films, Coppola has made two sequels to The Godfather; the second film of this trilogy, released in 1974, also won multiple awards, including an Academy Award for Best Picture.

Martin Scorcese (1942- ), film director and screenwriter, directed Mean Streets (1973), Taxi Driver (1976), Raging Bull (1980), and Good Fellas (1990), among others, all of which draw from the urban, ethnic milieu of his youth. Sylvester Stallone (1946-), actor, screenwriter, and director, has gained fame in each of these categories. He is perhaps best known as the title character in both Rocky (1976), which won an Academy Award for Best Picture (and spawned four sequels), and the Rambo series. Don Ameche (1908-1993), whose career spanned several decades, performed in vaudeville, appeared on radio serials ("The Chase and Sanborn Hour"), and starred in feature films. Ameche first achieved national acclaim in The Story of Alexander Graham Bell (1941) and appeared in many films, earning an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in Cocoon (1986). Ernest Borgnine (born Ermes Effron Borgnino, 1915–) spent his early acting career portraying villains, such as the brutal prison guard in From Here to Eternity, but captured the hearts of Americans with his sensitive portrayal of a Bronx butcher in Marty (1956), for which he won an Academy Award. Borgnine also appeared on network television as Lieutenant Commander Quintin McHale on "McHale's Navy," a comedy series that ran on ABC from 1962 to 1965. Liza Minnelli (1946-), stage, television, and motion picture actress and vocalist, won an Academy Award for Cabaret (1972), an Emmy for Liza with a Z (1972), and a Tony Award for The Act (1977).

# LITERATURE

Pietro DiDonato (1911-1992) published the classic Italian immigrant novel, *Christ in Concrete*, in 1939

994

to critical acclaim. He also captured the immigrant experience in later works, including Three Circles of Light (1960) and Life of Mother Cabrini (1960). Novelist Jerre Mangione (1909-) wrote Mount Allegro (1943), an autobiographical work describing his upbringing among Sicilian Americans in Rochester, New York. Mangione is also noted for his Reunion in Sicily (1950), An Ethnic at Large (1978), and La Storia: Five Centuries of the Italian American Experience (1992), with Ben Morreale. Gay Talese (1932-), began his career as a reporter for the New York Times, but later earned fame for his national bestsellers, including The Kingdom and the Power (1969), Honor Thy Father (1971), and Thy Neighbor's Wife (1980). Talese's Unto the Sons (1992) dealt with his own family's immigrant experience. The poetry of Lawrence Ferlinghetti (1919- ) captured the essence of the Beat Generation during the 1950s and 1960s. His San Francisco bookstore, City Lights Books, became a gathering place for literary activists. John Ciardi (1916-1986), poet, translator, and literary critic, published over 40 books of poetry and criticism and profoundly impacted the literary world as the long-time poetry editor of the Saturday Review. Ciardi's translation of Dante's Divine Comedy is regarded as definitive. Novelist Mario Puzo (1920–) published two critical successes, Dark Arena (1955) and The Fortunate Pilgrim (1965), prior to The Godfather in 1969, which sold over ten million copies and reached vast audiences in its film adaptations. Helen Barolini (1925–), poet, essayist, and novelist, explored the experiences of Italian-American women in her Umbertina (1979) and The Dream Book (1985).

# MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT

Francis Albert "Frank" Sinatra (1915-1998), began singing with the Harry James Band in the late 1930s, moved to the Tommy Dorsey Band, and then became America's first teenage idol in the early 1940s, rising to stardom as a "crooner." Moving into film, Sinatra established a new career in acting that was launched in 1946. He won an Academy Award for his performance in *From Here to Eternity* in 1953. Since 1954, Sinatra has made 31 films, released at least 800 records, and participated in numerous charity affairs.

Mario Lanza (1921-1959) was a famous tenor who appeared on radio, in concert, on recordings, and in motion pictures. Vocalist and television star Perry Como (born Pierino Roland Como, 1913–) hosted one of America's most popular television shows in the 1950s. Frank Zappa (1940-1993), musician, vocalist, and composer, founded the influential rock group Mothers of Invention in the 1960s. Noted for his social satire and musical inventiveness, Zappa was named Pop Musician of the Year for three years in a row in 1970-1972.

# POLITICS

Fiorello LaGuardia (1882-1947) gained national fame as an energetic mayor of New York City, in which capacity he served for three terms (1934-1945). Earlier, LaGuardia sat for six terms as a Republican representative in the U.S. Congress. Known as "The Little Flower," LaGuardia earned a reputation as an incorruptible, hard working, and humane administrator. John O. Pastore (1912-) was the first Italian American to be elected a state governor (Rhode Island, 1945). In 1950, he represented that state in the U.S. Senate. Geraldine Ferraro (1935-) was the first American woman nominated for vice president by a major political party in 1984 when she ran with Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale. Her earlier career included service as assistant district attorney in New York and two terms in the U.S. Congress. Mario Cuomo (1932-) was elected governor of New York in 1982 and has been reelected twice since then. Prior to his election as governor, Cuomo served as lieutenant governor and New York's secretary of state.

John J. Sirica (1904-1992), chief federal judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, presided over the Watergate trials. He was named *Time* magazine's Man of the Year in 1973. Antonin Scalia (1936–) became the first Italian American to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court when he was appointed Associate Justice in 1986. Rudolph W. Giuliani (1944–), served for many years as U.S. Attorney for the southern district of New York and waged war against organized crime and public corruption. In 1993, he was elected mayor of New York City.

# RELIGION

Father Eusebio Chino (Kino) (1645-1711) was a Jesuit priest who worked among the native people of Mexico and Arizona for three decades, establishing more than 20 mission churches, exploring wide areas, and introducing new methods of agriculture and animal-raising. Francesca Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917), the first American to be sainted by the Roman Catholic Church, worked with poor Italian immigrants throughout North and South America, opening schools, orphanages, hospitals, clinics, and novitiates for her Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Enrico Fermi (1901-1954), a refugee from Benito Mussolini's fascist regime, is regarded as the "father of atomic energy." Fermi was awarded the 1938 Nobel Prize in physics for his identification of new radioactive elements produced by neutron bombardment. He worked with the Manhattan Project during World War II to produce the first atomic bomb, achieving the world's first self-sustaining chain reaction on December 2, 1942. Salvador Luria (1912-1991) was a pioneer of molecular biology and genetic engineering. In 1969, while he was a faculty member at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Luria was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work on viruses. Rita Levi-Montalcini (1909-) was awarded a Nobel Prize in 1986 for her work in cell biology and cancer research. Emilio Segre (1905-1989), a student of Fermi, received the 1959 Nobel Prize in physics for his discovery of the antiproton.

### **SPORTS**

Joseph "Joe" DiMaggio (1914-1999), the "Yankee Clipper," was voted the Greatest Living Player in baseball. DiMaggio set his 56 consecutive game hitting streak in 1941. (The record still stands.) In a career spanning 1936 to 1951, DiMaggio led the New York Yankees to ten world championships and retired with a .325 lifetime batting average. At the time of his death, Vincent Lombardi (1913-1970) was the winningest coach in professional football, and the personification of tenacity and commitment in American sports. As head coach of the Green Bay Packers, Lombardi led the team to numerous conference, league, and world titles during the 1960s, including two Super Bowls in 1967 and 1968. Rocky Marciano (born Rocco Francis Marchegiano, 1924-1969) was the only undefeated heavyweight boxing champion, winning all his fights. Known as the "Brockton Bomber," Marciano won the heavyweight championship over Jersey Joe Walcott in 1952 and held it until his voluntary retirement in 1956. Rocky Graziano (born Rocco Barbella, 1922- ), middleweight boxing champion, is best known for his classic bouts with Tony Zale. Lawrence "Yogi" Berra (1925-), a Baseball Hall of Fame member who played for the New York Yankees as catcher for 17 years, enjoyed a career that lasted from 1946 to 1963. He also coached and managed several professional baseball teams, including the New York Mets and the Houston Astros. Joseph Garagiaola (1926–) played with the St. Louis Cardinals (1946-1951) and several other Major League clubs.

# **VISUAL ARTS**

Frank Stella (1936-) pioneered the development of "minimal art," involving three-dimensional, "shaped" paintings and sculpture. His work has been exhibited in museums around the world. Constantino Brumidi (1805-1880), a political exile from the liberal revolutions of the 1840s, became known as "the Michelangelo of the United States Capitol." Brumidi painted the interior of the dome of the Capitol in Washington, D.C., from 1865 to 1866, as well as numerous other areas of the building. Ralph Fasanella (1914–), a self-taught primitive painter whose work has been compared to that of Grandma Moses, is grounded in his immigrant backgrounds.

# Media

# PRINT

Since the mid-1800s, more than 2,000 Italian American newspapers have been established, representing a full range of ideological, religious, professional, and commercial interests. As of 1980, about 50 newspapers were still in print.

# America Oggi (America Today).

Currently the only Italian-language daily newspaper in the United States.

Contact: Andrea Mantineo, Editor. Address: 41 Bergentine Avenue, Westwood, New Jersey 07675. Telephone: (212) 268-0250. Fax: (212) 268-0379. E-mail: americoggi@aol.com.

# Fra Noi (Among Us).

A monthly publication in a bilingual format by the Catholic Scalabrini order; features articles on issues primarily of interest to Chicago's Italian community.

Contact: Paul Basile, Editor. Address: 263 North York Road, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126.

Telephone: (708) 782-4440.

# Italian Americana: Cultural and Historical Review.

An international journal published semi-annually by the University of Rhode Island's College of Continuing Education.

Contact: Carol Bonomo Albright, Editor. Address: 199 Promenade Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02908.

# Italian Tribune News.

Publishes a heavily illustrated journal that features articles weekly in English on Italian culture and Italian American contributions.

Contact: Joan Alagna, Editor.
Address: 427 Bloomfield Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07107.
Telephone: (201) 485-6000.
Fax: (201) 485-8967.
E-mail: italtribnews@viconet.com.

# The Italian Voice (La Voce Italiana).

Provides regional, national, and local news coverage; published weekly in English.

Contact: Cesarina A. Earl, Editor. Address: P.O. Box 9, Totowa, New Jersey 07511. Telephone: (201) 942-5028.

# Sons of Italy Times.

Publishes news bi-weekly concerning the activities of Sons of Italy lodges and the civic, professional, and charitable interests of the membership.

Contact: John B. Acchione III, Editor.
Address: 414 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-3323.
Telephone: (215) 592-1713.
Fax: (215) 592-9152.
E-mail: info@sonsofitalypa.org.

# VIA: Voices in Italian Americana.

A literary journal published by Purdue University.

Contact: Fred L. Gardophe, Editor.

Address: Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, 1359 Stanley Coulter Hall, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-1359.

**Telephone:** (765) 494-3839. **Fax:** (765) 496-1700.

### RADIO

# WHLD-AM (1270).

Broadcasts eight hours of Italian-language programming a week.

Contact: Paul A. Butler.
Address: 2692 Staley Road, Grand Island, New York 14072.
Telephone: (716) 773-1270.
Fax: (716) 773-1498.
Online: http://www.wnybiz.com/whld.

# WSBC-AM (1240).

Presents seven hours of Italian-language programming each week.

Contact: Roy Bellavia, General Manager. Address: 4900 West Belmont Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60641. Telephone: (773) 282-9722.

### WSRF-AM (1580).

Features 12 hours of Italian-language programming weekly.

Contact: Tony Bourne, Program Director.
Address: 3000 S.W. 60th Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33314.
Telephone: (305) 581-1580.
Fax: (305) 581-1301.

# WUNR-AM (1600). Features 12 hours of programs of ethnic interest.

Contact: Jane A. Clarke. Address: 160 North Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02114-2142. Telephone: (617) 367-9003.

**Fax:** (617) 367-2265.

# Organizations and Associations

# America-Italy Society (AIS).

Fosters friendship between Italy and the United States based upon mutual appreciation of their respective contributions to science, art, music, literature, law, and government.

Contact: Gianfranco Monacelli, President. Address: 3 East 48th Street, New York, New York 10017. Telephone: (212) 838-1560.

# American Committee on Italian Migration.

A non-profit social service organization advocating equitable immigration legislation and aiding newly arrived Italian immigrants. It sponsors conferences, publishes a newsletter, and disseminates information beneficial to new Italian Americans.

Contact: Rev. Peter P. Polo, National Executive Secretary.
Address: 373 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10016.
Telephone: (212) 679-4650.
E-mail: acimny@aol.com.

997

# American Italian Historical Association.

Founded in 1966 by a group of academics as a professional organization interested in promoting basic research into the Italian American experience; encourages the collection and preservation of primary source materials, and supports the teaching of Italian American history.

Contact: Fred L. Gardaphe, President.Address: 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, New York 11304.E-mail: fgardaphe@notes.cc.sunysb.edu.

# Italian Cultural Exchange in the United States (ICE).

Promotes knowledge and appreciation of Italian culture among Americans.

Contact: Professor Salvatore R. Tocci, Executive Director.
Address: 27 Barrow Street, New York, New York 10014.
Telephone: (212) 255-0528.

Italian Historical Society of America.

Perpetuates Italian heritage in America and gathers historical data on Americans of Italian descent.

Contact: Dr. John J. LaCorte, Director.
Address: 111 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201.
Telephone: (718) 852-2929.
Fax: (718) 855-3925.

# The National Italian American Foundation.

A nonprofit organization designed to promote the history, heritage, and accomplishments of Italian Americans and to foster programs advancing the interests of the Italian American community.

Contact: Dr. Fred Rotandaro, Executive Director. Address: 666 Eleventh Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20001-4596. Telephone: (202) 638-0220.

E-mail: info@niaf.org. Online: http://www.niaf.org.

# Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA).

Established in 1905, the organization is composed of lodges located throughout the United States. It seeks to preserve and disseminate information on Italian culture and encourages the involvement of its members in all civic, charitable, patriotic, and youth activities. OSIA is committed to supporting Italian-American cultural events and fighting discrimination. Contact: Philip R. Piccigallo, Executive Director.
Address: 219 E Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., 20002.
Telephone: (202) 547-2900.
Fax: (202) 546-8168.

# Museums and Research Centers

# American Italian Renaissance Foundation.

Focuses on the contributions of Italian Americans in Louisiana. Its research library also includes the wide-ranging Giovanni Schiavo collection.

Contact: Joseph Maselli, Director. Address: 537 South Peters Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.

Telephone: (504) 891-1904.

# The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies.

Contains many documents addressing the Italian American experience in Pennsylvania and elsewhere, most notably the Leonard Covello collection. A published guide to the holdings is available.

Contact: Pamela Nelson, Associate Curator/Registrar.
Address: 18 South Seventh Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.
Telephone: (215) 925-8090.
Fax: (215) 9258195.
E-mail: balchlib@hslc.org.
Online: http://libertynet.org/~balch.

# The Center for Migration Studies.

Houses a vast collection of materials depicting Italian American activities. It features extensive records of Italian American Catholic parishes staffed by the Scalabrini order. The center also provides published guides to its collections.

Contact: Dr. Lydio F. Tomasi, Director.
Address: 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, New York, 10304.
Telephone: (718) 351-8800.
Fax: (718) 667-4598.
E-mail: cmslft@aol.com.
Online: http://www.cmsny.org.

# Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), University of Minnesota.

IHRC is the nation's most important repository for research materials dealing with the Italian American experience. The center holds major documentary collections representing a wide cross-section of Italian American life, numerous newspapers, and many published works. A published guide is available.

Contact: Dr. Rudolph J. Vecoli, Director.
Address: 826 Berry Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55114.
Telephone: (612) 627-4208.
Fax: (612) 627-4190.
Email: ihrc@tc.umn.edu.
Online: http://www.umn.edu/ihrc.

# The New York Public Library, Manuscripts Division.

Holds many collections relevant to the Italian American experience, most notably the papers of Fiorello LaGuardia, Vito Marcantonio, Gino C. Speranza, and Carlo Tresca.

Address: 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10018-2788. Telephone: (212) 930-0801.

# Sources for Additional Study

Alba, Richard. Italian Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1985.

Battistella, Graziano. *Italian Americans in the '80s: A Sociodemographic Profile*. New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1989.

DeConde, Alexander. Half Bitter, Half Sweet: An Excursion into Italian American History. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971.

Gabaccia, Donna. "Italian American Women: A Review Essay," *Italian Americana*, Volume 12, No. 1 (Fall/Winter 1993); pp. 38-61.

Gambino, Richard. Blood of My Blood. New York: Anchor, 1975.

Mangione, Jerre, and Ben Morriale. La Storia: Five Centuries of the Italian American Experience. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.

Orsi, Robert A. The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

Pozzetta, George E., "From Immigrants to Ethnics: The Italian American Experience," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Volume 9, No. 1 (Fall 1989); pp. 67-95.

Vecoli, Rudolph J. "The Search for Italian American Identity: Continuity and Change," in *Italian Americans: New Perspectives in Italian Immigration and Ethnicity*, edited by Lydio Tomasi. Staten Island: Center for Migration Studies, 1985; pp. 88-112.





# XX

# Jewish Americans: Quest to Maintain Identity

# CHAPTER OUTLINE

The Jewish People: Race, Religion, or Ethnic Group? Immigration of Jews to the United States Anti-Semitism: Past and Present LISTEN TO OUR VOICES "Night"

by Elie Wiesel

Position of Jewish Americans Religious Life

Jewish Identity

**RESEARCH FOCUS** Intermarriage: The Final Step to Assimilation?

# Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/ Critical Thinking/Internet Connections— Research Navigator™



HE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE AN ETHNIC GROUP. THEIR IDENTITY rests not on the presence of physical traits or religious beliefs but on a sense of belonging that is tied to Jewish ancestry. The history of anti-Semitism is as ancient as the Jewish people themselves. Evidence suggests that this intolerance persists today in both thought and action. Jews in the United States may have experienced less discrimination than did earlier generations in Europe, but some opportunities are still denied them. Contemporary Jews figure prominently in the professions and as a group

exhibit a strong commitment to education. Many Jews share a concern about either the lack of religious devotion of some members or the division within American Judaism over the degree of orthodoxy. Jews in the United States practice their faith as Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform. Paradoxically, the acceptance of Jews by Gentiles has made the previously strong identity of Jews weaker with each succeeding generation. wo events reflect the complexity of Jewish life in the United States; one began with a lawsuit and the other with violence.

On December 21, 2001, the Second Court of Appeals upheld earlier court decisions that ruled in favor of Yale University and against the "Yale Five." The case began in 1997 when three Orthodox Jews felt that the Yale housing policy that requires unmarried freshmen and sophomores under age 21 to live on campus was discriminatory. The freshmen felt it would force Orthodox Jews to violate their faith's call for modesty in living by expecting them to live in co-ed residence halls. Even a compromise offered by Yale to place them in rooms with bathrooms on single-sex floors was rejected. The students contended that the dormitory atmosphere of sexual promiscuity is irreconcilable with their deeply held religious beliefs. Two sophomores, who had paid for university housing the year before while living off-campus, soon joined their lawsuit. Many supported the Yale Five, but even other Orthodox Jewish students at Yale expressed anger over the lawsuit, feeling that they could be respectful to their faith and still conform to the housing standards of the university (Itano 1997; Muller 2001).

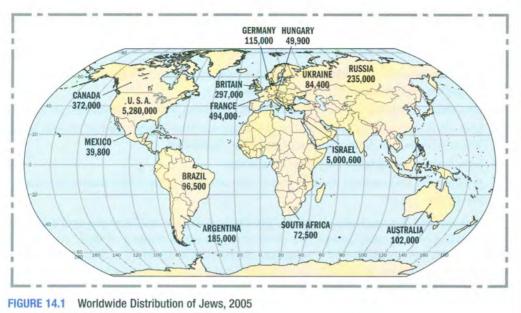
Billings, Montana, does not have a large Jewish population, but it does have an established community of Jews. Billings had no history of visible anti-Jewish hostility. However, beginning in 1992, swastikas appeared outside a Jewish temple, tombstones in a Jewish cemetery were toppled, and bomb threats were made to a synagogue. Then, in the fall of 1993, rocks and bottles were thrown through the windows of homes of prominent members of the Jewish community in Billings. Police advised one of the victim households to remove the "Happy Hanukkah" pictures from their front windows. In light of this tension, local Christian ministers encouraged their members to place menorahs in their windows. Stores instantly sold out of them, and local newspapers printed color pictures of them for people to hang in their windows. As Christmas Day came in this overwhelmingly Christian community, home after home displayed symbols of Judaism, defying those who had attacked the Jews. The culprits were never identified, but they had succeeded in bringing a city together (Cohen 2005; Cohon 1995).

The United States has the largest Jewish population in the world. This nation's approximately 5.3 million Jews account for 41 percent of the world's Jewish population. Jewish Americans not only represent a significant group in the United States but also play a prominent role in the worldwide Jewish community. The nation with the second-largest Jewish population, Israel, is the only one in which Jews are in the majority, accounting for 75 percent of the population, compared with just under 2 percent in the United States. Figure 14.1 depicts the worldwide distribution of Jews (DellaPergola 2005).

The Jewish people form a contrast to the other subordinate groups we have studied. At least 1,500 years had passed since Jews were the dominant group in any nation until Israel was created in 1948. Even there, Jews are in competition for power. American Jews superficially resemble Asian Americans in that both are largely free from poverty, compared to Chicanos or Puerto Ricans. Unlike those groups, however, the Jewish cultural heritage is not nationalistic in origin. Perhaps the most striking difference is that the history of anti-Jewish prejudice and discrimination (usually called **anti-Semitism**) is nearly as old as relations between Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews).

anti-Semitism Anti-Jewish prejudice or discrimination.

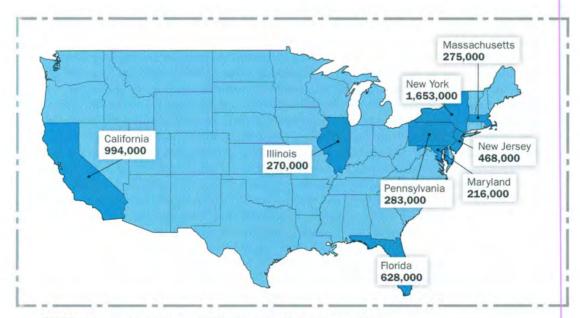






Source: Sergio Dellapergola, "World Jewish Population 2005," American Jewish Yearbook, ed. David Singer and Lawrence Grossman, American Jewish Committee, 2005b.

The most distinctive aspect of the Jewish population is its concentration in urban areas and in the Northeast. The most recent estimates place more than 45 percent of the Jewish population in the Northeast (Figure 14.2). Jews are concentrated especially in the metropolitan areas of New York City, Los Angeles, and Miami, where altogether they account for half of the nation's Jewish population.



### FIGURE 14.2 Jewish Population Distribution in the United States, 2001

Note: States highlighted have largest Jewish populations.

Source: Jim Schwartz and Jeffrey Scheckner, "Jewish Population in the United States, 2001." American Jewish Yearbook, ed. David Singer and Lawrence Grossman, American Jewish Committee, 2001.



# The Jewish People: Race, Religion, or Ethnic Group?

Jews are a subordinate group. They fulfill the criteria set forth in Chapter 1:

- Jewish Americans experience unequal treatment from non-Jews in the form of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation.
- Jews share a cultural history that distinguishes them from the dominant group.
- Jews do not choose to be Jewish, in the same way that Whites do not choose to be White or Mexican Americans to be Mexican American.
- Jews have a strong sense of group solidarity.
- Jewish men and women tend to marry one another rather than marrying outside the group.

What are the distinguishing traits for Jewish Americans? Are they physical features, thus making Jews a racial group? Are these characteristics matters of faith, suggesting that Jews are best regarded as a religious minority? Or are they cultural and social, making Jews an ethnic group? To answer these questions, we must address the ancient and perennial question: What is a Jew?

The issue of what makes a Jew is not only a scholarly question; in Israel, it figures in policy matters. The Israel Law of Return defines who is a Jew and extends Israeli citizenship to all Jews. Currently, the law recognizes all converts to the faith, but pressure has grown recently to limit citizenship to those whose conversions were performed by Orthodox rabbis. Although the change would have little practical impact, symbolically this pressure shows the tension and lack of consensus even among Jews over who is a Jew.

The definition of race used here is fairly explicit. The Jewish people are not physically differentiated from non-Jews. True, many people believe they can tell a Jew from a non-Jew, but actual distinguishing physical traits are absent. Jews today come from all areas of the world and carry a variety of physical features. Most Jewish Americans are descended from northern and eastern Europeans and have the appearance of Nordic and Alpine people. Many others carry Mediterranean traits that make them indistinguishable from Spanish or Italian Catholics. Many Jews reside in North Africa, and although they are not significantly represented in the United States, many people would view them only as a racial minority, Black. The wide range of variation among Jews makes it inaccurate to speak of a Jewish race in a physical sense (Gittler 1981; Montagu 1972).

To define Jews by religion seems the obvious answer because there are Judaic religious beliefs, holidays, and rituals. But these beliefs and practices do not distinguish all Jews from non-Jews. To be a Jewish American does not mean that one is affiliated with one of the three religious groups: the Orthodox, the Reform, and the Conservative. A large segment of adult Jewish Americans, more than a third, do not participate in religious services or even belong, however tenuously, to a temple or synagogue. They have not converted to Christianity, nor have they ceased to think of themselves as Jews. Nevertheless, Jewish religious beliefs and the history of religious practices remain significant legacies for all Jews today, however secularized their everyday behavior. In a 1998 survey, half of all Jews felt that a "shared history or culture" much more so than religion defined what it means to be Jewish (*Los Angeles Times* Poll 1998).

The trend for some time, especially in the United States, has been toward a condition called **Judaization**, the lessening importance of Judaism as a religion and the substitution of cultural traditions as the ties that bind Jews. Depending on one's definition, Judaization has caused some Jews to become so assimilated in the United States that very traditional Jews no longer consider them acceptable spouses (Gans 1956).

Jewish identity is ethnic. Jews share cultural traits, not physical features or uniform religious beliefs. The level of this cultural identity differs for the individual Jew. Just as

### Judaization

The lessening importance of Judaism as a religion and the substitution of cultural tradition as the tie that binds Jews.



some Apaches may be more acculturated than others, the degree of assimilation varies between Jewish people. Judaization may base identity on such things as eating traditional Jewish foods, telling Jewish jokes, and wearing the Star of David. For others, this cultural identity may be the sense of a common history of centuries of persecution. For still others, it may be an unimportant identification. They say, "I am a Jew," just as they say, "I am a resident of California."

The question of what constitutes Jewish identity is not easily resolved. The most appropriate explanation of Jewish identity may be the simplest. A Jew in contemporary America is a person who thinks of himself or herself as a Jew. That also means that being a Jew is a choice and, as we will return to later in the chapter, many Jews may not be making that choice (Abrahamson and Pasternak 1998; Himmelfarb 1982).

# Immigration of Jews to the United States

As every schoolchild knows, 1492 was the year in which Christopher Columbus reached the Western Hemisphere, exploring on behalf of Spain. That year also marked the expulsion of all Jews from Spain. The resulting exodus was not the first migration of Jews, nor was it the last. This is but one illustration of several of the social processes in the intergroup relations continuum illustrated in Figure 14.3. Other examples will be presented throughout this chapter.

One of the most significant movements among Jews is the one that created history's largest concentration of Jews: the immigration to the United States. The first Jews arrived in 1654 and were of Sephardic origin, meaning that they were originally from Spain and Portugal. These immigrants sought refuge in America after they had been expelled from other European countries as well as from Brazil.

When the United States gained its independence from Great Britain, only 2,500 Jews lived here. By 1870 the Jewish population had climbed to about 200,000, supplemented mostly by Jews of German origin. They did not immediately merge into the older Jewish American settlements any more than the German Catholics fused immediately with native Catholics. Years passed before the two groups' common identity as Jews overcame nationality differences (Dinnerstein 1994; Jaher 1994; Sarna 2004).

The greatest migration of Jews to the United States occurred around the end of the nineteenth century and was simultaneous with the great European migration described in Chapter 4. Because they arrived at the same time does not mean that the

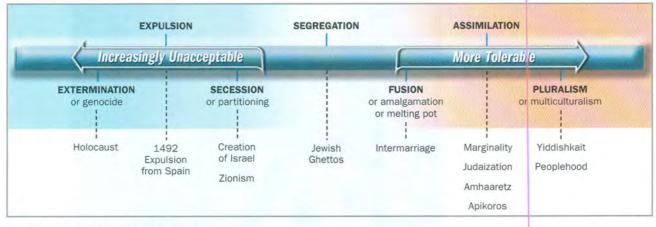


FIGURE 14.3 Intergroup Relations Continum

movements of Gentiles and Jews were identical in all respects. One significant difference was that Jews were much more likely to stay in the United States; few returned to Europe. Although between 1908 and 1937, one-third of all European immigrants returned, only 5 percent of Jewish immigrants did. The legal status of Jews in Europe at the turn of the century had improved since medieval times, but their rights were still revoked from time to time (Sherman 1974).

Despite the legacy of anti-Semitism in Europe, past and present, most of the Jews who migrated to the United States up to the early twentieth century came voluntarily. These immigrants tended to be less pious and less observant of Judaic religious customs than those who remained in Europe. As late as 1917, there were only five small day schools, as Jewish parochial schools were called, in the entire nation. Nevertheless, although the earliest Jewish immigration was not a direct response to fear, the United States had special meaning for the Jewish arrivals. This nation had no history of anti-Semitism like that of Europe. Many Jews must have felt a new sense of freedom, and many clearly demonstrated their commitment to their new nation by becoming citizens at a rate unparalleled in other ethnic groups (Herberg 1983; Sklare 1971).

The immigration acts of the 1920s sharply reduced the influx of Jews, as they did for other European groups. Beginning in about 1933, the Jews arriving in the United States were not merely immigrants; they were also refugees. The tyranny of the Third Reich began to take its toll well before World War II. German and Austrian Jews fled Europe as the impending doom became more evident. Many of the refugees from Nazism in Poland, Hungary, and the Ukraine tended to be more religiously orthodox and adapted slowly to the ways of the earlier Jewish immigrants, if they adapted at all. As Hitler's decline and fall came to pass, the concentration camps, the speeches of Hitler, the atrocities, the war trials, and the capture of Nazi leaders undoubtedly made all American Jews—natives and refugees, the secular and the orthodox—acutely aware of their Jewishness and the price one may be required to pay for ethnicity alone.

Because the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services do not identify an immigrant's religion, precise data are lacking for the number of people of Jewish background migrating recently to the United States. Estimates of 500,000 have been given for the number of Jews who made the United States their home in the 1960s and 1970s. The majority came from Israel, but 75,000 came from the Soviet Union and another 20,000 from Iran, escaping persecution in those two nations. As the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union improved in the late 1980s, U.S. immigration officials began to scrutinize



Jewish shoppers, many immigrants, crowd Orchard Street in New York City in 1923. Reprinted by permission of The American Jewish Committee.



requests for entry to see whether refugee status was still merited. Although some Soviet Jews had difficulty demonstrating that they had a "well-founded fear of persecution," the United States admitted more than 13,600 in 1988 (through the processing center in Rome alone). The situation grew more complicated with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Throughout the period, the immigrants' arrival brought about a growth in the Jewish community in the United States.

# Anti-Semitism: Past and Present

The history of the Jewish people is a history of struggle to overcome centuries of hatred. Several religious observances, such as Passover, Hanukkah, and Purim, commemorate the past sacrifices or conflicts Jews have experienced. Anti-Jewish hostility, or anti-Semitism, has followed the struggle of the Jewish people since before the beginning of the Christian faith to the present.

### Origins

Many anti-Semites justify their beliefs by pointing to the role of some Jews in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, although he was also a Jew. For nearly 2,000 years various Christians have argued that all Jews share in the responsibility of the Jewish elders who condemned Jesus Christ to death. Much anti-Semitism over the ages bears little direct relationship to the crucifixion, however, and has more to do with the persisting stereotype that sees Jews as behaving treacherously to members of the larger society in which they live.

A 2004 survey found that 26 percent of Americans felt Jews were "responsible for Christ's death"—a significant increase over a similar survey nine years earlier. At the time of the survey, many Jews felt that Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* reinforces such a view. Indeed, the same survey shows that among those who had seen the film, 36 percent held Jews responsible for the crucifixion (Pew Research Center 2004).

What truth is there in such stereotypes? Even prominent celebrities and political leaders have publicly expressed stereotyped opinions about Jews. In 2006, Hollywood director and actor Mel Gibson while stopped for drunk driving, told the arresting office, who happened to be Jewish, "The Jews are responsible for all wars in the world" (Cohen 2006). In 1974, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. armed forces declared that Jews "own, you know, the banks in this country" (*Time* 1974, 16). Yet the facts show that Jewish Americans are dramatically underrepresented in management positions in the nation's leading banks. Even in New York City, where Jews account for half the college graduates, Jewish Americans represent only 4 percent of that city's senior banking officials. Similarly, a 1998 national survey found that 8 percent of Jews were business owners, compared with 9 percent of the total U.S. population (Getlin 1998; Slavin and Pradt 1979, 1982).

If the stereotype that Jews are obsessed with money is false, how did it originate? Social psychologist Gordon Allport (1979), among others, advanced the **fringe-of-values theory**. Throughout history, Jews have occupied positions economically different from those of Gentiles, often because laws forbade them to farm or practice trades. For centuries, the Christian church prohibited the taking of interest in the repayment of loans, calling it the sin of usury. Consequently, in the minds of Europeans, the sinful practice of money lending was equated with the Jew. In reality, most Jews were not moneylenders, and most of those who were did not charge interest. In fact, many usurers were Christians, but because they worked in secret, it was only the reputation of the Jews that was damaged. To make matters worse, the nobles of some European countries used Jews to collect taxes, which only increased the ill feeling. To the Gentile, such business practices by the Jews constituted behavior on the fringes of proper

fringe-of-values theory

Behavior that is on the border of conduct that a society regards as proper and is often carried out by subordinate groups, subjecting those groups to negative sanctions.





### in-group virtues

Proper behavior by one's own group (in-group virtues) becomes unacceptable when practiced by outsiders (outgroup vices).

### out-group vices

Proper behavior by one's own group (in-group virtues) becomes unacceptable when practiced by outsiders (outgroup vices).

Germany's effort to move the population against Jews was clear well before the Holocaust. *The Poisonous Mushroom* published in 1938 was a *children's* book that shows children gleefully seeing Jewish teachers and children driven away from their school. Jews were presented as the poisonous mushrooms and Aryan Germans as the edible mushrooms.

Source: Reprinted by permission of The American Jewish Committee.

conduct. Therefore, this theory about the perpetuation of anti-Semitism is called the fringe-of-values theory (American Jewish Committee 1965, 1966a, 1966b; *Time* 1974).

A similar explanation is given for other stereotypes, such as the assertion that Jews are clannish, staying among themselves and not associating with others. In the ancient world, Jews in the Near East area often were under attack by neighboring peoples. Throughout history, Jews have also at times been required to live in closed areas, or ghettos. This experience naturally led them to unify and rely on themselves rather than others. More recently, the stereotype of clannishness has gained support because Jews have been more likely to interact with Jews than with Gentiles. But this behavior is reciprocal because Gentiles have tended to stay among their own kind, too.

Being critical of others for traits for which you praise members of your own group is an example of **in-group virtues** becoming **out-group vices**. Sociologist Robert Merton (1968) described how proper behavior by one's own group becomes unacceptable when practiced by outsiders. For Christians to take their faith seriously is commendable; for Jews to withstand secularization is a sign of backwardness. For Gentiles to prefer Gentiles as friends is understandable; for Jews to choose other Jews as friends suggests clannishness. The assertion that Jews are clannish is an exaggeration and also ignores the fact that the dominant group shares the same tendency. It also fails to consider to what extent anti-Semitism has logically encouraged—and indeed, forced— Jews to seek out other Jews as friends and fellow workers (Allport 1979).

This only begins to explore the alleged Jewish traits, their origin, and the limited value of such stereotypes in accurately describing several million Jewish people. Stereotypes are only one aspect of anti-Semitism; another has been discrimination against Jews. In C.E., 313, Christianity became the official religion of Rome. Within another two centuries, Jews were forbidden to marry Christians or to try to convert them. Because Christians shared with Jews both the Old Testament and the origin of Jesus, they felt ambivalent toward the Jewish people. Gentiles attempted to purge themselves of their doubts about the Jews by projecting exaggerated hostility onto the Jews. The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 is only one example. Spain was merely one of many countries, including England and France, from which the Jews were expelled. In the mid-fourteenth century, the bubonic plague wiped out a third of Europe's population. Because of their social conditions and some of their religious prohibitions, Jews were less likely to die from the plague. Anti-Semites pointed to this as evidence that the Jews were in league with the devil and had poisoned the wells of non-Jews. Consequently, from 1348 to 1349, 350 Jewish communities were exterminated, not by the plague but by Gentiles.





### The Holocaust

The injustices to the Jewish people continued for centuries. However, it would be a mistake to say that all Gentiles were anti-Semitic. History, drama, and other literature record daily, presumably friendly interaction between Jews and Gentiles. At particular times and places, anti-Semitism was an official government policy. In other situations, it was the product of a few bigoted individuals and sporadically became very wide-spread. Regardless of the scope, anti-Semitism was a part of Jewish life, something that Jews were forced to contend with. By 1870, most legal restrictions aimed at Jews had been abolished in Western Europe. Since then, however, Jews have again been used as scapegoats by opportunists who blame them for a nation's problems.

The most tragic example of such an opportunist was Adolf Hitler, whose "final solution" to Germany's problems led to the Holocaust. The **Holocaust** is the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators. The move to eliminate Jews from the European continent started slowly, with Germany gradually restricting the rights of Jews: preventing them from voting, living outside the Jewish ghetto, and owning businesses. Much of the anti-Semitic cruelty was evident before the beginning of the war. If there was any doubt, "Night of Broken Glass," or Kristallnacht, in Berlin on November 9, 1938, ended any doubt. Ninety Berlin Jews were murdered, hundreds of homes and synagogues were set on fire or ransacked, and thousands of Jewish store windows were broken.

Despite the obvious intolerance, Jews desiring to immigrate were turned back by government officials in the United States and elsewhere. Just a few months after Kristallnacht, 907 Jewish refugees aboard the liner *St. Louis* were denied entry to Cuba. Efforts to gain entry in the United States, including special appeals to Congress and President Roosevelt, were useless. Ultimately the ship returned, with many of the Jews later dying in the death camps. Between 1933 and 1945, two-thirds of Europe's total Jewish population were killed; in Poland, Germany, and Austria, 90 percent were murdered. Even today, there are still 17 percent fewer Jews than in 1940.

Many eyewitnesses to the events of the Holocaust remind us of the human tragedy involved. Among the most eloquent are the writings and speeches of Nobel Peace Prize winner, Romanian-born Elie Wiesel (pronounced EL-ee Vee-SELL). In "Listen to Our Voices," he recalls the moments before he, age 16 at the time, and other Jews were freed from the Buchenwald concentration camp.

Despite the enormity of the tragedy, a small but vocal proportion of the world community are **Holocaust revisionists** who claim that the Holocaust did not happen. Debates also continue between those who contend that this part of modern history must be remembered and others, in the United States and Europe, who feel that it is time to put the Holocaust behind us and go on. However, the poignant statements by Holocaust survivors such as Elie Wiesel and the release of such films as *Schindler's List* (1993) and *Life Is Beautiful* (1998) keep the tragedy of the Holocaust in our minds (Cooper and Brackman 2001; Stern 2001).

A new version of Holocaust revisionism emerged in the wake of 9/11. A small but vocal group of people in the United States contents that the attack on the World Trade Center was planned and actually carried out by Jews. The unfounded assertion even makes the false claim that Jewish employees at the World Trade Center did not show up for work because they were told in advance of the attacks (Foxman 2006).

Anti-Semitism is definitely not just a historical social phenomenon in Europe. After the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, fresh outbreaks occurred throughout the continent. Newspapers reported Jewish worshippers being subjected to rocks and insults as they walked to services. A growing Arab and Muslim population in Europe is also serving to offer an audience for Christian-generated anti-Semitism, especially after the U.S. occupation of Iraq beginning in 2003 and the continued uncertainty of Palestine's future (J. Fleishman 2004).

#### Holocaust

The state-sponsored systematc persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators.

### Holocaust revisionist

People who deny the Nazi efort to exterminate the Jews or who minimize the numbers killed.

# Voices Listen to Our Voices Listen to

n April 10 [1945], there were still some twenty thousand prisoners in the camp, among them a few hundred children. It was decided to evacuate all of us at once. By evening. Afterward, they would blow up the camp.

And so we were herded into the huge *Appelplatz* [assembly

square], in ranks of five, waiting for the gate to open. Suddenly, the sirens began to scream. Alert! We went back to the blocks. It was too late to evacuate us that evening. The evacuation was postponed to the next day.

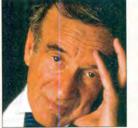
Hunger was tormenting us; we had not eaten for nearly six days except for a few stalks of grass and some potato peels found on the grounds of the kitchens.

At ten o'clock in the morning, the SS took positions throughout the camp and began to herd the last of us toward the *Appelplatz*.

The resistance movement decided at that point to act. Armed men appeared from everywhere. Bursts of gunshots. Grenades exploding. We, the children stayed, remained flat on the floor of the block.

The battle did not last long. Around noon, everything was calm again. The SS had fled and the resistance had taken charge of the camp.

### NIGHT



Elie Wiesel

At six o'clock that afternoon, the first American tank stood at the gates of Buchenwald.

Our first act as free men was to throw ourselves onto the provisions. That's all we thought about. No thought of revenge, or of our parents. Only of bread.

And then when we were no longer hungry, not one of us

thought of revenge. The next day, a few of the young men ran into Weimar to bring back some potatoes and clothes—and to sleep with the girls. But still no trace of revenge.

Three days after the liberation of Buchenwald, I became very ill: some form of [food] poisoning. I was transferred to a hospital and spent two weeks between life and death.

One day when I was able to get up, I decided to look at myself in the mirror on the opposite wall. I had not seen myself since the ghetto.

From the depths of the mirror, a corpse was contemplating me.

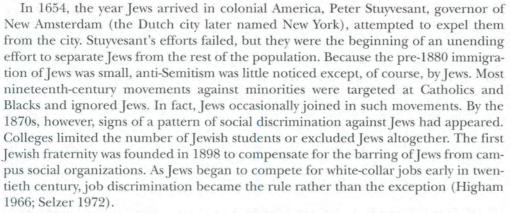
The look in his eyes as he gazed at me has never left me.

Source: Excerpt pp. 114–115 from Night by Elie Wiesel, translated from the French by Marion Wiesel. Copyright © 2006.

Originally published in 1958. Reprinted by permission of Hill & Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus & Giroux, LLC.

### U.S. Anti-Semitism: Past

Compared with the brutalities of Europe from the time of the early Christian church to the rule of Hitler, the United States cannot be described as a nation with a history of severe anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, the United States has also had its outbreaks of anti-Semitism, though none have begun to approach the scope of that in Western Europe. An examination of the status of Jewish Americans today indicates the extent of remaining discrimination against Jews. However, contemporary anti-Semitism must be seen in relation to past injustices.



The 1920s and the 1930s were periods of the most virulent and overt anti-Semitism. In these decades, the myth of an internationally organized Jewry took shape. According to a forged document titled *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, Jews throughout the world planned to conquer all governments, and the major vehicle for this rise to power was communism, said by anti-Semites to be a Jewish movement. Absurd though this argument was, some respected Americans accepted the thesis of an international Jewish conspiracy and believed in the authenticity of the *Protocols*.

Henry Ford, founder of the automobile company that bears his name, was responsible for the publication of the *Protocols*. The *Dearborn Independent*, a weekly newspaper owned by Ford, published anti-Semitic material for seven years. Finally in 1927, faced with several million dollars' worth of civil suits for slandering wellknown Jewish Americans, he published a halfhearted apology. In his later years, Ford expressed regret for his espousal of anti-Semitic causes, but the damage had been done; he had lent an air of respectability to the most exaggerated charges against Jewish people.

It is not clear why Henry Ford, even for a short period of his life, so willingly accepted anti-Semitism. But Ford was not alone. Groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and the German American Bund, as well as radio personalities, preached about the Jewish conspiracy as if it were fact. By the 1930s, these sentiments expressed a fondness for Hitler. Even famed aviator Charles Lindbergh made speeches to gatherings claiming that Jews were forcing the United States into a war so that Jewish people could profit by wartime production. When the barbarous treatment of the Jews by Nazi Germany was exposed, most Americans were horrified by such events, and people such as Lindbergh were as puzzled as anyone about how some Americans could have been so swept up by the pre–World War II wave of anti-Semitism (N. Baldwin 2001; Meyers 1943; Selzer 1972).

Historical anti-Semitism is never far below the surface. The discredited *Protocols* was sold online by Wal-Mart through 2004 and described as "genuine" until protests made the large retailer rethink its sale. In 2006, a Spanish-language version published in Mexico City enjoyed wide distribution (*Intelligence Report* 2004; Rothstein 2006).

The next section examines anti-Semitic feelings in contemporary America. Several crucial differences between anti-Semitism in Europe and in the United States must be considered. First, and most important, the U.S. government has never promoted anti-Semitism. Unlike its European counterparts, the U.S. government has never embarked on an anti-Semitic program of expulsion or extermination. Second, because anti-Semitism was never institutionalized in the United States as it sometimes has been in Europe, American Jews have not needed to develop a defensive ideology to ensure the survival of their people. A Jewish American can make a largely personal decision about how much to assimilate or how secular to become.



How much prejudice is there toward Jews in the United States today?





### **Contemporary Anti-Semitism**

Next to social research on anti-Black attitudes and behavior of Whites, anti-Semitism has been the major focus of studies of prejudice by sociologists and psychologists. Most of the conclusions described in Chapter 2 apply equally to the data collected on anti-Semitism. Little concern was expressed by Jews in the United States about anti-Semitism immediately after World War II. From the late 1960s through the 1990s, however, anti-Semitism has again appeared to be a threat in many parts of the world. A 2005 national survey found that 9 percent felt anti-Semitism was a "very serious problem" and 48 percent "somewhat of a problem" in the United States (J. Jones 2003b).

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith, founded in 1913, makes an annual survey of reported anti-Semitic incidents. Although the number has fluctuated, the 1994 tabulation reached the highest level in the twenty-two years during which the ADL has been recording such incidents. Figure 14.4 shows the rise of harassment, threats, and assaults, which, adding episodes of vandalism, brings the total to 1,757 incidents for 2005. Some incidents were inspired and carried out by neo-Nazis or skinheads, groups of young people who champion racist and anti-Semitic ideologies. In our mapping of racist fringe groups (see Figure 14.4), we see the widespread presence of such groups.

Particularly disturbing has been the number of reported anti-Semitic incidents on college campuses. Incidents continue to be reported. Anti-Jewish graffiti, anti-Semitic speakers, and swastikas affixed to predominantly Jewish fraternities were among the documented incidents. Another manifestation of it appears in editorial-style advertisements in college newspapers that argue that the Holocaust never occurred. A chilling development is the Internet as a growing vehicle for anti-Semitism, either delivering such messages or serving as a means of reaching Web sites that spread intolerance (Anti-Defamation League 1996, 2006).

Acts of anti-Semitic violence in the United States, along with the continuing conflict in the Middle East and the expression of anti-Semitic themes by some African Americans, have prompted renewed national attention to anti-Semitism.

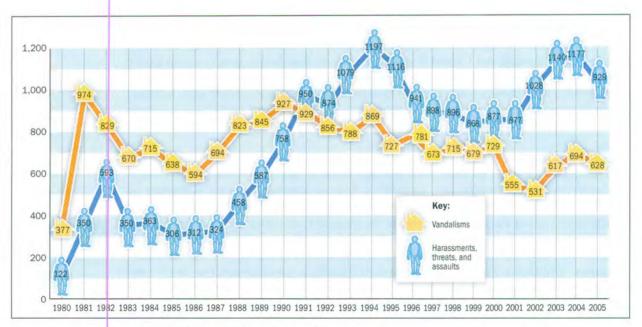


FIGURE 14.4 Anti-Semitic Incidents, 1980–2005

Source: Reprinted with permission of the Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org.





This anti-Semitic graffiti was painted on the outside walls of Pacadah, Kentucky's Temple Israel in 2004.

American Jews and Israel When the Middle East became a major hot spot in international affairs in the 1960's, a revival of 1930s anti-Semitism occurred. Many Jewish Americans expressed concern that because Jews are freer in the United States than they have been in perhaps any other country in their history, they would ignore the struggle of other Jews. Israel's precarious status has proven to be a strong source of identity for Jewish Americans. Major wars in the Middle East in 1967, 1973, and 1991 reminded the world of Israel's vulnerability. Palestinian uprisings in the Occupied Territories and international recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1988 and 2002 eroded the strong pro-Israeli front among the Western powers. Some Jewish Americans have shown their commitment to the Israeli cause by immigrating to Israel.

Jewish American support is not uniform. Although not all American Jews agree with Israel's actions, many Jews express support for Israel's struggles by contributing money and trying to influence American opinion and policy to be more favorable to Israel. A survey taken in 2005 showed that 36 percent of Jewish Americans feel "very close" to Israel and another 41 percent feel "fairly close." But that still leaves more than a quarter (23 percent) who feel distant from Israel. A similar proportion disagree that caring about Israel is an important part of being a Jew (American Jewish Committee 2005a).

In the year after the oil embargo (1974), the United Nations General Assembly ignored American and Israeli objections and passed a resolution declaring that "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination." **Zionism**, which initially referred to the old Jewish religious yearning to return to the biblical homeland, has been expressed in the twentieth century in the movement to create a Jewish state in Palestine. Ever since the **Diaspora**, the exile of Jews from Palestine several centuries before Christianity, many Jews have seen the destiny of their people only as the establishment of a Jewish state in the Holy Land.

The Zionism resolution, finally repealed by the United Nations in 1991, had no lasting influence and did not change any nation's foreign policy. However, it did increase Jewish fears of reawakened anti-Semitism thinly disguised as attacks on Zionist beliefs. Even the development of agreements between Israel and its Arab neighbors and the international recognition of Palestinian autonomy in Israel did not end the concern of Jewish Americans that continuing anti-Israeli feeling reflected anti-Semitism.

### Zionism

Traditional Jewish religious yearning to return to the biblical homeland, now used to refer to support for the state of Israel.

Diaspora

The exile of Jews from Palestine.



American Jews and African Americans. The contemporary anti-Semitism of African Americans is of special concern to Jewish Americans. There is no reason why anti-Semites should be exclusively White, but Jews have been especially troubled by Blacks expressing ethnic prejudices, given their own history of oppression. Jewish Americans have been active in civil rights causes and have contributed generously to legal defense funds. Jewish neighborhoods and employers have also been quicker than their Gentile counterparts to accept African Americans. Therefore, there is a positive Black–Jewish alliance with a long history. For these reasons, some Jews find it especially difficult to understand why another group experiencing prejudice and discrimination should express anti-Semitic sentiments.

Beginning in the 1960s, some African American activists and the Black Panther party supported the Arabs in the Middle East conflict and called on Israel to surrender. Black–Jewish relations were again inflamed in 1984 by the Reverend Jesse Jackson during his campaign for the Democratic party's nomination for the presidency. His off-the-record reference to Jews as "Hymies" and the publicly broadcast anti-Semitic remarks by one of his supporters, Nation of Islam minister Louis Farrakhan, gave rise to new tensions between Blacks and Jews. During the 1988 campaign, Jackson distanced himself from anti-Semitic rhetoric, stating, "The sons and the daughters of the Holocaust and the sons and the daughters of slavery must find common ground again" (Schmidt 1988, 14).

In the 1990s, unrelated events again seemed to draw attention to the relationship between Jews and African Americans. On several college campuses, invited African American speakers made anti-Israeli statements, inflaming the Jewish students in attendance. In a 1991 New York City incident, a Hasidic Jew ran a red light, killing an African American child, and the ambulance that regularly serves the Hasidic community did not pick up the child. In the emotional climate that resulted, an Australian Jewish researcher was stabbed to death, and several days of rioting in the Brooklyn, New York, neighborhood of Crown Heights followed (Morris and Rubin 1993).

In response to these and other events, many Jewish and African American leaders perceived a crisis in intergroup relations, and calls for unity became very public. For example, in 1994, the Reverend Jesse Jackson sought to distance himself from the statements of Khalid Abdul Muhammad, an aide of Farrakhan, calling him "racist, anti-Semitic, divisive, untrue, and chilling" (Finder 1994, 21).

African American resentment, in many situations attracting notoriety, has rarely been anti-Jewish as such but rather has been opposed to White institutions. As author James Baldwin (1967, 114) said, Blacks "are anti-Semitic because they're anti-White." That racial prejudice is deep in the United States is shown by the fact that two groups suffering discrimination, groups that might unite in opposition to the dominant society, fight each other instead.

An old Yiddish saying, "Schwer zu sein a Yid," means "It is tough to be a Jew." Anti-Semitism past and present is related. The old hostilities seem never to die. The atrocities of Nazi Germany have not been forgotten, nor should they be. Racial and ethnic hostility, against whatever group, unifies the group against its attackers, and Jewish Americans are no exception. The Jewish people of the United States have come together, regardless of nationality, to form a minority group with a high degree of group identity.

# Position of Jewish Americans

Jewish Americans have an important role in contemporary America. They are active participants in the fight for civil rights and work on behalf of Israel. These efforts are important but only begin to describe their role in the United States. For a better per-

387

spective on Jewish people in the United States, the following summarizes their present situation with respect to employment and income, education, organizational activity, and political activity.

### **Employment and Income**

Discrimination conditions all facets of a subordinate group's life. Jews have experienced, and to a limited extent still experience, differential treatment in the American job market. The results of a 1998 national survey showed that 71 percent of Jews viewed anti-Semitism as a problem in the United States, although not necessarily in hiring practices. As shown in Table 14.1, through perseverance and emphasis on education, Jewish Americans as a group have overcome barriers to full employment and now enjoy high incomes (*Los Angeles Times* Poll 1998).

Using a variety of techniques, social science studies have documented declining discrimination against Jews in the business world. Sociologist Samuel Klausner interviewed business school graduates, comparing Jews with Protestants and Catholics who graduated from the same university in the same year. Klausner (1988) concludes, "(1) Jewish MBAs are winning positions in the same industries as their Catholic and Protestant classmates; (2) they are rising more rapidly in corporate hierarchies than their Catholic and Protestant colleagues; (3) they are achieving higher salaries than their Catholic and Protestant colleagues" (p. 33). Klausner adds that researchers tested

	Jewish Americans	All U.S.
NCOME		
ess than \$40,000.	28%	52%
\$40,000-\$59,999	18	21
60,000 or more	38	20
Don't know/refused	16	7
OCCUPATION		
Professional	40	15
Manager	24	20
White collar	19	19
Business owner	8	9
Inskilled blue collar	5	16
Skilled blue collar	3	19
DEOLOGY		
iberal	46	24
Moderate	28	31
Conservative	23	40
OLITICAL PARTY		
Democrat	45	32
ndependent	29	31
Republican	12	23
DUCATION		
ligh school or less	13	59
Some college	27	21
College graduate	24	10
Graduate school	35	9



seven indicators of discrimination and in each case failed to find evidence of discrimination against Jewish executives. Interestingly, however, this same study detected substantial discrimination against African Americans and women.

The economic success of the Jewish people as a group obscures the poverty of many individual Jewish families. We reached a similar conclusion in Chapter 12 from income data on Asian Americans and their image as a model minority. Sociologists largely agree that Jews in 1930 were as likely to be poverty stricken and to be living in slums as any minority group today. Most have escaped poverty, but what Ann Wolfe (1972) calls "the invisible Jewish poor" remains invisible to the rest of society. Like Chinese Americans, the Jewish poor were not well served by the Economic Opportunity Act and other federal experiments to eradicate poverty in the 1960s and 1970s. Although the proportion of the poor among the Jews is not as substantial as among Blacks or Hispanics, it does remind us that not all Jewish families have affluent lifestyles (Gold 1965; Lavender 1977; Levine and Hochbaum 1974).

### Education

Jews place great emphasis on education (see Table 14.1). This desire for formal schooling stems, it is argued, from the Judaic religion, which places the rabbi, or teacher, at the center of religious life.

In the United States today, all Jewish congregations emphasize religious instruction more than Protestants typically do. A 2000 estimate stated that there were 7,000 day schools with 200,000 pupils. Day schools are, in effect, private elementary schools with a substantial proportion of the curriculum given to Judaic studies and the learning of Hebrew. The less religiously committed may attend instruction on Sundays or on weekday afternoons after attending public schools. Seventy-six percent of Jews have received some form of formal Jewish education before they reach 30 years of age. The Jewish-sponsored component of higher education is not limited to strict religious instruction such as that found in rabbinical schools. Beginning in 1947, Jews founded graduate schools of medicine, education, social work, and mathematics, along with Brandeis University, which offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees. These institutions are nonsectarian (i.e., admission is not limited to Jews) and are conceived of as a Jewish-sponsored contribution to higher education (Abrahamson 1997; *Los Angeles Times* Poll 1998; *Religion Watch* 2000).

The religiously based tradition of lifelong study has left as a legacy a value system that stresses education. The poverty of Jewish immigrants kept them from devoting years to secular schooling, but they were determined that their children would do better. Despite their high levels of educational attainment, some members of the Jewish community express concern about Jewish education. They are disappointed with its highly secularized nature, not only because religious teaching has been limited but also because the Jewish sociocultural experience has been avoided altogether. It may even contribute to Judaization, the lessening of Judaism.

### **Organizational Activity**

The American Jewish community has encompassed a variety of organizations since its beginnings. These groups serve many purposes: Some are religious, and others are charitable, political, or educational. No organization, secular or religious, represents all American Jews, but there are more than 300 nationwide organizations.

Among the most significant are the United Jewish Appeal (UJA), the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and B'nai B'rith. The UJA was founded in 1939 and serves as a fund-raising organization for humanitarian causes. Recently, Israel has received the largest share of the funds collected. The American Jewish Com-



mittee (founded in 1906) and American Jewish Congress (1918) work toward the similar purpose of improving Jewish–Gentile relations. B'nai B'rith (Sons of the Covenant) was founded in 1843 and claims 500,000 members in forty nations. It promotes cultural and social programs and, through its Anti-Defamation League, monitors and fights anti-Semitism and hate crimes directed at other groups.

Besides the national groups, many community-based organizations are active. Some local organizations, such as social and business clubs, were founded because the existing groups barred Jews from membership. The U.S. Supreme Court has consistently ruled that private social organizations such as country clubs and business clubs may discriminate against Jews or any other ethnic or racial group. Jewish community centers are also prominent local organizations. To Gentiles, the synagogue is the most visible symbol of the Jewish presence at the community level. However, the Jewish community center is an important focus of local activity. In many Jewish neighborhoods throughout the United States, it is the center of secular activity. Hospitals, nurseries, homes for the elderly, and child care agencies are only a few of the community-level activities sponsored by Jewish Americans (Rabinove 1970; Sklare 1971).

### **Political Activity**

American Jews play a prominent role in politics as both voters and elected officials. Jews as a group are not typical in that they are more likely than the general population to label themselves liberal (refer back to Table 14.1). Although upper-middle-class voters tend to vote Republican, Jewish voters in that category have been steadfastly Democratic. About 54 percent identify themselves as Democrat compared to only 16 percent Republican (American Jewish Committee 2005a).

Jews have long been successful in being elected to office, but it was not until 1988 that an Orthodox Jew from Connecticut was elected to the U.S. Senate. Joseph Lieberman refrained from campaigning on the Sabbath each week; his religious views were not an issue. He went on to be named as the vice presidential running mate of Al Gore. Even during the campaign, he honored the Sabbath and did not actively campaign, even avoiding dialing a telephone to potential supporters. Many view the positive response to his campaign as a sign of openness to devout Jews as political candidates (Issacson and Foltin 2001; Pew Charitable Trust 2000).

As in all subordinate groups, the political activity of Jewish Americans has not been limited to conventional electoral politics. Radical Jewish politics has been dominated by college students. At the height of their involvement in the late 1960s, Jewish youths were active with Gentiles in the New Left movement and in working alone for causes unique to Jews, such as the support of Israel. Into the latter part of the twentieth century, some Jews backed the more extreme responses to the friction between Israel and its Arab neighbors. A few even settled in Israel and, though small in number, were often vocal backers of resistance to any accommodation to the Arab nations or the Palestinian Authority.

# **Religious Life**

Jewish identity and participation in the Jewish religion are not the same. Many Americans consider themselves Jewish and are considered Jewish by others even though they have never participated in Jewish religious life. The available data indicate that 57 percent of American Jews are affiliated with a synagogue or temple, but only 10 percent view participation in religious worship as extremely important. Even in Israel, only 30 percent of Jews are religiously observant. Nevertheless, the presence of a religious tradition is an important tie among Jews, even secular Jews (American Jewish Committee 2005; S. Cohen 1991).



Typically Jews affiliated with Reform Congregations such as this one pictured in Seattle, Washington, at Yom Kippur Service have made up the largest segment of observant Jews. But the number of Conservative and Orthodox Jews is growing.



The Judaic faith embraces a number of factions or denominations that are similar in their roots but marked by sharp distinctions. No precise data reveal the relative numbers of the three major groups. Part of the problem is the difficulty of placing individuals in the proper group. For example, it is common for a Jew to be a member of an Orthodox congregation but consider himself or herself Conservative. The following levels of affiliation are based on a December 2005 national survey of Jewish Americans:

- Orthodox: 19 percent
- Conservative: 32 percent
- Reconstructionist: 2 percent
- Reform: 29 percent
- Just Jewish: 26 percent
- Not sure: 1 percent

There is a definite trend toward Jews being more Orthodox and Conservative. This trend results from the large Orthodox families, some conversion by less conservative Jews to orthodoxy, and immigration of traditional Jews to the United States. Young Jews ages 18 to 39 are nearly twice as likely to be Orthodox as the general Jewish population (American Jewish Committee 2001, 2005a; Ukeles et al. 2006).

We, will focus on two forms of Judaism at either end of the continuum: the Orthodox, faith, which attempts to uphold a very traditional practice of Judaism, and the Reform faith, which accommodates itself to the secular world.

### The Orthodox Tradition

The unitary Jewish tradition developed in the United States into three sects, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. The differences between Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Judaism are based on their varying acceptance of traditional rituals. All three sects embrace a philosophy based on the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. The differences developed because some Jews wanted to be less distinguishable



### kashrut

Laws pertaining to permissible (kosher) and forbidden foods and their preparation.

from other Americans. Another significant factor in explaining the development of different groups is the absence of a religious elite and bureaucratic hierarchy. This facilitated the breakdown in traditional practices.

Orthodox Jewish life is very demanding, especially in a basically Christian society such as the United States. Almost all conduct is defined by rituals that require an Orthodox Jew to reaffirm his or her religious conviction constantly. Most Americans are familiar with **kashrut**, the laws pertaining to permissible and forbidden foods. When strictly adhered to, kashrut governs not only what foods may be eaten (kosher) but also how the food is prepared, served, and eaten. Besides day-to-day practices, Orthodox Jews have weekly and annual observances. Women may not be rabbis among the Orthodox, although beginning in 2006, women were named to head a congregation, but only male members of the congregation could read publicly from the Torah (Luo 2006b).

Even Orthodox Jews differ in their level of adherence to traditional practices. Among the ultraorthodox are the Hasidic Jews, or Hasidim, who number some 2000,000 with half residing chiefly in several neighborhoods in Brooklyn. To the Hasidim, following the multitude of mitzvahs, or commandments of behavior, is as important today as it was in the time of Moses. Their spiritual commitment extends well beyond customary Jewish law even as interpreted by Orthodox Jews.

Hasidic Jews wear no garments that mix linen and wool. Men wear a yarmulke, or skullcap, constantly, even while sleeping. Attending a secular college is frowned on. Instead, the men undertake a lifetime of study of the Torah and the accompanying rabbinical literature of the Talmud. Women's education consists of instruction on how to run the home in keeping with Orthodox tradition. Hasidic Jews, who themselves are organized in separate communities, have courts with jurisdiction recognized by the faithful in many matters especially as they relate to family life.

Orthodox children attend special schools in order to meet minimal New York State educational requirements. The devotion to religious study is reflected in this comment by a Hasidic Jew: "Look at Freud, Marx, Einstein—all Jews who made their mark on the non-Jewish world. To me, however, they would have been much better off studying in a yeshiva [a Jewish school]. What a waste of three fine Talmudic minds" (H. Arden 1975, 294). Although devoted to their religion, the Hasidim participate in local elections and politics and are employed in outside occupations. All such activities are influenced by their orthodoxy and a self-reliance rarely duplicated elsewhere in the United States.



A rabbi blesses a 13-year-old at her Bat Mitzvah in the temple. Jewish children often celebrate a coming-of-age ceremony. According to Jewish law, when Jewish children reach the age of maturity (12 years for girls, 13 years for boys), they become responsible for their actions. At this point a boy is said to become Bar Mitzvah; a girl is said to become Bat Mitzvah.

### The Reform Tradition

Reform Jews, though deeply committed to the religious faith, have altered many of the rituals. Women and men sit together in Reform congregations, and both participate in the reading of the Torah at services. A few Reform congregations have even experimented with observing the Sabbath on Sunday. Circumcision for males is not mandatory. Civil divorce decrees are sufficient and recognized so that a divorce granted by a three-man rabbinical court is not required before remarriage. Reform Jews recognize the children of Jewish men and non-Jewish women as Jews with no need to convert. All these practices would be unacceptable to the Orthodox Jew.

Conservative Judaism is a compromise between the rigidity of the Orthodox and the extreme modification of the Reform. Because of the middle position, the national organization of Conservatives, the United Synagogue of America, strives to create its own identity and seeks to view its traditions as an appropriate, authentic approach to the faith.

Table 14.2 displays some results of a national survey on Jewish identification. The three sects here include both members and nonmembers of local congregations. Reform Jews are the least likely of the three religious groups to participate in religious events, to be involved in the Jewish community, or to participate in predominantly Jewish organizations. Yet in Reform temples, there has been an effort to observe religious occasions such as Rosh Hashanah (Religion Watch 1995b; Wertheimer 1996).

The one exception in Reform Jews' lower levels of participation is on issues concerning world Jewry, such as Israel or the treatment of Jews in such nations as the former Soviet Union and Iran. For the Orthodox Jew, these issues are less important than those strictly related to the observance of the faith. Although no nationwide organized movement advocates this, in recent years Reform Jews seem to have reclaimed traditions they once rejected.

Unlike people of other faiths in the United States, Jews historically have not embarked on recruitment or evangelistic programs to attract new members. Beginning in the late 1970s, Jews, especially Reform Jews, debated the possibility of outreach programs. Least objectionable to Jewish congregations were efforts begun in 1978 aimed at non-Jewish partners and children in mixed marriages. In 1981, the program was broadened to invite conversions by Americans who had no religious connection, but these very modest recruitment drives are still far from resembling those that have been carried out by Protestant denominations for decades (Luo 2006a).

Like Protestant denominations, Jewish denominations are associated with class, nationality, and other social differences. The Reform Jews are the wealthiest and have the best formal education of the group, the Orthodox are the poorest and least educated in years of formal secular schooling, and the Conservatives occupy a position between the

#### Jewish Identification by Group Indices Orthodox Conservative Reform "Just Jewish" Ethnic pride 86% 79% 73% 65% Closeness to Jews 90 83 71 54 Observance of Jewish holidays 73 42 28 18 Observance of Christian holidays 6 6 17 28 Pro-Israel 78 71 56 50 Source: S. Cohen 1991, 58, 63, 74.

# **TABLE 14.2**



two. A fourth branch of American Judaism, Reconstructionism, an offshoot of the Conservative movement, has only recently developed an autonomous institutional structure with ritual practices similar to those of Reform Jews. Religious identification is associated with generation: Immigrants and older Jews are more likely to be Orthodox, and their grandchildren are more likely to be Reform (*Los Angeles Times* Poll 1998).

# Jewish Identity

Ethnic and racial identification can be positive or negative. Awareness of ethnic identity can contribute to a person's self-esteem and give that person a sense of group solidarity with similar people. When a person experiences an identity only as a basis for discrimination or insults, he or she may want to shed that identity in favor of one more acceptable to society. Unfavorable differential treatment can also encourage closer ties between members of the community being discriminated against, as it has for Jews.

Most would judge the diminishing of out-group hostility and the ability of Jews to leave the ghetto as a positive development (G. Friedman 1967). However, the improvement in Jewish–Gentile relations also creates a new problem in Jewish social identity. It has become possible for Jews to shed their "Jewishness," or **Yiddishkait**. Many retain their Yiddishkait even in suburbia, but it is more difficult there than in the ghetto. In the end, however, Jews cannot lose their identity entirely. Jews are still denied total assimilation in the United States no matter how much the individual ceases to think of himself or herself as Jewish. Social clubs may still refuse membership, and prospective non-Jewish in-laws may try to interfere with plans to marry.

Events in the world also remind the most assimilated Jew of the heritage left behind. A few such reminders in the past generation include Nazi Germany, the founding of Israel in 1948, the Six-Day War of 1967, Soviet interference with Jewish life and migration, the terrorist attack at the 1972 Munich Olympics, the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the 1973 oil embargo, the United Nations' 1974 anti-Zionism vote, and the Scud missile attacks during the 1991 Gulf War.

A unique identity issue presents itself to Jewish women, whose religious tradition has placed them in a subordinate position. For example, it was not until 1972 that the first female rabbi was ordained. Jewish feminism has its roots in the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, several of whose leaders were Jewish. There have been some changes in **halakha** (Jewish law covering obligations and duties), but it is still difficult for a woman to get a divorce recognized by the Orthodox Jewish tradition. Sima Rabinowicz of upstate New York has been hailed as the Jewish Rosa Parks for her recent



Yiddishkait Jewishness.

halakha Jewish laws covering obligations and duties.

Young people gather at a Jewish school in Manhattan.



bus battle. Rabinowicz refused to give up her seat in the women's section of a Hasidicowned, publicly subsidized bus to Orthodox men who wanted to pray in private, segregated from women as required by halakha. The courts defended her right to ride as she wished, just as an earlier court had ruled with Rosa Parks in the Birmingham bus boycott. Jewish women contend that they should not be forced to make a choice between their identity as a woman and as a Jew (Baum 1998; Frankel 1995).

We will now examine three factors that influence the ethnic identity of Jews in the United States: family, religion, and cultural heritage.

### **Role of the Family**

In general, the family works to socialize children, but for religious Jews it also fulfills a religious commandment. In the past, this compulsion was so strong that the *shadchan* (the marriage broker or matchmaker) fulfilled an important function in the Jewish community by ensuring marriage for all eligible people. The emergence of romantic love in modern society made the *shadchan* less acceptable to young Jews, but recent statistics show Jews more likely to marry than any other group.

Jews have traditionally remained in extended families, intensifying the transmission of Jewish identity. Numerous observers have argued that the Jewish family today no longer maintains its role in identity transmission and that the family is consequently contributing to assimilation. The American Jewish Committee released a report identifying ten problems that are endangering "the family as the main transmission agent of Jewish values, identity, and continuity" (Conver 1976, A2). The following issues are relevant to Jews today:

- More Jews marry later than members of other groups.
- Most organizations of single Jews no longer operate solely for the purpose of matchmaking. These groups are now supportive of singles and the single way of life.
- The divorce rate is rising; there is no presumption of the permanence of marriage and no stigma attached to its failure.
- The birthrate is falling, and childlessness has become socially acceptable.
- Financial success has taken precedence over child raising in importance and for many has become the major goal of the family.
- The intensity of family interaction has decreased, although it continues to be higher than in most other religious and ethnic groups.
- There is less socializing across generation lines, partly as a result of geographic mobility.
- The sense of responsibility of family members to other family members has declined.
- The role of Jewishness is no longer central to the lives of Jews.
- Intermarriage has lessened the involvement of the Jewish partner in Jewish life and the emphasis on Jewish aspects of family life.

Data and sample surveys have verified these trends. Nevertheless, to use a term introduced in Chapter 10 in connection with the Latino family, Jewish Americans still have a higher than typical degree of familism. Jews are more likely than other ethnic or religious groups to be members of a household that interacts regularly with kinfolk. Nonetheless, the trend is away from familism, a trend that could further erode Jewish identity.

Without question, of the ten problems cited by the American Jewish Committee, intermarriage has received the greatest attention from Jewish leaders. Therefore, it has been the subject of significant social research and not just idle speculation. This topic is the subject of our "Research Focus."



What are the main challenges facing Jewish families today?



# Focus Research Focus Research

### INTERMARRIAGE: THE FINAL STEP TO ASSIMILATION?

S ex and the City's Charlotte York, the quintessential WASP character, descends again into a Jewish ritual bath marking her conversion to Judaism. Although this fictional portrayal was welcomed by Jewish viewers, is it representative of what happens when Jews take a spouse today?

Since Christianity's influence has grown in Europe and North America, a persistent fear among Jews has been that their children or grandchildren would grow up ignorant of the Torah. Equally bad, a descendant might become *apikoros*, an unbeliever who engages in intellectual speculation about the relevance of Judaism. These concerns are growing as Jewish Americans' resistance to intermarriage declines. In 2005, two-thirds of Jews felt anti-Semitism was the biggest threat to Jewish life, but one out of three saw it to be intermarriage.

Why does intermarriage emerge as a social issue rather than a personal dilemma? Intermarriage makes a decrease in the size of the Jewish community in the United States more likely. In marriages that occurred in the 1970s, more than 70 percent of Jews married Jews or people who converted to Judaism. In marriages since 1996, that proportion has dropped to 53 percent. This trend means that American Jews today are just as likely to marry a Gentile as a Jew. For many, religion is a nonissue—neither parent practices religious rituals. Two-thirds of the children of these Jewish–Gentile marriages are not raised as Jews.

Many Jewish Americans respond that intermarriage is inevitable and the Jewish community must build on whatever links the intermarried couple may still have with a Jewish ethnic culture. There are many programs throughout the United States to help Gentile spouses of Jews feel welcome so that the faith will not lose them both. Yet other Jews feel that such efforts may be sending a dangerous signal that intermarriage is inevitable. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that probably more than any other ethnic or religious group, organizations within the Jewish community commission research on the trends in intermarriage.

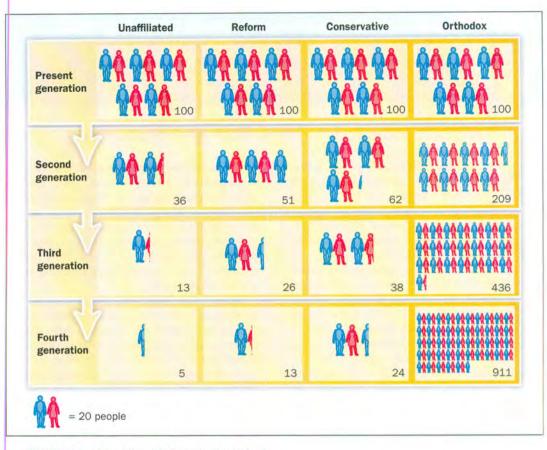
Source: American Jewish Committee 2005a; Freedman 2003; Schwartz 2006; Snyder 2006; United Jewish Communities 2003.

Several trends come together to lead to a stabilization or decline in the number of active Jews in the United States. As shown in Figure 14.5, the continuation of a Jewish tradition varies dramatically by denomination. Conservative and Orthodox Jews have larger families, encourage formal Jewish instruction, and are much less likely to witness intermarriage than Reform or unaffiliated ("just Jewish") Jewish Americans. Analysts of these data are concerned that Jews, especially if they are not Orthodox, cannot take it for granted that they will have grandchildren with whom to share seders, Sabbath, and other Jewish moments.

### **Role of Religion**

Devotion to Judaism appears to be the clear way to preserve ethnic identity. Yet Jews are divided about how to practice their faith. Many of the Orthodox see Reform Jews as little better than nonbelievers. Even among the Orthodox, some sects such as the Lubavitchers try to awaken less-observant Orthodox Jews to their spiritual obligation. Added to these developments is the continuing rise in Jewish out-marriages previously





### FIGURE 14.5 Generational Patterns by Denomination

Source: Gordon and Horowitz 1997. Based on the 1990 National Population Survey and the 1991 New York Jewish Population Study. Note: Figure assumes each denomination begins with the same number of people.

noted. Many Jewish religious rituals are centered in the home rather than in the synagogue, from lighting Sabbath candles to observing dietary laws. Therefore, Jews are far more likely to feel that children cannot be brought up in the faith without that family support.

The religious question facing Jews is not so much one of ideology as of observing the commandments of traditional Jewish law. The religious variations among the nearly 6 million Jewish Americans are a product of attempts to accommodate traditional rituals and precepts to life in the dominant society. It is in adhering to such rituals that Jews are most likely to be at odds with the Christian theme advanced in public schools, even if it appears only in holiday parties. In Chapter 1, we introduced the term **marginality** to describe the status of living in two distinct cultures simultaneously. Jews who give some credence to the secular aspects of Christmas celebrations exemplify individuals' accommodating themselves to two cultures. For all but the most Orthodox, this acceptance means disobeying commandments or even accepting non-Jewish traditions by singing Christmas carols or exchanging greeting cards.

Is there a widespread pattern among Jewish Americans of reviving the old ways? Some Jews, especially those secure in their position, have taken up renewed orthodoxy. It is difficult to say whether the sporadic rise of traditionalism among Jews is a significant force or a fringe movement. Novelist Tom Ross at age 67 retook his birth name, Tom Rosenberg. Shortly after coming to the United States, his parents volun-

### marginality

The status of being between two cultures at the same time, such as the status of Jewish immigrants in the United States.





tarily Anglicized their name. Now Tom wanted to take another step in reclaiming his roots. Still, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Jewish leaders in North America and Europe are much more likely to express concern about the increase in the number of secularized Jews than to find reasons to applaud an increase in Yiddishkait (Rosenberg 2000).

### Role of Cultural Heritage

For many Jews, religious observance is a very small aspect of their Jewishness. They express their identity instead in a variety of political, cultural, and social activities. For them, acts of worship, fasting, eating permitted foods, and the study of the Torah and the Talmud are irrelevant to being Jewish. Of course, religious Jews find such a position impossible to accept (Liebman 1973).

Many Gentiles mistakenly suppose that a measure of Jewishness is the ability to speak Yiddish. Few people have spoken as many languages as the Jews through their long history. Yiddish is only one, and it developed in Jewish communities in eastern Europe between the tenth and twelfth centuries. Fluency in Yiddish in the United States has been associated with the immigrant generation and the Orthodox. Sidney Goldstein and Calvin Goldscheider (1968) reported that evidence overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that linguistic assimilation among Jews is almost complete by the third generation. However, the 1960s and 1970s brought a slight increase in the use of Hebrew. This change probably resulted from increased pride in Israel and a greater interaction between that nation and the United States.

Overall, the differences between Jews and Gentiles have declined in the United States. To a large extent, this reduction is a product of generational changes typical of all ethnic groups. The first-generation Mexican American in Los Angeles contrasts sharply with the middle-class White living in suburban Boston. The convergence in culture and identity is much greater between the fourth-generation Mexican American and his or her White counterpart. A similar convergence is occurring among Jews. This change does not signal the eventual demise of the Jewish identity. Moreover, Jewish identity is not a single identity, as we can see from the heterogeneity in religious observance, dedication to Jewish and Israeli causes, and participation in Jewish organizations.

Being Jewish comes from the family, the faith, and the culture, but it does not require any one criterion. Jewishness transcends nation, religion, or culture. A sense of peoplehood is present that neither anti-Semitic bigotry nor even an ideal state of fellowship Hillel Houses, such as this one at the University of Southern California, are both social and spiritual gathering places for Jewish students on college campuses.



### peoplehood

Milton Gordon's term for a group with a shared feeling.

among all religions would destroy. American life may have drastically modified Jewish life in the direction of dominant society values, but it has not eliminated it. Milton Gordon (1964) refers to **peoplehood** as a group with a shared feeling. For Jews, this sense of identity originates from a variety of sources, past and present, both within and without (Goldscheider 2003).

# Conclusion

ewish Americans are the product of three waves of immigration originating from three different Jewish communities: the Sephardic, the western European, and the eastern European. They brought different languages and, to some extent, different levels of religious orthodoxy. Today, they have assimilated to form an ethnic group that transcends the initial differences in nationality.

Jews are not a homogeneous group. Among them are the Reform, the Conservative, and Orthodox denominations, listed in ascending order of adherence to traditional rituals. Nonreligious Jews make up another group, probably as large as any one segment, and still see themselves as Jewish.

Jewish identity is reaffirmed from within and outside the Jewish community; however, both sources of affirmation are weaker today. Identity is strengthened by the family, religion, and the vast network of national and community-based organizations. Anti-Semitism outside the Jewish community strengthens the in-group feeling and the perception that survival as a people is threatened.

Today, American Jews face a new challenge: They must maintain their identity in an overwhelmingly Christian society in which discrimination is fading and outbreaks of prejudice are sporadic. *Yiddishkait* may not so much have decreased as changed. Elements of the Jewish tradition have been shed in part because of modernization and social change. Some of this social change—a decline in anti-Semitic violence and restrictions—is certainly welcome. Although *kashrut* observance has declined, most Jews care deeply about Israel, and many engage in pro-Israel activities. Commitment has changed with the times, but it has not disappeared (S. Cohen 1988). Some members of the Jewish community view the apparent assimilation with alarm and warn against the grave likelihood of the total disappearance of a sizable and identifiable Jewish community in the United States. Others see the changes not as erosion but as an accommodation to a pluralistic, multicultural environment. We are witness to a progressive change in the substance and style of Jewish life. According to this view, Jewish identity, the Orthodox and Conservative traditions notwithstanding, has shed some of its traditional characteristics and has acquired others. The strength of this view comes with the knowledge that doomsayers have been present in the American Jewish community for at least two generations. Only the passage of time will reveal the future of Jewish life in the United States (Finestein 1988; Glazer 1990).

Despite their successes, Jews experience discrimination and prejudice, as does any subordinate group. Michael Lerner (1993:33), editor of the liberal Jewish journal *Tikkun*, declares that "Jews can only be deemed 'white' if there is massive amnesia on the part of non-Jews about the monumental history of anti-Semitism." As we noted earlier, reported episodes of anti-Semitism are on the increase in Europe and North America and even on the college campuses in the United States.

Although discrimination against Jews has gone on for centuries, far more ancient than anti-Semitism and the experience of the Diaspora is the subordinate role of women. Women were perhaps the first to be relegated to an inferior role and may be the last to work collectively to struggle for equal rights. Studying women as a subordinate group will reaffirm the themes in our study of racial and ethnic groups.

anti-Semitism 374 Diaspora 385 fringe-of-values theory 379 halakha 393 Holocaust 381

# Key Terms

Holocaust revisionists 381 in-group virtues 380 Judaization 376 kashrut 391 marginality 396 out-group vices 380 peoplehood 398 Yiddishkait 393 Zionism 385

# 399

# **Review Questions**

- 1. Why are the Jewish people most accurately characterized as an ethnic group?
- 2. How have the patterns of anti-Semitism changed or remained the same?
- 3. Why do African American–Jewish American relationships receive special scrutiny?
- 4. Why is maintaining Jewish identity so difficult in the United States?
- 5. Why does the family play such a critical role in Jewish identity?

# **Critical Thinking**

- 1. Most minority groups regard acceptance as a positive outcome. Why do some Jewish Americans seem threatened by being accepted in contemporary Gentile society?
- 2. Using the Jewish experience as a basis for comparison, how has fusion functioned or not functioned for any other subordinate group when compared with Jews in the United States?
- **3.** In Chapter 5, we presented Marcus Hansen's principle of third-generation interest. How does that apply or not apply to the generational differences displayed by denomination in Figure 14.5?
- **4.** How different and similar have the experiences of women in organized religion been, compared with those of women in the Jewish faith?

# Internet Connections—Research Navigator™

Follow the instructions found on page 35 of this text to access the features of Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>. Once at the Web site, enter your Login Name and Password. Then, to use the ContentSelect database, enter keywords such as "anti-Semitism," "bar mitzvah," "genocide," and "Holocaust," and the search engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology, and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.





# Ethnicity and Religion







## CHAPTER OUTLINE

Ethnic Diversity Why Don't We Study Whiteness? The Price Paid by White Ethnics The Irish Americans The Italian Americans Polish Americans The Language Divide

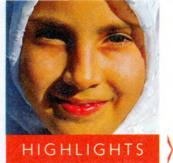
LISTEN TO OUR VOICES I Was Born in Tirana, by Harallamb Terba

## **Religious Pluralism**

RESEARCH FOCUS Measuring the Importance of Religion Ethnicity, Religion, and Social Class Religion in the United States Limits of Religious Freedom: The Am Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/Critical Thinking/ Internet Connections—Research Navigator™





HE UNITED STATES INCLUDES A MULTITUDE OF ETHNIC and religious groups. Do they coexist in harmony or in conflict? How significant are they as sources of identity for their members? Because White is a race, how this identity is socially constructed has received significant attention. Many White ethnic groups have transformed their ethnic status into Whiteness. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a resurgence of interest in White ethnicity, partly in response to the renewed pride in the ethnicity of Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans. We have an ethnicity paradox in which White ethnics seem to enjoy their heritage but at the same time seek to assimilate into the larger society. White ethnics are the victims of humor (or respectable bigotry) that some still consider socially acceptable, and they find themselves with little power in big business. Major White ethnic groups such as Irish, Italian, and Polish Americans have experienced similar yet distinctive social circumstances in the United States. Religious diversity continues and expands with immigration and growth in the followings of non-Christian faiths. Religious minorities experience intolerance in the present as they have in the past. Constitutional issues such as school prayer, secessionist minorities, creationism, and public religious displays are regularly taken to the Supreme Court. The Amish are presented as a case study of the experience of a specific religious group in the United States.

etty O'Keefe is a 60-year-old Californian who is a fifth-generation Irish American, meaning that her grandmother's grandmother came to the United States from Ireland. Sociologist Mary Waters (1990, 97) asked her what it was like growing up in the United States.

When I was in high school my maiden name was Tynan. This was 1940. I was dating some boys from school, and two different times when the parents found out I was an Irish Catholic, they told him he couldn't go out with me. The Protestants were like that. . . . One of his brothers later married someone named O'Flannery and I was so thrilled. I said I hope your mother is turning in her grave. So I am happy that my children have the name O'Keefe. So that people know right away what their background is. I think it is better. They would never be put in the position I was in.

Do you think something like that could happen now?

I don't think so openly. But I think it is definitely still there. You are not as bad (being an Irish Catholic) as a Black, but you are not Protestant. You are not Jewish either, which would be worse, but still you are not of their church.

Their names may be Badovich, Hoggarty, Jablonski, Reggio, or Williams. They may follow any one of thousands of faiths and gather at any of the 360,000 churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples. Our nation's motto is *E Pluribus Unum*, and although there may be doubt that we are truly united into one common culture following a single ideology, there is little doubt about our continuing diversity as a nation of peoples.

Indeed, the very complexity of relations between dominant and subordinate groups in the United States today is partly the result of its heterogeneous population. No one ethnic origin or religious faith encompasses all the inhabitants of the United States. Even though our largest period of sustained immigration is three generations past, an American today is surrounded by remnants of cultures and practitioners of religions whose origins are foreign to this country. Religion and ethnicity continue to be significant in defining a person's identity.

# **Ethnic Diversity**

The ethnic diversity of the United States at the beginning of the twenty-first century is apparent to almost everyone. Passersby in New York City were undoubtedly surprised once when two street festivals met head-to-head. The procession of San Gennaro, the patron saint of Naples, marched through Little Italy, only to run directly into a Chinese festival originating in Chinatown. Teachers in many public schools often encounter students who speak only one language, and it is not English. Students in Chicago are taught in Spanish, Greek, Italian, Polish, German, Creole, Japanese, Cantonese, or the language of a Native American tribe. In the Detroit metropolitan area, classroom instruction is conveyed in twenty-one languages, including Arabic, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Serbian. In many areas of the United States, you can refer to a special Yellow Pages and find a driving instructor who speaks Portuguese or a psychotherapist who will talk to you in Hebrew.

Germans are the largest ancestral group in the Untied States; the 2000 census showed almost one-sixth of Americans saying they had at least some German ancestry. Although most German Americans are assimilated, it is possible to see the ethnic tra-



What is the largest ethnic or ancestral group?

dition in some areas, particularly in Milwaukee, whose population has 48 percent German ancestry. There three Saturday schools teach German, and one can affiliate with thirty-four German American clubs and visit a German library that operates within the public library system. Just a bit to the south in River Forest, a Chicago suburb, *kinderwerksatt* meets weekly to help parents and children alike to maintain German culture (Carvajal 1996; Freedman 2004; Johnson 1992; Usdansky 1992).

Germany is one of twenty-one European nations from which at least 1 million people claim to have ancestry. The numbers are striking when one considers the size of some of the sending countries. For example, there are over 33 million Irish Americans, and the Republic of Ireland had a population of 3.7 million in 1998. Similarly, nearly 5 million people claim Swedish ancestry, and there are 8.9 million people living in Sweden today. Of course, many Irish Americans and Swedish Americans are of mixed ancestry, but not everyone in Ireland is Irish, nor is everyone in Sweden Swedish.

# Why Don't We Study Whiteness?

Race is socially constructed, as we learned in Chapter 1. Sometimes we come to define race in a clear-cut manner. A descendant of a Pilgrim is White, for example. But sometimes race is more ambiguous: People who are the children of an African American and Vietnamese American union are biracial or "mixed," or whatever they come to be seen as by others. Our recognition that race is socially constructed has sparked a renewed interest in what it means to be White in the United States. Two aspects of White as a race are useful to consider: the historical creation of whiteness and how contemporary White people reflect on their racial identity.

When the English immigrants established themselves as the political founders of the United States, they also came to define what it meant to be White. Other groups that today are regarded as White, such as Irish, Germans, Norwegians, or Swedes, were not always considered White in the eyes of the English. Differences in language and religious worship, as well as past allegiance to a king in Europe different from the English monarch, all caused these groups to be seen not so much as Whites in the Western Hemisphere but more as nationals of their home country who happened to be residing in North America.

The old distrust in Europe, where, for example, the Irish were viewed by the English as socially and culturally inferior, continued on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. Karl Marx, writing from England, reported that the average English worker looked down on the Irish the way poor Whites in the U.S. South looked down on Black people (Ignatiev 1994, 1995; Roediger 1994).

### Whiteness

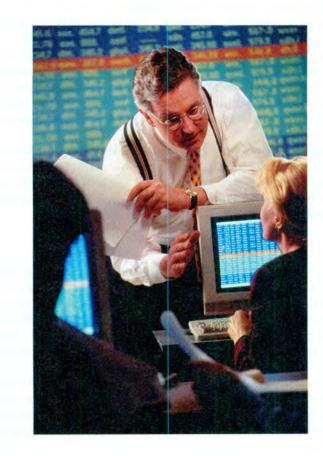
As European immigrants and their descendants assimilated to the English and distanced themselves from other oppressed groups such as American Indians and African Americans, they came to be viewed as White rather than as part of a particular culture. Writer Noel Ignatiev (1994, 84), contrasting being White with being Polish, argues that "Whiteness is nothing but an expression of race privilege." This strong statement argues that being White, as opposed to being Black or Asian, is characterized by being a member of the dominant group.

Whites as people don't think of themselves as a race or have a conscious racial identity. The only occasion when a White racial identity emerges is momentarily when Whites fill out a form asking for self-designation of race or one of those occasions when they are culturally or socially surrounded by people who are not White. Many immigrants who were not "White on arrival" had to "become White" in a process long forgotten by today's White Americans. The long documented transparent racial divide that engulfed the South during slavery allowed us to ignore how Whiteness was constructed.

Therefore, contemporary White Americans generally give little thought to "being White." Consequently, there is little interest in studying "Whiteness" or considering "being White" except that it is "not being Black." Unlike non-Whites, who are much more likely to interact with Whites, take orders from Whites, and see Whites as the leading figures in the mass media, Whites enjoy the privilege of not being reminded of their Whiteness.

Unlike racial minorities, Whites downplay the importance of their racial identity while being willing to receive the advantages that come from being White. This means that advocacy of a "color-blind" or "race-neutral" outlook permits the privilege of Whiteness to prevail (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Yancey 2003).

The new interest seeks to look at Whiteness but not from the vantage point of a White supremacist. Rather, focusing on White people as a race or on what it means today to be White goes beyond any definition that implies superiority over non-Whites. It is also recognized that "being White" is not the same experience for all Whites any more than "being Asian American" or "being Black" is the same for all Asian Americans or all Blacks. Historian Noel Ignatiev observes that studying Whiteness is a necessary stage to the "abolition of whiteness"—just as, in Marxist analysis, class consciousness is a necessary stage to the abolition of class. By confronting Whiteness, society grasps the all-encompassing power that accompanies socially constructed race (Lewis 2004; McKinney 2003; Roediger 2006).



White privilege, as described by Peggy McIntosh, includes holding a position in a company without coworkers suspecting it came about because of your race.

### White Privilege

Whiteness carries with it a sense of identity of being White as opposed to being, for example, Asian or African. For many people it may not be easy to establish a social identity of Whiteness, as in the case of biracial children. However, one can argue that the social identity of Whiteness exists if one enjoys the privilege of being White.

Scholar Peggy McIntosh of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women looked at the privilege that comes from being White and the added privilege of being male. The other side of racial oppression is the privilege enjoyed by dominant groups. Being White or being successful in establishing a White identity carries with it distinct advantages. Among those that McIntosh (1988) identified were:

- Being considered financially reliable when using checks, credit cards, or cash.
- Taking a job without having coworkers suspect it came about because of your race.
- Never having to speak for all the people of your race.
- Watching television or reading a newspaper and seeing people of your own race widely represented.
- Speaking effectively in a large group without being called a credit to your race.
- Assuming that if legal or medical help is needed your race will not work against you.

Whiteness does carry privileges, but most White people do not consciously think of them except on the rare occasions when they are questioned. We will return to the concepts of Whiteness and White privilege, but let us also consider the rich diversity of religion in the United States, which parallels the ethnic diversity of this nation.

### The Rediscovery of Ethnicity

Robert Park (1950, 205), a prominent early sociologist, wrote in 1913 that "a Pole, Lithuanian, or Norwegian cannot be distinguished, in the second generation, from an American, born of native parents." At one time, sociologists saw the end of ethnicity as nearly a foregone conclusion. W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole (1945) wrote in their often-cited *Yankee City* series that the future of ethnic groups seemed to be limited in the United States and that they would be quickly absorbed. Oscar Handlin's *Uprooted* (1951) told of the destruction of immigrant values and their replacement by American culture. Although Handlin was among the pioneers in investigating ethnicity, assimilation was the dominant theme in his work.

Many writers have shown almost a fervent hope that ethnicity would vanish. The persistence of ethnicity was for some time treated by sociologists as dysfunctional because it meant a continuation of old values that interfered with the allegedly superior new values. For example, to hold on to one's language delayed entry into the larger labor market and the upward social mobility it afforded. Ethnicity was expected to disappear not only because of assimilation but also because aspirations to higher social class and status demanded that it vanish. Somehow, it was assumed that one could not be ethnic and middle class, much less affluent.

### The Third-Generation Principle

Historian Marcus Hansen's (1952) **principle of third-generation interest** was an early exception to the assimilationist approach to White ethnic groups. Simply stated, Hansen maintained that in the third generation—the grandchildren of the original immigrants—ethnic interest and awareness would actually increase. According to Hansen, "What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember."

Hansen's principle has been tested several times since it was first put forth. John Goering (1971), in interviewing Irish and Italian Catholics, found that ethnicity was



How do white people sometimes take for granted what it means to be White?

# principle of third-generation interest

Marcus Hansen's contention that ethnic interest and awareness increase in the third generation, among the grandchildren of immigrants.



### symbolic ethnicity

Herbert Gans's term that describes emphasis on ethnic food and ethnically associated political issues rather than deeper ties to one's heritage. more important to members of the third generation than it was to the immigrants themselves. Similarly, Mary Waters (1990), in her interviews of White ethnics living in suburban San Jose, California, and suburban Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, observed many grandchildren wanting to study their ancestors' language, even though it would be a foreign language to them. They also expressed interest in learning more of their ethnic group's history and a desire to visit the homeland.

Social scientists in the past were quick to minimize the ethnic awareness of bluecollar workers. In fact, ethnicity was viewed as merely another aspect of White ethnics' alleged racist nature, an allegation that will be examined later in this chapter. Curiously, the very same intellectuals and journalists who bent over backward to understand the growing solidarity of Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans refused to give White ethnics the academic attention they deserved (Wrong 1972).

The new assertiveness of Blacks and other non-Whites of their rights in the 1960s unquestionably presented White ethnics with the opportunity to reexamine their own position. "If solidarity and unapologetic self-consciousness might hasten Blacks' upward mobility, why not ours?" asked the White ethnics, who were often only a half step above Blacks in social status. The African American movement pushed other groups to reflect on their past. The increased consciousness of Blacks and their positive attitude toward African culture and the contributions worldwide of African Americans are embraced in what we called the Afrocentric perspective (Chapter 1). Therefore, the mood was set in the 1960s for the country to be receptive to ethnicity. By legitimizing Black cultural differences from White culture, along with those of Native Americans and Hispanics, the country's opinion leaders legitimized other types of cultural diversity.

### Symbolic Ethnicity

Observers comment both on the evidence of assimilation and on the signs of ethnic identity that seem to support a pluralistic view of society. How can both be possible?

First, there is the very visible evidence of **symbolic ethnicity**, which may lead us to exaggerate the persistence of ethnic ties among White Americans. According to sociologist Herbert Gans (1979), ethnicity today increasingly involves the symbols of ethnicity, such as eating ethnic food, acknowledging ceremonial holidays such as St. Patrick's Day, and supporting specific political issues or the issues confronting the old country. One example was the push in 1998 by Irish Americans to convince state legislatures to make it compulsory in public schools to teach about the Irish potato



For many Irish American participants in a St. Patrick's Day Parade, this is their most visible expression of symbolic ethnicity during an entire year. famine, which was a significant factor in immigration to the United States. This symbolic ethnicity may be more visible, but this type of ethnic heritage does not interfere with what people do, read, or say, or even whom they befriend or marry.

The ethnicity of the twenty-first century embraced by English-speaking Whites is largely symbolic. It does not include active involvement in ethnic activities or participation in ethnic-related organizations. In fact, sizable proportions of White ethnics have gained large-scale entry into almost all clubs, cliques, and fraternal groups. Such acceptance is a key indicator of assimilation. Ethnicity has become increasingly peripheral to the lives of the members of the ethnic group. Although they may not relinquish their ethnic identity, other identities become more important.

Second, the ethnicity that does exist may be more a result of living in the United States than actual importing of practices from the past or the old country. Many socalled ethnic foods or celebrations, for example, began in the United States. The persistence of ethnic consciousness, then, may not depend on foreign birth, a distinctive language, and a unique way of life. Instead, it may reflect the experiences in the United States of a unique group that developed a cultural tradition distinct from that of the mainstream. For example, in Poland the *szlachta*, or landed gentry, rarely mixed socially with the peasant class. In the United States, however, even with those associations still fresh, they interacted together in social organizations as they settled in concentrated communities segregated physically and socially from others (Glazer 1971; Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Lopata 1994).

Third, maintaining ethnicity can be a critical step toward successful assimilation. This **ethnicity paradox** facilitates full entry into the dominant culture. The ethnic community may give its members not only a useful financial boost but also the psychological strength and positive self-esteem that will allow them to compete effectively in larger society. Thus, we may witness people participating actively in their ethnic enclave while trying to cross the bridge into the wider community (Lal 1995).

Therefore, ethnicity gives continuity with the past in the form of an affective or emotional tie. The significance of this sense of belonging cannot be emphasized enough. Whether reinforced by distinctive behavior or by what Milton Gordon (1964) called a sense of "peoplehood," ethnicity is an effective, functional source of cohesion. Proximity to fellow ethnics is not necessary for a person to maintain social cohesion and in-group identity. Fraternal organizations or sports-related groups can preserve associations between ethnics who are separated geographically. Members of ethnic groups may even maintain their feelings of in-group solidarity after leaving ethnic communities in the central cities for the suburban fringe.

# The Price Paid by White Ethnics

Many White ethnics have shed their past and want only to be Americans with no ancestral ties to another country. Some ethnics do not want to abandon their heritage, but to retain their past as a part of their present, they must pay a price because of prejudice and discrimination. Although the levels of present and past intolerance toward White ethnics are much less than those we saw in Chapters 2 and 3 toward African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, this intolerance is a part of multicultural America.

### Prejudice Toward White Ethnic Groups

Our examination of immigration to the United States in Chapter 4 pointed out the mixed feelings that have greeted European immigrants. They are apparently still not well received. In 1944, well after most immigration from Poland had ended, the Polish-American Congress, an umbrella organization of forty Polish fraternities, was

ethnicity paradox

The maintenance of one's ethnic ties in a way that can assist with assimilation in larger society. founded to defend the image of Polish Americans. Young Polish Americans are made to feel ashamed of their ethnic origin when teachers find their names unpronounceable and when they hear Polish jokes bandied about in a way that anti-Black or anti-Semitic humor is not. One survey found that half of second-generation Polish Americans encounter prejudice.

Curiously, it was socially proper to condemn the White working class as racist but improper to question the negative attitude of middle-class people toward White ethnics. Michael Lerner (1969) called this hostility toward White ethnics **respectable bigotry**. Polish jokes are acceptable, whereas anti-Black humor is considered to be in poor taste.

White ethnics in the early 1970s felt that the mass media unfairly ridiculed them and their culture while celebrating Black Power and African culture. For instance, Italian Americans remain concerned that their image is overwhelmed by stereotypes of organized crime, spaghetti, overweight mothers, and sexy women. Even television's Italian police seem to conform to the old stereotypes. In response to such stereotyping, the Columbian Coalition, founded in 1971, employs lawyers to handle cases of Italian Americans who claim they are victims of bigotry.

Even the broad group of White ethnics who still dominate Roman Catholicism have expressed feelings of being victimized. In 2000, a Roman Catholic was appointed chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives for the first time. This led to angry sentiments against a Catholic being granted this symbolic position rather than keeping it in the hands of the Protestant clergy. About the same time, candidate George W. Bush appeared at the avowedly anti-Catholic Bob Jones University during the South Carolina primary campaign. The response to this appearance raised questions in some quarters about lingering hostility toward Roman Catholics and the Roman Catholic Church. A national survey taken of Roman Catholics at that time found that the majority (56 percent) did not believe such a bias existed, but one-third did perceive the presence of anti-Catholic bias in the country (Bendyna and Pearl 2000).

### The Prejudice of Ethnics

In the 1960s, as the civil rights movement moved north, White ethnics replaced the southern White as the typical bigot portrayed in the mass media. The chanting of protestors resulted in ugly incidents that made White ethnics and bigots synonymous. This stereotype of the prejudiced White ethnic has rarely been questioned. The danger of this and any stereotype is that it becomes indistinguishable from fact. David Matza (1964, 1) referred to these mental pictures that "tend to remain beyond the reach of such intellectual correctives as argument, criticism and scrutiny. . . . Left unattended, they return to haunt us by shaping or bending theories that purport to explain major social phenomena." This 1964 picture of ethnics and the degree of truth behind it must be examined.

The first issue to resolve is whether White ethnic groups are more prejudiced than other Whites. Sociologist Andrew Greeley (1974a, 1977; Nie, Curry, and Greeley 1974) examined attitudes toward race, social welfare, and U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The evidence pointed to minimal differences between ethnics and others. Some of the differences actually showed greater tolerance and liberalism among White ethnics. For example, White ethnics were more in favor of welfare programs and more opposed to this country's participation in the Vietnam War.

Even when more sophisticated statistical analysis is introduced, the overall finding remains unchanged. No evidence supports the image of White ethnics as bigots. Greeley (1974a, 202) concludes, "Our argument is not that ethnics are the last bastion of liberalism in America today, but rather that it is a misrepresentation of the facts to picture them as a vanguard of conservatism." However, working-class ethnic neighborhoods have undeniably been the scene of ugly racial confrontations. If ethnics are no

### respectable bigotry

Michael Lerner's term for the social acceptance of prejudice against White ethnics, when intolerance against non-White minorities is regarded as unacceptable. more bigoted than others, how have such incidents come to occur, and how has this reputation developed? For that answer, the unique relationship between White ethnic groups and African Americans must be understood.

In retrospect, it should be no surprise that one group that has been antagonistic to African Americans is the White ethnics. For many citizens, including White ethnics, the United States they remembered from the 1950s seemed to change. When politicians told people in the 1960s, "We must fight poverty and discrimination," this translated to White ethnics as, "Share your job, share your neighborhood, but pay more taxes." Whites recalled how, in several generations, they had moved from membership in a poor immigrant group to becoming a prosperous part of the working class. Government assistance to the poor was almost nonexistent then, public education was more limited, and subsidized training programs were absent. Why was it different now? Many White ethnics found it difficult to understand why African Americans seemed to be singled out as a cause for concern in the 1960s when they perceived that they, too, had real needs (Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Novak 1996; Sanders and Morawska 1975; Tyler 1972).

White ethnics went so far as to turn their backs on federal aid offered them because they did not want to have their neighborhoods marked as "poverty pockets," nor did they want to be associated with Black-oriented programs. In Newark, New Jersey, Italians successfully prevented an antipoverty office from being established and thereby cut off the jobs its programs would have created (Barbaro 1974). This ethnic opposition to publicly sponsored programs was not new. James Wilson and Edward Banfield (1964) studied elections in seven major cities between 1956 and 1963 for referenda to build new hospitals, parks, and schools. The results indicated that the least support came from White ethnics, who would have paid the least and benefited the most.

White ethnics first learned that they are not considered part of the dominant group, but in time, through assimilation, they came to be redefined to enjoy most of the White privileges we identified earlier. We now look at three different White ethnic groups to explore how the sense of privilege can change over time.

# The Irish Americans

The Irish presence in the United States stretches back to the 1600s and reflects a diversity based on time of entry, settlement area, and religion. Irish Americans have been visible both in a positive way in terms of playing a central role in American life and also in a negative way at certain historical periods being victimized like so many other immigrant groups.

### Early Irish Immigration (before 1845)

The Protestants dominated the early Irish immigration to the colonies even though these Presbyterians from Ireland of Scotch descent accounted for only one out of ten, at most one out of seven, of the island of Ireland's residents in the eighteenth century. Motivating the early immigrants was the lure of free land in North America, which was in sharp contrast to Ireland where more and more tenants had to compete for land. The powerful landlords there took full advantage by squeezing more and more profits out of the tenants, making migration to colonial America attractive.

The Roman Catholics among the early immigrants were a diverse group. Some were extensions of the privileged classes seeking even greater prosperity. Protestant settlers of all national backgrounds were united in their hatred of Catholicism. In most of the colonies, Catholics could not practice their faith openly and either struggled inwardly or converted to Anglicanism. Other Roman Catholics and some Protestants came as an alternative to prison or after signing articles of indenture arriving bound to labor for periods of customarily three to five years but sometimes as long as seven years (Meagher 2005). The American Revolution temporarily stopped the flow of immigration, but soon deteriorating economic conditions in Ireland spurred even greater movement to North America. British officials, by making passage to the newly formed republic of the United States expensive, diverted many immigrants to British North America (Canada). Yet the numbers to the United States remained significant and, although still primarily Protestant, drew from a broader spectrum of Ireland both economically and geographically.

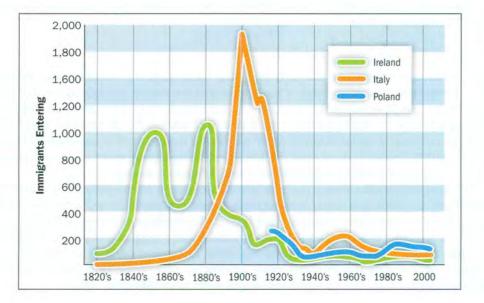
Many mistakenly overlook this early immigration and begin with Irish immigration during the Great Famine. Yet the Irish were the largest group after the English among immigrants during the colonial period. The historical emphasis on the famine immigrants is understandable given the role it played in Ireland and its impetus for the massive transfer of population from Ireland to the United States.

### The Famine Years

In 1845, a fungus wiped out the potato crop of Ireland, as well as much of western Europe and even coastal America. Potatoes were particularly central to the lives of the Irish and the devastating starvation did not begin to recede until 1851. Mortality was high especially among the poor and in the more agricultural areas of the island. Predictably to escape catastrophe, some 2 million fled mostly to England but then many continued on to the United States. From 1841 through 1890, over 3.2 million Irish arrived in the United States. (See Figure 5.1)

This new migration fleeing the old country was much more likely to consist of families rather than single men. This arrival of entire households and extended kinship networks increased significantly the rapid formation of Irish social organizations in the United States. This large influx of immigrants led to the creation of ethnic neighborhoods complete with parochial schools and parish churches serving as focal points. Fraternal organizations such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians, corner saloons, local political organizations, and Irish nationalist groups seeking the ouster of Britain from Ireland rounded out neighborhood social life.

Even in the best of times, the lives of the famine Irish would have been challenging in the United States but they arrived at a very difficult time. Nativist—that is, anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant—movements were already emerging and being embraced by politicians.



# FIGURE 5.1 Immigration from Ireland, Italy, and Poland

Note: Immigration after 1925 from Northern Ireland not included. No separate data for Poland from (1900 to 1920.

Source: Office of Immigration Statistics. Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2005. Washington, DC: Office of Immigration Statistics, 2006. Table 2. From independence until around 1820, little evidence appeared of the anti-Catholic sentiment of colonial days, but the cry against Roman Catholicism grew as Irish immigration increased. Prominent citizens encouraged hatred of these new arrivals. Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph and an accomplished painter, wrote a strongly worded anti-Catholic work in 1834 titled *A Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States.* Morse felt that the Irish were shamefully illiterate and deserved no respect. In the minds of prejudiced people, the Irish were particularly unwelcome because they were Catholic. Many readily believed Morse's warning that the Pope planned to move the Vatican to the Mississippi River Valley.

This antagonism was not limited to harsh words. From 1834 to 1854, mob violence against Catholics across the country led to death, the burning of a Boston convent, the destruction of a Catholic church and the homes of Catholics, and the use of Marines and state militia to bring peace to American cities as far west as St. Louis.

In retrospect, the reception given to the Irish is not difficult to understand. Many immigrated after the potato crop failure and famine in Ireland. They fled not so much to a better life as from almost certain death. The Irish Catholics brought with them a celibate clergy, who struck the New England aristocracy as strange and reawakened old religious hatreds. The Irish were worse than Blacks according to the dominant Whites, because unlike the slaves and even the freed Blacks, who "knew their place," the Irish did not suffer their maltreatment in silence. Employers balanced minorities by judiciously mixing immigrant groups to prevent unified action by the laborers. For the most part, nativist efforts only led the foreign born to emphasize their ties to Europe.

By the 1850s, nativism became an open political movement pledged to vote only for "native" Americans, to fight Catholicism, and to demand a twenty-one-year naturalization period. Party members were instructed to divulge nothing about their program and to say that they knew nothing about it. As a result, they came to be called the Know-Nothings. Although the Know-Nothings soon vanished, the anti-alien mentality survived and occasionally became formally organized into such societies as the Ku Klux Klan in the 1860s and the anti-Catholic American Protective Association in the 1890s. Revivals of anti-Catholicism continued well into the twentieth century.

Mostly of peasant backgrounds, the Irish arriving were ill-prepared to compete successfully for jobs in the city. Their children found it much easier to improve their occupational status over that of their fathers as well as experiencing upward mobility in their own lifetimes.

### **Becoming White**

Ireland had a long antislavery tradition including practices that prohibited Irish trade in English slaves. Some 60,000 Irish signed an address in 1841 petitioning Irish Americans to join the abolitionist movement in the United States. Many Irish Americans already opposed to slavery applauded the appeal, but they were soon drowned out by fellow immigrants with denouncing or questioning the authenticity of the petition.

The Irish immigrants, subjected to derision and menial jobs, sought to separate themselves from the even lower classes and particularly Black Americans and especially the slaves. It was not altogether clear that the Irish were "white" during the antebellum period. Irish character was rigidly cast in negative racial typology. Although the shared experiences of oppression could have led Irish Americans to allay with Black Americans, they grasped for Whiteness at the margins of their life in the United States. Direct competition was not common between the two groups. For example, in 1855, Irish immigrants made up 87 percent of New York City's unskilled laborers whereas free Blacks accounted for only 3 percent (Greeley 1981; Ignatiev 1995; Roediger 1994).

In 1863, the Union government implemented a national conscription law to fight in the Civil War. Men could avoid service by presenting an acceptable substitute or paying \$300. Irish Americans already experiencing heavy losses had grown tired of the war. Opposition to conscription was widespread but especially visible in Boston and New York City. The opposition grew violent in New York City with participants, mostly poor Irish American, striking out first against symbols of the government and then targeting African American organizations and even individual Blacks. The vandalism and violence were aimed at those even weaker than the working-class Irish who resented "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight." The "Draft Riots of 1863," as they came to be called, violently showed the dilemma many Irish Americans felt of fighting for the freedom of their Negro competitors in the labor market. Eventually the rioters were quelled with the dispatch of troops fresh from Gettysburg including Irish American soldiers.

As Irish immigration continued in the latter part of the nineteenth century until Irish independence in 1921, they began to see themselves favorably in comparison to the initial waves of Italian, Polish, and Slovak Roman Catholic immigrants. The Irish Americans began to assume more leadership positions in politics and labor unions. Loyalty to the church still played a major role. By 1910, the priesthood was the professional occupation of choice for second-generation men. Irish women were more likely than their German and English immigrant counterparts to become schoolteachers. In time Irish Americans' occupational profiles diversified and they began to experience slow advancement and gradually were welcomed into the White working class as their identity as "White" overcame any status as "immigrant."

With mobility came social class distinctions within Irish America. The immigrants and their children who began to move into the more affluent urban areas were derogatorily referred to as the "lace-curtain Irish." The lower-class Irish immigrants they left behind, meanwhile, were referred to as the "shanty Irish." But as immigration from Ireland slowed and upward mobility quickened, fewer and fewer Irish qualified as the poor cousins of their predecessors.

In the 1950s, as in the nineteenth century, economic hard times in Ireland spurred immigration to the United States. However, a cap of 2,000 immigrants from any one European country led to the sporadic influx of illegal immigrants from the Republic of Ireland. Congressional action in 1987 included a provision that resulted in another 16,000 visas for Irish immigrants. This recent experience with immigration controls led several national and local Irish American organizations to stand with those in 2006 who protested for procedures to allow illegal immigrants to apply for citizenship.

In the twentieth century, the most visible components of Irish American life had roots that are still visible in the twenty-first century. Extended formal schooling was stressed and entering professions, especially the law, was encouraged. The Irish with their long struggle for political independence comprehended the essentials of representative government. Politics and civic employment opportunities, such as law enforcement, became a critical path both to influence and upward mobility. This pattern continues today. Indeed, of the 345 firefighters who perished in New York City's Twin Trade Towers collapse of September 11, 2001, 145 were members of the Emerald Society, the fire department's Irish American fraternal group (Meagher 2005, 610).

For the Irish American man, the priesthood was viewed as a desirable and respected occupation. Irish Americans furthermore played a leadership role in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. The Irish dominance persisted long after other ethnic groups swelled the ranks of the faithful (Fallows 1979; Lee and Casey 2006).

### Contemporary Irish Americans

In the 2000 census, people identifying as Irish accounted for 30.5 million people second only to German ancestry. Yet this represented a decline of over 8.2 million people self-identifying as Irish from 1990, a product of assimilation rather than to any out-migration. Contemporary Irish immigration is relatively slight accounting for perhaps 1 out of 1,000 legal arrivals today compared to over a third of all immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s. About 202,000 people in the United States were born in Ireland—comparable to the numbers of Portuguese born in the United States. Today's Irish American typically enjoys the symbolic ethnicity of food, dance, and music. Gaelic language instruction is limited to less than thirty colleges. Visibility as a collective ethnic group is greatest with the annual St. Patrick's Day celebrations when everyone seems to be Irish or with the occasional fervent nationalism aimed at curtailing Great Britain's role in Northern Ireland. Yet some stereotypes remain concerning excessive drinking despite available data indicating that alcoholism rates are no higher and sometimes lower among people of Irish ancestry compared to descendants of other European immigrant groups.

St. Patrick's Day celebrations, as noted previously, offer an example of how ethnic identity evolves over time. The Feast of St. Patrick has a long history but the public celebrations with parties, concerts, and parades originated in the United States, which were then exported to Ireland in the latter part of the twentieth century.

Well-known Irish Americans span society including the celebrity chef Bobby Flay, actor Philip Seymour Hoffman, comedian Conan O'Brien, and author Frank McCourt as well as the political dynasties of Kennedy in Massachusetts and Daley in Chicago. Reflecting growing rates of intermarriage, Irish America also includes singer Mariah Carey (her mother Irish and her father African American and Venezuelan).

The Irish were the first immigrant group to encounter prolonged organized resistance. Strengthened by continued immigration, facility with the English language, building on strong community and family networks, and familiarity with representative politics, Irish Americans became an integral part of the Untied States.

# The Italian Americans

Although each European country's immigration to the United States has created its own social history, the case of Italians, though not typical of every nationality, offers insight into the White ethnic experience. Italians immigrated even during the colonial period, and they played prominent roles during the American Revolution and the early days of the republic. Mass immigration began in the 1880s, peaking in the first twenty years of the twentieth century, when Italians accounted for one-fourth of European immigration.



Italian Americans celebrate a religious festival in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Italian immigration was concentrated not only in time but also by geography. The majority of the immigrants were landless peasants from rural southern Italy, the Mezzogiorno. Although many people in the United States assume that Italians are a nationality with a single culture, this is not true either culturally or economically. The Italian people recognize multiple geographic divisions reflecting sharp cultural distinctions. These divisions were brought with the immigrants to the New World.

Many Italians, especially in the early years of mass immigration in the nineteenth century, received their jobs through an ethnic labor contractor, the *padrone*. Similar arrangements have been used by Asian, Hispanic, and Greek immigrants, where the labor contractors, most often immigrants, have mastered sufficient English to mediate for their compatriots. Exploitation was common within the padrone system through kickbacks, provision of inadequate housing, and withholding of wages. By World War I, 90 percent of Italian girls and 99 percent of Italian boys in New York City were leaving school at age 14 to work, but by that time Italian Americans were sufficiently fluent in English to seek out work on their own, and the padrone system had disappeared.

Along with manual labor, the Catholic Church was a very important part of Italian Americans' lives at this time. Yet they found little comfort in a Catholic church dominated by an earlier immigrant group: the Irish. The traditions were different; weekly attendance for Italian Americans was overshadowed by the religious aspects of the *feste* (or festivals) held throughout the year in honor of saints (the Irish viewed the feste as practically a form of paganism). These initial adjustment problems were overcome with the establishment of ethnic parishes, a pattern repeated by other non-Irish immigrant groups. Thus, parishes would be staffed by Italian priests, sometimes imported for that purpose. Although the hierarchy of the church adjusted more slowly, Italian Americans were increasingly able to feel at home in their local parish church. Today, more than 70 percent of Italian Americans identify themselves as Roman Catholics (Luconi 2001).

As assimilation proceeded, Italian Americans began to construct a social identity as a nationality group rather than viewing themselves in terms of their village or province. As shown in Figure 5.2, over time, Italian Americans shed old identities for a new one. As immigration from Italy declined, the descendants' ties became more nationalistic. This move from local or regional to national identity was followed by Irish and Greek Americans. The changing identity of Italian Americans reflected the treatment they received in the United States, where non-Italians did not make those regional distinctions. However, they were not treated well. For example, in turn-of-thecentury New Orleans, Italian Americans established special ties to the Black community because both groups were marginalized in southern society. Gradually, Italian Americans became White and enjoyed all the privileges that come with it. Today it would be inconceivable to imagine that Italian Americans of New Orleans would reach out to the African American community as their natural allies on social and political issues (Guglielmo and Salemo 2003; Luconi 2001).



### FIGURE 5.2 Constructing Social Identity Among Italian Immigrants

Over time Italian Americans moved from seeing themselves in terms of their provincial or village identity to their national identity, and then they successfully became indistinguishable from other Whites. A controversial aspect of the Italian American experience involves organized crime, as typified by Al Capone (1899–1947). Arriving in U.S. society in the bottom layers, Italians lived in decaying, crime-ridden neighborhoods that became known as Little Italies. For a small segment of these immigrants, crime was a significant means of upward social mobility. In effect, entering and leading criminal activity was one aspect of assimilation, though not a positive one. Complaints linking ethnicity and crime actually began in colonial times with talk about the criminally inclined Irish and Germans, and they continue with contemporary stereotyping about such groups as Colombian drug dealers and Vietnamese street gangs. Yet the image of Italians as criminals has persisted from Prohibition-era gangsters to the view of mob families today. As noted earlier, it is not at all surprising that groups such as the Columbian Coalition have been organized to counter such negative images.

The fact that Italians often are characterized as criminal, even in the mass media, is another example of what we have called respectable bigotry toward White ethnics. The persistence of linking Italians, or any other minority group, with crime probably is attributable to attempts to explain a problem by citing a single cause: the presence of perceived undesirables. Many Italian Americans still see their image tied to old stereotypes. A 2001 survey of Italian American teenagers found that 39 percent felt the media presented their ethnic group as criminal or gang members and 34 percent as restaurant workers (Girardelli 2004; National Italian American Foundation 2001).

The immigration of Italians was slowed by the national origin system, described in Chapter 4. As Italian Americans settled permanently, the mutual aid societies that had grown up in the 1920s to provide basic social services began to dissolve. More slowly, education came to be valued by Italian Americans as a means of upward mobility. Even becoming more educated did not ward off prejudice, however. In 1930, for example, President Herbert Hoover rebuked Fiorello La Guardia, then an Italian American member of Congress from New York City, stating that "the Italians are predominantly our murderers and bootleggers" and recommending that La Guardia "go back to where you belong" because, "like a lot of other foreign spawn, you do not appreciate this country which supports you and tolerates you" (Baltzell 1964:30).

While U.S. troops, including 500,000 Italian Americans, battled Italy during World War II, some hatred and sporadic violence emerged against Italian Americans and their property. However, they were not limited to actions against individuals. Italian Americans were even confined by the federal government in specific areas of California by virtue of their ethnicity alone, and 10,000 were relocated from coastal areas. In addition, 1,800 Italian Americans who were citizens of Italy were placed in an intermment camp in Montana. The internees were eventually freed on Columbus Day 1942 as President Roosevelt lobbied the Italian American community to gain full support for the impending land invasion of Italy (Department of Justice 2001a; Fox 1990).

In politics, Italian Americans have been more successful, at least at the local level, where family and community ties can be translated into votes. However, political success did not come easily because many Italian immigrants anticipated returning to their homeland and did not always take neighborhood politics seriously. It was even more difficult for Italian Americans to break into national politics.

Not until 1962 was an Italian American named to a cabinet-level position. Geraldine Ferraro's nomination as the Democratic vice presidential candidate in 1984 was every bit as much an achievement for Italian Americans as it was for women. The opposition to the nomination of Judge Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court in 2006 struck many as bordering on anti–Italian American sentiments in the manner it was advanced. Numerous critics used the phrase "Judge Scalito" in obvious reference to the sitting Italian American on the Court, Justice Antonio Scalia (Cornacchia and Nelson 1992; National Italian American Foundation 2006).

A recent study of the members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a group of nearly 4,000 members drawn from throughout the academic and scientific worlds, showed that Italian Americans are represented well below their representation on the nation's faculties. Ethnic disadvantage has not disappeared entirely (Alba and Abdel-Hady 2005).

There is no paucity of famous Italian Americans. They include athletes like Joe DiMaggio and Joe Paterno, politician Rudolph Giullani, director Francis Ford Coppola, singer Madonna, comedian Jay Leno, writer Mario Puzo, actor Nicholas Cage, chef Rachel Ray, and auto racing legend Mario Andretti.

In 2000, the 15.9 million people of Italian ancestry accounted for about 6 percent of the population, although only a small fraction of them had actually been born in Italy. Italian Americans still remain the seventh-largest immigrant group. Just how ethnically conscious is the Italian American community? Although the number is declining, 1 million Americans speak Italian at home; only six languages are spoken more frequently at home (Spanish, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog [Philippines], and German). For another 14-plus million Italian Americans, however, the language tie to their culture is absent, and depending on their degree of assimilation, only traces of symbolic ethnicity may remain. In a later section we will look at the role that language plays for many immigrants and their children (Shin and Bruno 2003).

# **Polish Americans**

Immigrants from Poland have had experiences similar to that of the Irish and Italians. They had to overcome economic problems and personal hardships just to make the journey. Once in the United States they found themselves often assigned to the jobs many citizens had not wanted to do. They had to adjust to a new language, a familiar yet different culture. And always they were looking back to the family members left behind who either wanted to join them in the United States or, in contrast, never wanted them to leave in the first place.

Like other arrivals, many Poles sought improvement in their lives, the Za Chlebem (For Bread) migration. The Poles who came were, at different times, more likely than many other European immigrants to see themselves as forced immigrants and were often described by and themselves adopted the terminology directly reflecting this social roles *exiles, refugees, displaced persons* or *émigrés.* The primary force for this exodus was the changing political status of Poland itself through most the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which was as turbulent as were the lives of the new arrivals.

### Early Immigration

Polish immigrants were among the settlers at Jamestown, Virginia in 1608 to help develop the colony's timber industry but it was the Poles that came later in that century that made a lasting mark. The successful exploits of Polish immigrants such as cavalry officer Casimir Pulaski and military engineer Thaddeus Kosciuszko are still commemorated today in communities with large Polish American populations. As we can see in Figure 5-1, it was not until the 1890s that Polish immigration was significant in comparison to some other European arrivals. Admittedly it is difficult to document exactly the size of this immigration because Poland or parts of the country became part, at various historical periods, of Austria-Hungary, Germany (Prussia), and the Soviet Union so that the migrants were not officially coming from a nation called "Poland."

Many of the Polish immigrants were adjusting not only to a new culture but also to a more urban way of life. Sociologists William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki in their classic study *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* traced the path from rural Poland to urban America. Many of the peasants did not necessarily come directly to the United States but first traveled through other European countries. This pattern is not unique and reminds us that, even today, many immigrants have crossed several countries sometimes establishing themselves for a period of time before finally settling in the United States (Thomas and Znaniecki 19187–1920).

Like the Italians and Irish, they arrived at the large port cities of the East Coast but, unlike them, the Polish immigrants were more likely to settle in cities further inland or work in mines in Pennsylvania. In such areas they would join kinfolk or acquaintances through the process of chain migration described in the previous chapter.

The reference to coal mining as an occupation reflects the continuing tendency of immigrants at work in jobs avoided by U.S. citizens because they paid little or were dangerous or both. For example, in September 1897, a group of miners in Lattimer, Pennsylvania, marched to demand safer working conditions and an end to special taxes placed only on foreign-born workers. In the ensuing confrontation with local officials, police officers shot at the protesters killing nineteen people, most of whom were Polish, the others Lithuanians and Slovaks (Duszak 1997).

#### Polonia

With growing numbers, the emergence of *Polonia* (meaning Polish American communities) became more common in cities throughout the Midwest. Male immigrants who came alone often took shelter through a system of inexpensive boarding houses called *tryzmanie bortnków* (brother-keeping), which allowed the new arrival to save and send money back to Poland to support his family. These funds eventually provided the financial means necessary to bring family members over, adding to the size of Polonia in such cities as Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and above all in Chicago where the population of Poles was second only to Warsaw, Poland.

Religion has played an important role among the Polish immigrants and their descendants. Most of the Polish immigrants who came to the United States prior to World War I were Roman Catholic. They quickly established their own parishes where new arrivals could feel welcomed. Although religious services at that time were in the Latin language, as they had been in Poland, the many service organizations around the parish, not to mention the Catholic schools, kept the immigrants steeped in the Polish language and the latest happenings back home. Jewish Poles began immigrating during the first part of the twentieth century to escape the growing hostility they felt in Europe that culminated in the Holocaust. Their numbers swelled greatly until movement from Poland stopped with the invasion of Poland by Germany in 1939 and then resumed again after the war.

Although the Jewish–Catholic distinction may be the most obvious distinguishing factor among Polish Americans, there are other divisions as well. Regional subgroups such as the Kashubes, the Górali, and the Mazurians have often carried great significance. Some Poles emigrated from areas where German actually was the language of origin.

Feelings about Poland and its future have both served to unify Polonia and at time reflect the political, economic, and culture divisions of the poles' ancestral homeland, which they have been able to follow through the dozens of Polish-language local and national newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and cable television news shows.

As with other immigrant groups, Polish Americans could make use of a rich structure of self-help voluntary associations that was already well established by the 1890s. Besides providing economic assistance and social networks, these organizations also directed attention to the political and ideological controversies that swirled around back in Poland. Groups like the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union, both headquartered in Chicago, had well over a hundred thousand members for most of the twentieth century.



Richie Sambora, guitarist with the rock group Bon Jovi, is one of many well-known Polish Americans.

> Like many other newcomers, Poles have been stigmatized as outsiders but also stereotyped as simple and uncultured—the typical biased view of working-class White ethnics. Their struggles in manual occupations placed them in direct competition with other White ethnics and African Americans, which occasionally led to labor disputes and longer-term tense and emotional rivalries. "Polish jokes" continue now to have a remarkable shelf life in casual conversation well into the twenty-first century. Jewish Poles suffer the added indignities of anti-Semitism.

#### The Contemporary Picture

Today Polonia numbers 9 million. Although this may not seem significant in a country of over 300 million, we need to recall that today Poland itself has a population of only about 39 million. Whether it was to support the efforts of Lech Walesa, Solidarity movement leader confronting the Soviet Union in the 1980s, or to celebrate the elevation of Karol Józef Wojtyla as Pope John Paul II in 1978, Polish Americans are a central part of the global Polish community.

Aging Polish American communities have received an influx of new arrivals since 1989 as elections in Poland marked the end of Soviet dominance, allowing Poles to join their relatives and facilitating immigration of entire households. Poland's entry into NATO in 1999 and the European Union in 2004 smoothed the way even further for Poles to migrate to Western Europe and on to the United States.

Many Polish Americans have retained little of their rich cultural traditions and may barely acknowledge even symbolic ethnicity. Others are still immersed in Polonia and their lives still revolve around many of the same religious and social institutions that were the center of Polonia a century ago. For example, as of 2006, fifty-four Roman Catholic churches in the metropolitan Chicago area still offer Polish-language masses. Although in many of these parishes there may be only one service in Polish serving a declining number of celebrants, a few traditional "Polish" churches actually still have Polish-speaking priests in residence.

Polish core neighborhoods and strips of stores proudly proclaiming their Polish connections still abound but increasingly Polish Americans have moved into suburban

communities—first to inner-ring suburbs and then out to the further reaches of metropolitan centers. This migration outward from the traditional ethnic enclaves is evidence of upward mobility and growing diversity in occupations and leisure-time pursuits.

In the latter part of the twentieth century some of the voluntary associations relocated or built satellite centers to serve the outlying Polish American populations. These social organizations also reached out of the central cities in order to tap into the financial resources of suburban Poles to sustain their activities financially. Yet also increasingly people of Polish descent have now made their way into the same social networks populated by Irish, Italian, and other ethnic Americans (Bukowcyk 1996; Erdmans 1998, 2006; Jaroszynska-Kirchman 1996; Lopata 1994; Mocha 1998; Polzin 1973).

Among the many Polish Americans well known or remembered today are actor Adrien Brody, home designer Martha (Kostyra) Stewart, comedian Jack Benny (Benjamin Kubelsky), guitarist Richie Sambora of the rock group Bon Jovi, actress Jane Kaczmarek of *Malcolm and the Middle*, entertainer Liberace, *Wheel of Fortune* host Pat Sajak, baseball star Stan Musial, football star Mike Ditka, Senator Barbara Mikulski, singer Bobby Vinton (Stanley Ventula, Jr.), polio vaccine pioneer Albert Sabin, and director Stanley Kubrick.

# The Language Divide

One evening in Chicago, Audrey Cho faced her ten adult students holding a handout listing federal holidays and asked, "Who is Washington?" Confused looks came over the faces of the Korean, Mexican, Peruvian, and Mongolian immigrants. Finally, someone raised his hand and said, "February 16th?" Cho, herself having immigrated from South Korea, remained patient and stated "No, it's who, not when." Learning English may not be easy but many immigrants of all ages are trying (Kaneya 2004 6).

In "Listen to Our Voices," Albanian immigrant Harallamb Terba speaks to his efforts to attend Truman College, the Chicago city college, and become a part of American society. Language is both a barrier and a means to accomplishing that.

Language is key to people's functioning in a society, and it is critical in relation to how they see themselves. But when that language is different from the dominant tongue, it can be the source of hardship and stigmatization. About 18 percent of the population speaks a language other than English, as shown in Figure 5.3 (Shin and Bruno 2003).

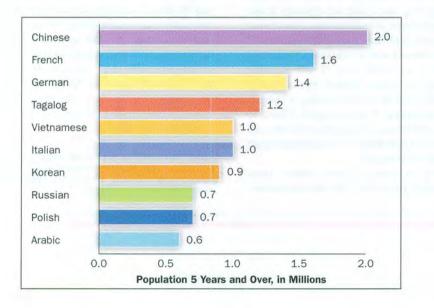


FIGURE 5.3 Ten Languages Most Frequently Spoken at Home Other Than English and Spanish Source: Data for 2000 released in 2003 in Shin and Bruno 2003.



### I WAS BORN IN TIRANA

y name is Harallamb Terba. I was born in Tirana, Albania in November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1965. I came here exactly in March 25, 1996. It was afternoon, 5:00 Chicago time, but my watch say 12:00 in the night because it is seven hours different from my country to here. [Laughs.]



Harallamb Terba

I'm in college now. My major is computer information system. I think after I will be graduating from school, I'm gonna start working, maybe for a company. I love working in computer, computer programming, designing and building programs, applications. I think my life is gonna be good. I always think about that. My wife is in school, too. She's taking sign language. She loves working with deaf people. So I think she is gonna get a good job....

Home is the place where you live. I think about my home in my country. It's the place where you born. But this is the life. The life change. You have to move. You have to try and when you try for the best, it's better for you. I like my country. I like the people there, but I feel this is my home now. I don't feel that about Albania now. I feel that when I was in Albania, I have this thought in my mind that, "I will go. One day I will go in the United States. Everything that I did here it's nothing. I have to get my education. I have to work. I have to do, but everything it's gonna start when I go in the United States." That's why I wish to came here younger.

I think to have my own home, years after. I think about that. It's not important,

but I always loved having my own home, my yard. I always loved that because I have been grow up with big home with a yard in front, so that's why I love that. But now I'm living in apartment and everything is OK. I like that.

In the future I want plan for to have children. I'm going to tell my children in the future

that they will be American because they will be born here, but I always am gonna tell them from where they are, their parents are. So they have to know about their country because this was the country that grow us, their father and their mother. So they have to know about their culture. Maybe I'm gonna advise them that when they go in Albanian, to be more Albanian than Albanians are, because Albanians are gonna see them just, "Hey, you are from America. You're American." You know what happens.

America to me means freedom, and the land where everyone can do what he dreams. Dreams come true. It's a hard work to do what you want, but finally you can do that. I came from one country that you want to do something, but no one lets you to do that. You can only do what they say to you. So here, if you want to do that, if you like to do that, you can do that. It's hard. I know it's hard. Nothing is easy in our life today, but you can do that. And this is more important for our life, to do what we want.

Source: Harallamb Terba. 2004, In Jeff Libman, 2004 An Immigrant Class: Oral Histories from Chicago's Newest Immigrants. Chicago: Flying Kite, pp. 185, 194–195 in pp. 184–195. Reprinted with permission of Flying Kite, Inc. As of 2002, about 23 percent of Mexican Americans are English dominant, 26 percent are bilingual, and 51 percent are Spanish dominant. Puerto Ricans in the United States tend to be more English language oriented, with 39 percent English-dominant, 40 percent bilingual, and 21 percent Spanish dominant. At the other extreme, Salvadorans, Dominicans, Colombians, and other Central and South Americans tend to be more Spanish dominant, and they are also more likely to be more recent immigrants. Nationally, about 70 percent of Latino schoolchildren report speaking Spanish at home (Brodie et al. 2002; Bureau of the Census 2003a, 158).

The myth of Anglo superiority has rested in part on language differences. (The term *Anglo* in the following text is used to mean all non-Hispanics but primarily Whites.) First, the criteria for economic and social achievement usually include proficiency in English. By such standards, Spanish-speaking pupils are judged less able to compete until they learn English. Second, many Anglos believe that Spanish is not an asset occupationally. Only recently, as government agencies have belatedly begun to serve Latino people and as businesses recognize the growing Latino consumer market, have Anglos recognized that knowing Spanish is not only useful but also necessary to carry out certain tasks. However, as we see in education, voting, and language practices, many people in the United States are concerned and suspicious about the public use of any language other than English.

#### **Bilingual Education**

Until the last twenty or thirty years, there was a conscious effort to devalue Spanish and other languages and to discourage the use of foreign languages in schools. In the case of Spanish, this practice was built on a pattern of segregating Hispanic schoolchildren from Anglos. In the recent past in the Southwest, Mexican Americans were assigned to Mexican schools to keep Anglo schools all White. These Mexican schools, created through de jure school segregation, were substantially underfunded compared with the regular public schools. Legal action against such schools dates back to 1945, but it was not until 1970 that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi Independent School District*, that the de jure segregation of Mexican Americans was unconstitutional. Appeals delayed implementation of that decision, and not until September 1975 was the de jure plan forcibly overturned in Corpus Christi, Texas (Commission on Civil Rights 1976).

Even in integrated schools, Latino children were given separate, unequal treatment. "No Spanish" was a rule enforced throughout the Southwest, Florida, and New York City by school boards in the 1960s. Children speaking Spanish on school grounds, even on the playground, might be punished with detention after school, fines, physical reprimands, and even expulsion for repeated violations. From 1855 to as recently as 1968, teaching in any language other than English was illegal in California. Such laws existed despite a provision in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between the United States and Mexico that guaranteed the right of Mexicans to maintain their culture. All official publications were to be bilingual, but "English only" became the social norm.

Is it essential that English be the sole language of instruction in schools in the United States? **Bilingualism** is the use of two or more languages in places of work or educational facilities, according each language equal legitimacy. Thus, a program of **bilingual education** may instruct children in their native language (such as Spanish) while gradually introducing them to the language of the dominant society (English). If such a program is also bicultural, it will teach children about the culture of both linguistic groups. Bilingual education allows students to learn academic material in their own language while they are learning a second language. Proponents believe that,

#### bilingualism

The use of two or more languages in places of work or education and the treatment of each language as legitimate.

#### bilingual education

Program designed to allow students to learn academic concepts in their native language while they learn a second language.



# **2** ASK Yourself

What different forms can bilingual education take?

ideally, bilingual education programs should also allow English-speaking pupils to be bilingual, but generally they are directed only at making non-English speakers proficient in more than one language.

Programs to teach English as a second language (ESL) have been the cornerstones of bilingual education, but they are limited in approach. For example, ESL programs tend to emphasize bilingual but not bicultural education. As a result, the method can unintentionally contribute to ethnocentric attitudes, especially if it seems to imply that a minority group is not really worthy of attention. As conflict theorists are quick to note, the interests of the less powerful—in this case, millions of non-English-speaking children—are those least likely to be recognized and respected. One alternative to the ESL approach, viewed with much less favor by advocates of bilingualism, is **English immersion**, in which students are taught primarily in English, using their native languages only when they do not understand their lessons. In practice, such instruction usually becomes an English-only "crash program" (Hechinger 1987).

Since its introduction into U.S. schools, bilingual education has been beset by problems. Its early supporters were disillusioned by the small number of English-speaking children participating and by the absence of a bicultural component in most programs. However, the frustration has been most clearly visible in the lack of consensus among educators on how best to implement bilingual programs. Even when a school district decides what methods it prefers, superintendents find it difficult to hire qualified instructors, although this varies depending on the language and the part of the country. The problem is further complicated by the presence of children speaking languages other than the predominant second language, so superintendents may want to mount bilingual programs in many languages.

Do bilingual programs help children to learn English? It is difficult to reach firm conclusions on the effectiveness of the bilingual programs in general because they vary so widely in their approach to non-English-speaking children. The programs differ in the length of the transition to English and how long they allow students to remain in bilingual classrooms. A major study released in 2004 analyzed more than three decades of research, combining seventeen different studies, and found that bilingual education programs produce higher levels of student achievement in reading. The most successful are paired bilingual programs—those offering ongoing instruction in a native language and English at different times of the day (Slavin and Cheung 2003).

Drawing on the perspective of conflict theory, we can understand some of the attacks on bilingual programs. The criticisms do not necessarily result from careful educational research. Rather, they stem from the effort to assimilate children and to deprive them of language pluralism. This view, that any deviation from the majority is bad, is expressed by those who want to stamp out foreigners, especially in our schools. Research findings have little influence on those who, holding such ethnocentric views, try to persuade policy makers to follow their thinking. This perspective does not take into account that success in bilingual education may begin to address the problem of high school dropouts and the paucity of Hispanics in colleges and universities.

As one might expect, Latinos tend to be very supportive of bilingual programs. A 2003 national survey found that 72 percent of Hispanics (and a similar proportion of African Americans) favor school districts offering such programs compared to 53 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. Nonetheless, opposition to bilingualism can be quite strong among some Hispanics. A few are very active in organized efforts to stop such programs, and some Latino parents pressure schools to keep their children out of

#### **English immersion**

Teaching in English by teachers who know the students' native language but use it only when students do not understand the lessons.





classrooms where Spanish may be spoken out of the misguided notion that Englishonly education, even for the youngest children, is the key to success (Freedman 2004; Mason 2003; Soltero 2004).

#### **Official Language Movement**

Attacks on bilingualism both in voting and in education have taken several forms and have even broadened to question the appropriateness of U.S. residents using any language other than English. Federal policy has become more restrictive. Local schools have been given more authority to determine appropriate methods of instruction; they have also been forced to provide more of their own funding for bilingual education.

In the United States, repeated efforts have been made to introduce a constitutional amendment declaring English as the nation's official language. In 2006, a congressional proposal for a national language arose during debates over immigration. Legislative leaders who were struggling to reach a compromise introduced a proposal to make English the national language. The legislation would not completely outlaw bilingual or multilingual government services. It would, however, require that such services be called for specifically as in the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which requires voting information to be available in multiple languages.

As shown in Figure 5.4, non-English speakers cluster in certain states, but bilingualism attracts nationwide passions. The release in 2006 of "Nuestro Himmo", the Spanish-language version of "The Star-Spangled Banner", led to a strong reaction with 69 percent of people saying it was only appropriate to be sung in English. Yet at least one congressman decrying the Spanish version sang the anthem himself in English with incorrect lyrics. Similarly, a locally famous restaurant owner in Philadelphia posted signs at his Philly steak sandwich diner announcing he would only accept orders in English. Passions remain strong as policy makers debate how much support should be given to prople who speak other languages (Carroll 2006; Koch 2006b).

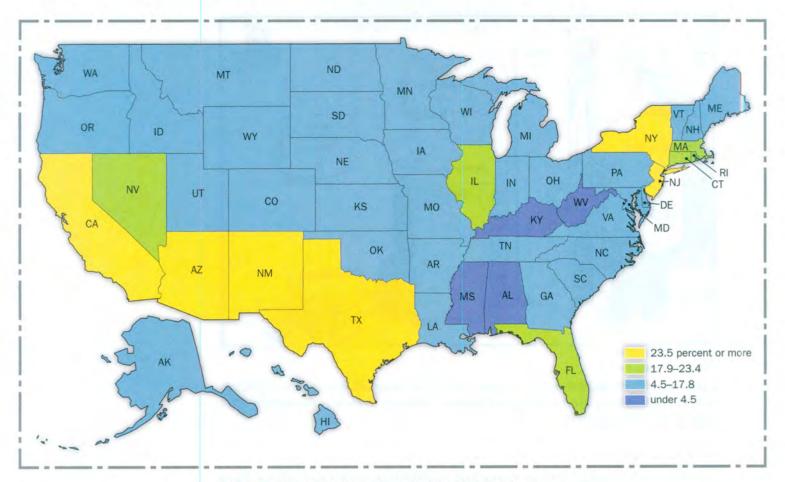
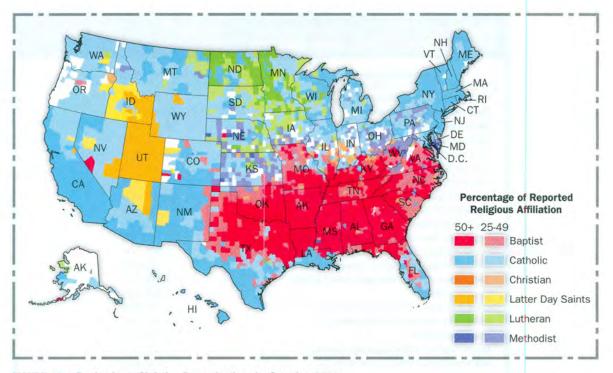


FIGURE 5.4 People Who Speak a Language Other Than English at Home Source: U.S. data for 2000 released in Shin and Bruno 2003, 8.

# **Religious Pluralism**

In popular speech, the term *pluralism* has often been used in the United States to refer explicitly to religion. Although certain faiths figure more prominently in the worship scene, there has been a history of greater religious tolerance in the United States than in most other nations. Today there are more than 1,500 religious bodies in the United States, ranging from the more than 66 million members of the Roman Catholic Church to sects with fewer than 1,000 adherents.

How do we view the United States in terms of religion? It is now more accurate to speak of the country as Judeo-Christian-Islamic or Abrahamic (referring to the historical religious leader common to the three faiths). There is an increasingly non-Christian presence in the United States. In 1900, an estimated 96 percent of the nation was Christian, just over 1 percent nonreligious, and about 3 percent all other faiths. In 2005, it is estimated that the nation is 82 percent Christian, nearly 11 percent nonreligious, and another 7 percent all other faiths. The United States has a long Jewish tradition, and Muslims number close to 5 million. A smaller but also growing number of people adhere to such Eastern faiths as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism (Barrett and Johnson 2001; Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion 2006).



#### FIGURE 5.5 Predominant Christian Denominations by Counties, 2000

The diversity of Christian religious life in the United States is apparent in the map. Many Christian denominations account for 25 percent or more of the church members in a county. Among non-Christian faiths, only Judaism figures so significantly—in New York County (Manhattan) of New York City and in Dade County, Florida (which includes Miami Beach).

Source: Major Religious Families By Counties of the United States 2000 from "Religious Congregations and Memberships in the United States 2000," Dale E. Jones, et al. Nashville, TN: Glenmary Research Center © 2002 Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies. (All rights reserved.) This material may not be printed or reproducted in any electronic format except for individual use and may not be distributed for profit.

The diversity of religious life in the United States is apparent in Figure 5.5, which numerically shows the Christian faiths that dominate various areas of the country. For many nations of the world, a map of religions would hardly be useful because one faith accounts for almost all religious followers in the country. The diversity of beliefs, rituals, and experiences that characterizes religious life in the United States reflects both the nation's immigrant heritage and the First Amendment prohibition against establishing a state religion.

Sociologists use the word **denomination** for a large, organized religion that is not linked officially with the state or government. By far the largest denomination in the United States is Catholicism, yet at least twenty-four other Christian religious denominations have 1 million or more members (Table 5.1).

There are also at least four non-Christian religious groups in the United States whose numbers are comparable to any of these large denominations. Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus in the United States all number more than 1 million. Within each of these groups, there are branches or sects that distinguish themselves from each other. For example, in the United States and the rest of the world, some followers of Islam are Sunni Muslims and others are Shiites. There are further divisions within these groups, just as there are among Protestants and in turn among Baptists (Kosmin, Mayer, and Keysar 2001).

One notable characteristic of religious practice in the United States is its segregated nature at the local level. In 2006, arsonists victimized ten churches in Alabama, and

#### denomination

A large, organized religion not officially linked with the state or government.

Churches with More Than a Million Members	
Denomination Name	Inclusive Membership
The Roman Catholic Church	67,820,835
Southern Baptist Convention	16,267,494
The United Methodist Church	8,186,254
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	5,599,177
The Church of God in Christ	5,499,875
National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.	5,000,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	4,930,429
National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.	3,500,000
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	3,189,573
Assemblies of God	2,779,095
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.	2,500,000
African Methodist Episcopal Church	2,500,000
National Missionary Baptist Convention of America	2,500,000
The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS)	2,463,747
Episcopal Church	2,284,233
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America	1,500,000
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.	1,500,000
Churches of Christ	1,500,000
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	1,432,795
American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.	1,424,840
Jnited Church of Christ	1,265,786
Baptist Bible Fellowship International	1,200,000
Christian Churches and Churches of Christ	1,071,616
Orthodox Church in America	1,064,000
Jehovah's Witness	1.029.092

Note: Most recent data as of 2006. Membership reporting year ranges from 1992 to 2004.

Source: "Membership Statistics in the United States" in Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2006 edited by Reverend Eileen W. Lindner, Ph.D. Copyright (c) 2006 by National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Reprinted by permission [www.ncccusa.org].

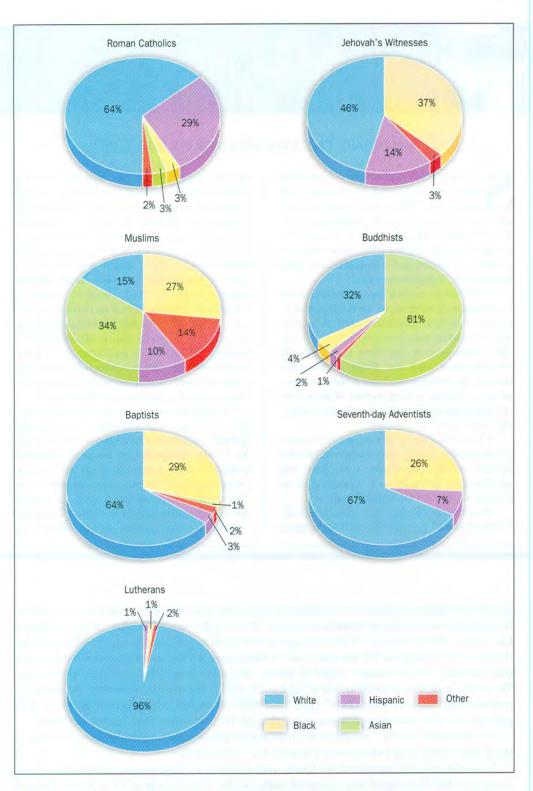
some feared that these fires could be racially motivated. But state and national authorities reassured the public that since five churches were "White" and five churches were "Black," racism was unlikely to be a motivating factor. The irony is that the legacy of racism in religious expression leads to the very segregation in worship that allows churches to be easily identified as "Black" or "White" (Associated Press 2006a).

Even if religious faiths have broad representation, they tend to be fairly homogeneous at the local church level. This is especially ironic, given that many faiths have played critical roles in resisting racism and trying to bring together the nation in the name of racial and ethnic harmony (Orfield and Liebowitz 1999).

Broadly defined faiths show representation of a variety of ethnic and racial groups. In Figure 5.6, we consider the interaction of White, Black, and Hispanic race with religions. Muslims, Pentecostals, and Jehovah's Witnesses are much more diverse than Presbyterians or Lutherans. Religion plays an even more central role for Blacks and Latinos than Whites. A 2004 national survey indicated that 65 percent of African Americans and 51 percent of Latinos attend a religious service every week, compared to 44 percent of non-Hispanic Whites (Winseman 2004b).

About two in three Americans (66 percent) are counted as church members, but it is difficult to assess the strength of their religious commitment. A persuasive case can be





#### FIGURE 5.6 Racial and Ethnic Makeup of Selected Religions in the United States

Note: More recent study (Latino Coalition 2006) shows 44 percent of Roman Catholics to be Hispanic. Totals do not always sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: "Racial and Ethnic Make-Up of Selected Religions," in American Religious Identification Survey, 2001 by Egon Mayer et al., The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Reprinted with permission.



# Focus Research Focus Research Foc

### MEASURING THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION

S ocial scientists and scholars of religious behavior have tried to measure the importance that religion has for people. Studies center on the holding of religious beliefs ("Do you believe in God?"), declarations of membership, contributions of money or time, and attendance at or participation in religious services.

We will focus on how people perceive the importance of religion to themselves and to others. This is a reasonable step because it does not make any assumptions about a specific religion, as if one were to ask people whether they read the Bible or attended church. In addition, we have reliable national data covering a long period of time with the same questions being asked using largely the same survey techniques.

In Figure 5.7 we see the responses over the last twenty-five years to two questions: how important people feel religion is to them and whether they feel religion is increasing its influence on the United States as a whole.

Two patterns emerge. First, somewhere between 53 and 61 percent of adults see religion as "very important" in their daily lives. Second, a much smaller proportion of people, usually around 35 percent, see religion's influence increasing, but this has fluctuated more widely. Of particular note across this time period is the dramatic increase in 2001. The events of September 11, 2001, had a pronounced impact on how people saw religion as influencing the nation. In 2000, about 36 percent of the people felt religion was increasing its influence and 55 percent felt it was losing its hold on the nation-pretty typical responses for the twenty-year period. Yet by December 7, 2001, 35 percent felt religion was increasing its influence and only 24 percent saw it losing. By the next year it dropped back to 48 percent.

Will this dramatic shift in the perception of how the nation was influenced translate into people's own lives? Probably not. There was little lasting change in how people saw religion playing in their own lives: 58 percent saw it as "very important" in May 2001, 60 percent by December. Media accounts spoke of a possible reawakening because religious houses of worship were packed in the weeks after the

made that religious institutions continue to grow stronger through an influx of new members despite mounting secularism in society. Some observers think that, after reaching a low in the 1960s, religion is becoming more important to people again. The past upheavals in U.S. religious life are reflected on the covers of *Time* magazine, which have cried out variously, "Is God Dead?" (April 8, 1966), "Is God Coming Back to Life?" (December 26, 1969), and "The Jesus Revolution" (June 21, 1971). Much more recently, *Newsweek* proclaimed that "Science Finds God" (July 20, 1998). At present, there is little statistical support for the view that the influence of religion on society is diminishing (Moore 2002).

In "Research Focus," we consider how social scientists examine religious fervor in the United States and what recent studies have indicated.

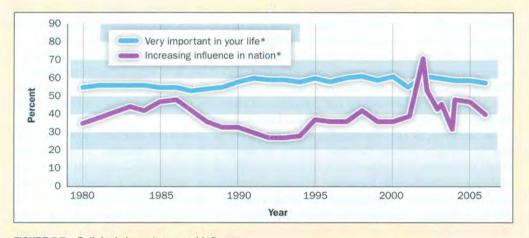
It would also be incorrect to focus only on older religious organizations. Local churches that developed into national faiths in the 1990s, such as the Calvary Chapel, Vineyard, and Hope Chapel, have created a following among Pentecostal believers, who embrace a more charismatic form of worship devoid of many traditional ornaments, with pastors and congregations alike favoring informal attire. New faiths develop with increasing rapidity in what can only be called a very competitive market for individual religious faith. In addition, many people, with or without religious affilia-

# **Research Focus Research Focus Research**

September 11 terrorist attacks, but it appeared to be a short-term gathering out of a sense of grieving rather than a transformation.

These research data show the importance of not using a single measure to analyze something as complex as attitudes about religion. They also show the importance of considering a broader historical perspective rather than attempting to reach a conclusion from a single snapshot.

Sources: Gallup 2004a, 2006b,; Goodstein 2001; Sherkat and Ellison 1999.



#### FIGURE 5.7 Religion's Importance and Influence

Note: Questions were "How important would you say religion is in your own life?" and "At the present time, do you think religion as a whole is increasing its influence on American life or losing its influence?"

Source: Gallup 2004a, 2006b. Copyright The Gallup Organization. Princeton, NJ. Reprinted with permission.

tion, become fascinated with spiritual concepts such as angels or become a part of loose-knit fellowships such as the Promise Keepers, an all-male movement of evangelical Christians founded in 1990. Religion in the United States is an ever-changing social phenomenon (Dudley and Roozen 2001; Miller and Schaefer 1998).

# Ethnicity, Religion, and Social Class

Generally, several social factors influence a person's identity and life chances. Pioneer sociologist Max Weber described **life chances** as people's opportunities to provide themselves with material goods, positive living conditions, and favorable life experiences. Religion, ethnicity, or both may affect life chances.

Religion and ethnicity do not necessarily operate together. Sometimes, they have been studied as if they were synonymous. Groups have been described as Irish Catholics, Swedish Lutherans, Muslim Arabs, or Russian Jew, as if religion and ethnicity had been merged into some type of national church. In the 1990s, the religion ethnicity tie took on new meaning as Latin American immigration invigorated the

#### life chances

People's opportunities to provide themselves with material goods, positive living conditions, and favorable life experiences. Roman Catholic Church nationwide, and West Indian immigration, particularly to New York City, brought new life to the Episcopal Church.

In the 1960s, sociologists felt that religion was more important than ethnicity in explaining behavior. They based this conclusion not on data but on the apparently higher visibility of religion in society. Using national survey data, Andrew Greeley came to different conclusions. He attempted to clarify the relative importance of religion and ethnicity by measuring personality characteristics, political participation, support for civil rights, and family structure. The sample consisted of German and Irish Americans, both Protestant and Catholic. If religion was more significant than ethnicity, Protestants, whether of German or Irish ancestry, and Catholics, regardless of ethnicity, would have been similar in outlook. Conversely, if ethnicity was the key, then the similarities would be among the Germans of either faith or among the Irish as a distinct group. On seventeen of the twenty-four items that made up the four areas measured, the differences were greater between German Catholics and Irish Catholics than between German Catholics and Protestants or between Irish Catholics and Protestants. Ethnicity was a stronger predictor of attitudes and beliefs than religion. In one area-political party allegiance-religion was more important, but this was the exception rather than the rule. In sum, Greeley found ethnicity to be generally more important than religion in predicting behavior. In reality, it is very difficult to separate the influences of religion and ethnicity on any one individual, but Greeley's research cautions against discounting the influence of ethnicity in favor of religion (Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Greeley 1974a, 1974b; Herberg 1983).

In addition, as already noted several times, social class is yet another significant factor. Sociologist Milton Gordon (1978) developed the term **ethclass** (ethnicity and class) to denote the importance of both factors. All three factors—religion, ethnicity, and class—combine to form one's identity, determine one's social behavior, and limit one's life chances. For example, in certain ethnic communities, friendships are limited, to a degree, to people who share the same ethnic background and social class. In other words, neither race and ethnicity nor religion nor class alone places one socially. One must consider several elements together, as reflected in ethclass.

# **Religion in the United States**

Divisive conflicts along religious lines are muted in the United States compared with those in, say, Northern Ireland or the Middle East. Although not entirely absent, conflicts about religion in the United States seem to be overshadowed by civil religion. **Civil religion** is the religious dimension in U.S. life that merges the state with sacred beliefs.

Sociologist Robert Bellah (1967) borrowed the phrase *civil religion* from eighteenthcentury French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau to describe a significant phenomenon in the contemporary United States. Civil religion exists alongside established religious faiths, and it embodies a belief system incorporating all religions but not associated specifically with any one. It is the type of faith to which presidents refer in inaugural speeches and to which American Legion posts and Girl Scout troops swear allegiance. In 1954, Congress added the phrase "under God" to the pledge of allegiance as a legislative recognition of religion's significance. Presidents of the United States, beginning with Ronald Reagan and continuing through George W. Bush, typically concluded even their most straightforward speeches with "God Bless the United States of America," which in effect evokes the civil religion of the nation.

Functionalists see civil religion as reinforcing central American values that may be more expressly patriotic than sacred in nature. Often, the mass media, following major societal upheavals, from the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing to the 2001 terrorist attacks, show church services with clergy praying and asking for national healing, Bellah (1967)

#### ethclass

The merged ethnicity and class in a person's status.

#### civil religion

The religious dimension in American life that merges the state with sacred beliefs. sees no sign that the importance of civil religion has diminished in promoting collective identity, but he does acknowledge that it is more conservative than during the 1970s.

In the following section, we will explore the diversity among the major Christian groups in the United States, such as Roman Catholics and Protestants. However, as already noted, significant numbers of people in the United States now practice religions long established in other parts of the world, such as Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and Buddhism. The greater visibility of religious diversity in the United States is primarily the result of immigrants bringing their religious faith with them and not assimilating to the dominant Christian rituals.

#### **Diversity Among Roman Catholics**

Social scientists have persistently tended to ignore the diversity within the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. Recent research has not sustained the conclusions that Roman Catholics are melding into a single group, following the traditions of the American Irish Catholic model, or even that parishioners are attending English-language churches. Religious behavior has been different for each ethnic group within the Roman Catholic Church. The Irish and the French Canadians left societies that were highly competitive both culturally and socially. Their religious involvement in the United States is more relaxed than it was in Ireland and Quebec. However, the influence of life in the United States has increased German and Polish involvement in the Roman Catholic Church, whereas Italians have remained largely inactive. Variations by ethnic background continue to emerge in studies of contemporary religious involvement in the Roman Catholic Church (Eckstrom 2001).

Since the mid-1970s, the Roman Catholic Church in America has received a significant number of new members from the Philippines, Southeast Asia, and particularly Latin America. Although these new members have been a stabilizing force offsetting the loss of White ethnics, they have also challenged a church that for generations was dominated by Irish, Italian, and Polish parishes. Perhaps the most prominent subgroup in the Roman Catholic Church is the Latinos, who now account for one-third of all Roman Catholic parishioners. In the 2006 new class of priests ordained, nearly one-third were foreign born. Some Los Angeles churches in or near Latino neighborhoods must schedule fourteen masses each Sunday to accommodate the crowds of worshipers. By 2006, Latinos constituted 44 percent of Roman Catholics nationwide (Chicago Tribune 2006; Murphy and Banerjee 2005).

The Roman Catholic Church, despite its ethnic diversity, has clearly been a powerful force in reducing the ethnic ties of its members, making it also a significant assimilating



The Roman Catholic Church has experienced growth through immigration from Latin America but has had difficulty recruiting men into the priesthood. Here we see an ordination ceremony at the Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, Illinois, in 2003.



force. The irony in this role of Catholicism is that so many nineteenth-century Americans heaped abuse on Catholics in this country for allegedly being un-American and having a dual allegiance. The history of the Catholic Church in the United States may be portrayed as a struggle within the membership between the Americanizers and the anti-Americanizers, with the former ultimately winning. Unlike the various Protestant churches that accommodated immigrants of a single nationality, the Roman Catholic Church had to Americanize a variety of linguistic and ethnic groups. The Catholic Church may have been the most potent assimilating force after the public school system. Comparing the assimilationist goal of the Catholic Church and the present diversity in it leads us to the conclusion that ethnic diversity has continued in the Roman Catholic Church despite, not because of, this religious institution.

#### **Diversity Among Protestants**

Protestantism, like Catholicism, often is portrayed as a monolithic entity. Little attention is given to the doctrinal and attitudinal differences that sharply divide the various denominations in both laity and clergy. However, several studies document the diversity. Unfortunately, many opinion polls and surveys are content to learn whether a respondent is a Catholic, a Protestant, or a Jew. Stark and Glock (1968) found sharp differences in religious attitudes within Protestant churches. For example, 99 percent of Southern Baptists had no doubt that Jesus was the divine Son of God as contrasted to only 40 percent of Congregationalists. We can identify four "generic theological camps":

- 1. Liberals: United Church of Christ (Congregationalists) and Episcopalians
- 2. Moderates: Disciples of Christ, Methodists, and Presbyterians
- 3. Conservatives: American Lutherans and American Baptists
- 4. Fundamentalists: Missouri Synod Lutherans, Southern Baptists, and Assembly of God

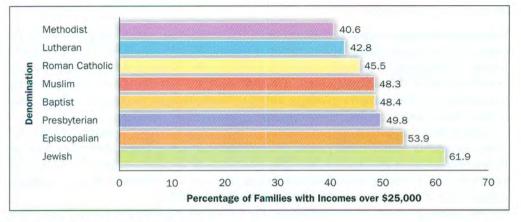
Roman Catholics generally hold religious beliefs similar to those of conservative Protestants, except on essentially Catholic issues such as papal infallibility (the authority of the spiritual role in all decisions regarding faith and morals). Whether or not there are four distinct camps is not important: The point is that the familiar practice of contrasting Roman Catholics and Protestants is clearly not productive. Some differences between Roman Catholics and Protestants are inconsequential compared with the differences between Protestant sects.

Secular criteria as well as doctrinal issues may distinguish religious faiths. Research has consistently shown that denominations can be arranged in a hierarchy based on social class. As Figure 5.8 reveals, members of certain faiths, such as Episcopalians, Jews, and Presbyterians, have a higher proportion of affluent members. Members of other faiths, including Baptists, tend to be poorer. Of course, all Protestant groups draw members from each social stratum. Nonetheless, the social significance of these class differences is that religion becomes a mechanism for signaling social mobility. A person who is moving up in wealth and power may seek out a faith associated with a higher social ranking. Similar contrasts are shown in formal schooling in Figure 5.9.

Protestant faiths have been diversifying, and many of their members have been leaving them for churches that follow strict codes of behavior or fundamental interpretations of Biblical teachings. This trend is reflected in the decline of the five mainline churches: Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian. In 2004, these faiths accounted for about 34 percent of total membership, compared with 75 percent in the 1970s. With a broader acceptance of new faiths and continuing immigration, it is unlikely that these mainline churches will regain their dominance in the near future (Davis, Smith, and Marsden 2005, 170).

Although Protestants may seem to define the civil religion and the accepted dominant orientation, some Christian faiths feel they, too, experience the discrimination



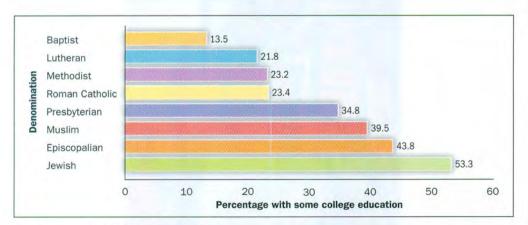


#### FIGURE 5.8 Income and Denominations

Denominations attract different income groups. All groups have both affluent and poor members, yet some have a higher proportion of members with high incomes and others are comparatively poor. *Source:* General social survey, 1994 through 2004. See Davis, Smith, and Marsden 2005.

usually associated with non-Christians such as Jews and Muslims. For example, representatives of the liberal and moderate faiths dominate the leadership of the military's chaplain corps. For example, there are 16 Presbyterian soldiers for every Presbyterian chaplain, 121 Full Gospel worshippers for every Full Gospel chaplain, and 339 Muslim soldiers for every Muslim chaplain (Cooperman 2005).

As another example of denominational discrimination, in 1998 the Southern Baptist Convention amended its basic theological statements of beliefs to include a strong statement on family life. However, the statement included a declaration that a woman should "submit herself graciously" to her husband's leadership. There were widespread attacks on this position, which many Baptists felt was inappropriate because they were offering guidance for their denomination's members. In some respects, Baptists felt this was a form of respectable bigotry. It was acceptable to attack them for their views on social issues even though such criticism would be much more muted for many more liberal faiths that seem free to tolerate abortion (Bowman 1998; Niebuhr 1998).



#### FIGURE 5.9 Education and Denominations

There are sharp differences in the proportion of those with some college education by denomination. *Source:* General social survey, 1994 through 2004. See Davis et al. 2005.

#### Women and Religion

Religious beliefs have often placed women in an exalted but protected position. As religions are practiced, this position has often meant being "protected" from becoming leaders. Perhaps the only major exception in the United States is the Christian Science church, in which the majority of practitioners and readers are women. Women may be evangelists, prophets, and even saints, but they find it difficult to enter the clergy within their own congregations.

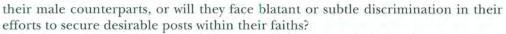
Even today, the largest denomination in the United States, Roman Catholicism, does not permit women to be priests. A 2005 national survey found that 62 percent of Roman Catholics in this country favor the ordination of women, compared with only 29 percent in 1974 but the church hierarchy has continued to maintain its long-standing requirement that priests be male (Briggs 1996; Snyder 2006).

The largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, has voted against ordaining women (although some of its autonomous churches have women ministers). Other religious faiths that do not allow women clergy include the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, the Orthodox Church in America, the Church of God in Christ, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and Orthodox Judaism.

Despite these restrictions, there has been a notable rise in female clergy in the last twenty years. The Bureau of the Census (2005a) shows that 6 percent of clergy were women in 1983, but that figure had increased to 14 percent in 2005. Increasingly, some branches of Protestantism and Judaism have been convinced that women have the right to become spiritual leaders. Yet a lingering question remains: Once women are ordained as spiritual leaders, do congregations necessarily accept these female ministers and rabbis? Will they advance in their calling as easily as



Women play a significant role as unpaid volunteers, but relatively few become members of the clergy with leadership responsibilities. Pictured is Barbara Harris as she was ordained the first female bishop in the Episcopalian Church in 1989.

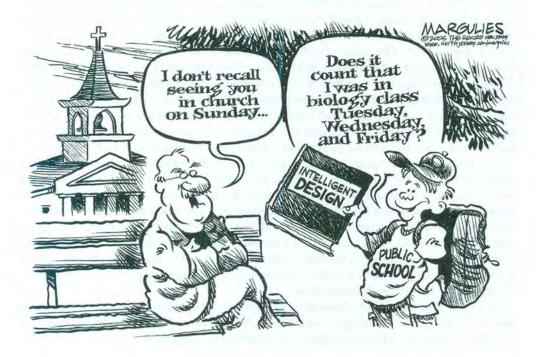


It is too early to offer any definitive answers to these questions, but thus far, women clearly continue to face lingering sexism after ordination. Evidence to date indicates that women find it more difficult than men to secure jobs in larger, more prestigious congregations. Although they may be accepted as junior clergy or as copastors, women may fail to receive senior clergy appointments. A national study found that 70 percent of men had moved on to midsize or larger congregations by their second decade compared to only 37 percent of the women. In both Reform and Conservative Judaism, the largest and best-known congregations rarely hire women rabbis. Consequently, women clergy in many denominations are gathered at the low end of the pay scale and the hierarchy (Banerjee 2006; Chang 1997; Religion Watch 1995a).

#### **Religion and the U.S. Supreme Court**

Religious pluralism owes its existence in the United States to the First Amendment declaration that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The U.S. Supreme Court has consistently interpreted this wording to mean not that government should ignore religion but that it should follow a policy of neutrality to maximize religious freedom. For example, the government may not help religion by financing a new church building, but it also may not obstruct religion by denying a church adequate police and fire protection. We will examine four issues that continue to require clarification: school prayer, secessionist minorities, creationism (including intelligent design), and the public display of religious symbols.

Among the most controversial and continuing disputes has been whether prayer has a role in the schools. Many people were disturbed by the 1962 Supreme Court decision in *Engel v. Vitale* that disallowed a purportedly nondenominational prayer drafted for use in the New York public schools. The prayer was "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our





#### secessionist minority

Groups, such as the Amish, that reject both assimilation and coexistence.

#### creationists

People who support a literal interpretation of the biblical book of Genesis on the origins of the universe and argue that evolution should not be presented as established scientific thought.



parents, our teachers, and our country." Subsequent decisions overturned state laws requiring Bible reading in public schools, laws requiring recitation of the Lord's Prayer, and laws permitting a daily one-minute period of silent meditation or prayer. Despite such judicial pronouncements, children in many public schools in the United States are led in regular prayer recitation or Bible reading.

What about prayers at public gatherings? In 1992, the Supreme Court ruled 5–4 in *Lee v. Weisman* that prayer at a junior high school graduation in Providence, Rhode Island, violated the U.S. Constitution's mandate of separation of church and state. A rabbi had given thanks to God in his invocation. The district court suggested that the invocation would have been acceptable without that reference. The Supreme Court did not agree with the school board that a prayer at a graduation was not coercive. The Court did say in its opinion that it was acceptable for a student speaker voluntarily to say a prayer at such a program (Marshall 2001).

Several religious groups have been in legal and social conflict with the rest of society. Some can be called **secessionist minorities** in that they reject both assimilation and coexistence in some form of cultural pluralism. The Amish are one such group that comes into conflict with outside society because of its beliefs and way of life. The Old Order Amish shun most modern conveniences, and later in this chapter we will consider them as a case study of maintaining a lifestyle dramatically different from that of larger society.

Are there limits to the free exercise of religious rituals by secessionist minorities? Today, tens of thousands of members of Native American religions believe that ingesting the powerful drug peyote is a sacrament and that those who partake of peyote will enter into direct contact with God. In 1990, the Supreme Court ruled that prosecuting people who use illegal drugs as part of a religious ritual is not a violation of the First Amendment guarantee of religious freedom. The case arose because Native Americans were dismissed from their jobs for the religious use of peyote and were then refused unemployment benefits by the State of Oregon's employment division. In 1991, however, Oregon enacted a new law permitting the sacramental use of peyote by Native Americans (*New York Times* 1991).

In another ruling on religious rituals, in 1993, the Supreme Court unanimously overturned a local ordinance in Florida that banned ritual animal sacrifice. The High Court held that this law violated the free-exercise rights of adherents of the Santeria religion, in which the sacrifice of animals (including goats, chickens, and other birds) plays a central role. The same year Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which said the government may not enforce laws that "substantially burden" the exercise of religion. Presumably, this action will give religious groups more flexibility in practicing their faiths. However, many local and state officials are concerned that the law has led to unintended consequences, such as forcing states to accommodate prisoners' requests for questionable religious activities or to permit a church to expand into a historic district in defiance of local laws (Greenhouse 1996).

The third area of contention has been whether the biblical account of creation should be or must be presented in school curricula and whether this account should receive the same emphasis as scientific theories. In the famous "monkey trial" of 1925, Tennessee schoolteacher John Scopes was found guilty of teaching the scientific theory of evolution in public schools. Since then, however, Darwin's evolutionary theories have been presented in public schools with little reference to the biblical account in Genesis. People who support the literal interpretation of the Bible, commonly known as **creationists**, have formed various organizations to crusade for creationist treatment in U.S. public schools and universities.

In a 1987 Louisiana case, *Edwards v. Aguillard*, the Supreme Court ruled that states may not require the teaching of creationism alongside evolution in public schools if the primary purpose of such legislation is to promote a religious viewpoint. Nevertheless, the teaching of evolution and creationism has remained a controversial issue in many communities across the United States (Applebome 1996).

Beginning in the 1980s, those who believe in a divine hand in the creation of life have advanced **intelligent design** (ID). Although not explicitly drawn on the biblical account, creationists feel comfortable with ID. Intelligent design is the idea that life is so complex it could only have been created by a higher intelligence. Supporters of ID advocate it is a more accurate account than Darwinism or, at the very least, that it be taught as an alternative alongside the theory of evolution. In 2005 a federal judge in *Kitzmiller v. Dove Area School District* ended a Pennsylvania school district intention to require the presentation of ID. In essence the judge found ID to be "a religious belief" that was only a subtler way of finding God's fingerprints in nature than traditional creationism. Because the issue continues to be hotly debated, future court cases are certain to come (Clemmitt 2005; Goodstein 2005).

The fourth area of contention has been a battle over public displays that depict symbols of or seem associated with a religion. Can manger scenes be erected on public property? Do people have a right to be protected from large displays such as a cross or a star atop a water tower overlooking an entire town? In a series of decisions in the 1980s through to 1995, the Supreme Court ruled that tax-supported religious displays on public government property may be successfully challenged but are not permissible if they are made more secular. Displays that combine a crèche, the Christmas manger scene depicting the birth of Jesus, or the Hanukkah menorah and also include Frosty the Snowman or even Christmas trees have been ruled secular. These decisions have been dubbed "the plastic reindeer rules." In 1995, the Court clarified the issue by stating that privately sponsored religious displays may be allowed on public property if other forms of expression are permitted in the same location. The final judicial word has not been heard, and all these rulings should be viewed as tentative because the Court cases have been decided by close votes. Changes in the Supreme Court composition also may alter the outcome of future cases (Bork 1995; Hirsley 1991; Mauro 1995).

# Limits of Religious Freedom: The Amish

The Amish began migrating to North America early in the eighteenth century and settled first in eastern Pennsylvania, where a large settlement is still found. Those who continued the characteristic lifestyle of the Amish are primarily members of the Old Order Amish Mennonite Church. By 2003, there were about 1,400 Old Order Amish settlements in the United States and Canada. Estimates place this faith at about 180,000, with approximately 75 percent living in three states: Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana.

#### The Amish Way of Life

Amish practice self-segregation, living in settlements divided into church districts that are autonomous congregations composed of about 75 baptized members. If the district becomes much larger, it is again divided because the members meet in each other's homes. There are no church buildings. Amish homes are large, with the main floor often having removable walls so a household can take its periodic turn hosting the Sunday service.

Each Amish district has a bishop, two to four preachers, and an elder but there are no general conferences, mission groups, or cooperative agencies. The Amish differ little from the Mennonites in formal religious doctrine. Holy Communion is celebrated twice each year, and both groups practice washing of feet. Adults are baptized when they are admitted to formal membership in the church at about age 17 to 20. Old Order Amish services are conducted in German with a mixture of English, commonly known as Pennsylvania Dutch (from *Deutsch*, the German word for "German").

intelligent design

View that life is so complex that it must have been created by a higher intelligence. The Amish are best known for their plain clothing and their nonconformist way of life. Sociologists sometimes use the term *secessionist minorities* to refer to groups such as the Amish, who reject assimilation and practice coexistence or pluralism with the rest of society primarily on their own terms. The practice of *Meidung*, or shunning, persists, and sociologists view it as central to the Amish system of social control. The social norms of this secessionist minority that have evolved over the years are known as the *Ordnung*. These "understandings" specify the color and style of clothing, color and style of buggies, the use of horses for fieldwork, the use of the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect, worship services in the homes, unison singing without instruments, and marriage within the church, to name a few.

The Amish shun telephones and electric lights, and they drive horses and buggies rather than automobiles. The *Ordnung* also prohibits filing a lawsuit, entering military service, divorce, using air transportation, and even using wall-to-wall carpeting. They are generally considered excellent farmers, but they often refuse to use modern farm machinery. Concessions have been made but do vary from one Amish settlement to another. Among common exceptions to the *Ordnung* is the use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, and pesticides, the use of indoor bathroom facilities, and modern medical and dental practice.

#### The Amish and Larger Society

The Amish have made some concessions to the dominant society, but larger society has made concessions to the Amish to facilitate their lifestyle. For example, the 1972 U.S. Supreme Court, in *Yoder v. Wisconsin*, allowed Wisconsin Amish to escape prosecution from laws that required parents to send their children to school to age 18. Amish education ends at about age 13 because the community feels their members have received all the schooling necessary to prosper as Amish people. States waive certification requirements for Amish teaching staff (who are other Amish people), minimum wage requirements for the teachers, and school building requirements.

The Amish today do not totally reject social change. For example, until the late 1960s, church members could be excommunicated for being employed in other than agricultural pursuits. Now their work is much more diversified. Although you will not find Amish computer programmers, there are Amish engaged as black-smiths, harness makers, buggy repairers, and carpenters. Non-Amish often hire these craftspeople as well.

The movement by the Amish into other occupations is sometimes a source of tension with larger society, or the "English," as the Amish refer to non-Amish people. Conflict theorists observe that as long as the Amish remained totally apart from dominant society in the United States, they experienced little hostility. As they entered the larger economic sector, however, intergroup tensions developed in the form of growing prejudice. The Amish today may underbid their competitors. The Amish entry into the commercial marketplace has also strained the church's traditional teaching on litigation and insurance, both of which are to be avoided. Mutual assistance has been the historical path taken, but that does not always mesh well with the modern businessperson. After legal action taken on their behalf, Amish businesses typically have been allowed to be exempt from paying Social Security and workers' compensation, another sore point with English competitors.

The Amish entrepreneur represents an interesting variation of the typical ethnic businessperson one might encounter in a Chinatown, for example. Research on ethnic businesses often cites discrimination against minorities and immigrants as a prime force prodding the development of minority enterprises. The Amish are a very different case because their own restrictions on education, factory work, and certain occupations have propelled them into becoming small business owners.



The Amish, as shown in this group of young women on a farm in Kentucky, have made relatively few accommodations with the larger culture—the culture of outsiders referred collectively to by the Amish as the "English."

However, stratification is largely absent among the Old Order Amish. The notion of ethclass would have no meaning, as the Amish truly regard one another as equal.

Children are not sent to high schools. This practice caused the Amish some difficulty because of compulsory school attendance laws, and some Amish parents have gone to jail rather than allow their children to go to high school. Eventually, as noted earlier, the Supreme Court, in *Yoder v. Wisconsin*, upheld a lower court's decision that a Wisconsin compulsory education law violated the Amish right to religious freedom. However, not all court rulings have been friendly to Amish efforts to avoid the practices and customs of the English. In another case, the effort by the Amish to avoid using the legally mandated orange triangles for marking slow-moving vehicles (such as their buggies) was rejected. If you travel through Amish areas, you can now see their horse-drawn buggies displaying this one symbol of modernity.

Living alongside this modernity, Amish youth often test their subculture's boundaries during a period of discovery called *rumspringe*, a term that means "running around." Amish young people attend barn dances where taboos like drinking, smoking, and driving cars are commonly broken. Parents often react by looking the other way, sometimes literally. For example, when they hear radio sounds from a barn or motorcycle entering their property in the middle of the night, they don't immediately investigate and punish their offspring. Instead, they pretend not to notice, secure in the comfort that their children almost always return to the traditions of the Amish lifestyle. In 2004, UPN aired the "Amish in the City" reality program featuring five Amish youths allegedly on *rumspringe* moving in with six city-wise young adults in Los Angeles. Critics on behalf of the Amish community noted that this exploitation showed how vulnerable the Amish are, since no program was developed to try to show the conversion of Muslim or Orthodox Jewish youth.

A growing area of Amish–English legal clashes is over the custom of young Amish children working as laborers. Amish families in western and central Pennsylvania in 1998 protested the federal government's enforcement of labor laws that are intended to protect children from workplace hazards. The Amish are turning to new businesses, such as sawmills and wood shops, as their available farmland begins to disappear. That means more children on the shop floor. The Amish contend that their religious and cultural traditions hold that children should work, but the U.S. Labor Department had taken a different view. The Amish argued that letting children work alongside their fathers instills core values of hard work, diligence, cooperation, and responsibility, values that they say are central to their faith. English businesses see this underage employment as another form of unfair competition by the Amish. In 2004, Congress passed the law with the Amish in mind that exempted such child labor as long as machinery is not operated and adults are present.

The Old Order Amish have developed a pluralistic position that has become increasingly difficult to maintain as their numbers grow and as they enter the economy in competition with the English, or the non-Amish (Dart 1998; *The Economist* 2004a; Kraybill 2001, 2003; Kraybill and Nolt 1995; Public Broadcasting System 1998).

## Conclusion

onsidering ethnicity and religion reinforces our understanding of the patterns of intergroup relations first presented in Chapter 1. Figure 5.10 shows the rich variety of relationships as defined by people's ethnic and religious identity. The profiles of Irish, Italian, and Polish Americans reflect the variety of White ethnic experiences.

Any study of life in the United States, but especially one focusing on dominant and subordinate groups, cannot ignore religion and ethnicity. The two are closely related, as certain religious faiths predominate in certain nationalities. Both religious activity and interest by White ethnics in their heritage continue to be prominent features of the contemporary scene. People have been and continue to be ridiculed or deprived of opportunities solely because of their ethnic or religious affiliation. To get a true picture of people's place in society, we need to consider both ethnicity and social class (or what has been called ethclass) in association with their religious identification.

Religion is changing in the United States. As one commercial measure, Hallmark created its first greeting card in 2003 for the Muslim holiday Eid-al-fitr, which marks the end of the monthlong feast of Ramadan. The issue of the persistence of ethnicity is an intriguing one. Some people may only casually exhibit their ethnicity and practice what has been called symbolic ethnicity. However, can people immerse themselves in their ethnic culture without society punishing them for their will to be different? The tendency to put down White ethnics through respectable bigotry continues. Despite this intolerance, ethnicity remains a viable source of identity for many citizens today. There is also the ethnicity paradox, which finds that practicing one's ethnic heritage often strengthens people and allows them to move successfully into the larger society.

The issue of religious expression in all its forms also raises a variety of intriguing questions. How can a country increasingly populated by diverse and often non-Christian faiths maintain religious tolerance? How might this change in decades ahead? How will the courts and society resolve the issues of religious freedom? This is a particularly important issue in such areas as school

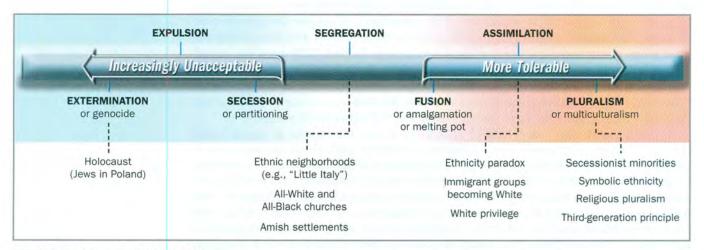


FIGURE 5.10 Intergroup Relations Continuum



prayer, secessionist minorities, creationism, intelligent design, and public religious displays. Some examination of religious ties is fundamental to completing an accurate picture of a person's social identity. Ethnicity and religion are a basic part of today's social reality and of each individual's identity. The emotions, disputes, and debate over religion and ethnicity in the United States are powerful indeed.

### **Key Terms**

bilingual education 143 bilingualism 143 civil religion 152 creationists 158 denomination 147 English immersion 144 ethclass 152 ethnicity paradox 129 intelligent design 159 life chances 151 principle of third-generation interest 127 respectable bigotry 130 secessionist minority 158 symbolic ethnicity 128

### **Review Questions**

- 1. In what respects are ethnic and religious diversity in the United States related to each other?
- 2. Is assimilation automatic within any given ethnic group?
- 3. Apply "Whiteness" to Irish, Italian, and Polish Americans.
- 4. To what extent has a non-Christian tradition been developing in the United States?
- 5. How have court rulings affected religious expression?

### **Critical Thinking**

- 1. When do you see ethnicity becoming more apparent? When does it appear to occur only in response to other people's advancing their own ethnicity? From these situations, how can ethnic identity be both positive and perhaps counter-productive or even destructive?
- **2.** Why do you think we are so often reluctant to show our religion to others? Why might people of certain faiths be more hesitant than others?
- **3.** How does religion reflect conservative and liberal positions on social issues? Consider services for the homeless, the need for child care, the acceptance or rejection of gay men and lesbians, and a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy versus the fetus's right to survive.

### Internet Connections—Research Navigator™

Follow the instructions found on page 35 of this text to access the features of Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>. Once at the Web site, enter your Login Name and Password. Then, to use the ContentSelect database, enter keywords such as "Mormons," "Amish," and "Whiteness studies," and the research engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.

# Week 7:

# GALE ENCYCLOPEDIA:

African Americans

# SCHAEFER:

The Making of African Americans

# **HEALEY**:

From Segregation to Modern Racism

About 70 percent of blacks are making progress in nearly every aspect of American life: the black middle-class is increasing, whitecollar employment is on the rise, and

although the growth

of black political

and economic

power is slow, it

remains steady.

# FRICAN by AMERICANS Barbara C. Bigelow

### Overview

The continent of Africa, the second largest on the globe, is bisected by the equator and bordered to the west by the Atlantic Ocean and to the east by the Indian Ocean. Roughly the shape of an inverted triangle—with a large bulge on its northwestern end and a small horn on its eastern tip—it contains 52 countries and six islands that, together, make up about 11.5 million square miles, or 20 percent of the world's land mass.

Africa is essentially a huge plateau divided naturally into two sections. Northern Africa, a culturally and historically Mediterranean region, includes the Sahara desert—the world's largest expanse of desert, coming close to the size of the United States. Sub-Saharan, or Black Africa, also contains some desert land, but is mainly tropical, with rain forests clustered around the equator; vast savanna grasslands covering more than 30 percent of continent and surrounding the rain forests on the north, east, and south; some mountainous regions; and rivers and lakes that formed from the natural uplifting of the plateau's surface.

Africa is known for the diversity of its people and languages. Its total population is approximately 600 million, making it the third most populous continent on earth. Countless ethnic groups inhabit the land: it is estimated that there are nearly 300 different ethnic groups in the West African nation of Nigeria alone. Still, the peoples of Africa are generally united by a respect for tradition and a devotion to their community.

Most of the flags of African nations contain one or more of three significant colors: red, for the blood of African people; black, for the face of African people; and green, for hope and the history of the fatherland.

#### HISTORY

Some historians consider ancient Africa the cradle of human civilization. In *Before the Mayflower*, Lerone Bennett, Jr., contended that "the African ancestors of American Blacks were among the major benefactors of the human race. Such evidence as survives clearly shows that Africans were on the scene and acting when the human drama opened."

Over the course of a dozen centuries, beginning around 300 A.D., a series of three major political states arose in Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhay. These agricultural and mining empires began as small kingdoms but eventually established great wealth and control throughout Western Africa.

African societies were marked by varying degrees of political, economic, and social advancement. "Wherever we observe the peoples of Africa," wrote John Hope Franklin in *From Slavery to Freedom*, "we find some sort of political organization, even among the so-called stateless. They were not all highly organized kingdoms—to be sure, some were simple, isolated family states—but they all ... [established] governments to solve the problems that every community encounters." Social stratification existed, with political power residing in a chief of state or a royal family, depending on the size of the state. People of lower social standing were respected as valued members of the community.

Agriculture has always been the basis of African economics. Some rural African peoples worked primarily as sheep, cattle, and poultry raisers, and African artisans maintained a steady trade in clothing, baskets, pottery, and metalware, but farming was a way of life for most Africans. Land in such societies belonged to the entire community, not to individuals, and small communities interacted with each other on a regular basis. "Africa was ... never a series of isolated self-sufficient communities," explained Franklin. Rather, tribes specialized in various economic endeavors, then traveled and traded their goods and crops with other tribes.

Slave trade in Africa dates back to the midfifteenth century. Ancient Africans were themselves slaveholders who regarded prisoners of war as sellable property, or chattel, of the head of a family. According to Franklin, though, these slaves "often became trusted associates of their owners and enjoyed virtual freedom." Moreover, in Africa the children of slaves could never be sold and were often freed by their owners.

Throughout the mid–1400s, West Africans commonly sold their slaves to Arab traders in the Mediterranean. The fledgling system of slave trade increased significantly when the Portuguese and Spanish—who had established sugar-producing colonies in Latin America and the West Indies, respectively—settled in the area in the sixteenth century. The Dutch arrived in Africa in the early 1600s, and a large influx of other European traders followed in ensuing decades with the growth of New World colonialism.

#### **MODERN ERA**

Much of Africa's land is unsuitable for agricultural use and, therefore, is largely uninhabited. Over the centuries, severe drought and periods of war and famine have left many African nations in a state of agricultural decline and impoverishment. Still, most nations in Africa tend to increase their rate of population faster than the countries on any other continent.

Agriculture, encompassing both the production of crops and the raising of livestock, remains the primary occupation in Africa. The more verdant areas of the continent are home to farming communities; male members of these communities clear the farmland and often do the planting, while women usually nurture, weed, and harvest the crops.

Africa is very rich in oil, minerals, and plant and animal resources. It is a major producer of cotton, cashews, yams, cocoa beans, peanuts, bananas, and coffee. A large quantity of the world's zinc, coal, manganese, chromite, phosphate, and uranium is also produced on the continent. In addition, Africa's natural mineral wealth yields 90 percent of the world's diamonds and 65 percent of the world's gold.

Much of Africa had become the domain of European colonial powers by the nineteenth century. But a growing nationalistic movement in the mid-twentieth century fueled a modern African revolution, resulting in the establishment of independent nations throughout the continent. Even South Africa, a country long gripped by the injustice of apartheid's white supremacist policies, held its first free and fair multiracial elections in the spring of 1994.

In 1999, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a group organized to investigate

the crimes committed by the South African government under apartheid, announced that it had not been completely forthcoming in its account of the government's actions. Nevertheless, the commission issued strong reproaches of the government. "In the application of the policy of apartheid, the state in the period 1960–1990 sought to protect the power and privilege of a racial minority. Racism therefore constituted the motivating core of the South African political order, an attitude largely endored by the investment and other policies of South Africa's major trading partners in this period." P.W. Botha, former president of South Africa, was named as a major facilitator of apartheid, and Winnie Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela, was chastised for establishing the Mandela United Football Club, a group that retaliated against apartheid with its own violence, torture, and murder.

South Africa is not the only African country to experience internal violence. In 1999, the United Nations disbanded and then re-deployed a peacekeeping force in Angola, a nation that has been suffering through a long civil war. In 1974, after 13 years of opposition from indigenous Angolans, Portugal withdrew as a colonial ruler of Angola and a struggle for power ensued. Although Angola is rich with fertile farming land and oil reserves, it has failed to tap into these resources because of its ongoing internal war.

The United Nations continued to seek justice in Rwanda in the wake of the genocide that occurred there in 1994. In 1999, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda charged former Women's Development and Family Welfare Minister Pauline Nyiramasuhuko with rape. She was not personally charged with rape; rather, Nyiramasuhuko was prosecuted, according to Kingsley Moghalu of the United Nations, "under the concept of command responsibility" for failing to prevent her subordinates from raping women during the 1994 uprising.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) continued to spread death in African countries in the 1990s. In Kenya in August of 1999, President Daniel Arap Moi announced that AIDS was killing approximately 420 Kenyans each day.

#### THE FIRST AFRICANS IN AMERICA

Most Africans transported to the New World as slaves came from sub-Saharan Africa's northwestern and middle-western coastal regions. This area, located on the continent's Atlantic side, now consists of more than a dozen modern nations, including Gabon, the Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Upper Volta, the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Gambia, and Senegal.

Africans are believed to have traveled to the New World with European explorers—especially the Spanish and the Portuguese—at the turn of the fifteenth century. They served as crew members, servants, and slaves. (Many historians agree that Pedro Alonzo Niño, who accompanied Christopher Columbus on his expedition to the New World, was black; in addition, it has been established that in the early 1500s, blacks journeyed to the Pacific with Spanish explorer Vasco Núñez de Balboa and into Mexico with Cortéz.) The early African slave population worked on European coffee, cocoa, tobacco, and sugar plantations in the West Indies, as well as on the farms and in the mines that operated in Europe's South American colonies.

Later, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Dutch, the French, and the English became dominant forces in New World slave trade, and by the early eighteenth century, colonization efforts were focusing on the North American mainland. In August of 1619, the first ship carrying Africans sailed into the harbor at Jamestown, Virginia, and so began the history of African Americans.

During the early years of America's history, society was divided by class rather than skin color. In fact, the first Africans in North America were not slaves, but indentured servants. At the dawn of colonial time, black and white laborers worked together, side by side, for a set amount of time before earning their freedom. According to Lerone Bennett, "The available evidence suggests that most of the first generation of African Americans worked out their terms of servitude and were freed." Using the bustling colony of Virginia as an example of prevailing colonial attitudes, Bennett explained that the coastal settlement, in its first several decades of existence, "was defined by what can only be called equality of oppression.... The colony's power structure made little or no distinction between black and white servants, who were assigned the same tasks and were held in equal contempt."

But North American landowners began to face a labor crisis in the 1640s. Indians had proven unsatisfactory laborers in earlier colonization efforts, and the indentured servitude system failed to meet increasing colonial labor needs. As Franklin reflected in *From Slavery to Freedom*, "Although Africans were in Europe in considerable numbers in the seventeenth century and had been in the New World at least since 1501, ... the colonists and their Old World sponsors were extremely slow in recognizing them as the best possible labor force for the tasks in the New World."

By the second half of the 1600s, however, white colonial landowners began to see slavery as a solution to their economic woes: the fateful system of forced black labor—achieved through a program of perpetual, involuntary servitude-was then set into motion in the colonies. Africans were strong, inexpensive, and available in seemingly unlimited supplies from their native continent. In addition, their black skin made them highly visible in the white world, thereby decreasing the likelihood of their escape from bondage. Black enslavement had become vital to the American agricultural economy, and racism and subjugation became the means to justify the system. The color line was drawn, and white servants were thereafter separated from their black comrades. Slave codes were soon enacted to control almost every aspect of the slaves' lives, leaving them virtually no rights or freedoms.

# SIGNIFICANT IMMIGRATION WAVES AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Between 10 and 12 million Africans are believed to have been imported to the New World between 1650 and 1850. The process began slowly, with an estimated 300,000 slaves brought to the Americas prior to the seventeenth century, then reached its peak in the eighteenth century with the importation of more than six million Africans. These estimates do not include the number of African lives lost during the brutal journey to the New World.

Slave trade was a profitable endeavor: the more slaves transported to the New World on a single ship, the more money the traders made. Africans, chained together in pairs, were crammed by the hundreds onto the ships' decks; lying side by side in endless rows, they had no room to move or exercise and barely enough air to breathe. Their one-way trip, commonly referred to as the Middle Passage, ended in the Americas and the islands of the Caribbean. But sources indicate that somewhere between 12 and 40 percent of the slaves shipped from Africa never completed the Middle Passage: many died of disease, committed suicide by jumping overboard, or suffered permanent injury wrestling against the grip of their shackles.

By the mid-1700s, the majority of Africans in America lived in the Southern Atlantic colonies, where the plantation system made the greatest demands for black labor. Virginia took and maintained the lead in slave ownership, with, according to Franklin, more than 120,000 blacks in 1756 about half the colony's total population. Around the same time in South Carolina, blacks outnumbered whites. To the North, the New England colonies maintained a relatively small number of slaves. The continued growth of the black population made whites more and more fearful of a black revolt. An all-white militia was formed, and stringent legislation was enacted throughout the colonies to limit the activities of blacks. It was within owners' rights to deal out harsh punishments to slaves—even for the most insignificant transgressions.

The fight against the British during the Revolutionary War underscores a curious irony in American history: the colonists sought religious, economic, and political freedom from England for themselves, while denying blacks in the New World even the most basic, human rights. The close of the American Revolution brought with it the manumission, or release, of several thousand slaves, especially in the North. But the Declaration of Independence failed to address the issue of slavery in any certain terms.

By 1790, the black population approached 760,000, and nearly eight percent of all blacks in America were free. Free blacks, however, were bound by many of the same regulations that applied to slaves. The ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1788 guaranteed equality and "certain inalienable rights" to the white population, but not to African Americans. Census reports counted each slave as only three-fifths of a person when determining state congressional representation; so-called free blacks—often referred to as "quasi-free"—faced limited employment opportunities and restrictions on their freedom to travel, vote, and bear arms.

It was in the South, according to historians, that the most brutal, backbreaking conditions of slavery existed. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 greatly increased the profitability of cotton production, thereby heightening the demand for slaves to work on the plantations. The slave population in the South rose with the surge in cotton production and with the expansion of plantations along the western portion of the Southern frontier. But not all slaves worked on Southern plantations. By the second half of the nineteenth century, nearly half a million were working in cities as domestics, skilled artisans, and factory hands.

A growing abolitionist movement—among both blacks and whites—became a potent force in the 1830s. After a century of subjugation, many blacks in America who could not buy their freedom risked their lives in escape attempts. Antislavery revolts first broke out in the 1820s, and uprisings continued for the next four decades. Black anger, it seemed, could only be quelled by an end to the slave system.

Around the same time, a philosophy of reverse migration emerged as a solution to the black dilem-

ma. The country's ever-increasing African American population was cause for alarm in some white circles. Washington D.C.'s American Colonization Society pushed for the return of blacks to their fatherland. By the early 1820s, the first wave of black Americans landed on Africa's western coastal settlement of Liberia; nearly 1,500 blacks were resettled throughout the 1830s. But the idea of repatriation was largely opposed, especially by manumitted blacks in the North: having been "freed," they were now subjected to racial hatred, legalized discrimination, and political and economic injustice in a white world. They sought equity at home, rather than resettlement in Africa, as the only acceptable end to more than two centuries of oppression.

The political and economic turbulence of the Civil War years intensified racial troubles. Emancipation was viewed throughout the war as a military necessity rather than a human rights issue. In December of 1865, eight months after the Civil War ended, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution was adopted: slavery was abolished. But even in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the black population in the United States saw few changes in its social, political, and economic condition.

With no money, land, or livestock, freed slaves were hardly in a position to establish their own farming communities in the South. Thus began the largely exploitative system of tenant farming, which took the form of sharecropping. A popular postslavery agricultural practice, sharecropping allowed tenants (most of whom were black), to work the farms of landlords (most of whom were white) and earn a percentage of the proceeds of each crop harvested. Unfortunately, the system provided virtually no economic benefits for the tenants; relegated to squalid settlements of rundown shacks, they labored as if they were still bound in slavery and, in most cases, barely broke even.

The price of cotton fell around 1920—a precursor to the Great Depression. Over the next few decades, the mass production and widespread use of the mechanical cotton picker signaled the beginning of the end of the sharecropping system. At the same time, the United States was fast becoming an industrial giant, and a huge labor force was needed in the North. This demand for unskilled labor, combined with the expectation of an end to the legal and economic oppression of the South, attracted blacks to northern U.S. cities in record numbers. On Chicago's South Side alone, the black population quintupled by 1930.

Migration to the North began around 1920 and reached its peak—with an influx of more than five million people—around World War II. Prior to the war, more than three-quarters of all blacks in the United States lived in the southern states. In all, between 1910 and 1970, about 6.5 million African Americans migrated to the northern United States. "The black migration was one of the largest and most rapid mass internal movements of people in history—perhaps *the* greatest not caused by the immediate threat of execution or starvation," wrote Nicholas Lemann in *The Promised Land.* "In sheer numbers it outranks the migration of any other ethnic group—Italians or Irish or Jews or Poles—to this country."

But manufacturing jobs in the northern United States decreased in the 1960s. As the need for unskilled industrial laborers fell, hundreds of thousands of African Americans took government service jobs—in social welfare programs, law enforcement, and transportation sectors—that were created during President Lyndon Baines Johnson's presidency. These new government jobs meant economic advancement for some blacks; by the end of the decade, a substantial portion of the black population had migrated out of the urban ghettos.

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by the year 2050, minorities (including people of African, Asian, and Hispanic descent) will comprise a majority of the nation's population. In 1991 just over 12 percent of the U.S. population was black; as of 1994, about 32 million people of African heritage were citizens of the United States. Within six decades, blacks are expected to make up about 15 percent of the nation's population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993).

# Acculturation and Assimilation

History casts a dark shadow on the entire issue of black assimilation in the United States. For hundreds of years, people of African descent were oppressed and exploited purely on the basis of the blackness of their skin. The era of "freedom" that began in the mid-1780s in post-Revolutionary America excluded blacks entirely; black Americans were considered less than human beings and faced discrimination in every aspect of their lives. Many historians argue that slavery's legacy of social inequality has persisted in American society—even 130 years after the post-Civil War emancipation of slaves in the United States.

Legally excluded from the white world, blacks were forced to establish their own social, political, and economic institutions. In the process of building a solid cultural base in the black community, they formed a whole new identity: that of the African American. African Americans recognized their African heritage, but now accepted America as home.

In addition, African Americans began to employ the European tactics of petitions, lawsuits, and organized protest to fight for their rights. This movement, which started early in the nineteenth century, involved the formation and utilization of mutual aid societies; independent black churches; lodges and fraternal organizations; and educational and cultural institutions designed to fight black oppression. As Lerone Bennett stated in *Before the Mayflower:* "By 1837 ... it was plain that Black people were in America to stay and that room had to be made for them."

Some observers note that the European immigrants who streamed into America during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also faced difficulties during the assimilation process, but these difficulties were not insurmountable; their light skin enabled them to blend more quickly and easily with the nation's dominant racial fabric. Discrimination based on race appears to be far more deeply ingrained in American society.

#### TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS, AND BELIEFS

In Superstition and the Superstitious, Eric Maple provided examples of common African folklore and beliefs. For example, when a pregnant woman walks under a ladder, she can expect to have a difficult birth. When someone sneezes, an African wishes that person "health, wealth, prosperity, and children." In Nigeria it is believed that sweeping a house during the night brings bad luck; conversely, all evil things should be expelled from the house by a thorough sweeping in the morning. If a male is hit with a broom he will be rendered impotent unless he retaliates with seven blows delivered with the same broom. In Africa, ghosts are greatly feared because, according to Maple, "all ghosts are evil." One Yoruba tribesman was quoted as saying: "If while walking alone in the afternoon or night your head feels either very light or heavy, this means that there is a ghost around. The only way to save yourself is to carry something that gives off a powerful odor."

#### PROVERBS

A wealth of proverbs from African culture have survived through the generations: If you want to know the end, look at the beginning; When one door closes, another one opens; If we stand tall it is because we stand on the backs of those who came before us;

Two men in a burning house must not stop to argue; Where you sit when you are old shows where you stood in youth; You must live within your sacred truth; The one who asks questions doesn't lose his way; If you plant turnips you will not harvest grapes; God makes three requests of his children: Do the best you can, where you are, with what you have now; You must act as if it is impossible to fail.

#### MISCONCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

African Americans have struggled against racial stereotypes for centuries. The white slaveholding class rationalized the institution of slavery as a necessary evil: aside from playing an integral part in the nation's agricultural economy, the system was viewed by some as the only way to control a wild, pagan race. In colonial America, black people were considered genetically inferior to whites; efforts to educate and Christianize them were therefore regarded as justifiable.

The black population has been misunderstood by white America for hundreds of years. The significance of Old World influences in modern African American life—and an appreciation of the complex structure of traditional African societywent largely unrecognized by the majority of the nation's nonblacks. Even in the latter half of the twentieth century, as more and more African nations embraced multiparty democracy and underwent massive urban and industrial growth, the distorted image of Africans as uncivilized continued to pervade the consciousness of an alarmingly high percentage of white Americans. As social commentator Ellis Cose explained: "Theories of blacks' innate intellectual inadequacy provided much of the rationale for slavery and for Jim Crow [legal discrimination based on race]. They also accomplished something equally pernicious, and continue to do so today: they caused many blacks (if only subconsciously) to doubt their own abilities-and to conform to the stereotype, thereby confirming it" (Ellis Cose, "Color-Coordinated Truths," Newsweek, October 24, 1994, p. 62).

For decades, these images were perpetuated by the American media. Prime-time television shows of the 1960s and 1970s often featured blacks in demeaning roles—those of servants, drug abusers, common criminals, and all-around threats to white society. During the controversial "blaxploitation" phase in American cinema—a period that saw the release of films like *Shaft* and *Superfly*—sex, drugs, and violence prevailed on the big screen. Though espoused by some segments of the black artistic community as a legitimate outlet for black radicalism, these films were seen by many critics as alienating devices that glorified urban violence and drove an even greater wedge between blacks and whites.

African American entertainment mogul Bill Cosby is credited with initiating a reversal in the tide of media stereotypes. His long-running situation comedy *The Cosby Show*—a groundbreaking program that made television history and dominated the ratings throughout the 1980s—helped to dispel the myths of racial inferiority. An intact family consisting of well-educated, professional parents and socially responsible children, the show's fictional Huxtable family served as a model for more enlightened, racially-balanced programming in the 1990s.

By 1999, however, Hollywood seemed to to be failing in its quest for more shows about blacks. The Fall 1999 television shows of the four major networks (ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX) featured only a smattering of black characters. Black leaders called on the networks to rectify the situation, and the networks immediately responded by crafting black characters.

#### CUISINE

Most African nations are essentially agricultural societies. For centuries, a majority of men have worked as farmers and cattle raisers, although some have made their living as fishers. Planting, sowing, and harvesting crops were women's duties in traditional West African society. The task of cooking also seems to have fallen to women in ancient Africa. They prepared meals like fufu—a traditional dish made of pounded yams and served with soups, stew, roasted meat and a variety of sauces over huge open pits.

Many tribal nations made up the slave population in the American South. Africans seem to have exchanged their regional recipes freely, leading to the development of a multinational cooking style among blacks in America. In many areas along the Atlantic coast, Native Americans taught the black population to cook with native plants. These varied cooking techniques were later introduced to southern American society by Africans.

During the colonial period, heavy breakfast meals of hoecakes (small cornmeal cakes) and molasses were prepared to fuel the slaves for work from sunup to sundown. Spoonbread, crab cakes, corn pone (corn bread), corn pudding, greens, and succotash—cooked over an open pit or fireplace became common items in a black cook's repertoire in the late 1700s and the 1800s. African Americans served as cooks for both the northern and southern armies throughout the Civil War. Because of the scarcity of supplies, the cooks were forced to improvise and invent their own recipes. Some of the dishes that sprang from this period of culinary creativity include jambalaya (herbs and rice cooked with chicken, ham, sausage, shrimp, or oysters), bread pudding, dirty rice, gumbo, and red beans and rice—all of which remain favorites on the nation's regional cuisine circuit.

The late 1800s and early 1900s saw the establishment of many African American-owned eateries specializing in southern fried chicken, pork chops, fish, potato salad, turkey and dressing, and rice and gravy. In later years, this diet—which grew to include pigs' feet, chitlins (hog intestines), collard greens (a vegetable), and ham hocks—became known as "soul food."

Food plays a large role in African American traditions, customs, and beliefs. Nothing underscores this point more than the example of New Year's Day, a time of celebration that brings with it new hopes for the coming months. Some of the traditional foods enjoyed on this day are black-eyed peas, which represent good fortune; rice, a symbol of prosperity; greens, which stand for money; and fish, which represents the motivation and desire to increase wealth.

#### A REVIVAL OF OTHER TRADITIONS

Over the centuries, various aspects of African culture have blended into American society. The complex rhythms of African music, for instance, are evident in the sounds of American blues and jazz; a growth in the study of American folklore—and the development of American-style folktales-can be linked in part to Africa's long oral tradition. But a new interest in the Old World began to surface in the 1970s and continued through the nineties. In an effort to connect with their African heritage, some black Americans have adopted African names to replace the Anglo names of their ancestors' slaveowners. In addition, increasing numbers of African American men and women are donning the traditional garb of their African brothers and sisters-including African-inspired jewelry, headwear, and brightly colored, loose-fitting garments called dashikis—to show pride in their roots.

#### HOLIDAYS

In addition to Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, other dates throughout the calendar year hold a special significance for African Americans. For example, on June 19th of each year, many blacks celebrate a special day known as Juneteenth. Although the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared an end to slavery in the Confederacy, took effect on January 1, 1863, the news of slavery's end did not reach the black population in Texas until June 19, 1865. Union General Gordon Granger arrived outside Galveston, Texas, that day to announce the freedom of the state's 250,000 enslaved blacks. Former slaves in Texas and Louisiana held a major celebration that turned into an annual event and spread throughout the nation as free blacks migrated west and north.

From December 26th to January 1st, African Americans observe *Kwanzaa* (which means "first fruits" in Swahili), a nonreligious holiday that celebrates family, culture, and ancestral ties. This weeklong commemoration was instituted in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga to promote unity and pride among people of African descent.

Kwanzaa comes directly from the tradition of the agricultural people of Africa, who gave thanks for a bountiful harvest at designated times during the year. In this highly symbolic celebration, mazeo (crops) represent the historical roots of the holiday and the rewards of collective labor; mekeka (a mat) stands for tradition and foundation; kinara (a candleholder) represents African forebears; muhindi (ears of corn) symbolize a family's children; zawadi (gifts) reflect the seeds sown by the children (like commitments made and kept, for example) and the fruits of the parents' labor; and the kikombe cha umoja functions as a unity cup. For each day during the week of Kwanzaa, a particular principle or nguzo saba ("n-goo-zoh sah-ba") is observed: (Day 1): Umoja ("oo-moe-ja")—unity in family, community, nation, and race; (Day 2): Kujichagulia ("coo-gee-cha-goolee-ah")-self-determination, independence, and creative thinking; (Day 3): Ujima ("oo-gee-mah")collective work and responsibility to others; (Day 4): Ujamaa ("oo-jah-mah")—cooperative economics, as in the formation and support of black businesses and jobs; (Day 5): Nia ("nee-ah")-purpose, as in the building and development of black communities; (Day 6): Kuumba ("coo-oom-bah")-creativity and beautification of the environment; (Day 7): Imani ("ee-mah-nee")-faith in God, parents, leaders, and the righteousness and victory of the black struggle.

For African Americans, the entire month of February is set aside not as a holiday, but as a time of enlightenment for people of all races. Black History Month, first introduced in 1926 by historian Carter G. Woodson as Negro History Week, is observed each February as a celebration of black heritage. A key tool in the American educational system's growing multicultural movement, Black History Month was designed to foster a better understanding of the role black Americans have played in U.S. history.

#### **HEALTH ISSUES**

African Americans are at a high risk for serious health problems, including cancer, diabetes, and hypertension. Several studies show a direct connection between poor health and the problem of underemployment or unemployment among African Americans. One-third of the black population is financially strapped, with an income at or below the poverty level. Illnesses brought on by an improper diet or substandard living conditions are often compounded by a lack of quality medical care—largely a result of inadequate health insurance coverage.

Statistics indicate that African Americans are more likely to succumb to many life-threatening illnesses than white Americans. This grim reality is evident even from birth: black babies under one year of age die at twice the rate of white babies in the same age group. "When you collect all the information and search for answers, they usually relate to poverty," noted University of Iowa pediatrics professor Dr. Herman A. Hein in 1989 (Mark Nichols and Linda Graham Caleca, "Black Infant Mortality," *Indianapolis Star*, August 27, 1989, p. A-1). A lack of prenatal care among low-income mothers is believed to be the greatest single factor in the high mortality rate among African American infants.

A 1992 medical survey found that black Americans were more likely to die from cancer than white Americans: the age-adjusted cancer mortality rate was a full 27 percent higher for the nation's black population than the white population. African Americans also had a significantly lower five-year survival rate-only 38 percent compared to 53 percent for whites-even though the overall cancer incidence rates are actually lower for blacks than for whites. Black Americans who suffer from cancer seem to be receiving inferior medical treatment, and they are much more likely to have their cancer diagnosed only after the malignancy has metastasized, or spread to other parts of the body (Catherine C. Boring and others, "Cancer Statistics for African Americans," CA 42, 1992, pp. 7-17).

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, strikes a third more African Americans than whites. Although the Public Health Service reports that the hypertension is largely inherited, other factors such as poor diet and stress can play a key role in the development of the disorder. The effects of hypertension are especially devastating to the black population: blacks aged 24 to 44 are reportedly 18 times more likely than whites to suffer kidney failure as a complication of high blood pressure (Dixie Farley, "High Blood Pressure: Controlling the Silent Killer," *FDA Consumer*, December 1991, pp. 28-33). A reduction in dietary fat and salt are recommended for all hypertensive patients. African Americans are believed to be particularly sensitive to blood pressure problems brought on by a high-salt diet.

Sickle cell anemia is a serious and painful disorder that occurs almost exclusively in people of African descent. The disease is believed to have been brought to the United States as a result of African immigration, and by the last decade of the twentieth century it had found its way to all corners of the world. In some African nations, two to three percent of all babies die from the disease. In the United States, one in every 12 African Americans carries the trait; of these, about one in 600 develops the disease. Sickle cell anemia is generally considered to be the most common genetically determined blood disease to affect a single ethnic group (Katie Krauss, "The Pain of Sickle Cell Anemia," *Yale-New Haven Magazine*, summer 1989, pp. 2-6).

Normal red blood cells are round, but the blood cells of sickle cell victims are elongated and pointed (like a sickle). Cells of this shape can clog small blood vessels, thereby cutting off the supply of oxygen to surrounding tissues. The pain associated with sickle cell anemia is intense, and organ failure can result as the disease progresses. By the late 1980s, researchers had begun to make strides in the treatment and prevention of some of the life-threatening complications associated with sickle cell anemia, including damage to the heart, lungs, immune system, and nervous system.

Although the threats to the health of African Americans are numerous and varied, the number one killer of blacks in the United States is violent crime. In the early 1990s, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia, began viewing violence as a disease. In an October 17, 1994 press conference, CDC director David Satcher noted that homicide is the leading cause of death among black Americans aged 15 to 34. The severity of the problem has led the CDC to take an active role in addressing violence as a public health issue.

In November of 1990, the National Center for Health Statistics reported that while life expectancy for whites increased in the 1980s, life expectancy actually fell among African Americans during the latter half of the decade. African American men have a life expectancy of only 65.6 years—more than seven years lower than that of the average white American male (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993). Census projections suggest that between 1995 and 2010, life expectancy should increase to 67.3 years for black men and 75.1 years for white men.

# Language

More than 1,000 different languages are spoken in Africa, and it is often difficult for even the most studied linguistic scholars to differentiate between separate African languages and the dialects of a single language. The multitudinous languages of Africa are grouped into several large families, including the Niger-Congo family (those spoken mainly in the southern portion of the continent) and the Afro-Asiatic family (spoken in northern Africa, the eastern horn of Africa, and Southwest Asia).

Africa has a very long and rich oral tradition; few languages of the Old World ever took a written form. Literature and history in ancient Africa, therefore, were passed from generation to generation orally. After the fourteenth century, the use of Arabic by educated Muslim blacks was rather extensive, and some oral literature was subsequently reduced to a more permanent written form. But, in spite of this Arab influence, the oral heritage of Africans remained strong, serving not only as an educational device, but as a guide for the administration of government and the conduct of religious ceremonies.

Beginning with the arrival of the first Africans in the New World, Anglo-American words were slowly infused into African languages. Successive generations of blacks born in America, as well as Africans transported to the colonies later in the slave trading era, began to use standard English as their principal language. Over the years, this standard English has been modified by African Americans to encompass their own culture, language, and experience.

The social change movements of the 1960s gave birth to a number of popular black expressions. Later, in the 1980s and 1990s, the music of hip-hop and rap artists became a culturally significant expression of the trials of black urban life. In her book Talkin & Testifyin, linguistic scholar Geneva Smitherman offers this explanation of the formation of a very distinctive black English: "In a nutshell: Black Dialect is an Africanized form of English reflecting Black America's linguistic-cultural African heritage and the conditions of servitude, oppression, and life in America. Black Language is Euro-American speech with Afro-American meaning, nuance, tone, and gesture. The Black Idiom is used by 80 to 90 percent of American Blacks, at least some of the time. It has allowed Blacks to create a culture of survival in an alien land, and as a by-product has served to enrich the language of all Americans."

As recounted in *Before the Mayflower*, scholar Lorenzo Turner found linguistic survivals of the



African Americans have very strong family foundations that often extend outside of the nuclear family.

African past in the syntax, word-formations, and intonations of African Americans. Among these words in general use, especially in the South, are "goober" (peanut), "gumbo" (okra), "ninny" (female breast), "tote" (to carry), and "yam" (sweet potato). Additionally, Turner discovered a number of African-inspired names among Americans on the South Side of Chicago, including: "Bobo," meaning one who cannot talk; "Geiji," the name of a language and tribe in Liberia; "Agona," after a country in Ghana; "Ola," a Yoruban word meaning that which saves; and "Zola," meaning to love.

# Family and Community Dynamics

In *From Slavery to Freedom*, Franklin pointed out that "the family was the basis of social organization. . . [and] the foundation even of economic and political life" in early Africa, with descent being traced through the mother. Historians have noted that Africans placed a heavy emphasis on their obligations to their immediate and extended family mem-

bers and their community as a whole. In addition, according to Franklin, Africans are said to have believed that "the spirits of their forefathers had unlimited power over their lives"; thus a sense of kinship was especially significant in the Old World.

Slavery exerted an undeniable strain on the traditional African family unit. The system tore at the very fiber of family life: in some cases, husbands and wives were sold to different owners, and children born into servitude could be separated—sold—from their mothers on a white man's whim. But, according to Nicholas Lemann in *The Promised Land*, "the mutation in the structure of the black family" that occurred during slavery did not necessarily destroy the black family. Rather, the enduring cycle of *poverty* among African Americans seems to have had the strongest negative impact on the stability of the family.

As of March of 1992, the U.S. Bureau of the Census estimated that 32.7 percent of African Americans lived below the poverty level (with family incomes of less than \$14,000). It is this segment of the underclass that defines the term "families in crisis." They are besieged by poverty and further

challenged by an array of cyclical social problems: high unemployment rates; the issue of teenage pregnancy; a preponderance of fatherless households; inadequate housing or homelessness; inferior health care against a backdrop of high health hazards; staggering school drop-out rates; and an alarming incarceration rate. (One out of four males between the ages of 18 to 24 was in prison in the early 1990s.) Experts predict that temporary assistance alone will not provide long-term solutions to these problems. Without resolutions, impoverished black families are in danger of falling further and further behind.

Another third of all African American families found themselves in tenuous financial positions in the mid-1990s, corresponding with the prevailing economic climate of the United States in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These families faced increasing layoffs or job termination as the nation's onceprosperous industrial base deteriorated and the great business boom of the early 1980s faded. Still, they managed to hold their extended family units together and provide support systems for their children.

At the same time, more than 30 percent of African American families were headed by one or two full-time wage earners. This middle- and uppermiddle-class segment of the nation's black population includes men and women who are second, third, or fourth generation college graduates—and who have managed to prosper within a system that, according to some observers, continues to breed legalized racism in both subtle and substantive ways. As models of community action and responsibility, these African American families have taken stock in an old African proverb: "It takes a whole tribe to raise one child."

### EDUCATION

As early as the 1620s and 1630s, European missionaries in the United States began efforts to convert Africans to Christianity and provide them with a basic education. Other inroads in the black educational process were made by America's early white colonists. The Pennsylvania Quakers (members of a Christian sect known as the Society of Friends) were among the most vocal advocates of social reform and justice for blacks in the first century of the nation's history. Staunch opponents of the oppressive institution of slavery, the Quakers began organizing educational meetings for people of African heritage in the early 1700s; in 1774, they launched a school for blacks in Philadelphia. By the mid-1800s, the city had become a center for black learning, with public, industrial, charity, and private schools providing an education for more than 2,000 African American students.

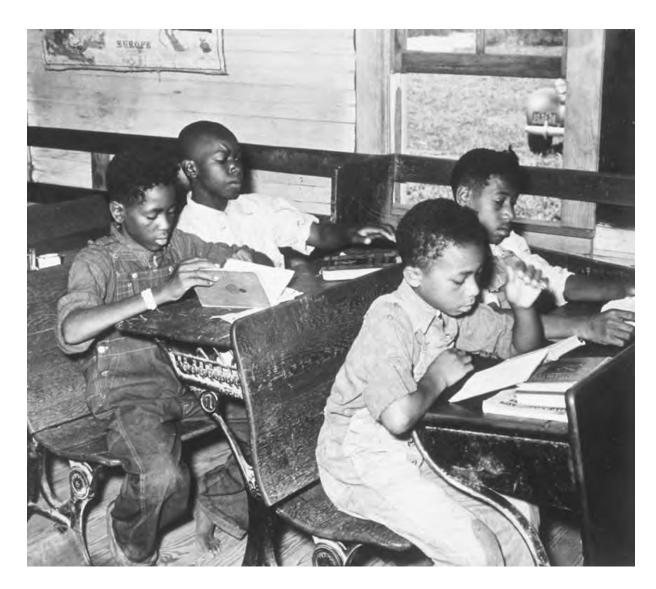
After the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, groups known as Freedmen's organizations were formed to provide educational opportunities to former slaves. Under the Freedmen's Bureau Acts passed by Congress in the 1860s, more than 2,500 schools were established in the South.

Over the next decade or so, several colleges opened for black students. In the late 1870s, religious organizations and government-sponsored landgrant programs played an important role in the establishment and support of many early black institutions of higher learning. By 1900, more than 2,000 black Americans would graduate from college.

The end of the nineteenth century saw a surge in black leadership. One of the best-known and most powerful leaders in the black community at this time was educator and activist Booker T. Washington. A graduate of Virginia's Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, Washington set up a similar school in Tuskegee, Alabama, in 1881, with a \$2,000 grant from the Alabama legislature. Committed to the ideal of economic self-help and independence, the Tuskegee Institute offered teachers' training—as well as industrial and agricultural education—to young black men and women.

Activist Mary McLeod Bethune, the most prominent black woman of her era, also had a profound impact on black education at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1904, with less than two dollars in savings and a handful of students, she founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute in Florida. Devoted mainly to the education of African American girls, the Daytona Institute also served as a cornerstone of strength for the entire black community. The school later merged with Cookman's Institute, a Florida-based men's college, to become Bethune-Cookman College.

Bethune's efforts, and the struggles of dozens of other black educational leaders, were made in the midst of irrefutable adversity. In 1896 the U.S. Supreme Court sanctioned the practice of racial segregation: the court's ruling in the case of Plessy vs. Ferguson upheld the doctrine of "separate but equal" accommodations for blacks-and schools were among these accommodations. It took more than half a century for the Plessy decision to be overturned; in 1954, a major breakthrough in the fight for black rights came when the Supreme Court handed down its decision in the Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka case: "To separate [black] children from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone.... Segregation with the sanction



In the 1930s, schools were segregated throughout the North and South. These boys went to school in Missouri.

of law, therefore, has a tendency to [retard] the educational and mental development of Negro children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racially integrated school system.... In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" (from the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*, May 17, 1954, 347 U.S. 483).

Brown was clearly a landmark decision that set the tone for further social advancements among African Americans, but its passage failed to guarantee integration and equality in education. Even four decades after Brown, true desegregation in American public schools had not been achieved. The school populations in cities like Detroit, Chicago, and Los Angeles remain almost exclusively black, and high school drop-out rates in poor, urban, predominantly black districts are often among the highest in the nation—sometimes reaching more than 40 percent.

U.S. Census reports suggest that by the year 2000, the country will witness a change in the face of school segregation. Hispanics, unprotected by the

Brown decision, will outnumber blacks in the United States; the Hispanic community, therefore, will need to battle side by side with African Americans for desegregation and equity in education. As Jean Heller put it in the *St. Petersburg Times*, "The Brown decision outlawed *de jure* segregation, the separation of races by law. There is no legal remedy for *de facto* segregation, separation that occurs naturally. It is not against any law for whites or blacks or Hispanics to choose to live apart, even if that choice creates segregated school systems" (Jean Heller, A Unfulfilled Mission," *St. Petersburg Times* (Florida), December 10, 1989, p. 1A).

Not all attempts at school desegregation have failed. Heller points out that the East Harlem school district, formerly one of the worst in New York City, designed such an impressive educational system for its black and Hispanic students that neighboring whites began transferring into the district. Educational experts have suggested that the key to successful, nationwide school integration is the establishment of high quality educational facilities in segregated urban areas. Superior school systems in segregated cities, they argue, would discourage urban flight—thereby increasing the racial and economic diversity of the population—and bring about a natural end to segregation.

In 1990 the U.S. Department of Commerce reported that the gap between black and white high school graduation rates was closing. The department's census-based study showed an encouraging increase in the overall percentage of black high school graduates between 1978 and 1988. Only 68 percent of blacks and 83 percent of whites graduated from secondary school in 1978; ten years later, 75 percent of blacks and 82 percent of whites had graduated.

But studies show that fewer blacks than whites go on to college. Between 1960 and 1991, the percentage of black high school graduates who were enrolled in college or had completed at least one year of college rose from 32.5 to 46.1 percent, compared to a rise of 41 to 62.3 percent for white graduates (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993). As the United States completes its move from a manufacturing society to an information-based, technological society, the need for highly educated, creative, computer-literate workers continues to grow.

In response to perceived inadequacies in black American education, a progressive philosophy known as Afrocentrism developed around 1980. An alternative to the nation's Eurocentric model of education, Afrocentrism places the black student at the center of history, thereby instilling a sense of dignity and pride in black heritage. Proponents of the movement—including its founder, activist and scholar Molefi Kete Asante—feel that the integration of the Afrocentric perspective into the American consciousness will benefit students of all colors in a racially diverse society. In addition, pro-Afrocentric educators believe that empowered black students will be better equipped to succeed in an increasingly complex world.

### WEDDINGS

American tradition calls for the bride to have "something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue" in her possession for luck on her wedding day. While modern African American couples marry in the western tradition, many are personalizing their weddings with an ancestral touch to add to the day's historical and cultural significance.

Among Africans, marriage represents a union of two families, not just the bride and groom. In keeping with West African custom, it is essential for parents and extended family members to welcome a man or woman's future partner and offer emotional support to the couple throughout their marriage. The bonding of the families begins when a man obtains formal permission to marry his prospective bride.

In the true oral tradition, Africans often deliver the news of their upcoming nuptials by word of mouth. Some African American couples have modified this tradition by having their invitations printed on a scroll, tied with raffia, and then hand-delivered by friends. The ancestral influence on modern ceremonies can also be seen in the accessories worn by the bride and groom. On African shores, the groom wears his bride's earring, and the bride dons an elaborate necklace reserved exclusively for her.

Because enslaved Africans in America were often barred from marrying in a legal ceremony, they created their own marriage rite. It is said that couples joined hands and jumped over a broom together into "the land of matrimony." Many twentieth-century black American couples reenact "jumping the broom" during their wedding ceremony or reception.

### INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE

In the three decades between 1960 and 1990, interracial marriages more than quadrupled in the United States, but the number remains small. By 1992 less than one percent of all marriages united blacks with people of another racial heritage (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993).

"America has often been referred to as a melting pot, a heterogeneous country made up of diverse ethnic, religious, and racial groups," noted *Boston Globe* contributor Desiree French. But, in spite of the nation's diversity, it has taken more than 350 years for many Americans to begin to come to terms with the idea of interracial marriage (Desiree French, "Interracial Marriage," *Sun-Sentinel* (Fort Lauderdale), January 25, 1990, p.3E; originally printed in the *Boston Globe*). As late as 1967, antimiscegenation laws (laws that prohibited the marriage of whites to members of another race) were still on the books in 17 states; that year, the U.S. Supreme Court finally declared such laws unconstitutional.

Surveys indicate that young Americans approaching adulthood at the dawn of the twentyfirst century are much more open to the idea of interracial unions than earlier generations. A decline in social bias has led experts to predict an increase in cross-cultural marriages throughout the 1990s.

Still, according to the 1994 National Health and Social Life Survey, 97 percent of black women

In recent

years African

Americans have

been branching

out to many

different faiths

and practices.

are likely to choose a partner of the same race (John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, Edward O. Laumann, and Gina Kolata, Sex in America: A Definitive Survey [Boston: Little Brown, 1994]). Newsweek magazine quoted one young black woman as saving that "relationships are complicated enough" without the extra stress of interracial tensions (Michael Marriott, "Not Frenzied, But Fulfilled," Newsweek, October 17, 1994, p. 71). Conflict in the United States over black-white relationships stems from the nation's brutal history of slavery, when white men held all the power in society. More than a century after the abolition of slavery, America's shameful legacy of racism remains. According to some observers, high rates of abortion, drug abuse, illness, and poverty among African Americans seemed to spark a movement of black solidarity in the early 1990s. Many black women-"the culture bearers"-oppose the idea of interracial marriage, opting instead for racial strength and unity through the stabilization of the black family (Ruth Holladay, "A Cruel History of Colors Interracial Relationships," Indianapolis Star, May 6, 1990, p. H-1).

### Religion

In *From Slavery to Freedom*, John Hope Franklin described the religion of early Africans as "ancestor worship." Tribal religions varied widely but shared some common elements: they were steeped in ritual, magic, and devotion to the spirits of the dead, and they placed heavy emphasis on the need for a knowledge and appreciation of the past.

Christianity was first introduced in West Africa by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Franklin noted that resistance among the Africans to Christianization stemmed from their association of the religion with the institution of slave trade to the New World. "It was a strange religion, this Christianity," he wrote, "which taught equality and brotherhood and at the same time introduced on a large scale the practice of tearing people from their homes and transporting them to a distant land to become slaves."

In the New World, missionaries continued their efforts to convert Africans to Christianity. As far back as 1700, the Quakers sponsored monthly Friends meetings for blacks. But an undercurrent of anxiety among a majority of white settlers curbed the formation of free black churches in colonial America: many colonists felt that if blacks were allowed to congregate at separate churches, they would plot dangerous rebellions. By the mid-1700s, black membership in both the Baptist and Methodist churches had increased significantly; few blacks, however, became ordained members of the clergy in these predominantly white sects.

African Americans finally organized the first independent black congregation—the Silver Bluff Baptist Church—in South Carolina in the early 1770s. Other black congregations sprang up in the first few decades of the 1800s, largely as outgrowths of established white churches. In 1816 Richard Allen, a slave who bought his own freedom, formed the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church in Philadelphia in response to an unbending policy of segregated seating in the city's white Methodist church.

An increase in slave uprisings led fearful whites to impose restrictions on the activities of black churches in the 1830s. In the post-Civil War years, however, black Baptist and Methodist ministers exerted a profound influence on their congregations, urging peaceful social and political involvement for the black population as Reconstructionperiod policies unfolded.

But as segregation became a national reality in the 1880s and 1890s, some black churches and ministers began to advocate decidedly separatist solutions to the religious, educational, and economic discrimination that existed in the United States. AME bishop Henry McNeal Turner, a former Civil War chaplain, championed the idea of African migration for blacks with his "Back to Africa" movement in 1895—more than twenty years before the rise of black nationalist leader Marcus Garvey. By the early 1900s, churches were functioning to unite blacks politically.

Organized religion has always been a strong institution among African Americans. More than 75 percent of black Americans belong to a church, and nearly half attend church services each week ("America's Blacks: A World Apart," *Economist*, March 30, 1991). Black congregations reflect the traditional strength of community ties in their continued devotion to social improvement—evident in the launching of youth programs, anti-drug crusades, and parochial schools, and in ongoing efforts to provide the needy with food, clothing, and shelter.

Today, the largest African American denomination in the country is the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Inc. Many African Americans belong to the AME and CME (Christian Methodist Episcopal) churches, and the Church of God in Christ—a Pentecostal denomination that cuts across socioeconomic lines—also has a strong black following. The 1990s saw a steady increase in black membership in the Islamic religion and the Roman Catholic church as well. (A separate African American Catholic congregation, not sanctioned by the church in Rome, was founded in 1989 by George A. Stallings, Jr.) Less mainstream denominations include Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, based on the black separatist doctrine of Elijah Muhammad. Though faulted by some critics for its seemingly divisive, controversial teachings, the Nation of Islam maintains a fairly sizeable following.

In 1995, black churches in the United States became the targets of arson. In what seemed to be a case of serial arsons, churches with black or mixedrace congregations were destroyed by fire. One church, the Macedonia Baptist Church in South Carolina sued four members of the Ku Klux Klan and the North and South Carolina klan organizations in civil court. In a stunning verdict, the jury ordered the Ku Klux Klan to pay \$37.8 million in damages to the Macedonia Baptist Congregation.

## Employment and Economic Traditions

When African Americans left the South in the early 1900s to move North, many migrants found jobs in manufacturing, especially in the automobile, tobacco, meat-packing, clothing, steel, and shipping industries; African Americans were hit especially hard by the decline of the nation's manufacturing economy later in the century. In the 1960s, U.S. presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson launched a "war on poverty." Some blacks were able to move out of the ghettos during these years, following the passage of the Civil Rights and Fair Housing Acts, the inauguration of affirmative action policies, and the increase of black workers in government jobs. But John Hope Franklin contended in From Slavery to Freedom that the Civil Rights Act of 1964, though "the most far-reaching and comprehensive law in support of racial equality ever enacted by Congress," actually reflected only "the illusion of equality."

Designed to protect blacks against discrimination in voting, in education, in the use of public facilities, and in the administration of federallyfunded programs, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 led to the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the institution of affirmative action programs to redress past discrimination against African Americans. Affirmative action measures were initiated in the mid-1960s to improve educational and employment opportunities for minorities; over the years, women and the handicapped have also benefited from these programs. But opponents of affirmative action have argued that racial quotas breed racial resentment.

A strong feeling of "white backlash" accompanied the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; racial tensions sparked violence across the country as blacks tried to move beyond the limits of segregation—economically, politically, and socially—in the latter half of the twentieth century. Still, more than three decades after the act's passage, economic inequities persist in America.

The conservative policies of U.S. presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush dealt a serious blow to black advancement in the 1980s and early 1990s. The percentage of Americans living in poverty "rose in the 1980s, when the government [cut] back its efforts" to support social programs (Nicholas Lemann, "Up and Out," *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, May 24-June 4, 1989, pp. 25-26). The budget cuts made by these Republican administrations drastically reduced black middleclass employment opportunities.

According to the U.S. Census, in 1991 the median family income for African Americans was \$18,807, nearly \$13,000 less than the median income for white families; 45.6 percent of black children lived below the poverty level, compared to 16.1 percent of white children; and black unemployment stood at 14.1 percent, more than twice the unemployment rate among whites.

But the outlook for African American advancement is encouraging. Experts predict that by the year 2000, blacks will account for nearly 12 percent of the American labor force. A strong black presence is evident in the fields of health care, business, and law, and a new spirit of entrepreneurship is burgeoning among young, upwardly-mobile African Americans. About 70 percent of blacks are making progress in nearly every aspect of American life: the black middle-class is increasing, white-collar employment is on the rise, and although the growth of black political and economic power is slow, it remains steady (Joseph F. Coates, Jennifer Jarratt, and John B. Mahaffie, "Future Work," Futurist, May/June 1991, pp. 9-19). The other 30 percent of the black population, however, is trapped by a cycle of poor education, multigenerational poverty, and underemployment. The civil rights struggles of the 1990s and beyond, then, must be primarily economic in nature.

## Politics and Government

The abolitionist movement of the 1830s joined a multiracial coalition in the quest for black emancipation and equality. In addition to agitating for civil rights through traditional legal means, the abolitionists took a daring step by operating the legendary Underground Railroad system, a covert network of safe havens that assisted fugitive slaves in their flight to freedom in the North. "Perhaps nothing did more to intensify the strife between North and South, and to emphasize in a most dramatic way the determination of abolitionists to destroy slavery, than the Underground Railroad," Franklin wrote in From Slavery to Freedom. "It was this organized effort to undermine slavery ... that put such a strain on intersectional relations and sent antagonists and protagonists of slavery scurrying headlong into the 1850s determined to have their uncompromising way." Around 50,000 slaves are believed to have escaped to the northern United States and Canada through the Underground Railroad prior to the Civil War.

The reality of the black plight was magnified in 1856 with the Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Dred Scott vs. Sandford.* A slave named Dred Scott had traveled with his master out of the slave state of Missouri during the 1830s and 1840s. He sued his owner for freedom, arguing that his journeys to free territories made him free. The Supreme Court disagreed and ruled that slaves could not file lawsuits because they lacked the status of a U.S. citizen; in addition, an owner was said to have the right to transport a slave anywhere in U.S. territory without changing the slave's status.

The Union victory in the Civil War and the abolition of slavery under President Abraham Lincoln consolidated black political support in the Republican party. This affiliation lasted throughout the end of the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth century—even after the Republicans began to loosen the reins on the Democratic South following the removal of the last federal troops from the area in 1876.

Earlier in the post-Civil War Reconstruction era, African Americans made significant legislative gains—or so it seemed. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution were intended to provide full citizenship with all its rights and privileges—to all blacks. The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, granted black American men the right to vote.

But the voting rights amendment failed in its attempts to guarantee blacks the freedom to choose at the ballot box. Poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses were established by some state and local governments to deny blacks their right to vote. (The poll tax would not be declared unconstitutional until 1964, with the passage of the Twenty-fourth Amendment.) These legalized forms of oppression presented seemingly insurmountable obstacles to black advancement in the United States.

Around the same time—the 1870s—other forms of white supremacist sentiment came to the fore. The so-called "Jim Crow" laws of segregation—allowing for legal, systematic discrimination on the basis of race—were accepted throughout the nation. Voting rights abuses persisted. And violence became a common tool of oppression: between 1889 and 1922, nearly 3,500 lynchings took place, mainly in the southern states of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi, but also in some northern cities.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Booker T. Washington had gained prominence as the chief spokesperson on the state of black America and the issue of racial reconciliation. Recognized throughout the United States as an outstanding black leader and mediator, he advocated accommodationism as the preferred method of attaining black rights. His leading opponent, black historian, militant, and author W. E. B. Du Bois, felt it was necessary to take more aggressive measures in the fight for equality. Du Bois spearheaded the Niagara Movement, a radical black intellectual forum, in 1905. Members of the group merged with white progressives in 1910 to form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). After Washington's death in 1915, the NAACP became a greater force in the struggle for racial reform.

The massive black migration to the North in the 1920s showed that racial tension was no longer just a rural, southern issue. Anti-black attitudes, combined with the desperate economic pressures of the Great Depression, exerted a profound effect on politics nationwide. Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt attracted black voters with his "New Deal" relief and recovery programs in the 1930s. For 70 years blacks had been faithful to the Republican Party—the party of Lincoln. But their belief in Roosevelt's "serious interest in the problem of the black man caused thousands of [African Americans] to change their party allegiance," noted John Hope Franklin in From Slavery to Freedom. Housing and employment opportunities started to open up, and blacks began to gain seats in various state legislatures in the 1930s and 1940s.

World War II ushered in an era of unswerving commitment to the fight for civil rights. According to Franklin, the continued "steady migration of [African Americans] to the North and West and their concentration in important industrial communities gave blacks a powerful new voice in political affairs. In cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland they frequently held the balance of power in close elections, and in certain pivotal states the [black vote] came to be regarded as crucial in national elections." Progress was being made on all fronts by national associations, political organizations, unions, the federal branch of the U.S. government, and the nation's court system.

President Harry S Truman, who assumed office on the death of Roosevelt in 1945, contributed to black advancement by desegregating the military, establishing fair employment practices in the federal service, and beginning the trend toward integration in public accommodations and housing. His civil rights proposals of the late 1940s came to fruition a decade later during President Eisenhower's administration. The Civil Rights Act of 1957, also known as the Voting Rights Act of 1957, was the first major piece of civil rights legislation passed by Congress in more than eight decades. It expanded the role of the federal government in civil rights matters and established the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to monitor the protection of black rights.

But the Commission soon determined that unfair voting practices persisted in the South; blacks were still being denied the right to vote in certain southern districts. Because of these abuses, the Civil Rights Act of 1957 was followed three years later by a second act that offered extra protection to blacks at the polls. In 1965, yet another Voting Rights Act was passed to eliminate literacy tests and safeguard black rights during the voter registration process.

The postwar agitation for black rights had vielded slow but significant advances in school desegregation and suffrage-advances that met with bold opposition from some whites. By the mid- to late-1950s, as the black fight for progress gained ground, white resistance continued to mount. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., took the helm of the fledgling civil rights movement-a multiracial effort to eliminate segregation and achieve equality for blacks through nonviolent resistance. The movement began with the boycott of city buses in Montgomery, Alabama, and, by 1960, had broadened in scope, becoming a national crusade for black rights. Over the next decade, civil rights agitators-black and white-organized economic boycotts of racist businesses and attracted front-page news coverage with black voter registration drives and anti-segregationist demonstrations, marches, and sit-ins. Bolstered by the new era of indepen-



These African Americans picket and march in protest of lunch counter segregation during the 1960s.

dence that was simultaneously sweeping through sub-Saharan Africa, the movement for African American equality gained international attention.

Around the same time, racial tensions—especially in the South—reached violent levels with the emergence of new white supremacist organizations and an increase in Ku Klux Klan activity. Raciallymotivated discrimination on all fronts—from housing to employment—rose as Southern resistance to the civil rights movement intensified. By the late 1950s, racist hatred had once again degenerated into brutality and bloodshed: blacks were being murdered for the cause, and their white killers were escaping punishment.

In the midst of America's growing racial tragedy, Democrat John F. Kennedy gained the black vote in the 1960 presidential elections. His domestic agenda centered on the expansion of federal action in civil rights cases—especially through the empowerment of the U.S. Department of Justice on voting rights issues and the establishment of the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity. Civil rights organizations continued their peaceful assaults against barriers to integration, but black

resistance to racial injustice was escalating. The protest movement heated up in 1961 when groups like the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) organized "freedom rides" that defied segregationist policies on public transportation systems. "By 1963," wrote John Hope Franklin, "the Black Revolution was approaching full tide."

Major demonstrations were staged that April, most notably in Birmingham, Alabama, under the leadership of King. Cries for equality met with harsh police action against the black crowds. Two months later, Mississippi's NAACP leader, Medgar Evers, was assassinated. Soon demonstrations were springing up throughout the nation, and Kennedy was contemplating his next move in the fight for black rights.

On August 28, 1963, over 200,000 black and white demonstrators converged at the Lincoln Memorial to push for the passage of a new civil rights bill. This historic "March on Washington," highlighted by King's legendary "I Have a Dream" speech, brought the promise of stronger legislation from the president. After Kennedy's assassination that November, President Johnson continued his predecessor's civil rights program. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 sparked violence throughout the country, including turmoil in cities in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. The Ku Klux Klan stepped up its practice of black intimidation with venomous racial slurs, cross burnings, firebombings—even acts of murder.

The call for racial reform in the South became louder in early 1965. King, who had been honored with the Nobel Peace Prize for his commitment to race relations, commanded the spotlight for his key role in the 1965 Freedom March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. But African Americans were disheartened by the lack of *real* progress in securing black rights. Despite the legislative gains made over two decades, John Hope Franklin noted that "between 1949 and 1964 the relative participation of [blacks] in the total economic life of the nation declined significantly."

Black discontent over economic, employment, and housing discrimination reached frightening proportions in the summer of 1965, with rioting in the Watts section of Los Angeles. This event marked a major change in the temper of the civil rights movement. Nearly a decade of nonviolent resistance had failed to remedy the racial crisis in the United States; consequently, a more militant reformist element began to emerge. "Black Power" became the rallying cry of the middle and late 1960s, and more and more civil rights groups adopted all-black leadership. King's assassination in 1968 only compounded the nation's explosive racial situation. According to Franklin, King's murder symbolized for many blacks "the rejection by white America of their vigorous but peaceful pursuit of equality." The Black Revolution had finally crystallized, and with it came a grave sense of loss and despair in the black community. The new generation of black leaders seemed to champion independence and separatism for blacks rather than integration into white American society.

Fear of black advancement led many whites to shift their allegiance to the Republican party in the late 1960s. With the exception of President Jimmy Carter's term in office from 1977 to 1981, Republicans remained in the White House for the rest of the 1970s and 1980s. But a new era of black activism arose with the election of Democratic president Bill Clinton in 1992. After a dozen years of conservatism under Presidents Reagan and Bush, Clinton was seen as a champion of "the people" all people. Demonstrating a commitment to policies that would cut across the lines of gender, race, and economics, he offered a vision of social reform, urban renewal, and domestic harmony for the United States. Once in office, Clinton appointed African Americans to key posts in his Cabinet, and the black population began wielding unprecedented influence in government. For example, the 102nd Congress included 25 African American representatives; the elections in 1993 brought black representation in the 103rd Congress up to 38.

Despite the advancements made by African Americans in politics and business, gang violence continued to plague African American communities in the 1990s. To encourage positive feelings, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan and civil rights activist Phile Chionesu organized the Million Man March. On October 16, 1995, close to one million African American men converged on the nation's capital to hear speeches and connect with other socially conscious black men. The Reverend Jesse Jackson spoke at the event, as did poet Maya Angelou, Damu Smith of Greenpeace, Rosa Parks, the Reverend Joseph Lowery, and other luminaries.

In October 1997, African American women held their own massive march. The Million Woman March attracted hundreds of thousands of African American women to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where they experienced a sense of community and cohesion. The attendees heard speeches and discussed issues such as the rising prison populations, the idea of independent schools for black children, the use of alternative medicines, and the progress of black women in politics and business.

### MILITARY

Brave African American men and women have advanced the cause of peace and defended the ideals of freedom since the 1700s. As far back as 1702, blacks were fighting against the French and the Indians in the New World. Virginia and South Carolina allowed African Americans to enlist in the militia, and, throughout the eighteenth century, some slaves were able to exchange their military service for freedom. African American soldiers served in the armed forces during the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam conflict, the Persian Gulf War, and during peacekeeping ventures in Somalia and Haiti. For nearly two centuries, however, segregation existed in the U.S. military—a shameful testament to the nation's long history of racial discrimination.

On March 5, 1770, prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution, a crowd of angry colonists gathered in the streets of Boston, Massachusetts, to protest unjust British policies. This colonial rally which would later be remembered as the Boston Massacre—turned bloody when British soldiers retaliated with gunfire. A black sailor named Crispus Attucks is said to have been the first American to die in the conflict. The death of Attucks, one of the earliest acts of military service by blacks in America, symbolizes the cruel irony of the revolutionary cause in America—one that denied equal rights to its African American population.

The American Revolution focused increased attention on the thorny issue of slavery. An underlying fear existed that enslaved blacks would revolt if granted the right to bear arms, so most colonists favored the idea of an all-white militia. Although some blacks fought at the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill in 1775, General George Washington issued a ban on the enlistment of slaves that summer; by November, he had extended the ban to all blacks, slave or free. However, the Continental Congress—apprehensive about the prospect of black enlistment in the British Army— partially reversed the policy in the next year. An estimated 5,000 blacks eventually fought in the colonial army.

Integration of the fledgling American Army ended in 1792, when Congress passed a law limiting military service to white men. More than half a century later, blacks were still unable to enlist in the U. S. military.

Many African Americans mistakenly perceived the Civil War, which began in April of 1861, as a war against slavery. But as Alton Hornsby, Jr., pointed out in Chronology of African-American History, "[President Abraham] Lincoln's war aims did not include interference with slavery where it already existed." Early in the struggle, the president felt that a stand "against slavery would drive additional Southern and Border states into the Confederacy," a risk he could not afford to take at a time when the Union seemed dangerously close to dissolving. By mid-1862, though, the need for additional Union Army soldiers became critical. The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by Lincoln in 1863, freed the slaves of the Confederacy. With their new "free" status, blacks were allowed to participate in the Civil War. By the winter of 1864-65, the Union Army boasted 168 volunteer regiments of black troops, comprising more than ten percent of its total strength; over 35,000 blacks died in combat.

Between 300,000 and 400,000 African Americans served in the U.S. armed forces during World War I, but only 10 percent were assigned to combat duty. Blacks were still hampered by segregationist policies that perpetuated an erroneous notion of inferiority among the troops; however, the stellar performance of many black soldiers during the era of the world wars helped to dispel these stereotypes. In 1940, for example, Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., became the first black American to achieve the rank of brigadier general. Over the next decade, his son, U.S. Air Force officer Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., distinguished himself as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron, the 332nd Fighter Group, the 477th Bombardment Group, and the 332nd Fighter Wing.

Several hundred thousand blacks fought for the United States in World War II. Still, according to John Hope Franklin in *From Slavery to Freedom*, "too many clear signs indicated that the United States was committed to maintaining a white army and a black army, and ironically the combined forces of this army had to be used together somehow to carry on the fight against the powerful threat of fascism and racism in the world."

In an effort to promote equality and opportunity in the American military, President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 on July 26, 1948, banning segregation in the armed forces. Six years later, the U.S. Department of Defense adopted an official policy of full integration, abolishing all-black military units. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a steady increase in the number of career officers in the U.S. military. By the mid-1990s, close to 40 percent of the American military was black. Some social commentators feel that this disproportionately high percentage of African Americans in the military-the entire black population in the United States being around 12 percent-calls attention to the obstacles young black people face in forging a path into mainstream American business.

# Individual and Group Contributions

African Americans have made notable contributions to American popular culture, to government policy, and to the arts and sciences. The following is a mere sampling of African American achievement:

### EDUCATION

Alain Locke (1886–1954) was a prolific author, historian, educator, and drama critic. A Harvard University graduate and Rhodes Scholar, he taught philosophy at Howard University for 36 years and is remembered as a leading figure in the Harlem Renaissance. For more than three decades, social scientist and Spingarn medalist Kenneth B. Clark (1914–) taught psychology at New York's City College; his work on the psychology of segregation played an important part in the Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in *Brown vs. Board of Education.* In 1987 dynamic anthropologist and writer Johnnetta B. Cole (1936–) became the first African American woman president of Spelman College, the nation's oldest and most esteemed institution of higher learning for black women. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1950–), a respected literary scholar, critic, and the chairman of Harvard University's African American Studies Department, offers a fresh new perspective on the related roles of black tradition, stereotypes, and the plurality of the American nation in the field of education; he is best known for championing a multicultural approach to learning.

### FILM, TELEVISION, THEATER, AND DANCE

Actor Charles Gilpin (1878-1930) is considered the dean of early African American theater. In 1921, the former vaudevillian was awarded the NAACP Spingarn Award for his theatrical accomplishment. Richard B. Harrison (1864-1935) was an esteemed actor who gained national prominence for his portrayal of "De Lawd" in Green Pastures. For three decades Harrison entertained black audiences with one-man performances of William Shakespeare's Macbeth and Julius Caesar, as well as readings of poems by Edgar Allan Poe, Rudyard Kipling, and Paul Laurence Dunbar. Actor, writer, director, and civil rights activist Ossie Davis (1917-) is committed to advancing black pride through his work. He has been a groundbreaking figure in American theater, film, and television for five decades.

Best known for her role as Mammy in Gone with the Wind, Hattie McDaniel (1895–1952) was awarded the 1940 Oscar for best supporting actress—the first Oscar ever won by an African American performer. Actress and writer Anna Deavere Smith (1950–), a bold and intriguing new force in American theater, examines issues like racism and justice in original works such as Fires in the Mirror and Twilight: Los Angeles 1992.

Dancer and choreographer Katherine Dunham (1910?–) has been called the mother of Afro-American dance. She is best known for blending elements of traditional Caribbean dance with modern African American rhythms and dance forms. Also a noted activist, Dunham went on a 47-day hunger strike in 1992 to protest U.S. policy on Haitian refugees.

Dancer and actor Gregory Hines has earned a place among the great African American entertainers. A tap dancer since childhood, Hines has acted in numerous plays and movies and has received many awards for his efforts. In 1999, Hines starred in his own television sitcom, "The Gregory Hines Show." Black Entertainment Television (BET) is a cable television network devoted to entertainment by and for African Americans. In 1999, the programmer announced the creation of an internet site for the network. BET.com was launched to attract more African Americans to the world wide web. BET founder and Chief Executive Officer Robert L. Johnson said, "BET.com is an effort to address how we can make African Americans a part of this economic engine the Internet has created."

### GOVERNMENT

Alexander Lucius Twilight, the first African American elected to public office, was sent to the Vermont legislature in 1836 by the voters of Orleans County. Less than a decade later, William A. Leidesdorf, a black political official, was named sub-consul to the Mexican territory of Yerba Buena (San Francisco); he also served on the San Francisco town council and held the post of town treasurer. Attorney and educator Charles Hamilton Houston (1895-1950) was a brilliant leader in the legal battle to erode segregation in the United States; his student, Thurgood Marshall (1908–1993), successfully argued against the constitutionality of segregation in Brown vs. Board of Education (1954). A director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund for more than two decades, Marshall went on to become a U.S. Supreme Court justice in 1967. Career military officer Colin Powell (1937-) made his mark on American history as the first black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a position he held from 1989 to 1993. Some political observers have pegged him as a U.S. presidential candidate in the 1996 elections. An early follower of Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson (1941–) became a potent force in American politics in his own right. In 1984 and 1988 he campaigned for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. presidency. Founder of Operation PUSH and the National Rainbow Coalition, Jackson is committed to the economic, social, and political advancement of America's dispossessed and disfranchised peoples. Attorney and politician Carol Moseley-Braun (1947-) won election to the U.S. Senate in 1992, making her the first black woman senator in the nation. Kweisi Mfume (born Frizzell Gray; 1948–), a Democratic congressional representative from Maryland for half a dozen years, became the chairman of the powerful Congressional Black Caucus in 1993. In 1997 he became president of the NAACP.

### JOURNALISM

Frederick Douglass (1818–1875), the famous fugitive slave and abolitionist, recognized the power of

the press and used it to paint a graphic portrait of the horrors of slavery. He founded The North Star, a black newspaper, in 1847, to expose the reality of the black condition in nineteenth century America. John Henry Murphy (1840-1922), a former slave and founder of the Baltimore Afro-American, was inspired by a desire to represent black causes with honor and integrity. Activist and journalist T. Thomas Fortune (1856–1928), a staunch defender of black rights during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, used his editorial position at various urban newspapers in the North to crusade for an end to racial discrimination. Robert S. Abbott (1870–1940) was a key figure in the development of black journalism in the twentieth century. The first issue of his Chicago Defender went to press in 1905. Charlayne Hunter-Gault (1942-) broke the color barrier at the University of Georgia, receiving her degree in journalism from the formerly segregated institution in 1963. A national correspondent for public television's MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour, she has earned distinction for her socially-conscious brand of investigative reporting.

### LITERATURE

Langston Hughes (1902–1967) was a major figure of the Harlem Renaissance, a period of intense artistic and intellectual activity centered in New York City's black community during the early 1920s. The author of poetry, long and short fiction, plays, autobiographical works, and nonfiction pieces, Hughes infused his writings with the texture of urban African Americana. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alex Haley (1921–1992) traced his African heritage, his ancestors' agonizing journey to the New World, and the brutal system of slavery in the United States in his unforgettable 1976 bestseller Roots. Playwright Lorraine Hansberry (1930–1965), author of the classic play A Raisin in the Sun, was the first black recipient of the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. Bob Kaufman (1925-1986) was the most prominent African American beatnik poet, and he is considered by many to be the finest. Maya Angelou (1928–). renowned chronicler of the black American experience, earned national acclaim in 1970 with the publication of the first volume of her autobiography, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings; she presented her moving original verse, On the Pulse of Morning, at the inauguration of U.S. president Bill Clinton in January 1993. Cultural historian and novelist Toni Morrison (1931-), author of such works as The Bluest Eye, Tar Baby, Beloved, and Jazz, was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1993. In the late 1980s, Terry McMillan (1951-) emerged as a powerful new voice on the literary scene; her 1992 novel Waiting to Exhale was a runaway bestseller.

### MUSIC

African Americans have made a profound impact on the nation's musical history. The blues and jazz genres, both rooted in black culture, exerted an unquestionable influence on the development of rock and soul music in the United States.

The blues, an improvisational African American musical form, originated around 1900 in the Mississippi Delta region. Some of its pioneering figures include legendary cornetist, bandleader, and composer W. C. Handy (1873–1958), often called the "Father of the Blues"; singing marvel Bessie Smith (1898–1937), remembered as the "Empress of the Blues"; and Muddy Waters (1915–1983), a practitioner of the urban blues strain that evolved in Chicago in the 1940s.

Jazz, a blend of European traditional music, blues, and Southern instrumental ragtime, developed in the South in the 1920s. Key figures in the evolution of jazz include New Orleans horn player and "swing" master Louis Armstrong ("Satchmo"; 1900–1971), who scored big with hits like "Hello, Dolly" and "What a Wonderful World"; Lionel Hampton (1909–), the first jazz musician to popularize vibes; trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie (1917–1993) a chief architect of a more modern form of jazz called "bebop"; singer Ella Fitzgerald (1918-), a master of improvisation who came to be known as "The First Lady of Song"; innovative and enigmatic trumpeter, composer, and bandleader Miles Davis (1926-1991), who pioneered the genre's avantgarde period in the 1950s and electrified jazz with elements of funk and rock-beginning the "fusion" movement-in the late 1960s; and Melba Liston (1926-), trombonist, arranger, and leader of an allfemale jazz group in the 1950s and 1960s.

Vocalist, composer, and historian Bernice Johnson Reagon (1942–), founder of the female *a cappella* ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock, is committed to maintaining Africa's diverse musical heritage.

In the field of classical music, Marian Anderson (1902–1993), one of the greatest contraltos of all time, found herself a victim of racial prejudice in her own country. A star in Europe for years before her American debut, she was actually barred from making an appearance at Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution in April of 1939—an incident that prompted First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to resign from the organization. Shortly thereafter, on Easter Sunday, Anderson sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Composer and pianist Margaret Bonds (1913–1972) wrote works that explore the African American experience. Her best known compositions include *Migration*, a ballet;

Spiritual Suite for Piano; Mass in D Minor; Three Dream Portraits; and the songs "The Ballad of the Brown King" and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."

African Americans continue to set trends and break barriers in the music business, especially in pop, rap, blues, and jazz music. A partial list of celebrated African American musicians would include: guitarist Jimi Hendrix (1942–1970), Otis Redding (1941-1967), singer Aretha Franklin (1942-), Al Green (1946–), Herbie Mann (1930–), Miles Davis (1926–1991), saxophonist John Coltrane (1926– 1967), founder of the group "Sly and the Family Stone" Sly Stone (Sylvester Stewart; 1944-), singersongwriter Phoebe Snow (1952–), rap artist Snoop Doggy Dog (1972–), rap artist and record company executive Sean "Puffy" Combs (1969-), pop-star and cultural icon Michael Jackson (1958-), singer Lauryn Hill (1975?- ), pianist-songwriter Ray Charles (1930-), singer Little Richard (1932-), singer Diana Ross (1944– ), legendary blues guitarist B.B. King (1925–), rap artist Easy-E (Erykah Badu; 1963-1995), singer Billy Preston (1946-), and singer Whitney Houston (1963–).

### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Granville T. Woods (1856–1910) was a trailblazer in the fields of electrical and mechanical engineering whose various inventions include a telephone transmitter, an egg incubator, and a railway telegraph. His contemporary, George Washington Carver (1861?-1943), was born into slavery but became a leader in agricultural chemistry and botany-and one of the most famous African Americans of his era. Inventor Garrett A. Morgan (1877–1963), a self-educated genius, developed the first gas mask and traffic signal. Ernest Everett Just (1883–1915), recipient of the first Spingarn medal ever given by the NAACP, made important contributions to the studies of marine biology and cell behavior. Another Spingarn medalist, Percy Lavon Julien (1889–1975), was a maverick in the field of organic chemistry. He created synthesized versions of cortisone (to relieve the pain and inflammation of arthritis) and physostigmine (to reduce the debilitating effects of glaucoma).

Surgeon and scientist Charles Richard Drew (1904–1950) refined techniques of preserving liquid blood plasma. Samuel L. Kountz (1930–1981), an international leader in transplant surgery, successfully transplanted a kidney from a mother to a daughter—the first operation of its kind between individuals who were not identical twins. He also pioneered anti-rejection therapy in transplant patients. Benjamin Carson (1951– ) is a pediatric neurosurgeon who gained international acclaim in 1987 by separating a pair of Siamese twins who were

joined at their heads. Medical doctor and former astronaut Mae C. Jemison (1957–) made history as the first black woman to serve as a mission specialist for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). She was a crew member on the 1992 flight of the space shuttle *Endeavour*.

### SOCIAL ISSUES

Harriet Tubman (1820?–1913) was a runaway slave who became a leader in the abolitionist movement. A nurse and spy for the Union Army during the Civil War, she earned distinction as the chief "conductor" of the Underground Railroad, leading an estimated 300 slaves to freedom in the North. Attorney, writer, activist, educator, and foreign consul James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was an early leader of the NAACP and a strong believer in the need for black unity as the legal fight for civil rights evolved. He composed the black anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" in 1900. Labor and civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph (1889–1979) fought for greater economic opportunity in the black community. A presidential consultant in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s and a key organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, Randolph is probably best remembered for his role in establishing the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first black union in the country, in 1925.

Ella Baker (1903–1986), renowned for her organizational and leadership skills, co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party-groups that were at the forefront of civil rights activism in the United States. Mississippi native Fannie Lou Hamer (1917–1977) was an impassioned warrior in the fight for black voter rights, black economic advancement, and women's rights. Rosa Parks (1913-) sparked the Montgomery bus boycott in December of 1955 when her refusal to give up her seat to a white passenger landed her in jail. Malcolm X (born Malcolm Little; 1925–1965) advocated a more radical pursuit of equal rights than Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), the champion of nonviolent resistance to racism. A fiery speaker who urged blacks to seize self-determination "by any means necessary," Malcolm embraced the concept of global unity toward the end of his life and revised his black separatist ideas. In 1965 he was assassinated by members of the Nation of Islam-an organization with which he had severed earlier ties. Attorney and activist Marian Wright Edelman (1939-) founded the Children's Defense Fund in 1973. Randall Robinson (1942?- ), executive director of the human rights lobbying organization TransAfrica, Inc., has played a key role in influencing progressive U.S. foreign policy in South Africa, Somalia, and Haiti.

### SPORTS

A Brooklyn Dodger from 1947 to 1956, Jackie Robinson (1919–1972) is credited with breaking the color barrier in professional baseball. In 1974 Frank Robinson (1935–), a former National and American League MVP, became the first black manager of a major league baseball franchise. Phenomenal Cleveland Brown running back Jim Brown (1936–), a superstar of the late 1950s and 1960s, helped change the face of professional football—a sport that for years had been dominated by whites. The on-court skills and charisma of two of the top NBA players of the 1980s and early 1990s, retired Los Angeles Laker Earvin "Magic" Johnson (1959–) and Chicago Bull Michael Jordan (1963–) left indelible marks on the game of basketball.

Track sensation Jesse Owens (1913-1980) blasted the notion of Aryan supremacy by winning four gold medals at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Wilma Rudolph (1940-) overcame the crippling complications of polio and became the first American woman to win three Olympic gold medals in track and field. Always colorful and controversial, Olympic gold medalist and longtime heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali (born Cassius Clay; 1942-) was a boxing sensation throughout the 1970s and remains one of the most widely recognized figures in the sport's history. Althea Gibson (1927-) and Arthur Ashe (1943-1993) both rocked the tennis world with their accomplishments: Gibson, the first black player ever to win at Wimbledon, was a pioneer in the white-dominated game at the dawn of the civil rights era. Ashe, a dedicated activist who fought against racial discrimination in all sports, was the first African American male to triumph at Wimbledon, the U.S. Open, and the Australian Open.

### VISUAL ARTS

Sculptor Sargent Johnson (1888–1967), a threetime winner of the prestigious Harmon Foundation medal for outstanding black artist, was heavily influenced by the art forms of Africa. Romare Bearden (1914–1988) was a highly acclaimed painter, collagist, and photomontagist who depicted the black experience in his work. His images reflect black urban life, music, religion, and the power of the family. A series titled *The Prevalence of Ritual* is one of his best-known works. Jacob Lawrence (1917–), a renowned painter, has depicted through his art both the history of racial injustice and the promise of racial harmony in America. His works include the *Frederick Douglass* series, the *Harriet Tubman* series, the *Migration of the Negro* series, and *Builders*.

Augusta Savage (1900–1962), a Harlem Renaissance sculptor, was the first black woman to

win acceptance in the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. *Lift Every Voice and Sing, Black Women,* and *Lenore* are among her notable works. Multimedia artist and activist Faith Ringgold (1930–) seeks to raise the consciousness of her audience by focusing on themes of racial and gender-based discrimination. Ringgold is known for weaving surrealist elements into her artworks; her storytelling quilt *Tar Beach* inspired a children's book of the same title.

### Media

### PRINT

### African American Review.

Founded in 1967 as Negro American Literature Forum, this quarterly publication contains interviews and essays on black American art, literature, and culture.

Contact: Joe Weixlmann, Editor.

Address: Indiana State University, Department of English, Terre Haute, Indiana 47809-9989.

Telephone: (812) 237-2968.

**Fax:** (812) 237-3156.

Online: http://web.indstate.edu/artsci/AAR/.

### Africa Report.

Founded in 1937, this periodical covers current political and economic developments in Africa.

Address: African-American Institute, 833 United Nations Plaza, New York, New York 10017. Telephone: (212) 949-5666.

### Amsterdam News.

Now known as the *New York Amsterdam News*, this source was founded in 1909 and is devoted to black community-interest stories.

Address: Powell-Savory Corp., 2340 Frederick Douglass Boulevard, New York, New York 10027.
Telephone: (212) 932-7400.
Fax: (212) 222-3842.

### Chicago Daily Defender.

Founded in 1905 by Robert S. Abbott as a black weekly newspaper, it is now a daily paper with a black perspective.

Address: 2400 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60616. Telephone: (312) 225-2400.

### Crisis.

The official publication of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, this monthly magazine, founded in 1910, features articles on civil rights issues.

Contact: Garland Thompson, Editor.
Address: 4805 Mt. Hope Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21215.
Telephone: (212) 481-4100.
Online: http://www.naacp.org/crisis/.

### Ebony and Jet.

Both of these publications are part of the family of Johnson Publications, which was established in the 1940s by entrepreneur John H. Johnson. *Ebony*, a monthly magazine, and *Jet*, a newsweekly, cover African Americans in politics, business, and the arts.

Contact: *Ebony*—Lerone Bennett, Jr., Editor; *Jet*—Robert Johnson, Editor.
Address: Johnson Publishing Co., Inc., 820 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605.
Telephone: (312) 322-9200.
Fax: (312) 322-9375.
Online: http://www.ebony.com/jpcindex.html.

### Essence.

First published in 1970, this monthly magazine targets a black female audience.

Contact: Susan L. Taylor, Editor.
Address: Essence Communications, Inc., 1500 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, New York 10036.
Telephone: (212) 642-0600.
Fax: (212) 921-5173.

Freedomways.

Founded in 1961, this source offers a quarterly review of progress made in the ongoing movement for human freedom.

Contact: Esther Jackson and Jean Carey Bond, Editors.Address: 799 Broadway, Suite 542, New York, New York 10003.

Telephone: (212) 477-3985.

### RADIO

WESL-AM (1490). Founded in 1934; gospel format.

Contact: Robert Riggins. Address: 149 South 8th Sreet, East St. Louis, Illinois 62201. **Telephone:** (618) 271-1490. **Fax:** (618) 875-4315.

### WRKS-FM (98.7).

Founded in 1941; an ABC-affiliate with an urban/ contemporary format.

Contact: Charles M. Warfield, Jr., Director of Operations.
Address: 395 Hudson Street, 7th Floor, New York, New York 10014.
Telephone: (212) 242-9870.
Fax: (212) 929-8559.

### **TELEVISION**

### Black Entertainment Television (BET).

The first cable network devoted exclusively to black programming, BET features news, public affairs and talk shows, television magazines, sports updates, concerts, videos, and syndicated series.

Contact: Robert Johnson, President and Chief Executive Officer.
Address: 1900 West Place N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018-1121.
Telephone: (202) 608-2000.
Online: http://www.msbet.com.

### WGPR-TV, Channel 62, Detroit.

Groundbreaking black-owned television station that first went on the air September 29, 1975; began as an independent network; became a CBS-affiliate in 1994.

**Contact:** George Mathews, President and General Manager.

Address: 3146 East Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48207. Telephone: (313) 259-8862.

**Fax:** (313) 259-6662.

## Organizations and Associations

### Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF).

Founded in 1978 to support and promote independently produced film and video work for African American artists.

Contact: Warrington Hudlin, President. Addresses: 670 Broadway, Suite 304, New York, New York 10012. Telephone: (212) 253-1690.

### Black Resources, Inc.

A resource on race-related matters for corporations, government agencies, and institutions.

Address: 231 West 29th Street, Suite 1205, New York, New York 10001. Telephone: (212) 967-4000.

## NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF).

A nonprofit organization founded in 1940 to fight discrimination and civil rights violations through the nation's court system. (Independent of the NAACP since the mid-1950s.)

Contact: Elaine R. Jones, Director-Counsel.

Address: 99 Hudson Street, 16th Floor, New York, New York 10013.

**Telephone:** (212) 219-1900. **Fax:** (212) 226-7592.

## The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Founded in 1910, the NAACP is perhaps the bestknown civil rights organization in the United States. Its goals are the elimination of racial prejudice and the achievement of equal rights for all people.

- Address: Headquarters—4805 Mt. Hope Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21215.
- **Telephone:** For general information, contact New York office—(212) 481-4100.

**Online:** http://www.naacp.org/.

### National Black United Fund.

Provides financial and technical support to projects that address the needs of black communities throughout the United States.

Contact: William T. Merritt, President.
Address: 40 Clinton Street, 5th Floor, Newark, New Jersey 07102.
Telephone: (973) 643-5122.
Fax: (973) 648-8350.
E-mail: nbuf@nbuf.org.
Online: http://www.nbuf.org.

### The National Urban League.

Formed in 1911 in New York by the merger of three committees that sought to protect the rights of the city's black population. Best known for piloting the decades-long fight against racial discrimination in the United States, the National Urban League and its regional branches are also active in the struggle for political and economic advancement among African Americans and impoverished people of all colors.

Contact: Hugh Price, CEO & President. Address: 120 Wall Street, New York, New York 10005. Telephone: (212) 558-5300. Fax: (212) 344-5332.

### Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

An educational service agency founded in 1957 (with Martin Luther King, Jr., as its first president) to aid in the integration of African Americans in all aspects of life in the United States. Continues to foster a philosophy of nonviolent resistance.

Address: 334 Auburn Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Telephone: (404) 522-1420. Fax: (404) 659-7390.

## Museums and Research Centers

### The Afro-American Historical and

Genealogical Society.

Founded in 1977 to encourage scholarly research in Afro-American history and genealogy.

Contact: Edwin B. Washington, Jr., Special Information.

Address: P.O. Box 73086, T Street Station, Washington, D.C. 20056-3086.

Telephone: (202) 234-5350.

**E-mail:** washingtoneb@erols.com.

Online: http://www.rootsweb.com/~mdaahgs/ index.html.

## The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASALH).

Originally named the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, this research center was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in 1915. ASALH is committed to the collection, preservation, and promotion of black history.

Contact: Dr. Edward Beasley, President.

Address: 1401 14th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. Telephone: (202) 667-2822. Fax: (202) 387-9802. E-mail: asalb@earthlink.net. Online: http://artnoir.com/asalb.html.

## The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change.

Founded in 1969 by Coretta Scott King to uphold the philosophy and work of her husband, the slain civil rights leader.

**Contact:** Dexter Scott King, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer; or Coretta Scott King, President.

Address: 449 Auburn Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30312. Telephone: (404) 524-1956.

Fax: (404) 526-8901.

### The Museum of African American Culture.

Preserves and displays African American cultural artifacts.

Address: 1616 Blanding Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. Telephone: (803) 252-1450.

## The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

An arm of the New York Public Library, the Schomburg Center was founded at the height of the Harlem Renaissance by historian Arthur A. Schomburg to preserve the historical past of people of African descent. It is widely regarded as the world's leading repository for materials and artifacts on black cultural life.

Contact: Howard Dodson, Jr., Director.
Address: 515 Malcolm X Boulevard, New York, New York 10037-1801.
Telephone: (212) 491-2200.
Fax: (212) 491-6760.
Online: http://www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html.

## Sources for Additional Study

African American Almanac. 8th edition. Edited by Jessie Carney Smith and Joseph M. Palmisano. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group, 2000.

African American Sociology: A Social Study of the Pan African Diaspora. Edited by Alva Barnett and James L. Conyers. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1998.

Asante, Molefi Kete. *The Afrocentric Idea*. Philadel-phia: Temple University Press, 1998.

Bennett, Lerone, Jr. Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America—The Classic Account of the Struggles and Triumphs of Black Americans, fifth revised edition. New York: Penguin, 1984.

A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, two volumes, edited by Herbert Aptheker. New York: Citadel Press, 1969 (originally published in 1951).

Franklin, John Hope, with Alfred A. Moss, Jr. From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans, sixth edition. New York: Knopf, 1988 (originally published in 1947).

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr., and Cornel West. *The Future of the Race*. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.

Harris, Joseph E. Africans and Their History. New York: Penguin, 1987.

Lemann, Nicholas. The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America. New York: Knopf, 1991.

Lynd, Staughton. Class Conflict, Slavery, and the U.S. Constitution. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980 (originally published in 1967).

Mannix, Daniel Pratt. Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1518-1865. NewYork: Viking, 1962.

Parham, Vanessa Roberts. *The African-American Child's Heritage Cookbook*. Sandcastle Publishing, 1993.

Segal, Ronald. *The Black Diaspora: Five Centuries of the Black Experience Outside Africa.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.

Smitherman, Geneva. Talkin & Testifyin: The Language of Black America. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

Von Eschen, Penny M. Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Woodson, Carter G. *The Negro in Our History*. Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1962 (originally published by Associated Publishers, 1922).

# The Making of African Americans in a White America

Ш

1

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

Slavery The Challenge of Black Leadership Reemergence of Black Protest

RESEARCH FOCUS Sundown Towns, USA

The Civil Rights Movement

LISTEN TO OUR VOICES "Letter from Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr. Urban Violence and Oppression

Black Power

The Religious Force

Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/ Critical Thinking/Internet Connections-Research Navigator™



HE AFRICAN PRESENCE IN THE UNITED STATES BEGAN almost simultaneously with permanent White settlement. Unlike most Europeans, however, the African people were brought involuntarily and in bondage. The end of slavery heralded new political rights during Reconstruction, but this was a short-lived era of dignity. Despite advocacy of nonviolence by leaders such as the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., the civil rights movement met violent resistance throughout the South. In the mid-1960s, the nation's attention was diverted to urban violence in the North and the West. Blacks responded to their relative deprivation and rising expectations by advocating Black Power, which in turn met with White resistance. Although African Americans have made significant gains, the gap between Blacks and Whites remains remarkably unchanged in the last half century. Religion continues to be a major force in the African American community.

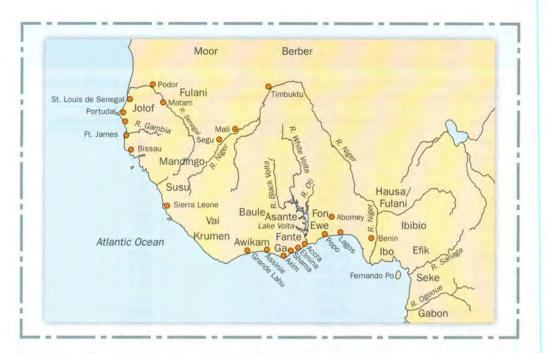
he Gee's Bend Ferry resumed service crossing the Alabama River in 2006. This is especially noteworthy because, it represented the end of several decades of keeping Blacks from voting in Camden, Alabama. In 1962, as Blacks began to vote in larger numbers, ending the ferry service meant a key concentration of 700 African American citizens would have to travel an hour rather than 15 minutes to get to the county seat to register to vote. In 2003, the City Council of Zephyrhills, a community of 11,000 people 35 miles northeast of Tampa, Florida, voted to rename a street in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. In taking this step they joined company with about 650 other cities in 41 states that have renamed streets in honor of the civil rights worker. Although a few responded to the creation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue with pleasure, the city council was unprepared for the strong protest that accompanied its decision. Protesters became more vocal over the action, with critics saying they did not want to have to change their address. Observers noticed that all the townspeople who spoke against the policy were White, and most of the supporters were African American. In May, the council reversed itself and King Avenue again became Sixth Avenue. This is not the story of just one town, because this has occurred again and again. Efforts to recognize significant figures in African American history have often been controversial. The people of San Diego were so incensed about renaming a street after Martin Luther King, Jr., that they successfully got the issue on the ballot in 1987 and had the former name restored. More recently in 2003, the people of Muncie, Indiana, defeated the idea of renaming a street after the slain civil rights leader, and similarly in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the suggestion to name a city park after King did not succeed (Good enough 2004 Linn 2006).

Relationships between Whites and Blacks in the United States have been marked by many episodes like these, sometimes a step backward and occasionally a step forward.

The United States, with more than 38 million Blacks, has the eighth-largest Black population in the world; only Brazil, Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, and Tanzania have larger Black populations. Despite their large numbers, Blacks in this country have had almost no role in major national and political decisions and have been allowed only a peripheral role in many crucial decisions that influenced their own destiny.

The history of African Americans is, to a significant degree, the history of the United States. Black people accompanied the first explorers, and a Black man was among the first to die in the American Revolution. The enslavement of Africans was responsible for the South's wealth in the nineteenth century and led to the country's most violent domestic strife. After Blacks were freed from slavery, their continued subordination led to sporadic outbreaks of violence in the rural South and throughout urban America. This chapter concentrates on the history of African Americans into the 1990s. Their contemporary situation is the subject of Chapter 8.

As with European immigrants described in Chapter 4, Black Africans brought with them a variety of cultural traditions. As illustrated in Figure 7.1, although most of the people brought forcibly to North America from Africa came from a limited geographic area of the African continent, they represented diverse cultural experiences. Today, we rarely remember these tribal or ethnic variations among the descendants of the Africans in the way we customarily do among Europeans.



#### FIGURE 7.1 West African Tribal Groups During the Slave Trade

Most Africans who were forcibly brought to the United States came from a limited area of Africa but brought with them a rich variety of cultural traditions, as reflected on this map. *Source:* From Historical and Cultural Atlas of African Americans, 1st ed., by M.K. Asante & M.T. Mattson, 1991. Reprinted with permission of Gale, a division of Thomson Learning: www.thomsonrights.com. Fax: 800-730-2215

The Black experience in what came to be the United States began as something less than citizenship, yet slightly better than slavery. In 1619, twenty Africans arrived in Jamestown as indentured servants. Their children were born free people. These Blacks in the British colonies were not the first in the New World, however; some Blacks had accompanied European explorers, perhaps even Columbus. But all this is a historical footnote. By the 1660s, the British colonies had passed laws making Africans slaves for life, forbidding interracial marriages, and making children of slaves bear the status of their mother regardless of their father's race. Slavery had begun in North America; more than three centuries later we still live with its legacy.

### Slavery

Slavery seems far removed from the debates over issues that divide Whites and Blacks today. However, contemporary institutional and individual racism, which is central to today's conflicts, has its origins in the institution of slavery. Slavery was not merely a single aspect of American society for three centuries; it has been an essential part of our country's life. For nearly half of this country's history, slavery was not only tolerated but also legally protected by the U.S. Constitution as interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In sharp contrast to the basic rights and privileges enjoyed by White Americans, Black people in bondage lived under a system of repression and terror. Nearly one out five people were Black and enslaved in the United States (see Table 7.1). Because the institution of slavery was so fundamental to our culture, it continues to influence Black–White relations in the twenty-first century.

### TABLE 7.1 Black Population, 1790–2050

Blacks accounted for a decreasing proportion of the total population until the 1940s, primarily because White immigration to the United States far outdistanced population growth by Blacks.

Census	Black Population (in thousands)	Black Percentage (of Total Population)
1790	757	19.3
1810	1,378	19.0
1830	2,329	18.1
1850	3,639	15.7
1870	4,880	12.7
1890	7,489	11.9
1910	9,828	10.7
1930	11,891	9.7
1950	15,042	10.0
1970	22,580	11.1
1990	29,986	12.1
2000	35,818	12.7
2010 (projection)	40,454	13.1
2050 (projection)	61,361	14.6

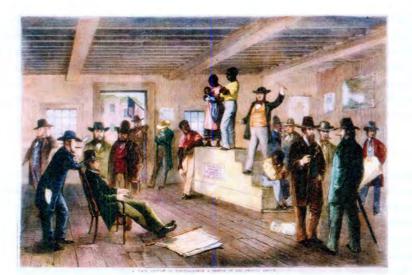
### Slave Codes

Slavery in the United States rested on five central conditions: Slavery was for life, the status was inherited, slaves were considered mere property, slaves were denied rights, and coercion was used to maintain the system (Noel 1972). As slavery developed in colonial America and the United States, so did **slave codes**, laws that defined the low position of slaves in the United States. Although the rules varied from state to state and from time to time and were not always enforced, the more common features demonstrate how completely subjugated the Africans were:

- 1. A slave could not marry or even meet with a free Black.
- 2. Marriage between slaves was not legally recognized.
- 3. A slave could not legally buy or sell anything except by special arrangement.
- 4. A slave could not possess weapons or liquor.
- 5. A slave could not quarrel with or use abusive language toward Whites.
- 6. A slave could not possess property (including money), except as allowed by his or her owner.
- 7. A slave could make no will, nor could he or she inherit anything.
- 8. A slave could not make a contract or hire him or herself out.
- **9.** A slave could not leave a plantation without a pass noting his or her destination and time of return.
- **10.** No one, including Whites, was to teach a slave (and in some areas even a free Black) to read or write or to give a slave a book, including the Bible.
- 11. A slave could not gamble.
- 12. A slave had to obey established curfews.
- 13. A slave could not testify in court except against another slave.

### slave codes

Laws that defined the low position held by slaves in the United States.



For many generations, Africans were treated by their White slave owners as property, with none of the rights extended to people. Pictured is a slave auction in Richmond, Virginia, in 1861.

Violations of these rules were dealt with in a variety of ways. Mutilation and branding were not unknown. Imprisonment was rare; most violators were whipped. An owner was largely immune from prosecution for any physical abuse of slaves. Because slaves could not testify in court, a White's actions toward enslaved African Americans were practically above the law (ACLU 1996; Elkins 1959; Franklin and Moss 2000; Stampp 1956).

Slavery, as enforced through the slave codes, controlled and determined all facets of the lives of the enslaved Africans. The organization of family life and religious worship were no exceptions. Naturally, the Africans had brought to America their own cultural traditions. In Africa, people had been accustomed to a closely regulated family life and a rigidly enforced moral code. Slavery rendered it impossible for them to retain these family ties in the New World.

The slave family had no standing in law. Marriages between slaves were not legally recognized, and masters rarely respected them in selling adults or children. Slave breeding—a deliberate effort to maximize the number of offspring—was practiced with little attention to the emotional needs of the slaves themselves. The slaveholder, not the parents, decided at what age children should begin working in the fields. The slave family could not offer its children shelter or security, rewards or punishments. The man's only recognized family role was that of siring offspring, being the sex partner of a woman. In fact, slave men often were identified as if they were the woman's possession, for example, as "Nancy's Tom." Southern law consistently ruled that "the father of a slave is unknown to our law." This does not imply that the male slave did not occupy an important economic role. Men held almost all the managerial positions open to slaves (Du Bois 1970; Stampp 1956).

Unlike the family structure, to which slavery dealt near-mortal blows, a strong religious tradition survived. In fact, a slaveholder wanting to do "God's work on Earth" would encourage the slave church, finding it functional in dominating the slaves. Of course, African religions were forbidden, and the White people's Christianity flourished, but Blacks still used West African concepts in the new way of life that slavery brought. The preacher maintained an intense relationship with the congregation, similar to the role played by the elder in West Africa. The Christianity to which the slaves were introduced stressed obeying their owner. Complete surrender to Whites meant salvation and eternal happiness in the hereafter. In contrast, to question God's will or to fight slavery caused everlasting damnation. Obviously, this twisted version of Christianity was intended to make slaves acquiesce to their holders' wishes in return for reward after death. To some degree, however, religion did keep the desire for freedom alive in slaves, and to some extent it formed the basis of their struggle for freedom: Nightly prayer meetings and singing gave them a sense of unity and common destiny necessary for that struggle. On a more personal level, religion made the slaves' daily lives more bearable (Frazier 1964; Rawick 1972; Stampp 1956).

### **African Americans and Africa**

The importance of Africa to Black Americans can be seen in the aspects of African culture that became integral parts of Blacks' lives in the United States. This importance was recognized long before the emergence of the Afrocentric perspective in the 1990s. Black scholars W. E. B. Du Bois (1939) and Carter Woodson (1968) and respected White anthropologist Melville Herskovits (1930, 1941) have all argued persuasively for the continued influence of the African heritage.

Scholars debate to what degree African culture was able to persist despite efforts by slaveholders to replace any vestige of African tradition. The survival of African culture can be most easily documented in folklore, religion, language, and music. It is difficult to clarify the degree of survival, however, because Africans came from many different cultures. When we think of ethnic origins, our thoughts turn to European groups such as Poles or Greeks, but within Africa are the Ibos, Gas, and Yorubas, to name a few of the sources of slaves from Africa (see Figure 7.1). Thus, to speak of a single source of African culture ignores the complexity of social life on that continent. Furthermore, as the **Afrocentric perspective** argues, some aspects of African culture, such as certain art forms, have so permeated Western culture that we mistakenly believe their origins are European.

Africa has had and will always have an importance to Blacks that many Blacks and most Whites do not appreciate, and this importance is unlikely to be changed by the continued debate over which aspects of Black life today can be traced back to African culture. The significance of Africa to Black Americans is one of the most easily identifiable themes in the Black experience. During certain periods (the 1920s and the late 1960s), the Black cultural tradition was the rallying point of many Blacks, especially those living in the cities. Studies continue to document the survival of African culture in North America.

Research has identified remnants of grammar and sentence construction in the speech patterns of low-income and rural Blacks. **Ebonics** is the distinctive dialect, with a complex language structure, that is found among Black Americans. Although the term *Ebonics (ebony* and *phonics)* was coined in the 1970s, there has long been a recognition of a distinctive language pattern, sometimes called "Black English," that includes some vocabulary and grammar rules that reflect the West African origins of Black Americans. In 1996, Ebonics became a national issue after the Oakland, California, school board's recognition of it as the primary language of schoolchildren who were then learning mainstream American English. This debate aside, there is consensus that, a century after slavery, remnants of African cultural traditions survive (Applebome 1997).

### The Attack on Slavery

Although the slave was vulnerable to his or her owner's wishes, slavery as an institution was vulnerable to outside opinion. For a generation after the American Revolution, restrictions on slaves increased as Southerners accepted slavery as permanent. Slave revolts and antislavery propaganda only accelerated the intensity of oppression. This change led to the ironic situation that as slavery was attacked from within and without,

#### afrocentric perspective

An emphasis on the customs of African cultures and how they have pervaded the history, culture, and behavior of Blacks in the United States and around the world.

### Ebonics

Distinctive dialect with a complex language structure found among many Black Americans. its conditions became harsher and its defenders became more outspoken in asserting what they saw as its benefits.

Antislavery advocates, or **abolitionists**, included both Whites and free Blacks. Many Whites who opposed slavery, such as Abraham Lincoln, did not believe in racial equality. In their minds, even though slavery was a moral evil, racial equality was still unimaginable. This apparent inconsistency did not lessen the emotional fervor of the efforts to end slavery. Antislavery societies had been founded even before the American Revolution, but the Constitution dealt the antislavery movement a blow. To appease the South, the framers of the Constitution recognized and legitimized slavery's existence. The Constitution even allowed slavery to increase Southern political power. A slave was counted as three-fifths of a person in determining population representation in the House of Representatives.

Abolitionists, both Black and White, continued to speak out against slavery and the harm it was doing not only to the slaves but also to the entire nation, which had become economically dependent on bondage. Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, both freed slaves, became very visible in the fight against slavery through their eloquent speeches and publications. Harriet Tubman, along with other Blacks and sympathetic Whites, developed the Underground Railroad to convey escaping slaves to freedom in the North and Canada (Franklin and Moss 2000).

Another aspect of Black enslavement was the slaves' own resistance to servitude. Slaves did revolt, and between 40,000 and 100,000 actually escaped from the South and slavery. Yet fugitive slave acts provided for the return even of slaves who had reached free states. Enslaved Blacks who did not attempt escape, at least in part because failure often led to death, resisted slavery through such means as passive resistance. Slaves feigned clumsiness or illness; pretended not to understand, see, or hear; ridiculed Whites with a mocking, subtle humor that their owners did not comprehend; and destroyed farm implements and committed similar acts of sabotage (Bauer and Bauer 1942; L. Bennett 1966; Oakes 1993).

### Slavery's Aftermath

On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. The document created hope in slaves in the South, but many Union soldiers resigned rather than participate in a struggle to free slaves. The proclamation freed slaves only in the Confederacy, over which the president had no control. Six months after the surrender of the Confederacy in 1865, abolition became law when the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery throughout the nation.

From 1867 to 1877, during the period called Reconstruction, Black–White relations in the South were unlike anything they had ever been. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 put each southern state under a military governor until a new state constitution could be written, with Blacks participating fully in the process. Whites and Blacks married each other, went to public schools and state universities together, and rode side by side on trains and streetcars. The most conspicuous evidence of the new position of Blacks was their presence in elected office. In 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, prohibiting the denial of the right to vote on grounds of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Black men put their vote to good use; Blacks were elected as six lieutenant governors, sixteen major state officials, twenty members of the House of Representatives, and two U.S. senators. Despite accusations that they were corrupt, Black officials and Black-dominated legislatures created new and progressive state constitutions. Black political organizations, such as the Union League and the Loyal League, rivaled the church as the focus of community organization (Du Bois 1969b; Foner 2006).

Reconstruction was ended as part of a political compromise in the election of 1876 and, consequently, segregation became entrenched in the South. Evidence of Jim Crow's reign

### abolitionists

Whites and free Blacks who favored the end of slavery.



### Jim Crow

Southern laws passed in the late 19th century that kept Blacks in their subordinate position.

### white primary

Legal provisions forbidding Black voting in election primaries, which in one-party areas of the South effectively denied Blacks their right to select elected officials.

#### slavery reparations

Act of making amends for the injustices of slavery.

was apparent by the close of the nineteenth century. The term **Jim Crow** appears to have its origin in a dance tune, but by the 1890s it was synonymous with segregation and referred to the statutes that kept African Americans in an inferior position. Segregation often preceded Jim Crow laws and in practice often went beyond their provisions. The institutionalization of segregation gave White supremacy its ultimate authority. In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that state laws requiring "separate but equal" accommodations for Blacks were a "reasonable" use of state government power (L. Bennett 1966; Woodward 1974).

It was in the political sphere that Jim Crow exacted its price soonest. In 1898, the Court's decision in *Williams v. Mississippi* declared constitutional the use of poll taxes, literacy tests, and residential requirements to discourage Blacks from voting. In Louisiana that year, 130,000 Blacks were registered to vote. Eight years later only 1,342 were. Even all these measures did not deprive all African Americans of the vote, and so White supremacists erected a final obstacle: the **White primary**, which forbade Black voting in election primaries. By the turn of the century, the South had a one-party system, making the primary the significant contest and the general election a mere rubber stamp. Beginning with South Carolina in 1896 and spreading to twelve other states within twenty years, statewide Democratic party primaries were adopted. The party explicitly excluded Blacks from voting, an exclusion that was constitutional because the party was defined as a private organization that was free to define its own membership qualifications. The White primary brought an end to the political gains of Reconstruction (Lacy 1972; Lewinson 1965; Woodward 1974).

### **Reparations for Slavery**

The legacy of slavery lives on more than 150 years after its end in the United States. We can see it in the nation's Capitol and the White House, which were built with slave labor, but we can also see it in the enduring poverty that grips a large proportion of the descendants of slavery.

For more than thirty years, there has been serious discussion about granting reparations for slavery. **Slavery reparations** refers to the act of making amends for the injustice of slavery. Few would argue that slavery was wrong and continues to be wrong



Wright, The Detroit News

arry



where it is practiced in parts of the world even today. However, what form should the reparations take? Since 1989, Congressman John Conyers, a Black Democrat from Detroit, has annually introduced in Congress a bill to acknowledge the "fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery" and calls for the creation of a commission to examine the institution and to make recommendations on appropriate remedies. This bill has never made it out of committee, but the discussion continues outside the federal government.

There has not been an official government apology for slavery even though the U.S. government has apologized for injustices to the American Indians and to the Japanese Americans placed in internment camps during World War II. The absence of an official apology angers many African Americans today and those sympathetic to the reparation issue, but the true controversy surrounds what form a remedy should take. Should the government develop and fund some major program to assist the African American community? Should there be direct payments to all African Americans or only to people who can prove that they are descended from enslaved people? Each of these possibilities raises a variety of questions about fairness and equity, but many object in principle to giving any money to people who themselves were not enslaved.

Beginning in the late 1990s, legal researchers raised yet another issue as documentation emerged that private companies that still exist today benefited from slavery. Although it is not too difficult to see how much of the plantation economy of the South was built on enslaved people, the corporate profits from slavery go well beyond the cotton fields. The railroad industry depended heavily on slave labor for construction of railway systems still in use today. Insurance companies even in the North during slavery collected a substantial number of insurance premiums from slaveholders who insured their slaves, much as they would other forms of property. Proponents of slavery reparations argue that these companies owe payments to today's descendants similar to efforts to get payments from German companies that profited from the Jewish Holocaust during World War II.

Government policy makers, for the most part, have not been willing to endorse the concept of slave reparations in any way. A few cities and the state of California have adopted resolutions to explore the issue, but the federal government has not acted. A national survey taken in 2002 showed that only a third of Whites and two-thirds of African Americans feel that corporations that benefited from slavery should even make an apology, although some, such as Aetna Insurance, have already done so. Attitudes

Within all racial and ethnic groups, celebrations emerge to reflect their distinctive experience. Juneteenth celebration is spreading across the United States and marks the anniversary of the emancipation of the slaves in Texas on June 19, 1864.

## ASK Yourself

Is there evidence of the nation's slavery past in your area? Perhaps it is present in a segregated cemetery, historic markers, local accounts of the Underground Railroad, or even in the names of streets. are clearly divided along racial lines on government cash payments: Only 6 percent of Whites and 55 percent of Black Americans endorse some kind of cash payment to the descendants of slaves. Although it may be futile to try to put a price on the cost of slavery, most African Americans and some other citizens are disappointed by the unwillingness to debate the issue in Washington, D.C. (Cox 2002; Dawson and Popoff 2004; Foner 2006; Salzberger and Turck 2004).

## The Challenge of Black Leadership

The institutionalization of White supremacy precipitated different responses from African Americans, just as slavery had. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a number of articulate Blacks attempted to lead the first generation of freeborn Black Americans. Most prominent were Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois. The personalities and ideas of these two men contrasted with one another. Washington was born a slave in 1856 on a Virginia plantation. He worked in coal mines after emancipation and attended elementary school. Through hard work and driving ambition, Washington became the head of an educational institute for Blacks in Tuskegee, Alabama. Within fifteen years, his leadership brought the Tuskegee Institute national recognition and made him a national figure. Du Bois, on the other hand, was born in 1868 of a free family in Massachusetts. He attended Fisk University and the University of Berlin and became the first Black to receive a doctorate from Harvard. Washington died in 1915, and Du Bois died in self-imposed exile in Africa in 1963.

### The Politics of Accommodation

Booker T. Washington's approach to White supremacy is called the politics of accommodation. He was willing to forgo social equality until White people saw Blacks as deserving of it. Perhaps his most famous speech was made in Atlanta on September 18, 1895, to an audience that was mostly White and mostly wealthy. Introduced by the governor of Georgia as "a representative of Negro enterprise and Negro civilization," Washington (1900) gave a five-minute speech in which he pledged the continued dedication of Blacks to Whites:

As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past, in nursing your children, watching by the sick-bed of your mothers and fathers, and often following them with tear-dimmed eyes to their graves, so in the future, in our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defense of yours. (p. 221)

The speech catapulted Washington into the public forum, and he became the anointed spokesperson for Blacks for the next twenty years. President Grover Cleveland congratulated Washington for the "new hope" he gave Blacks. Washington's essential theme was compromise. Unlike Frederick Douglass, who had demanded the same rights for Blacks as for Whites, Washington asked that Blacks be educated because it would be a wise investment for Whites. He called racial hatred "the great and intricate problem which God has laid at the doors of the South." The Blacks' goal should be economic respectability. Washington's accommodating attitude ensured his popularity with Whites. His recognition by Whites contributed to his large following of Blacks, who were not used to seeing their leaders achieve fame among Whites.

It is easy in retrospect to be critical of Washington and to write him off as simply a product of his times. Booker T. Washington entered the public arena when the more militant proposals of Douglass had been buried. Black politicians were losing political contests and influence. To become influential as a Black, Washington reasoned,

required White acceptance. His image as an accommodator allowed him to fight discrimination covertly. He assisted Presidents Roosevelt and Taft in appointing Blacks to patronage positions. Washington's goal was for African Americans eventually to have the same rights and opportunities as Whites. Just as people disagree with leaders today, some Blacks disagreed over the means that Washington chose to reach that goal. No African American was more outspoken in his criticism of the politics of accommodation than W. E. B. Du Bois (Conyers 1996; Harlan 1972; Hawkins 1962; Meier and Rudwick 1966 Pinkney 2001).

### The Niagara Movement

The rivalry between Washington and Du Bois has been exaggerated. Actually, they enjoyed fairly cordial relations for some time. In 1900, Washington recommended Du Bois, at his request, for superintendent of Black schools in Washington, D.C. By 1905, however, relations between the two had cooled. Du Bois spoke critically of Washington's influence, arguing that his power was being used to stifle African Americans who spoke out against the politics of accommodation. He also charged that Washington had caused the transfer of funds from academic programs to vocational education. Du Bois's greatest objection to Washington's statements was that they encouraged Whites to place the burden of the Blacks' problems on the Blacks themselves (Du Bois 1961; Hawkins 1962).

As an alternative to Washington's program, Du Bois (1903) advocated the theory of the *talented tenth*, which reflected his atypical educational background. Unlike Washington, Du Bois was not at home with both intellectuals and sharecroppers. Although the very words talented tenth have an elitist ring to them, Du Bois argued that these privileged Blacks must serve the other nine-tenths. This argument was also Du Bois's way of criticizing Washington's emphasis on vocational education. He thought education for African Americans should emphasize academics, which would be more likely to improve their position. Drawing on the talented tenth, Du Bois invited twenty-nine Blacks to participate in a strategy session near Niagara Falls in 1905. Out of a series of meetings came several demands that unmistakably placed the responsibility for the problems facing African Americans on the shoulders of Whites.



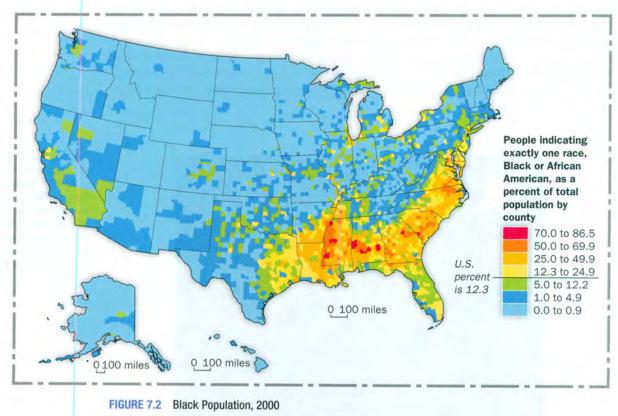
Pictured is a 1935 lynching in Ft. Lauderdale of Rubin Stacy, an African American who had been charged with "threatening and frightening" a White woman. Note the reaction of some of the onlookers. Over 3,000 Blacks were executed by lynching between 1889 and 1938.

209

The Niagara Movement, as it came to be called, was closely monitored by Booker T. Washington. Du Bois encountered difficulty gaining financial support and recruiting prominent people, and Du Bois (1968) himself wrote, "My leadership was solely of ideas. I never was, nor ever will be, personally popular" (p. 303). The movement's legacy was the education of a new generation of African Americans in the politics of protest. After 1910, the Niagara Movement ceased to hold annual conventions. In 1909, however, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), with White and Black members, was founded by the Niagara Movement leaders. It was through the work of the NAACP that the Niagara Movement accomplished most of the goals set forth in 1905. The NAACP also marked the merging of White liberalism and Black militancy, a coalition unknown since the end of the abolition movement and Reconstruction (L. Bennett 1966; Conyers 1996; Rudwick 1957).

In 1900, 90 percent of African Americans lived in the South. Blacks moved out of the South and into the West and North, especially the urban areas in those regions, during the post–Civil War period and continued to migrate through the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1980s and 1990s, a migration to the South began as job opportunities grew in that part of the country and most vestiges of Jim Crow vanished in what had been the states of the Confederacy. By 2000, 55 percent of African Americans lived in the South, compared to 33 percent of the rest of the population (Figure 7.2).

The pattern of violence, with Blacks usually the victims, started in the South during Reconstruction and continued into the twentieth century, when it also spread northward. In 1917, a riot in East St. Louis, Illinois, claimed the lives of thirty-nine Blacks



Source: Bureau of the Census data map in C. Brewer and Suchan 2001.

and nine Whites. The several days of violence resulted from White fear of social and economic gains made by Blacks. The summer of 1919 saw so much violence that it is commonly called the "red summer." Twenty-six riots broke out throughout the country as White soldiers who returned from World War I feared the new competition that Blacks represented. This period of violence against African Americans also saw a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, which at its height had nearly 9 million members (Grimshaw 1969; Schaefer 1971, 1980).

By no stretch of the imagination, and certainly as documented by historians and sociologists, the South had no monopoly on racism. In "Research Focus" we consider the evidence of communities called sundown towns that kept Blacks out at night and were found throughout the North beginning in 1890 and continuing well into the last quarter of the twentieth century.

## **Reemergence of Black Protest**

American involvement in World War II signaled improved economic conditions for both Whites and Blacks. Nearly a million African Americans served in the military in rigidly segregated units. Generally, more Blacks could participate in the armed services in World War II than in previous military engagements, but efforts by Blacks to contribute to the war effort at home were hampered by discriminatory practices in defense plants. A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, threatened to lead 100,000 Blacks in a march on Washington in 1941 to ensure their employment. Randolph's proposed tactic was nonviolent direct action, which he modeled on Mahatma Gandhi's practices in India. Randolph made it clear that he intended the march to be an all-Black event because he saw it as neither necessary nor desirable for Whites to lead Blacks to their own liberation. President Franklin Roosevelt responded to the pressure and agreed to issue an executive order prohibiting discrimination if Randolph would call off the march. Although the order and the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) it set up did not fulfill the original promises, a precedent had been established for federal intervention in job discrimination (Garfinkel 1959).

Racial turmoil during World War II was not limited to threatened marches. Racial disturbances occurred in cities throughout the country, the worst riot occurring in Detroit in June 1943. In that case, President Roosevelt sent in 6,000 soldiers to quell the violence, which left twenty-five Blacks and nine Whites dead. The racial disorders were paralleled by a growth in civil disobedience as a means to achieve equality for Blacks. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was founded in 1942 to fight discrimination with nonviolent direct action. This interracial group used sit-ins to open restaurants to Black patrons in Chicago, Baltimore, and Los Angeles. In 1947, CORE sent "freedom riders" to test a court ruling that prohibited segregation in interstate bus travel. In contrast to the red summer of 1919, the end of World War II was not followed by wide-spread racial violence, in part because the continued expansion of the postwar economy reduced competition between Whites and Blacks for employment (Grimshaw 1969; Meier and Rudwick 1966).

The war years and the postwar period saw several U.S. Supreme Court decisions that suggested the Court was moving away from tolerating racial inequities. The White primary elections endorsed in Jim Crow's formative period were finally challenged in the 1944 *Smith v. Allwright* decision. The effectiveness of the victory was limited; many states simply passed statutes that used new devices to frustrate African American voters.

A particularly repugnant legal device for relegating African Americans to secondclass status was restrictive covenants. A **restrictive covenant** was a private contract entered into by neighborhood property owners stipulating that property could not

#### restrictive covenants

Private contracts or agreements that discourage or prevent minority-group members from purchasing housing in a neighborhood.

## Focus Research Focus Research Foc

### SUNDOWN TOWNS, USA

Sundown towns are communities where non-Whites were systematically excluded from living. They emerged in the late nineteenth century and persisted for a hundred years into the late twentieth century. Sundown towns existed throughout the nation, but more often they were located in northern states that were not pre-Civil War Slave states. Although the precise number of sundown towns in the United States is unknown, it is estimated that there were several thousand such towns throughout the nation. As shown in Figure 7.3, sundown towns were common in the southern part of the nonslave state of Illinois.

The dotted line in the map is the "dead line," north of which Blacks were not allowed to live (except in unbolded towns). South of this line, Blacks still lived alongside Whites plantation-style.

The term *sundown town* comes from signs once posted at the city limits reading "Nigger, Don't Let the Sun Set on YOU." In addition to excluding African Americans from many small towns, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, Mexican Americans, Jews, and Native Americans—citizens and noncitizens alike—were also subject to such exclusions. In some cases, the exclusion was official town policy. In others cases, the racism policy was enforced through intimidation. This intimidation could occur in a number of ways, including harassment by law enforcement officers with the blessing of the local citizens.

Although to many today the thought of sundown towns may seem a relic of the past, sociologist James Loewen estimates that by 1970, still *more than half* of all incorporated communities outside the traditional South probably excluded African Americans. Many of these communities had no history of Blacks in residence. Such laws persisted even throughout the era of the civil rights movement. The city council of New Market, Iowa, for example, suspended its sundown ordinance for one night in the mid-1980s to allow an interracial band to play at a town festival, but it went back into effect the very next day.

So what is it like today in these communities? Few sundown towns today have significant populations of excluded people. Some towns where colleges are located have benefited from efforts to desegregate their hometown. Such has been the case with initiatives by Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin. What Loewen calls "recovering" sundown towns face continuing challenges to developing good race relations to attract African American families, including biased school curricula and overwhelmingly White teaching staffs. Practices that discourage desegregation persist across the country.

Source: Loewen 2005, 2008.

be sold or rented to certain minority groups, thus ensuring that they could not live in the area. In 1948, the Supreme Court finally declared in *Shelley v. Kramer* that restrictive covenants were not constitutional, although it did not actually attack their discriminatory nature. The victory was in many ways less substantial than it was symbolic of the new willingness by the Supreme Court to uphold the rights of Black citizens.

The Democratic administrations of the late 1940s and early 1950s made a number of promises to Black Americans. The party adopted a strong civil rights platform in 1948, but its provisions were not enacted. Once again, union president Randolph

#### sundown towns

Communities where non-Whites were systematically excluded from living.

## Research Focus Research Focus Research



threatened Washington, D.C., with a march. This time he insisted that as long as Blacks were subjected to a peacetime draft, the military must be desegregated. President Truman responded by issuing an executive order on July 26, 1948, desegregating the armed forces. The U.S. Army abolished its quota system in 1950, and training camps for the Korean War were integrated. Desegregation was not complete, however, especially in the reserves and the National Guard, and even today charges of racial favoritism confront the armed forces. Whatever its shortcomings, the desegregation order offered African Americans an alternative to segregated civilian life (Moskos and Butler 1996).



In this classic Margaret Bourke-White photograph, a line of Black Americans awaits food handouts in 1937 in Louisville, Kentucky.

### The Civil Rights Movement

It is difficult to say exactly when a social movement begins or ends. Usually, a movement's ideas or tactics precede the actual mobilization of people and continue long after the movement's driving force has been replaced by new ideals and techniques. This description applies to the civil rights movement and its successor, the continuing struggle for African American freedom. Before 1954, there were some confrontations of White supremacy: the CORE sit-ins of 1942 and efforts to desegregate buses in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1953. The civil rights movement gained momentum with a Supreme Court decision in 1954 that eventually desegregated the public schools, and it ended as a major force in Black America with the civil disorders of 1965 through 1968. However, beginning in 1954, toppling the traditional barriers to full rights for Blacks was the rule, not the exception.

### Struggle to Desegregate the Schools

For the majority of Black children, public school education meant attending segregated schools. Southern school districts assigned children to school by race rather than by neighborhood, a practice that constituted de jure segregation. **De jure segregation** is segregation that results from children being assigned to schools specifically to maintain racially separate schools. It was this form of legal humiliation that was attacked in the landmark decree of *Linda Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.

Seven-year-old Linda Brown was not permitted to enroll in the grade school four blocks from her home in Topeka, Kansas. Rather, school board policy dictated that she attend the Black school almost two miles away. This denial led the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund to bring suit on behalf of Linda Brown and twelve other Black children. The NAACP argued that the Fourteenth Amendment was intended to rule out segregation in public schools. Chief Justice Earl Warren of the Supreme Court wrote the unanimous opinion that "in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

The freedom that African Americans saw in their grasp at the time of the *Brown* decision essentially amounted to a reaffirmation of American values. What Blacks sought was assimilation into White American society. The motivation for the *Brown* suit did not come

### de jure segregation

Children assigned to schools specifically to maintain racially separated schools.



In this often-reproduced photograph, civil rights hero Rosa Parks is shown defying *de jure* segregation by sitting in the White section of the bus that launched the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott in 1955. Actually, while the event was very real, there were no journalists present at the time and this iconic photography was a re-creation with an Associated Press reporter seated behind Rosa Parks.

merely because Black schools were inferior, although they were. Blacks were assigned to poorly ventilated and dilapidated buildings, with overcrowded classrooms and unqualified teachers. Less money was spent on Black schools than on White schools throughout the South in both rural and metropolitan areas. The issue was not such tangible factors, however, but the intangible effect of not being allowed to go to school with Whites. All-Black schools could not be equal to all-White schools. Even in this victory, Blacks were reaffirming White society and the importance of an integrated educational experience.

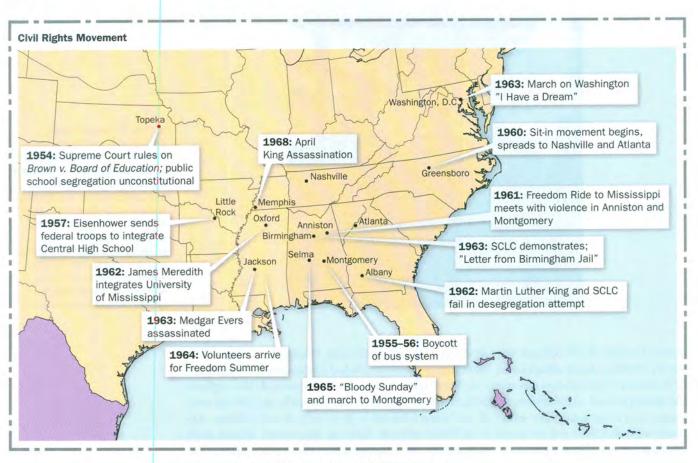
Although *Brown* marked the beginning of the civil rights movement, the reaction to it showed just how deeply prejudice was held in the South. Resistance to court-ordered desegregation took many forms: Some people called for impeachment of all the Supreme Court justices; others petitioned Congress to declare the Fourteenth Amendment unconstitutional; cities closed schools rather than comply; and the governor of Arkansas used the state's National Guard to block Black students from entering a previously all-White high school in Little Rock (Figure 7.4).

The issue of school desegregation was extended to higher education, and Mississippi state troopers and the state's National Guard confronted each other over the 1962 admission of James Meredith, the first African American accepted by the University of Mississippi. Scores were injured, and two were killed in this clash between segregationists and the law. A similar defiant stand was taken a year later by Governor George Wallace, who "stood in the schoolhouse door" to block two Blacks from enrolling in the University of Alabama. President Kennedy federalized the Alabama National Guard to guarantee admission of the students. *Brown* did not resolve the school controversy, and many questions remain unanswered. More recently, the issue of school segregation resulting from neighborhood segregation has been debated. In Chapter 8, another form of segregation, called de facto segregation, is examined more closely (Butler 1996).

### **Civil Disobedience**

The success of a yearlong boycott of city buses in Montgomery, Alabama, dealt Jim Crow another setback. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks defied the law and refused to give her seat on a crowded bus to a White man. Her defiance led to the organization of the Montgomery Improvement Association, headed by 26-year-old Martin Luther King, Jr., a Baptist minister with a Ph.D. from Boston University. The bus boycott was

Chapter 7 The Making of African Americans in a White America





the first of many instances in which Blacks used nonviolent direct action to obtain the rights that Whites already enjoyed. The boycott eventually demanded the end of segregated seating. The *Brown* decision woke up all of America to racial injustice, but the Montgomery boycott marked a significant shift away from the historical reliance on NAACP court battles (Killian 1975).

**Civil disobedience** is based on the belief that people have the right to disobey the law under certain circumstances. This tactic was not new; it had been used before in India and also by Blacks in the United States. Under King's leadership, however, civil disobedience became a widely used technique and even gained a measure of acceptability among some prominent Whites. King distinguished clearly between the laws to be obeyed and those to be disobeyed: "A just law is a man-made law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law" (1963, 82). In disobeying unjust laws, King (1958) developed this strategy:

- Active nonviolent resistance to evil
- Not seeking to defeat or humiliate opponents but to win their friendship and understanding
- Attacking the forces of evil rather than the people who happen to be doing the evil
- Willingness to accept suffering without retaliating
- Refusing to hate the opponent
- Acting with the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice (pp. 101–107)

#### civil disobedience

A tactic promoted by Martin Luther King, Jr., based on the belief that people have the right to disobey unjust laws under certain circumstances.



# Voices Listen to Our Voices Listen to

### LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL

ou may well ask: "Why direct action? Why sitins, marches and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has

constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent-resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension." I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood.



Martin Luther King, Jr.

The purpose of our direct-action program is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. I therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in a tragic effort to live in monologue rather than dialogue. ...

You express a great deal of

anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may well ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all."

Source: "Letter from Birmingham Jail," in Why We Can't Wait, by Martin Luther King, Jr. Copyright © 1963 by Martin Luther King, Jr. Renewed 1991 by Coretta Scott King, Reprinted by arrangement with The Estate of Martin Luther King, Jr., c/o Writer's House as agents for the proprietor.

King, like other Blacks before him and since, made it clear that passive acceptance of injustice was intolerable. He hoped that by emphasizing nonviolence, southern Blacks would display their hostility to racism in a way that would undercut violent reaction by Whites.

The pattern had now been established and a method devised to confront racism. But civil disobedience did not work quickly. The struggle to desegregate buses in the South, for example, took seven years. Civil disobedience was also not spontaneous. The success of the civil rights movement rested on a dense network of local efforts. People were spontaneously attracted to the efforts, but organized tactics and targets were crucial to dismantling racist institutions that had existed for generations (Payne 1995). Beginning in April 1963, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), founded by King, began a series of marches in Birmingham to demand fair employment opportunities, desegregation of public facilities, and the release of 3,000 people arrested for participating in the marches. King, himself arrested, tells in "Listen to Our Voices" why civil disobedience and the confrontations that followed were necessary. In May, the Birmingham police used dogs and water from high-pressure hoses on the marchers, who included many schoolchildren.

Congress had still failed to enact any sweeping federal barrier to discrimination. Following the example of A. Philip Randolph in 1941, Blacks organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963. With more than 200,000 people participating, the march was the high point of the civil rights movement. The mass of people, middle-class Whites and Blacks looking to the federal government for support, symbolized the struggle. However, a public opinion poll conducted shortly before the march documented the continuing resentment of the majority of Whites: Sixty-three percent were opposed to the rally (G. Gallup 1972).

King (1971, 351) delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech before the large crowd; he looked forward to a time when all Americans "will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, 'Free at last! free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last!'" Just eighteen days later, a bomb exploded in a Black church in Birmingham, killing four little girls and injuring twenty others.

Despair only increased as the November 1963 elections saw segregationists successful in their bids for office. Most distressing was the assassination of President Kennedy on November 22. As president, Kennedy had appealed to Blacks despite his previously mediocre legislative record in the U.S. Senate. His death left doubt as to the direction and pace of future actions on civil rights by the executive branch under President Lyndon Baines Johnson. Two months later, the Twenty-Fourth Amendment was ratified, outlawing the poll tax that had long prevented Blacks from voting. The enactment of the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964, was hailed as a major victory and provided at least for a while what historian John Hope Franklin called "the illusion of equality" (Franklin and Moss 2000).

In the months that followed the passage of the act, the pace of the movement to end racial injustice slowed. The violence continued, however, from the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn to Selma, Alabama. Southern state courts still found White murderers of Blacks innocent, and they had to be tried and convicted in federal civil, rather than criminal, court on the charge that by killing a person one violates that person's civil rights. Government records, which did not become public until 1973, revealed a systematic campaign by the FBI to infiltrate civil rights groups in an effort to discredit them, in the belief that such activist groups were subversive. It was in such an atmosphere that the Voting Rights Act was passed in August 1965, but this significant, positive event was somewhat overshadowed by violence in the Watts section of Los Angeles in the same week (Blackstock 1976).

# Urban Violence and Oppression

Riots involving Whites and Blacks did not begin in the 1960s. As we saw earlier in this chapter, urban violence occurred after World War I and even during World War II, and violence against Blacks in the United States is nearly 350 years old. But the urban riots of the 1960s influenced Blacks and Whites in the United States and throughout the world so extensively that they deserve special attention. However, we must remember that most violence between Whites and Blacks has not been large-scale collective action but has involved only a small number of people.

5

The summers of 1963 and 1964 were a prelude to riots that gripped the country's attention. Although most people knew of the civil rights efforts in the South and legislative victories in Washington, everyone realized that the racial problem was national after several cities outside the South experienced violent disorders. In April 1968, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., more cities exploded than had in all of 1967. Even before the summer of 1968 began, there were 369 civil disorders. Communities of all sizes were hit (Oberschall 1968).

As the violence continued and embraced many ghettos, a popular explanation was that riot participants were mostly unemployed youths who had criminal records, often involving narcotics, and who were vastly outnumbered by the African Americans who repudiated the looting and arson. This explanation was called the **riff-raff theory** or the rotten-apple theory because it discredited the rioters and left the barrel of apples, White society, untouched. On the contrary, research shows that the Black community expressed sympathetic understanding toward the rioters and that the rioters were not merely the poor and uneducated but included middle-class, working-class, and educated residents (Sears and McConahay 1969, 1973; Tomlinson 1969; R. Turner 1994).

Several alternatives to the riff-raff theory explain why Black violent protest increased in the United States at a time when the nation was seemingly committed to civil rights for all. Two explanations stand out. One ascribes the problem to Black frustration with rising expectations in the face of continued deprivation relative to Whites.

The standard of living of African Americans improved remarkably after World War II, and it continued to do so during the civil rights movement. However, White income and occupation levels also improved, so the gap between the groups remained. Chapter 3 showed that feelings of relative deprivation often are the basis for perceived discrimination. **Relative deprivation** is the conscious feeling of a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and present actualities (W. Wilson 1973).

It is of little comfort to African Americans that their earning power matches that of Whites ten or more years earlier. As shown in Figure 7.5, Black family income has increased significantly, but so has that of White families, leaving the gap between the two largely unchanged. Relative to Whites, most Blacks made no tangible gains in housing, education, jobs, or economic security. African Americans were doing better in absolute numbers, but not relative to Whites.

At the same time that African Americans were feeling relative deprivation, they were also experiencing growing discontent. **Rising expectations** refers to the increasing sense of frustration that legitimate needs are being blocked. Blacks felt that they had legitimate aspirations to equality, and the civil rights movement reaffirmed that discrimination had blocked upward mobility. As the horizons of African Americans broadened, they were more likely to make comparisons with Whites and feel discontented. The civil rights movement gave higher aspirations to Black America, yet for the majority, life remained basically unchanged. Not only were their lives unchanged, but also the feeling was widespread that the existing social structure held no prospect for improvement (Garner 1996; Sears and McConahay 1970; Thomas and Thomas 1984).

### **Black Power**

The riots in the northern ghettos captured the attention of Whites, and Black Power was what they heard. Appropriately enough, Black Power was born not of Black but of White violence. On June 6, 1966, James Meredith was carrying out a one-person march from Memphis to Jackson, Mississippi, to encourage fellow African Americans to overcome their own fears and vote after the passage of the Voting Rights Act. During that

### riff-raff theory

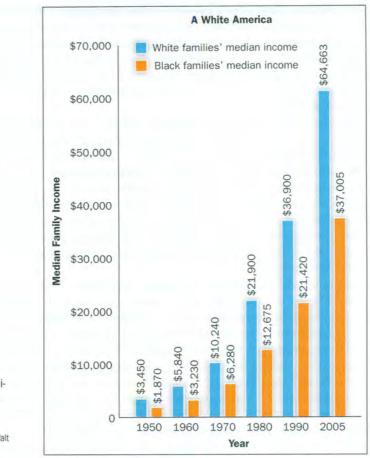
Also called the rotten-apple theory; the belief that the riots of the 1960s were caused by discontented youths rather than by social and economic problems facing all African Americans.

#### relative deprivation

The conscious experience of a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and present actualities.

#### rising expectations

The increasing sense of frustration that legitimate needs are being blocked.



### FIGURE 7.5 Black–White Income Gap For the over 50 years of available data, medi-

an Black family income has been only about half that of White family income. *Note:* 2005 data are for White, non-Hispanic households. *Sources:* Bureau of the Census 1975, 297; 2002c; DeNavas-Walt et al. 2006. HINC.

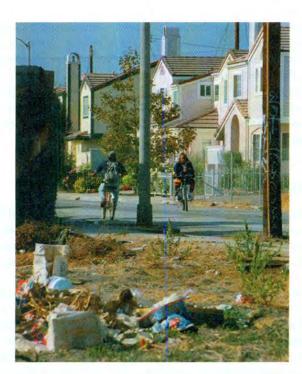
march, an unidentified assailant shot and wounded Meredith. Blacks from throughout the country immediately continued the march. During the march, Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) proclaimed to a cheering Black crowd, "What we need is Black Power." King and others later urged "Freedom Now" as the slogan for the march. A compromise dictated that no slogan would be used, but the mood of Black America said otherwise (King 1967; Lomax 1971).

In retrospect, it may be puzzling that the phrase *Black Power* frightened Whites and offended so many Blacks. It was not really new. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968, 234–235) correctly identified it as old wine in new bottles: Black consciousness was not new, even if the phrase was.

By advocating Black Power, Carmichael was distancing himself from the assimilationism of King. Carmichael rejected the goal of assimilation into White middle-class society. Instead, he said, Blacks must create new institutions. To succeed in this endeavor, Carmichael argued that Blacks must follow the same path as the Italians, Irish, and other White ethnic groups. "Before a group can enter the open society, it must first close ranks. . . . Group solidarity is necessary before a group can operate effectively from a bargaining position of strength in a pluralistic society" (Ture and Hamilton 1992, 44). Prominent Black leaders opposed the concept; many feared that Whites would retaliate even more violently. King (1967) saw Black Power as a "cry of disappointment" but acknowledged that it had a "positive meaning."

Eventually Black Power gained wide acceptance among Blacks and even many Whites. Although it came to be defined differently by nearly every new proponent,

220



Since the riots of the 1960s, inner-city neighborhoods such as South Central Los Angeles (renamed South Los Angeles in 2003 to try to symbolically erase the stigma) have undergone only modest redevelopment and much less than originally anticipated by the residents. Santa Ana Pines development, pictured here, is one of the few examples of economic investment in the community.

support of Black Power generally implied endorsing Black control of the political, economic, and social institutions in Black communities. One reason for its popularity among African Americans was that it gave them a viable option for surviving in a segregated society. The civil rights movement strove to end segregation, but the White response showed how committed White society was to maintaining it. Black Power presented restructuring society as the priority item on the Black agenda (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003; Pinkney 2001).

One aspect of Black Power clearly operated outside the conventional system. The Black Panther Party was organized in October 1966 in Oakland, California, by Huey Newton, age 24, and Bobby Seale, age 30, to represent urban Blacks in a political climate that the Panthers felt was unresponsive. The Panthers were controversial from the beginning, charging police brutality and corruption among government officials. They engaged in violent confrontations with law enforcement officers. From 1969 to 1972, internal weaknesses, a long series of trials involving most of the leaders, intraparty strife, and several shoot-outs with police combined to bring the organization to a standstill. Although they were often portrayed as the most separatist of the Black militant movements, the Panthers were willing to form alliances with non-Black organizations, including Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Peace and Freedom Party, the Young Lords, the Young Patriots, and the Communist Party of the United States. Despite, or perhaps because of, such coalitions, the Panthers were not a prominent force in shaping contemporary Black America. Newton himself admitted in 1973 that the party had alienated Blacks and had become "too radical" to be accepted by the Black community (Cleaver 1982; Joseph 2006; C. Woodward 1974).

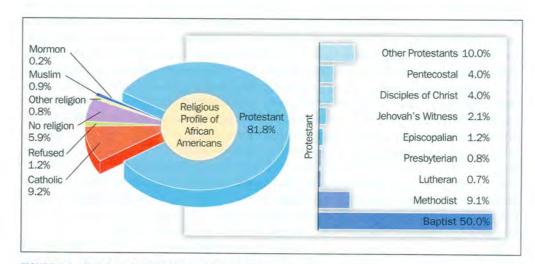
The militant Black Panthers encountered severe difficulties in the 1970s and fell victim to both internal political problems and external surveillance. Finally, their formerly outspoken leaders moved in new directions. Eldridge Cleaver became a bornagain Christian and confined himself to lecturing on the virtues of his evangelical faith. Cofounder Bobby Seale ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Oakland, California, in the kind of traditional campaign he had formerly denounced as unproductive. After that unsuccessful bid, Seale became an organizer of moderate community groups. Former Panther defense minister Bobby Rush became deputy chairman of the Illinois State Democratic Party, was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1992, and has been reelected to eight more terms. The role of spokesperson for a minority group in the United States is exhausting, and people who have assumed that role for a time often turn to more conventional, less personally demanding roles, especially if public support for their programs wanes.

## **The Religious Force**

It is not possible to overstate the role religion has played, good and bad, in the social history of African Americans. Historically, Black leaders have emerged from the pulpits to seek out rights on behalf of all Blacks. Churches have served as the basis for community organization in neighborhoods abandoned by businesses and even government. Religion may be a source of antagonism as well.

As we saw earlier in this chapter, because the Africans who were brought involuntarily to the Western Hemisphere were non-Christian, they were seen as heathens and barbarians. To "civilize" the slaves in the period before the Civil War, Southern slaveholders encouraged and often required their slaves to attend church and embrace Christianity. The Christian churches to which Blacks were introduced in the United States encouraged them to accept the inferior status enforced by Whites, and the religious teaching that the slaves received equated whiteness with salvation, presenting whiteness as an acceptable, if not preferred, object of reverence.

Despite being imposed in the past by Whites, the Christian faiths are embraced by most African Americans today. As shown in Figure 7.6, African Americans are overwhelmingly Protestant, with half being Baptist. Methodists and Roman Catholics account for another 9 percent each. Therefore, almost seven out of ten African Americans are members of these three faiths, compared with less than half of Whites.



### FIGURE 7.6 Religious Profile of African Americans

Based on a 1990 national sample, most African Americans are Baptist, Roman Catholic, or Methodist. Source: From One Nation Under God by Seymour P. Lachman and Barry A. Kosmin. Copyright © 1993 by Seymour P. Lachman and Barry A. Kosmin. Reprinted by permission of Harmony Books, a division of Random House Inc.



Does the place where your family has traditionally worshipped show much evidence of diversity among those who attend regularly?



Especially in urban centers, recent immigrants from Africa have begun to provide a new diversity to the Black community in the United States. Here a Senegalese restaurateur is shown in front of her Philadelphia restaurant.

The Black church continues to be socially involved in the community. Even when upwardly mobile African Americans move out of the central city, many travel long distances to return to their congregations to support them financially and spiritually (Watson 2004).

However, a variety of non-Christian groups have exerted a much greater influence on African Americans than the reported numbers of their followers suggest. The Nation of Islam, for example, which became known as the Black Muslims, has attracted a large number of followers and received the most attention. We will look at this group in grater detail in Chapter 11 when we consider the large Muslim community in the United States.

### Conclusion

The dramatic events affecting African Americans today have their roots in the forcible bringing of their ancestors to the United States as slaves. In the South, whether as slaves or later as victims of Jim Crow, Blacks were not a real threat to any but the poorest Whites, although even affluent Whites feared the perceived potential threat that Blacks posed. During their entire history here, Blacks have been criticized when they rebelled and praised when they went along with the system. During the time of slavery, revolts were met with increased suppression; after emancipation, leaders calling for accommodation were applauded.

The Black migration to the urban North helped to define a new social order. Yet many of the communities they may have settled in were sundown towns where the welcome mat had been replaced with covert and overt racism. Whites found it more difficult to ignore Blacks as residents of the ghetto than as sharecroppers in the rural South. No longer excluded by the White primary as in the South, the Black urban voter had potential power. The federal government and city halls slowly began to acknowledge the presence of Blacks. From the Black community came voices that spoke of pride and selfhelp: Douglass, Tubman, Washington, Du Bois, King, and Malcolm X.

Most people today look back at the civil rights movement and accept the significance of its legacy but, like so many things in society, Black and White perceptions differ. A national survey found that 46 percent of Whites compared to 75 percent of Blacks felt the movement was extremely important. Half of Whites felt that most of the goals of the civil rights movement have been achieved, while only 30 percent of African Americans were similarly convinced (Ludwig 2004).

Blacks, in their efforts to bring about change, have understandably differed in their willingness to form

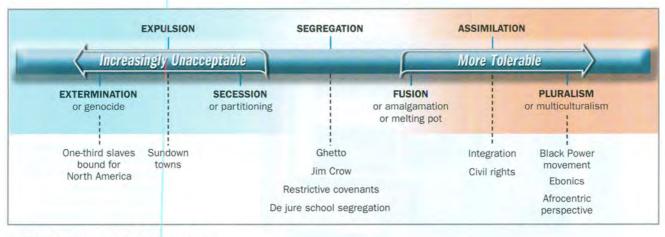


FIGURE 7.7 Intergroup Relations Continuum

coalitions with Whites. Resisting African Americans, in the days of either slavery or the civil rights movement (see the intergroup relations continuum in Figure 7.7), would have concurred with Du Bois's (1903) comment that a Black person "simply wishes to make it possible to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the door of opportunity closed roughly in his face" (pp.3–4). The object of Black protest seems simple enough, but for many people, including presidents, the point was lost.

How much progress has been made? When covering several hundred years, beginning with slavery and ending with rights recognized constitutionally, it is easy to be impressed. Yet let us consider Topeka, Kansas, the site of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case. Linda Brown, one of the original plaintiffs, was recently touched by another segregation case. In 1992, the courts held that Oliver Brown, her grandchild, was being victimized because the Topeka schools were still segregated, now for reasons of residential segregation. The remedy to separate schools in this Kansas city is still unresolved (Hays 1994).

Chapter 8 assesses the status of African Americans today. Recall the events chronicled in this chapter as you consider the advances that have been made. These events are a reminder that any progress has followed years—indeed, generations—of struggle by African Americans, enlisting the support of Whites seeking to end second-class status for African Americans in the United States.

abolitionists 205 afrocentric perspective 204 civil disobedience 216 de jure segregation 214 Ebonics 204

### **Key Terms**

Jim Crow 206 relative deprivation 219 restrictive covenants 211 riff-raff theory 219 rising expectations 219 slave codes 202 slavery reparations 206 sundown towns 212 white primary 206

## **Review Questions**

- 1. In what ways were slaves defined as property?
- 2. How did slavery provide a foundation for both White and Black America today?
- 3. If civil disobedience is nonviolent, why is so much violence associated with it?
- 4. How did observers of the urban riots tend to dismiss any social importance to the outbreaks?
- 5. Why has religion proved to be a force for both unity and disunity among African Americans?

224

## **Critical Thinking**

- 1. How much time do you recall spending in school thus far learning about the history of Europe? How about Africa? What do you think this says about the way education is delivered or what we choose to learn?
- 2. What would you consider the three most important achievements in civil rights for African Americans since 1900? What roles did Whites and Blacks play in making these events happen?
- **3.** Growing numbers of Blacks are immigrating to the United States (especially to the eastern United States) from the Caribbean. What impact may this have on what it means to be Black or African American in the United States? What would the so-cial construction of race say about this development?

# Internet Connections—Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>

To access the full resources of Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>, please find the access code printed on the inside cover of OneSearch with Research Navigator <sup>TM</sup>: Sociology. You may have received this booklet if your instructor recommended this guide be packaged with new textbooks. (If your book did not come with this printed guide, you can purchase one through your college bookstore). Visit our Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup> site atx www.ResearchNavigator.com. Once at this site, click on REGISTER under New Users and enter your access code to create a personal Login Name and Password. (When revisiting the site, use the same Login Name and Password.) Browse the features of the Research Navigator <sup>TM</sup> Web site and search the databases of academic journals, newspapers, magazines, and Web links.

For further information relevant to Chapter 7, you may wish to use such keywords as "slavery," "Martin Luther King," and "civil rights movement," and the search engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.

# African Americans

CHAPTER

From Segregation to Modern Institutional Discrimination and Modern Racism

t the dawn of the 20th century, African Americans were primarily a southern rural peasantry, victimized by de jure segregation, exploited by the sharecropping system of agriculture, and blocked from the better-paying industrial and manufacturing jobs in urban areas. Segregation had disenfranchised them and stripped them of the legal and civil rights they had briefly enjoyed during Reconstruction. As we saw in Chapter 5, the huge majority of African Americans had very limited

access to quality education; few political rights; few occupational choices; and very few means of expressing their views, grievances, and concerns to the larger society or to the world.

Today, a century later, African Americans are highly urbanized, dispersed throughout the United States, and represented in virtually every occupational grouping. Members of the group are visible at the highest levels of American society: from the Supreme Court to corporate boardrooms to the most prestigious universities. Some of the best-known, most successful, and



most respected (and wealthiest) people in the world have been African Americans: Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Michael Jordan, Shirley Chisholm, Jesse Jackson, Bill Cosby, Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, Muhammad Ali, Oprah Winfrey, Barbara Jordan, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and Barack Obama, to name just a few. Furthermore, some of the most important and prestigious American corporations (including Merrill Lynch, American Express, and Time Warner) have been led by African Americans.

How did these changes come about, and what do they signify? What problems are obscured by these glittering success stories? Do racism, prejudice, and discrimination continue to be significant problems? Is it true that barriers to racial equality have been eliminated? How do the Noel and Blauner hypotheses and the other concepts developed earlier in this text help us understand contemporary black-white relations?

To understand the trajectories of change that have led to the present, we must deal with the watershed events in black-white relations: the end of de jure segregation, the triumph (and the limitations) of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, the urban riots and Black Power movement of the 1960s, and the continuing racial divisions within U.S. society since the 1970s. Behind these events lie the powerful pressures of industrialization and modernization, the shift from rigid to fluid competitive group relations, changing distributions of power and forms of intergroup competition, declining levels of traditional prejudice, and new ideas about assimilation and pluralism. In less abstract terms, black-white relations changed as a direct result of protest, resistance, and the concerted actions of thousands of individuals, both blacks and whites.

# The End of De Jure Segregation

As a colonized minority group, African Americans entered the 20th century facing extreme inequality, relative powerlessness, and sharp limitations on their freedom. Their most visible enemy was the system of de jure segregation in the South, the rigid competitive system of group relations that controlled the lives of most African Americans.

Why and how did de jure segregation come to an end? Recall from Chapter 5 that dominant-minority relationships dhange as the larger society and its subsistence technology change. As the United States industrialized and urbanized during the 20th century, a series of social, political, economic, and legal processes were set in motion that ultimately destroyed Jim Crow segregation.

The mechanization and modernization of agriculture in the South had a powerful effect on race relations. As farmwork became less labor-intensive and machines replaced people, the need to maintain a large, powerless workforce declined (Geschwender, 1978, pp. 175–177). Thus, one of the primary motivations for maintaining Jim Crow segregation and the sharecropping system of farming lost force.

In addition, the modernization of southern agriculture helped to spur the migration northward and to urban areas, as we discussed in Chapter 5. Outside the rural South, African Americans found it easier to register to vote and pursue other avenues for improving their situations. The weight of the growing African American vote was first felt in the 1930s and was large enough to make a difference in local, state, and even national elections by the 1940s. In 1948, for example, President Harry Truman recognized that he could not be reelected without the support of African American voters. As a result, the Democratic Party adopted a civil rights plank in the party platform, the first time since Reconstruction that a national political party had taken a stand on race relations (Wilson, 1973, p. 123).

The weight of these changes accumulated slowly, and no single date or specific event marks the end of de jure segregation. The system ended as it had begun: gradually and in a series of discrete episodes and incidents. By the mid-20th century, resistance to racial change was weakening, and the power resources of African Americans were increasing. This enhanced freedom and strength fueled a variety of efforts that sped the demise of Jim Crow segregation. Although a complete historical autopsy is not necessary here, a general understanding of the reasons for the death of Jim Crow segregation is essential for an understanding of modern black-white relations.

# Wartime Developments

One of the first successful applications of the growing stock of black power resources occurred in 1941, as the United States was mobilizing for war against Germany and Japan. Despite the crisis atmosphere, racial discrimination was common, even in the defense industry. A group of African Americans, led by labor leader A. Philip Randolph, head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, threatened to march on Washington to protest the discriminatory treatment.

To forestall the march, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 8802, banning discrimination in defense-related industries, and created a watchdog federal agency, the Fair Employment Practices Commission, to oversee compliance with the new antidiscriminatory policy (Franklin & Moss, 1994, pp. 436–437; Geschwender, 1978, pp. 199–200). President Roosevelt's actions were significant in two ways. First, a group of African Americans not only had their grievances heard at the highest level of society but also succeeded in getting what they wanted. Underlying the effectiveness of the planned march was the rising political and economic power of the northern African American community and the need to mobilize all segments of the population for a world war. Second, the federal government made an unprecedented commitment to fair employment rights for African Americans. This alliance between the federal government and African Americans was tentative, but it foreshadowed some of the dynamics of racial change in the 1950s and 1960s.

# The Civil Rights Movement

The civil rights movement was a multifaceted campaign to end legalized segregation and ameliorate the massive inequalities faced by African Americans. The campaign lasted for decades and included lawsuits and courtroom battles as well as protest marches and demonstrations. We begin our examination with a look at the movement's successful challenge to the laws of racial segregation.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. Undoubtedly, the single most powerful blow to de jure segregation was delivered by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954. The Supreme Court reversed the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision of 1896 and ruled that racially separate facilities are inherently unequal and therefore unconstitutional. Segregated school systems—and all other forms of legalized racial



### segregation—would have to end. The landmark Brown decision was the culmination of decades of planning and effort by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and individuals such as Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP's chief counsel (who was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1967).

The strategy of the NAACP was to attack Jim Crow by finding instances in which the civil rights of an African American had been violated and then bringing suit against the relevant governmental agency. These lawsuits were intended to extend far beyond the specific case being argued. The goal was to persuade the courts

### Photo 6.1

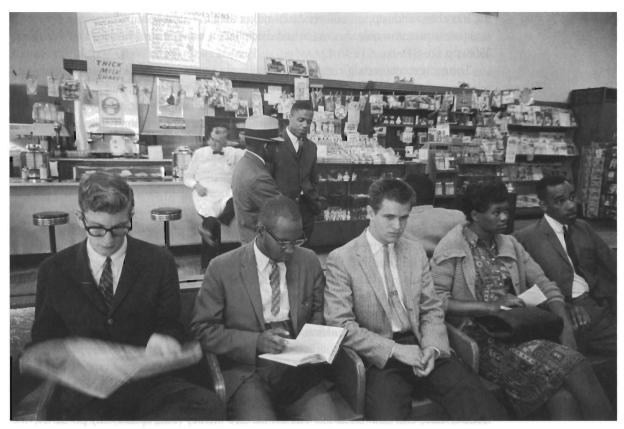
In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court declared school segregation to be unconstitutional.

Bettmann/CORBIS.

to declare segregation unconstitutional not only in the specific instance being tried but in all similar cases. The *Brown* (1954) decision was the ultimate triumph of this strategy. The significance of the Supreme Court's decision was not that Linda Brown—the child in whose name the case was argued—would attend a different school or even that the school system of Topeka, Kansas, would be integrated. Instead, the significance lay in the rejection of the principle of de jure segregation in the South and, by implication, throughout the nation. The *Brown* decision changed the law and dealt a crippling blow to Jim Crow segregation.

The blow was not fatal, however. Southern states responded to the *Brown* (1954) decision by stalling and mounting campaigns of massive resistance. Jim Crow laws remained on the books for years. White southerners actively defended the system of racial privilege and attempted to forestall change through a variety of means, including violence and intimidation. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK), largely dormant since the 1920s, reappeared along with other racist and terrorist groups, such as the White Citizens' Councils. White politicians and other leaders competed with each other to express the most adamant statements of racist resistance (Wilson, 1973, p. 128). One locality, Prince Edward County in central Virginia, chose to close its public schools rather than integrate. The schools remained closed for 5 years. During that time, the white children attended private, segregated academies, and the county provided no education at all for African American children (Franklin, 1967, p. 644).

Nonviolent Direct Action Protest. The principle established by *Brown* (1954) was assimilationist: It ordered the educational institutions of the dominant group to be opened up freely and equally to all. Southern states and communities overwhelmingly rejected the principle of equal access and shared facilities. Centuries of racist tradition and privilege were at stake, and considerable effort would be required to overcome southern defiance and



sees a standard to a first second resolution of the state of the second second first second second second second

resistance. The central force in this struggle was a protest movement, the beginning of which is often traced to Montgomery, Alabama, where on December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a seamstress and NAACP member, rode the city bus home from work, as she usually did. As the bus filled, she was ordered to surrender her seat to a white male passenger. When she refused, the police were called and Rosa Parks was jailed for violating a local segregation ordinance.

Although Mrs. Parks was hardly the first African American to be subjected to such indignities, her case stimulated a protest movement in the African American community, and a boycott of the city buses was organized. Participants in the boycott set up car pools, shared taxis, and walked (in some cases, for miles) to and from work. They stayed off the buses for more than a year, until victory was achieved and the city was ordered to desegregate its buses. The Montgomery boycott was led by the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., the new minister of a local Baptist church.

From these beginnings sprang the protest movement that eventually defeated de jure segregation. The central strategy of the movement involved nonviolent direct action, a method by which the system of de jure segregation was confronted head-on, not in the courtroom or in the state legislature, but in the streets. The movement's principles of nonviolence were adopted from the tenets of Christianity and from the teachings of Mohandas K. Gandhi, Henry David Thoreau, and others. Dr. King expressed the philosophy in a number of books and speeches (King, 1958, 1963, 1968). Nonviolent protest was intended to confront the forces of evil rather than the people who happened to be doing evil, and it attempted to win

### Photo 6.2

Freedom riders staging a sit-in at a bus terminal.

© Bettmann/Corbis.

the friendship and support of its enemies rather than to defeat or humiliate them. Above all, nonviolent protest required courage and discipline; it was not a method for cowards (King, 1958, pp. 83–84).

The movement used different tactics for different situations, including sit-ins at segregated restaurants, protest marches and demonstrations, prayer meetings, and voter registration drives. The police and terrorist groups such as the KKK often responded to these protests with brutal repression and violence, and protesters were routinely imprisoned, beaten, and attacked by police dogs. The violent resistance sometimes escalated to acts of murder, including the 1963 bombing of a black church in Birmingham, Alabama, which took the lives of four little girls, and the 1968 assassination of Dr. King. Resistance to racial change in the South was intense. It would take more than protests and marches to finally extirpate de jure segregation, and the U.S. Congress finally provided the necessary tools (see D'Angelo, 2001; Killian, 1975; King, 1958, 1963, 1968; Morris, 1984).

Landmark Legislation. The successes of the protest movement, combined with changing public opinion and the legal principles established by the Supreme Court, coalesced in the mid-1960s to stimulate the passage of two laws that, together, ended Jim Crow segregation. In 1964, at the urging of President Lyndon B. Johnson, the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, banning discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, or gender. The law applied to publicly owned facilities such as parks and municipal swimming pools, businesses and other facilities open to the public, and any programs that received federal aid. Congress followed this up with the Voting Rights Act in 1965, also initiated by President Johnson, which required that the same standards be used to register all citizens in federal, state, and local elections. The act banned literacy tests, whites-only primaries, and other practices that had been used to prevent African Americans from registering to vote. This law gave the franchise back to black southerners and laid the groundwork for increasing black political power. This landmark federal legislation, in combination with court decisions and the protest movement, finally succeeded in crushing Jim Crow.

The Success and Limitations of the Civil Rights Movement. Why did the civil rights movement succeed? A comprehensive list of reasons would be legion, but we can cite some of the most important causes of its success, especially those consistent with the general points about dominant-minority relations that have been made in previous chapters.

The continuing industrialization and urbanization of the society as a whole—and the South in particular—weakened the Jim Crow, rigid competitive system of minority group control and segregation.

Following World War II, the United States enjoyed a period of prosperity that lasted into the 1960s. Consistent with the Noel hypothesis, this was important, because it reduced the intensity of intergroup competition, at least outside the South. During prosperous times, resistance to change tends to weaken. If the economic "pie" is expanding, the "slices" claimed by minority groups can increase without threatening the size of anyone else's portions, and the prejudice generated during intergroup competition (à la Robber's Cave, Chapter 3) is held in check. Thus, these "good times" muted the sense of threat experienced in the dominant group by the demands for equality made by the civil rights movement.

Also, some of the economic prosperity found its way into African American communities and increased their pool of economic and political resources. Networks of independent, African-American-controlled organizations and institutions, such as churches and colleges, were created or grew in size and power. The increasingly elaborate infrastructure of the black community included protest organizations, such as the NAACP (see Chapter 5), and provided material resources, leadership, and "people power" to lead the fight against segregation and discrimination.

The goals of the civil rights movement were assimilationist; the movement embraced the traditional American values of liberty, equality, freedom, and fair treatment. It demanded civil, legal, and political rights for African Americans, rights available to whites automatically. Thus, many whites did not feel threatened by the movement because they saw it as consistent with mainstream American values, especially in contrast with the intense, often violent resistance of southern whites.

The perceived legitimacy of the goals of the movement also opened up the possibility of alliances with other groups (white liberals, Jews, college students). The support of others was crucial because black southerners had few resources of their own other than their numbers and their courage. By mobilizing the resources of other, more powerful groups, black southerners forged alliances and created sympathetic support that was brought to bear on their opposition.

Finally, widespread and sympathetic coverage from the mass media, particularly television, was crucial to the success of the movement. The oft-repeated scenario of African Americans being brutally attacked while demonstrating for their rights outraged many Americans and reinforced the moral consensus that eventually rejected "old-fashioned" racial prejudice along with Jim Crow segregation (see Chapter 3).

The southern civil rights movement ended de jure segregation but found it difficult to survive the demise of its primary enemy. The confrontational tactics that had been so effective against the Jim Crow system proved less useful when attention turned to the actual distribution of jobs, wealth, political power, and other valued goods and services. Outside the South, the allocation of opportunity and resources had always been the central concern of the African American community. Let's take a look at these concerns.

# Developments Outside the South

# De Facto Segregation

Chapter 5 discussed some of the difficulties encountered by African Americans as they left the rural South. Discrimination by labor unions, employers, industrialists, and white ethnic groups was common. Racial discrimination outside the South was less blatant but was still pervasive, especially in housing, education, and employment.

The pattern of racial separation and inequality outside the South is often called **de facto segregation**: segregation resulting from the apparently voluntary choices of dominant and minority groups alike. Theoretically, no person, law, or specific group is responsible for de facto segregation; it "just happens" as people and groups make decisions about where to live and work.

The distinction between de facto and de jure segregation can be misleading, however, and the de facto variety is often the de jure variety in thin disguise. Although cities and states outside the South may not have had actual Jim Crow laws, de facto segregation was often the

direct result of intentionally racist decisions made by governmental and quasi-governmental agencies, such as real estate boards, school boards, and zoning boards (see Massey & Denton, 1993, pp. 74–114). For example, shortly after World War I, the real estate board in the city of Chicago adopted a policy that required its members, on penalty of "immediate expulsion," to follow a policy of racial residential segregation (Cohen & Taylor, 2000, p. 33).

Regardless of who or what was responsible for these patterns, African Americans living outside the South faced more poverty, higher unemployment, and lower-quality housing and schools than did whites, but there was no clear equivalent of Jim Crow to attack or to blame for these patterns of inequality. In the 1960s, the African American community outside the South expressed its frustration over the slow pace of change in two ways: Urban unrest and a movement for change that rose to prominence as the civil rights movement faded.

# Urban Unrest

In the mid-1960s, the frustration and anger of urban African American communities erupted into a series of violent uprisings. The riots began in the summer of 1965 in Watts, a neighborhood in Los Angeles, California, and over the next 4 years, virtually every large black urban community experienced similar outbursts. Racial violence was hardly a new phenomenon in America. Race riots had existed as early as the Civil War, and various time periods had seen racial violence of considerable magnitude. The riots of the 1960s were different, however. Most race riots in the past had involved attacks by whites against blacks, often including the invasion and destruction of African American neighborhoods (see, e.g., D'Orso, 1996; Ellsworth, 1982). The urban unrest of the 1960s, in contrast, consisted largely of attacks by blacks against the symbols of their oppression and frustration. The most obvious targets were white-owned businesses operating in black neighborhoods and the police, who were seen as an army of occupation and whose excessive use of force was often the immediate precipitator of riots (Conot, 1967; National Advisory Commission, 1968).

# The Black Power Movement

The urban riots of the 1960s were an unmistakable sign that the problems of race relations had not been resolved with the end of Jim Crow segregation. Outside the South, the problems were different and called for different solutions. Even as the civil rights movement was celebrating its victory in the South, a new protest movement rose to prominence. The Black Power movement was a loose coalition of organizations and spokespersons that encompassed a variety of ideas and views, many of which differed sharply from those of the civil rights movement. Some of the central ideas included racial pride ("Black is beautiful" was a key slogan of the day), interest in African heritage, and Black Nationalism. In contrast to the assimilationist goals of the civil rights movement, Black Power groups worked to increase African American control over schools, police, welfare programs, and other public services operating in black neighborhoods.

Most adherents of the Black Power movement felt that white racism and institutional discrimination, forces buried deep in the core of American culture and society, were the primary causes of racial inequality in America. Thus, if African Americans were ever to be truly empowered, they would have to liberate themselves and do it on their own terms. Some

Black Power advocates specifically rejected the goal of assimilation into white society, arguing that integration would require blacks to become part of the very system that had for centuries oppressed, denigrated, and devalued them and other peoples of color.

The Nation of Islam. The themes of Black Power voiced so loudly in the 1960s were decades, even centuries, old. Marcus Garvey had popularized many of these ideas in the 1920s, and they were espoused and further developed by the Nation of Islam, popularly known as the Black Muslims, in the 1960s.

The Black Muslims, who formed one of the best-known organizations within the Black Power movement, were angry, impatient, and outspoken. They denounced the hypocrisy, greed, and racism of American society and advocated staunch resistance and racial separation. The Black Muslims did more than talk, however. Pursuing the goals of autonomy and selfdetermination, they worked hard to create a separate, independent African American economy within the United States. They opened businesses and stores in African American neighborhoods and tried to deal only with other Muslim-owned firms. Their goal was to develop the African American community economically and supply jobs and capital for expansion solely by using their own resources (Essien-Udom, 1962; Lincoln, 1961; Malcolm X, 1964; Wolfenstein, 1993).

The Nation of Islam and other black power groups distinguished between *racial separation* and *racial segregation*. The former is a process of empowerment whereby a group becomes stronger as it becomes more autonomous and self-controlled. The latter is a system of inequality in which the African American community is powerless and is controlled by the dominant group. Thus, the Black Power groups were working to find ways in which African Americans could develop their own resources and deal with the dominant group from a more powerful position, a strategy similar to that followed by minority groups that form ethnic enclaves (see Chapter 2).

The best-known spokesman for the Nation of Islam was Malcolm X, one of the most charismatic figures of the 1960s. Malcolm X forcefully articulated the themes of the Black Power movement. Born Malcolm Little, he converted to Islam and joined the Nation of Islam while serving a prison term. He became the chief spokesperson for the Black Muslims and a well-known but threatening figure to the white community. After a dispute with Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X founded his own organization, in which he continued to express and develop the ideas of Black Nationalism. Like so many other protest leaders of the era, Malcolm X was assassinated, in 1965.

Black power leaders such as Malcolm X advocated autonomy, independence, and a pluralistic direction for the African American protest movement. They saw the African American community as a colonized, exploited population in need of liberation from the unyielding racial oppression of white America, not integration into the system that was the source of its oppression.

# Protest, Power, and Pluralism

# The Black Power Movement in Perspective

By the end of the 1960s, the riots had ended, and the most militant and dramatic manifestations of the Black Power movement had faded. In many cases, the passion of Black Power activists had been countered by the violence of the police and other agencies, and many of the most powerful spokespersons of the movement were dead; others were in jail or in exile. The nation's commitment to racial change wavered and weakened as other concerns, such as the Vietnam War, competed for attention. Richard M. Nixon was elected president in 1968 and made it clear that his administration would not ally itself with the black protest movement. Pressure from the federal government for racial equality was reduced. The boiling turmoil of the mid-1960s faded, but the idea of Black Power had become thoroughly entrenched in the African American community.

In some part, the pluralistic themes of Black Power were a reaction to the failure of assimilation and integration in the 1950s and 1960s. Laws had been passed; court decisions had been widely publicized; and promises and pledges had been made by presidents, members of Congress, ministers, and other leaders. For many African Americans, though, little had changed. The problems of their parents and grandparents continued to constrain and limit their lives and, as far into the future as they could see, the lives of their children. The pluralistic Black Power ideology was a response to the failure to go beyond the repeal of Jim Crow laws and fully implement the promises of integration and equality.

Black Nationalism, however, was, and remains, more than simply a reaction to a failed dream. It was also a different way of defining what it means to be black in America. In the context of black-white relations in the 1960s, the Black Power movement served a variety of purposes. First, along with the civil rights movement, it helped carve out a new identity for African Americans. The cultural stereotypes of black Americans (see Chapter 3) stressed laziness, irresponsibility, and inferiority. This image needed to be refuted, rejected, and buried. The black protest movements supplied a view of African Americans that emphasized power, assertiveness, seriousness of purpose, intelligence, and courage.

Second, Black Power served as a new rallying cry for solidarity and unified action. Following the success of the civil rights movement, these new themes and ideas helped to focus attention on "unfinished business": the black-white inequalities that remained in U.S. society.

Finally, the ideology provided an analysis of the problems of American race relations in the 1960s. The civil rights movement had, of course, analyzed race relations in terms of integration, equality of opportunity, and an end to exclusion. After the demise of Jim Crow, that analysis became less relevant. A new language was needed to describe and analyze the continuation of racial inequality. Black Power argued that the continuing problems of U.S. race relations were structural and institutional, not individual or legal. To take the next steps toward actualizing racial equality and justice would require a fundamental and far-reaching restructuring of the society. Ultimately, white Americans, as the beneficiaries of the system, would not support such restructuring. The necessary energy and commitment had to come from African Americans pursuing their own self-interests.

The nationalistic and pluralistic demands of the Black Power movement evoked defensiveness and a sense of threat in white society. By questioning the value of assimilation and celebrating a separate African heritage equal in legitimacy with white European heritage, the Black Power movement questioned the legitimacy and worth of Anglo-American values. In fact, many Black Power spokespersons condemned Anglo-American values fiercely and openly and implicated them in the creation and maintenance of a centuries-long system of racial repression. Today, 40 years after the success of the civil rights movement, assertive and critical demands by the African American community continue to be perceived as threatening.

# Week 8:

# **SCHAEFER**:

Chinese and Japanese Americans

# SCHAEFER:

Asian American Diversity

# **HEALEY**:

Model Minorities



# and Japanese Americans

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

**Chinese Americans** 

**RESEARCH FOCUS** Chinese Christians or Christian Chinese?

Japanese Americans

LISTEN TO OUR VOICES "From Kawasaki to Chicago"

by Miku Ishii

Remnants of Prejudice and Discrimination

### Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/ Critical Thinking/Internet Connections— Research Navigator™



RESENT-DAY CHINESE AMERICANS ARE DESCENDANTS OF both pre-Exclusion Act immigrants and those who immigrated after World War II. Although Chinese Americans are associated with Chinatown and its glitter of tourism, this facade hides the poverty of the newly arrived Chinese and the discontent of the U.S.-born Chinese Americans. Japanese Americans encountered discrimination and ill treatment in the early twentieth century. The involuntary wartime internment of 113,000 Japanese Americans was the result of sentencing without charge or trial. During wartime, merely to be of Japanese ancestry was reason enough to be suspected of treason. A little more than a generation later, Japanese Americans did very well, with high educational and occupational attainment. Today, Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans experience both prejudice and discrimination despite a measure of economic success.

EANUTLE

he Los Angeles Japanese American festival was in full swing in mid-July 2004 when, during the opening ceremonies, a South Pasadena 24-year-old grabbed a heavy mallet and took a swing at a drum as she had practiced for months. Nicole Miyako Cherry, the daughter of a Japanese American mother and a White American father, had had little interest in her Japanese roots except for wearing a kimono for Halloween as a youngster. Yet in the last couple of years, she has begun to take interest in all things Japanese, including a visit to Japan. Looking to her future as a social work therapist, she says she would like her own children to learn Japanese, go to Japanese festivals, play in Japanese sports leagues, and have a Japanese first name (M. Navarro 2004).

Nicole's experience is certainly a case of the principle of third-generation interest that ethnic awareness may increase among the grandchildren. But Nicole is of mixed ancestral background, so she is obviously making a choice to maintain her Japanese American identity as an important part of her future. But for many other Asian Americans, particularly recent immigrants, they are just trying to survive and to accumulate savings for their family here and kinfolk in the old country.

Many people in the United States find it difficult to distinguish between Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans physically, culturally, and historically. As we will see in this chapter, the two groups differ in some ways but also share similar patterns in their experiences in the United States.

### **Chinese Americans**

**TABLE 13.1** 

China, the most populous country in the world, has been a source of immigrants for centuries. Many nations have a sizable Chinese population whose history there may be traced back more than five generations. The United States is such a nation. Even before the great migration from Europe began in the 1880s, more than 100,000 Chinese already lived in the United States. Today, Chinese Americans number more than 2.8 million (Table 13.1).

Year	Chinese Americans	Japanese Americans
1860	34,933	-
1880	105,465	148
1900	89,863	24,326
1930	74,954	138,834
1950	117,629	141,768
1960	237,292	464,332
1970	435,062	591,290
1980	806,027	700,747
1990	1,640,000	847,562
2000	2,314,533	796,700
2005	2,882,257	833,761

Note: Data beginning with 1960 include Alaska and Hawaii. Data are for responses of one race. In 2000, 2,734,841 reported Chinese American and another race, and 1,148,932 reported Japanese American and another race.

Source: Barnes and Bennett 2002; S. Lee 1998, 15; Ng 1991. Data for 2005 from American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census.



From the beginning of Chinese immigration, Americans have held conflicting views about it. In one sense, Chinese immigration was welcome because it brought to these shores needed hardworking laborers. At the same time, it was unwelcome because the Chinese brought with them an alien culture that the European settlers were unwilling to tolerate. There was also a perception of economic competition by people in the western United States, and the Chinese newcomers proved to be very convenient and powerless scapegoats. As detailed in Chapter 4, the anti-Chinese mood led to the passage of the Exclusion Act in 1882, which was not repealed until 1943. Even then, the group that lobbied for repeal, the Citizens' Committee to Repeal Chinese Exclusion, encountered the old racist arguments against Chinese immigration (Ryo 2006).

Very gradually, the Chinese were permitted to enter the United States after 1943. Initially, the annual limit was 105, then several thousand wives of servicemen were admitted, and later, college students were allowed to remain after finishing their education. Not until after the 1965 Immigration Act did Chinese immigrants arrive again in large numbers, almost doubling the Chinese American community. Immigration continues to exert a major influence on the growth of the Chinese American population. It has approached 100,000 annually. The influx was so great in the 1990s that the number of new arrivals in that decade exceeded the total number of Chinese Americans present in 1980.

As the underside of immigration, illegal immigration is also functioning in the Chinese American community. The lure of perceived better jobs and a better life leads overseas Chinese to seek alternative routes to immigration if legal procedures are unavailable to them. The impact of illegal entry in some areas of the country can be significant. For example, every month in 2002, 340 illegal Chinese immigrants were apprehended at Chicago's O'Hare Airport and taken to a rural jail (Starks 2002).

A small but socially significant component of Chinese in the United States are those that have been adopted by American non-Chinese couples. Since 1991, China loosened its adoption laws to address the growing number of children, particularly girls, who were abandoned under the country's one-child policy. This policy strongly encourages couples to have one child and having more children can impede promotions and even cause a household to have to accept a less roomy dwelling. Numbers of adopted Chinese were small but recently about 7,000 are adopted annually. Although most are still young, they and their adopting parents face the complex issues of cultural and social identity. Organized efforts now exist to reconnect these children with their roots back in China, but for most of their lives they are adjusting to being Chinese American in a non Chinese American family (Olemetson 2005).

It is also important to appreciate that even *Chinese American* is a collective term. There is diversity within this group represented by nationality (China versus Taiwan, for example), language, and region of origin. It is not unusual for a church serving a Chinese American community to have five separate services, each in a different dialect. These divisions can be quite sharply expressed. For example, near the traditional Chinatown of New York City, a small neighborhood has emerged serving Chinese from the Fujian Province of China. In this area, job postings include annotation in Chinese that translates as "no north," meaning people from the provinces north of Fujian are not welcomed. Throughout the United States, Chinese Americans often divide along pro-China and pro-Taiwan allegiances (K. Guest 2003; Lau 2005b; Louie 2004; Sachs 2001).

### **Occupational Profile of Chinese Americans**

The background of the contemporary Chinese American labor force lies in Chinatown. For generations, Chinese Americans were largely barred from working elsewhere. The Chinese Exclusion Act was only one example of discriminatory legislation. Many laws were passed that made it difficult or more expensive for Chinese Americans to enter certain occupations. Whites did not object to Chinese in domestic service With the growth of the Chinese American population in the United States, businesses developed to cater to their needs. Bo Bo Poultry Market, located in upstate New York, produces Buddhist-style chicken—referring to birds sold with their heads and feet still attached and killed and prepared to precise specifications.

Source: John Sotomayor/ The New York Times



What are some of the elements that comprise life in contemporary Chinatowns?

### tsu

Clans established along family lines and forming a basis for social organization by Chinese Americans.



occupations or in the laundry trade because most White men were uninterested in such menial, low-paying work. When given the chance to enter better jobs, as they were in wartime, Chinese Americans jumped at the opportunities. Without such opportunities, however, many Chinese Americans sought the relative safety of Chinatown. The tourist industry and the restaurants dependent on it grew out of the need to employ the growing numbers of idle workers in Chinatown.

### **Chinatowns Today**

Chinatowns represent a paradox. The casual observer or tourist sees them as thriving areas of business and amusement, bright in color and lights, exotic in sounds and sights. Behind this facade, however, they have large poor populations and face the problems associated with all slums. Most Chinatowns are in older, deteriorating sections of cities. There are exceptions, such as Monterey Park outside Los Angeles, where Chinese Americans dominate the economy. However, in the older enclaves, the problems of Chinatowns include the entire range of the social ills that affect low-income areas but with even greater difficulties because the glitter sometimes conceals the problems from outsiders and even social planners. A unique characteristic of Chinatowns, one that distinguishes them from other ethnic enclaves, is the variety of social organizations they encompass.

**Organizational Life** The Chinese in this country have a rich history of organizational membership, much of it carried over from China. Chief among such associations are the clans, or *tsu*; the benevolent associations, or *hui kuan*; and the secret societies, or *tongs*.

The clans, or **tsu**, that operate in Chinatown have their origins in the Chinese practice in which families with common ancestors unite. At first, immigrant Chinese continued to affiliate themselves with those sharing a family name, even if a blood relationship was absent. Social scientists agree that the influence of clans is declining as young Chinese become increasingly acculturated. The clans in the past provided mutual assistance, a function increasingly taken on by government agencies. The strength of the clans, although diminished today, still points to the extended family's important role for Chinese Americans. Social scientists have found parent–child relationships stronger and more harmonious than those among non–Chinese Americans. Just as the clans have become less significant, however, so has the family structure changed. The differences between family life in Chinese and non-Chinese homes are narrowing with each new generation (Li 1976; Lyman 1986; Sung 1967).



#### hui kuan

Chinese American benevolent associations organized on the basis of the district of the immigrant's origin in China.

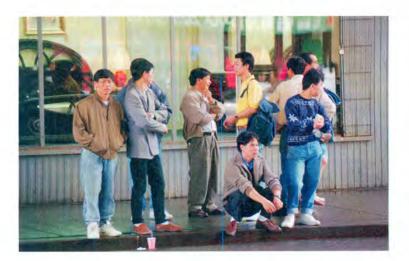
### tongs

Chinese American secret associations.

The benevolent associations, or **hui kuan** (or *huiguan*), help their members adjust to a new life. Rather than being organized along kinship ties like the clans, hui kuan membership is based on the person's district of origin in China. Besides extending help with adjustment, the *hui kuan* lend money to and settle disputes between their members. They have thereby exercised wide control over their members. The various *hui kuan* are traditionally, in turn, part of an unofficial government in each city called the Chinese Six Companies, later changed to the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA). The president of the CCBA is sometimes called the mayor of a Chinatown. The CCBA often protects newly arrived immigrants from the effects of racism. The organization works actively to promote political involvement among Chinese Americans and to support the democracy movement within the People's Republic of China. Some members of the Chinese community have resented, and still resent, the CCBA's authoritarian ways and its attempt to speak as the sole voice of Chinatown.

The Chinese have also organized in **tongs**, or secret societies. The secret societies' membership is determined not by family or locale but by interest. Some have been political, attempting to resolve the dispute over which China (the People's Republic of China or Taiwan) is the legitimate government, and others have protested the exploitation of Chinese workers. Other *tongs* provide illegal goods and services, such as drugs, gambling, and prostitution. Because they are secret, it is difficult to determine accurately the power of *tongs* today. Most observers concur that their influence has dwindled over the last sixty years and that their functions, even the illegal ones, have been taken over by elements less closely tied to Chinatown.

Some conclusions can be reached about these various social organizations. First, all have followed patterns created in traditional China. Even the secret societies had antecedents, organizationally and historically, in China. Second, all three types have performed similar functions, providing mutual assistance and representing their members' interests to a sometimes hostile dominant group. Third, because all these groups have had similar purposes and have operated in the same locale, conflict between them has been inevitable. Such conflicts were very violent in the nineteenth century, but in the twentieth century they tended to be political. Fourth, the old associations have declined in significance, notably since the mid-1970s, as new arrivals from Asian metropolises bring little respect for the old rural ways to which such organizations were important. Fifth, when communicating with the dominant society, all these groups have downplayed the problems that afflict Chinatowns. Only recently has the magnitude of social problems become known (Adams 2006; Lyman 1974, 1986; Soo 1999; Tong 2000; Wei 1993; Zhao 2002).



Chinatown, despite its tourist image, offers limited job opportunities for young people.



**Social Problems** It is a myth that Chinese Americans and Chinatowns have no problems. This false impression grows out of our tendency to stereotype groups as being all one way or the other, as well as the Chinese people's tendency to keep their problems within their community. The false image is also reinforced by the desire to maintain tourism. The tourist industry is a double-edged sword. It does provide needed jobs, even if some pay substandard wages. But it also forces Chinatown to keep its problems quiet and not seek outside assistance, lest tourists hear of social problems and stop coming. Slums do not attract tourists. This parallel between Chinese Americans and Native Americans finds both groups depending on the tourist industry even at the cost of hiding problems (Light et al. 1994).

In the late 1960s, White society became aware that all was not right in the Chinatowns. This awareness grew not because living conditions suddenly deteriorated in Chinese American settlements but because the various community organizations could no longer maintain the facade that hid Chinatowns' social ills. Despite Chinese Americans' remarkable achievements as a group, the inhabitants suffered by most socioeconomic measures. Poor health, high suicide rates, run-down housing, rising crime rates, poor working conditions, inadequate care for the elderly, and the weak union representation of laborers were a few of the documented problems.

These problems have grown more critical as Chinese immigration has increased. For example, the population density of San Francisco's Chinatown in the late 1980s was ten times that of the city as a whole. The problems faced by elderly Chinese are also exacerbated by the immigration wave because the proportion of older Chinese immigrants is more than twice that of older people among immigrants in general. The economic gap between Chinatown residents and outsiders is growing. As Chinese Americans become more affluent, they move out of Chinatowns. Census data showed the household income for Chinese Americans in New York City's Chinatown was 26 percent lower than those who lived outside the ethnic enclave (Logan et al. 2002; Wong 1995).

Life in Chinatown may seem lively to an outsider, but beyond the neon signs the picture can be quite different. Chinatown in New York City remained a prime site of sweatshops in the 1990s. Dozens of women labor over sewing machines, often above restaurants. These small businesses, often in the garment industry, consist of workers sewing twelve hours a day, six or seven days a week, and earning about \$200 weekly—well below minimum wage. The workers, most of whom are women, can be victimized because they are either illegal immigrants who may owe labor to the smugglers who brought them into the United States, or legal residents unable to find better employment (Finder 1994; Kwong 1994).

The attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 made the marginal economy of New York's Chinatown even shakier. Though not located by the World Trade Center, it was close enough to feel the drop in customary tourism and a significant decline in shipments to the garment industry. Initially, emergency relief groups ruled out assistance to Chinatown, but within a couple of months, agencies opened up offices in Chinatown. Within two months, 42,000 people had received relief as 60 percent of businesses cut staff. Like many other minority neighborhoods, New York City's Chinatown may be economically viable, but it always is susceptible to severe economic setbacks that most other areas could withstand much more easily (J. Lee 2001; Swanson 2004).

Increasingly, Chinese neither live nor work in Chinatowns; most have escaped them or have never experienced their social ills. Chinatown remains important for many of those who now live outside its borders, although less so than in the past. For many Chinese, movement out of Chinatown is a sign of success. Upon moving out, however, they soon encounter discriminatory real estate practices and White parents' fears about their children playing with Chinese American youths.

The movement of Chinese Americans out of Chinatowns parallels the movement of White ethnics out of similar enclaves. It signals the upward mobility of Chinese Amer-





The extended family is an important part of the Chinese American community.

icans, coupled with their growing acceptance by the rest of the population. This mobility and acceptance are especially evident in the presence of Chinese Americans in managerial and professional occupations.

However, with their problems and constant influx of new arrivals, we should not forget that, first and foremost, Chinatowns are communities of people. Originally, in the nineteenth century, they emerged because the Chinese arriving in the United States had no other area in which they were allowed to settle. Today, Chinatowns represent cultural decompression chambers for new arrivals and an important symbolic focus for long-term residents. Even among many younger Chinese Americans, these ethnic enclaves serve as a source of identity.

### Family and Religious Life

Family life and religious worship are major forces shaping all immigrant groups' experience in the United States. Generally, with assimilation, cultural behavior becomes less distinctive. Family life and religious practices are no exceptions. For Chinese Americans, the latest immigration wave has helped preserve some of the old ways, but traditional cultural patterns have undergone change even in the People's Republic of China, so the situation is very fluid.

In the People's Republic of China, organized religion barely exists, with state policy sharply discouraging it and prohibiting foreign mission activity. In "Research Focus," we consider religion in the Chinese American community.

The contemporary Chinese American family often is indistinguishable from its White counterpart except that it is victimized by prejudice and discrimination. Older Chinese Americans and new arrivals often are dismayed by the more American behavior patterns of Chinese American youths. Change in family life is one of the most difficult cultural changes to accept. Children questioning parental authority, which Americans grudgingly accept, is a painful experience for the tradition-oriented Chinese.

Where acculturation has taken hold less strongly among Chinese Americans, the legacy of China remains. Parental authority, especially the father's, is more absolute, and the extended family is more important than is typical in White middle-class families. Divorce is rare, and attitudes about sexual behavior tend to be strict because the Chinese generally frown on public expressions of emotion. We noted earlier that Chinese immigrant women in Chinatown survive a harsh existence. A related problem beginning to surface is domestic violence. Although the available data do not indicate



# Focus Research Focus Research

### CHINESE CHRISTIANS OR CHRISTIAN CHINESE?

Religion plays an important role in most immigrant communities, but the Chinese are an unusual case because they come from a country where organized religion has been strongly discouraged for three generations. Many festivals are celebrated in the Chinese American community, such as Chingming or Tomb-Sweeping Day, but such observances have lost their religious significance and have become largely social occasions.

What about organized religion within the Chinese American community? A 1997 survey of Chinese Americans in southern California found that a large proportion have no ties to organized religion. When asked, "What religion—if any—do you currently consider yourself?" 44 percent said none, whereas 32 percent identified themselves as Christian and 20 percent as Buddhists. This is at least twice as high a proportion of no religious affiliation as the general population.

Most Christian Chinese are Protestant: about one in five Chinese Americans, compared with one in twenty who are Roman Catholic. What kind of Christianity is pursued by the Chinese Americans? On one level, it typically embraces what one would normally expect to be practices in a church, but on a second level, Chinese Americans often bring into the faith the moral virtues and filial piety (discussed in Chapter 11) that are taught by Buddhism. Protestant churches attended by Chinese Americans often were initially sponsored by a major denomination such as the Methodists, Presbyterians, or United Church of Christ to serve an ethnic Chinese community. Services often are bilingual, making prolonged sermons a bit laborious to worshippers.

As in nonethnic churches, social events play a prominent role in the church calendar. However, there is little to distinguish these events in a Protestant Chinese church, except that the food served is typically Chinese, with some non-Chinese options for the young people. Distinctive touches do exist, such as celebration of the Chinese (or Lunar) New Year and the use of Chinese calligraphy or the playing of the lantern puzzle at get-togethers.

Although each Chinese American church has its own manner of approaching religious faith, one finds that the links to the larger Chinese American community, including non-Christian Chinese, tend to be stronger than the links to congregations of the same faith that are not of Chinese ancestry. This is not to say that religion is not important but that ethnicity ties the congregation together. Consequently, the Chinese American community of Christian worshippers probably is best seen as Christian Chinese, where Chinese is the operative identifier rather than Christian.

Source: J. Dart 1997; Guest 2003; Ng 1999, 2003.

that Asian American men are any more abusive than men in other groups, their wives, as a rule, are less willing to talk about their plight and to seek help. The nation's first shelter for Asian women was established in Los Angeles in 1981, but increasingly, the problem is being recognized in more cities (Banerjee 2000; Tong 2000).

Another problem for Chinese Americans is the rise in gang activity since the mid-1970s. Battles between opposing gangs have taken their toll, including the lives of some innocent bystanders. Some trace the gangs to the *tongs* and, thus, consider them an aspect, admittedly destructive, of the cultural traditions some groups are trying to maintain. However, a more realistic interpretation is that Chinese American youths



from the lower classes are not part of the model minority. Upward mobility is not in

their future. Alienated, angry, and with prospects of low-wage work in restaurants and laundries, they turn to gangs such as the Ghost Shadows and Flying Dragons and force Chinese American shopkeepers to give them extortion money. Asked why he became involved in crime, one gang member replied, "To keep from being a waiter all my life" (Takaki 1989, 451; see also Chin 1996).

### Japanese Americans

The nineteenth century was a period of sweeping social change for Japan: It brought the end of feudalism and the beginning of rapid urbanization and industrialization. Only a few pioneering Japanese came to the United States before 1885 because Japan prohibited emigration. After 1885, the numbers remained small relative to the great immigration from Europe at the time.

With little consideration of the specific situation, the American government began to apply to Japan the same prohibitions it applied to China. The early feelings of yellow peril were directed at the Japanese as well. The Japanese who immigrated into the United States in the 1890s took jobs as laborers at low wages under poor working conditions. Their industriousness in such circumstances made them popular with employers but unpopular with unions and other employees.

Japanese Americans distinguish sharply between themselves according to the number of generations a person's family has been in the United States. Generally, each succeeding generation is more acculturated, and each is successively less likely to know Japanese. The Issei (pronounced "EE-say") are the first generation, the immigrants born in Japan. Their children, the Nisei ("NEE-say"), are American-born. The third generation, the Sansei ("SAHN-say"), must go back to their grandparents to reach their roots in Japan. The Yonsei ("YAWN-say") are the fourth generation. Because Japanese immigration is recent, these four terms describe almost the entire contemporary Japanese American population. Some Nisei are sent by their parents to Japan for schooling and to have marriages arranged, after which they return to the United States. Japanese Americans expect such people, called Kibei ("KEE-boy"), to be less acculturated than other Nisei. These terms sometimes are used loosely, and occasionally Nisei is used to describe all Japanese Americans. However, we will use them as they were intended to differentiate the four generational groups.

The Japanese arrived just as bigotry toward the Chinese had been legislated in the harsh Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. For a time after the act, powerful business interests on the West Coast welcomed the Issei. They replaced the dwindling number of Chinese laborers in some industries, especially agriculture. In time, however, anti-Japanese feeling grew out of the anti-Chinese movement. The same Whites who disliked the Chinese made the same charges about the new yellow peril. Eventually, a stereotype developed of Japanese Americans as lazy, dishonest, and untrustworthy.

The attack on Japanese Americans concentrated on limiting their ability to earn a living. In 1913, California enacted the Alien Land Act, which 1920 amendments made still stricter. The act prohibited anyone who was ineligible for citizenship from owning land and limited leases to three years. The anti-Japanese laws permanently influenced the form that Japanese American business enterprise was to take. In California, the land laws drove the Issei into cities. In the cities, however, government and union restrictions prevented large numbers from obtaining the available jobs, leaving selfemployment as the only option. Japanese, more than other groups, ran hotels, grocery stores, and other medium-sized businesses. Although this specialty limited their opportunities to advance, it did give urban Japanese Americans a marginal position in the expanding economy of the cities (Bonacich 1972; Light 1973; Lyman 1986).

### Issei

First-generation immigrants from Japan to the United States.

### Nisei

Children born of immigrants from Japan.

### Sansei

The children of the Nisei-that is, the grandchildren of the original immigrants from Japan.

#### Yonsei

The fourth generation of Japanese Americans in the United States; the children of the Sansei.

### Kibei

Japanese Americans of the Nisei generation sent back to Japan for schooling and to have marriages arranged.



Why were Japanese Americans placed in prison-like camps during World War II?



### The Wartime Evacuation

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, brought the United States into World War II and marked a painful tragedy for the Issei and Nisei. Almost immediately, public pressure mounted to "do something" about the Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. Many feared that if Japan attacked the mainland, Japanese Americans would fight on behalf of Japan, making a successful invasion a real possibility. Pearl Harbor was followed by successful Japanese invasions of one Pacific island after another. A Japanese submarine actually attacked a California oil tank complex early in 1943.

Rumors mixed with racism rather than facts explain the events that followed. Japanese Americans in Hawaii were alleged to have cooperated in the attack on Pearl Harbor by using signaling devices to assist the pilots from Japan. Front-page attention was given to pronouncements by the Secretary of the Navy that Japanese Americans had the greatest responsibility for Pearl Harbor. Newspapers covered in detail FBI arrests of Japanese Americans allegedly engaging in sabotage to assist the attackers. They were accused of poisoning drinking water, cutting patterns in sugarcane fields to form arrows directing enemy pilots to targets, and blocking traffic along highways to the harbor. None of these charges was substantiated, despite thorough investigations. It made no difference. In the 1940s, the treachery of the Japanese Americans was a foregone conclusion regardless of evidence to the contrary (Kashima 2003 Kimura 1988; Lind 1946; ten Brock et al. 1954;).

**Executive Order 9066** On February 13, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. It defined strategic military areas in the United States and authorized the removal from those areas of any people considered threats to national security. The events that followed were tragically simple. All people on the West Coast of at least one-eighth Japanese ancestry were taken to assembly centers for transfer to evacuation camps. These camps are identified in Figure 13.1. This order covered 90 percent of the 126,000





Source: Map "Evacuation Camps" from Michi Nishura Weglyn, Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps. New York: Quill Paperbooks, John Hawkins & Associates, Inc., 1976.



Japanese Americans on the mainland. Of those evacuated, two-thirds were citizens, and three-fourths were under age 25. Ultimately, 120,000 Japanese Americans were in the camps. Of mainland Japanese Americans, 113,000 were evacuated, but to those were added 1,118 evacuated from Hawaii, 219 voluntary residents (Caucasian spouses, typically), and, most poignantly of all, the 5,981 who were born in the camps (Weglyn 1976).

The evacuation order did not arise from any court action. No trials took place. No indictments were issued. Merely having a Japanese great-grandparent was enough to mark a person for involuntary confinement. The evacuation was carried out with little difficulty. For Japanese Americans to have fled or militantly defied the order would only have confirmed the suspicions of their fellow Americans. There was little visible objection initially from the Japanese Americans. The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), which had been founded by the Nisei as a self-help organization in 1924, even decided not to arrange a court test of the evacuation order. The JACL felt that cooperating with the military might lead to sympathetic consideration later when tensions subsided.

Even before reaching the camps, the **evacuees**, as Japanese Americans being forced to resettle came to be called officially, paid a price for their ancestry. They were instructed to carry only personal items. No provision was made for shipping their household goods. The federal government took a few steps to safeguard the belongings they left behind, but the evacuees assumed all risks and agreed to turn over their property for an indeterminate length of time. These Japanese Americans were destroyed economically. Merchants, farmers, and business owners had to sell all their property at any price they could get. Precise figures of the loss in dollars are difficult to obtain, but after the war, the Federal Reserve Bank estimated it to be \$400 million. To place this amount in perspective, one estimate stated that, in 1995 dollars, the economic damages sustained, excluding personal income, would be more than \$3.7 billion (Bureau of the Census 1996, 483; Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 1982a, 1982b; Hosokawa 1969; Thomas and Nishimoto 1946).

**The Camps** Ten camps were established in seven states. Were they actually concentration camps? Obviously, they were not concentration camps constructed for the murderous purposes of those in Nazi Germany, but such a positive comparison is no compliment to the United States. To refer to them by their official designation as relocation centers ignores these facts: The Japanese Americans did not go there voluntarily, they had been charged with no crime, and they could not leave without official approval.

Japanese Americans were able to work at wage labor in the camps. The maximum wage was set at \$19 a month, which meant that camp work could not possibly recoup the losses incurred by evacuation. The evacuees had to depend on the government for food and shelter, a situation they had not experienced in prewar civilian life. More devastating than the economic damage of camp life was the psychological damage. Guilty of no crime, the Japanese Americans moved through a monotonous daily routine with no chance of changing the situation. Forced community life, with such shared activities as eating in mess halls, weakened the strong family ties that Japanese Americans, especially the Issei, took so seriously (Kitsuse and Broom 1956).

Amid the economic and psychological devastation, the camps began to take on some resemblance to U.S. cities of a similar size. High schools were established, complete with cheerleaders and yearbooks. Ironically, Fourth of July parades were held, with camp-organized Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops marching past proud parents. But the barbed wire remained, and the Japanese Americans were asked to prove their loyalty.

A loyalty test was administered in 1943 on a form all had to fill out, the "Application for Leave Clearance." Many of the Japanese Americans were undecided how to respond to two questions:

No. 27. Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered? No. 28. Will you swear to abide by the laws of the United States and to take no action which would in any way interfere with the war effort of the United States? (Daniels 1972, 113)

#### evacuees

Japanese Americans interned in camps for the duration of World War II.



The ambiguity of the questions left many confused about how to respond. For example, if Issei said yes to the second question, would they then lose their Japanese citizenship and be left stateless? The Issei would be ending allegiance to Japan but were unable, at the time, to gain U.S. citizenship. Similarly, would Nisei who responded yes be suggesting that they had been supporters of Japan? For whatever reasons, 6,700 Issei and Nisei, many because of their unacceptable responses to these questions, were transferred to the high-security camp at Tule Lake for the duration of the war (Bigelow 1992).

Overwhelmingly, Japanese Americans showed loyalty to the government that had created the camps. In general, security in the camps was not a problem. The U.S. Army, which had overseen the removal of the Japanese Americans, recognized the value of the Japanese Americans as translators in the war ahead. About 6,000 Nisei were recruited to work as interpreters and translators, and by 1943, a special combat unit of 23,000 Nisei volunteers had been created to fight in Europe. The predominantly Nisei unit was unmatched, and it concluded the war as the most decorated of all American units.

Japanese American behavior in the concentration camps can be seen only as reaffirming their loyalty. True, some refused to sign an oath, but that was hardly a treasonous act. More typical were the tens of thousands of evacuees who contributed to the U.S. war effort.

A few Japanese Americans resisted the evacuation and internment. Several cases arising out of the evacuation and detention reached the U.S. Supreme Court during the war. Amazingly, the Court upheld lower court decisions on Japanese Americans without even raising the issue of the whole plan's constitutionality. Essentially, the Court upheld the idea of the collective guilt of an entire race. Finally, after hearing *Mitsuye Endo v. United States*, the Supreme Court ruled, on December 18, 1944, that the detainment was unconstitutional and consequently the defendant (and presumably all evacues) must be granted freedom. Two weeks later, Japanese Americans were allowed to return to their homes for the first time in three years, and the camps were finally closed in 1946 (Asahina 2006; ten Brock et al. 1954).

The immediate postwar climate was not pro–Japanese American. Whites terrorized returning evacuees in attacks similar to those against Blacks a generation earlier. Labor unions called for work stoppages when Japanese Americans reported for work. Fortunately, the most blatant expression of anti-Japanese feeling disappeared rather quickly. Japan stopped being a threat as the atomic bomb blasts destroyed Nagasaki and Hiroshima. For the many evacuees who lost relatives and friends in the bombings, however, it must have been a high price to pay for marginal acceptance (Maykovich 1972a, 1972b; Peterson 1971).

The Evacuation: What Does It Mean? The social significance of the wartime evacuation has often been treated as a historical exercise, but in the wake of the stigmatizing



Mournful Japanese Americans during World War II, as depicted in this present-day mural in Los Angeles.



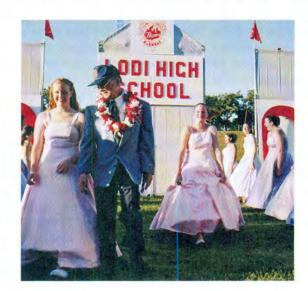
of Arab and Muslim Americans after 9/11, singling out people of Japanese descent some sixty years ago takes on new meaning. Japanese American playwright Chay Yew reflected recently, "You think you can walk away from history and it takes you on the back" (Boehm 2004, E2). We will not know the consequences of the current focus on identifying potential disloyal Americans, but we do have some perspective on stigmatizing Japanese Americans during and after World War II.

The evacuation policy cost the U.S. taxpayers a quarter of a billion dollars in construction, transportation, and military expenses. Japanese Americans, as already noted, effectively lost at least several billion dollars. These are only the tangible costs to the nation. The relocation was not justifiable on any security grounds. No verified act of espionage or sabotage by a Japanese American was recorded. How could it happen?

Racism cannot be ignored as an explanation. Japanese Americans were placed in camps, but German Americans and Italian Americans were largely ignored. Many of those whose decisions brought about the evacuation were of German and Italian ancestry. The fact was that the Japanese were expendable. Placing them in camps posed no hardship for the rest of society, and, in fact, some profited by their misfortune. That Japanese Americans were evacuated because they were seen as expendable is evident from the decision not to evacuate Hawaii's Japanese. In Hawaii, the Japanese were an integral part of the society; removing them would have destroyed the islands economically (Hosokawa 1969; Kimura 1988; Miyamoto 1973).

Some argue that Japanese lack of resistance made internment possible. This seems a weak effort to transfer guilt—to blame the victim. In the 1960s, some Sansei and Yonsei were concerned about the alleged timidity of their parents and grandparents when faced with evacuation orders. However, many evacuees, if not most, probably did not really believe what was happening. "It just cannot be that bad," they may have thought. At worst, the evacuees can be accused of being naive. But even if they did see clearly how devastating the order would be, what alternatives were open? None (Haak 1970; Kitano 1976; Takezawa 1991).

The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in 1981 held hearings on whether additional reparations should be paid to evacuees or their heirs. The final commission recommendation in 1983 was that the government formally apologize and give \$20,000 tax-free to each of the approximately 82,000 surviving internees. Congress began hearings in 1986 on the bill authorizing these steps, and President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which authorized the payments. The payments, however, were slow in coming because other



Six decades late! Ben Hara was a freshman at Lodi High School in May 1942 when he was taken and forced into an internment camp. In 2005, the California State Assembly authorized diplomas for the Japanese American internees. federal expenditures had higher priority. Meanwhile, the aging internees were dying at a rate of 200 a month. In 1990, the first checks were finally issued, accompanied by President Bush's letter of apology. Many Japanese Americans were disappointed by and critical of the begrudging nature of the compensation and the length of time it had taken to receive it (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 1982a, 1982b; Department of Justice 2000).

Perhaps actor George Takei, of *Star Trek* fame, sums up best the wartime legacy of the evacuation of Japanese Americans. As a child, he had lived with his parents in the Tule Lake, California, camp. In 1996, on the fiftieth anniversary of the camp's closing and five years before 9/11 would turn the nation's attention elsewhere, he reflected on his arrival at the camp. "America betrayed American ideals at this camp. We must not have national amnesia; we must remember this" (S. Lin 1996, 10).

### **The Economic Picture**

The socioeconomic status of Japanese Americans as a group is very different from that of Chinese Americans. Many of the latter are recent immigrants and refugees, who have fewer of the skills that lead to employment in higher-paying positions. In contrast, the Japanese American community is more settled and less affected by new arrivals from the home country, yet it continues to operate in a society in which tensions remain with Japan. We will first consider the Japanese American economic situation, which, on balance, has been very positive.

The camps left a legacy with economic implications; the Japanese American community of the 1950s was very different from that of the 1930s. Japanese Americans were more widely scattered. In 1940, 89 percent lived on the West Coast. By 1950, only 58 percent of the population had returned to the West Coast. Another difference was that a smaller proportion than before was Issei. The Nisei and even later generations accounted for 63 percent of the Japanese population. By moving beyond the West Coast, the Japanese Americans seemed less of a threat than if they had remained concentrated. Furthermore, by dispersing, Japanese American businesspeople had to develop ties to the larger economy rather than do business mostly with other Japanese Americans. Although ethnic businesses can be valuable initially, those who limit their dealings to those from the same country may limit their economic potential (Oliver and Shapiro 1995, 46).

After the war, some Japanese Americans continued to experience hardship. Some remained on the West Coast and farmed as sharecroppers in a role similar to that of the freed slaves after the Civil War. Sharecropping involved working the land of others, who provided shelter, seeds, and equipment and who also shared any profits at the time of harvest. The Japanese Americans used the practice to gradually get back into farming after being stripped of their land during World War II (Parrish 1995).

However, perhaps the most dramatic development has been the upward mobility that Japanese Americans collectively and individually have accomplished. By occupational and academic standards, two indicators of success, Japanese Americans are doing very well. The educational attainment of Japanese Americans as a group, as well as their family earnings, is higher than that of Whites, but caution should be used in interpreting such group data. Obviously, large numbers of Asian Americans, as well as Whites, have little formal schooling and are employed in poor jobs. Furthermore, Japanese Americans are concentrated in areas of the United States such as Hawaii, California, Washington, New York, and Illinois, where both wages and the cost of living are far above the national average. Also, the proportion of Japanese American families with multiple wage earners is higher than that of White families. Nevertheless, the overall picture for Japanese Americans is remarkable, especially



for a racial minority that had been discriminated against so openly and so recently (Inoue 1989; Kitano 1980; Nishi 1995).

The Japanese American story does not end with another account of oppression and hardship. Today, Japanese Americans have achieved success by almost any standard. However, we must qualify the progress that *Newsweek* (1971) once billed as their "Success Story: Outwhiting the Whites." First, it is easy to forget that several generations of Japanese Americans achieved what they did by overcoming barriers that U.S. society had created, not because they had been welcomed. However, many, if not most, have become acculturated. Nevertheless, successful Japanese Americans still are not wholeheartedly accepted into the dominant group's inner circle of social clubs and fraternal organizations. Second, Japanese Americans today may represent a stronger indictment of society than economically oppressed African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics. There are few excuses apart from racism that Whites can use to explain why they continue to look on Japanese Americans as different—as "them."

### Family and Religious Life

The contradictory pulls of tradition and rapid change that are characteristic of Chinese Americans are very strong among Japanese Americans today. Surviving Issei see their grandchildren as very nontraditional. Change in family life is one of the most difficult cultural changes for any immigrant to accept in the younger generations.

As cultural traditions fade, the contemporary Japanese American family seems to continue the success story. The divorce rate has been low, although it is probably rising. Similar conclusions apply to crime, delinquency, and reported mental illness. Data on all types of social disorganization show that Japanese Americans have a lower incidence of such behavior than all other minorities; it is also lower than that of Whites. Japanese Americans find it possible to be good Japanese and good Americans simultaneously. Japanese culture demands high in-group unity, politeness, respect for authority, and duty to community, all traits highly acceptable to middle-class Americans. Basically, psychological research has concluded that Japanese Americans share the high-achievement orientation held by many middle-class White Americans. However, one might expect that as Japanese Americans continue to acculturate, the breakdown in traditional Japanese behavior will be accompanied by a rise in social deviance (Nishi 1995).

As is true of the family and other social organizations, religious life in these groups has its antecedents in Asia, but there is no single Japanese faith. In Japan, religious beliefs tend to be much more accommodating than Christian beliefs are: One can be Shinto but also Buddhist at the same time. Consequently, when they came to the United States, immigrants found it easy to accept Christianity, even though doing so ultimately meant rejecting their old faiths. In the United States, a Christian cannot also be a Shintoist or a Buddhist. As a result, with each generation, Japanese Christians depart from traditional ways.

Although traditional temples are maintained in most places where there are large numbers of Japanese Americans, many exist only as museums, and few are places of worship with growing memberships. Religion is still a source of community attachment, but it is in the Protestant Chinese church, not in the temple. At the same time, some Eastern religions, such as Buddhism, are growing in the United States, but, overwhelmingly, the new adherents are Whites who are attracted to what they perceive as a more enriching value system. This has led to friction between more traditional Buddhist centers and those associated with the more Americanized Zen Buddhism (Ataiyero 2006; Kosmin and Lachman 1993). 🚺 ASK Yourself

What are Japanese American families like today?



# Voices Listen to Our Voices Listen to Our

### FROM KAWASAKI TO CHICAGO

was born a citizen of Japan in an area named Kawasaki, which is basically the suburbs of Tokyo. My parents raised me in a small apartment in Kawasaki until I was six years old. From then, my father's company decided to transfer him to the U.S. and my mother, my father and my brother all moved to Illinois. Japanese

er, my father and my brother Mik all moved to Illinois. Japanese is my native language and as I came to America, I was forced to learn English. It took me 4 years in bilingual school to fully be able to speak English and get sent off to the "regular" school where there were no foreigners like me. Since we moved to the Northwest suburbs of Chicago, I grew up with mostly Caucasian kids and a mediocre percentage of Asians. There were hardly any African American people in the town of Schaumburg. In elementary school, I was mistreated so badly at my "regular" school that I hardly spoke and was incredibly shy.



Miku Ishii

The very first time I had experienced the excruciating pain of pure racism was when I was only in the second grade. A Caucasian girl with big bright blue eyes and short bouncy blonde hair had a habit of picking at me constantly. She said it was because of my slanted slim slits of an eye. It was because of my dark jet-black pigtails that hung thick as horses tail

around my face. One afternoon during recess, I climbed up a dome that she also happened to be on. As she saw me coming near, she jumped back down on the ground and ran to the teacher. The next thing I knew, my teacher was punishing me, saying that I should not be pushing this grinning blonde haired blue-eyed girl. At the time, I was only a beginner in bilingual class so I was barely able to say anything but "Where is the bathroom?" and "I don't know." I tried to explain to the teacher. But all that came out were words in Japanese. Of course they looked at me wide

# **Remnants of Prejudice and Discrimination**

The Fu Manchu image may be gone, but its replacement is not much better. In popular television series, Asian Americans, if they are present, usually are either karate experts or technical specialists involved in their work. Chinese Americans are ignored or misrepresented in history books. Even past mistakes are repeated. When the transcontinental railroad was completed in Utah in 1869, Chinese workers were barred from attending the ceremony. Their contribution is now well known, one of the stories of true heroism in the West. However, in 1969, when Secretary of Transportation John Volpe made a speech marking the hundredth anniversary of the event, he neglected to mention the Chinese contribution. He exclaimed, "Who else but Americans could drill tunnels in mountains 30 feet deep in snow? Who else but Americans could chisel through miles of solid granite? Who else but Americans could have laid 10 miles of track in 12 hours?" (Yee 1973, 100). The Chinese contribution was once again forgotten.



# es Listen to Our Voices Listen to Our Voices

eyed, as I tried to speak broken English with Japanese. Finally, the teacher, who could not understand me to hear my self-defense, banned me from going out to recess for a week. I was furious and embarrassed and felt ashamed of my race.

Even the bus ride to school and back could not be near peaceful for me. The back of the bus was where all the cool white kids sat. When I would try to sit in the back because there were no other seats, those kids would call me Chinese or chink and make that obnoxious sound which clearly mocked the language. Some days they threw chewed gum at me. Not because I did anything to them. But because I was a chink and they wanted to see how crazy I would react. I would always just ignore it and stay quiet. I wanted to make it seem like it did not bother me, but inside, it was breaking my heart. Heck, I was not even Chinese but I was always called that in such disdainful manner. Going to school became something I feared. I remember I felt so miserable and ashamed to death for being born "Chinese." All I wanted was to be white.

I stand here today still remembering those days very vividly. In all essence, those experiences have molded me into person that I am today. I like to think that I am very openminded and I love diversity. I love to learn about other cultures and I have a very ethnic variety of friends. I would say relative to others, my multicultural experience has been rich because of the fact that I am an immigrant, a minority. And as I have expressed before, for many years when I first came to the United States, I have experienced so much hate and prejudice for just being born my race. I am still a citizen of Japan to this day and I go back to Kawasaki about every 2 years. I feel that I have grown up in two different worlds. The experiences that I have undergone have made me accept people at face value. A lot of times for me, I forget about color because I never judge by race but I am also not oblivious or blind to the fact that racism does exist. I think as sad as it sounds, that it is an evil that will never go away.

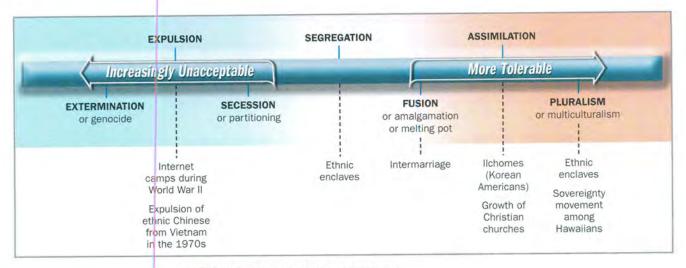
Source: Ishii 2006.

Today, young Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans are very ambivalent about their cultural heritage. The pull to be American is intense, but so are the reminders that, in the eyes of many others, Asian Americans are "they," not "we." College student Miku Ishii comments in "Listen to Our Voices" about the prejudice she has experienced both because she is Japanese American and sometimes because others just think of her as being "Asian" or even "Chinese."

Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans believe that prejudice and discrimination have decreased in the United States, but subtle reminders remain. Third-generation Japanese Americans feel insulted when they are told, "You speak English so well." Adopting new tactics, Asian Americans are now trying to fight racist and exclusionary practices (Lem 1976).

Marriage statistics also illustrate the effects of assimilation. At one time, twenty-nine states prohibited or severely regulated marriages between Asians and non-Asians. Today, intermarriage, though not typical, is legal and certainly more common, and more than one-fourth of Chinese Americans under age 24 marry someone who is not







Chinese. The degree of intermarriage is even higher among Japanese Americans: 1990 census data showed that two-thirds of all children born to a Japanese American had a parent of a different race.

The increased intermarriage indicates that Whites are increasingly accepting of Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans. It also suggests that Chinese and Japanese ties to their native cultures are weakening. As happened with the ways of life of European immigrants, the traditional norms are being cast aside for those of the host society. In one sense, these changes make Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans more acceptable and less alien to Whites. But this points to all the changes in Asian Americans rather than any recognition of diversity in the United States. As illustrated in Figure 13.2, intermarriage patterns reflect the fusion of different racial groups; but, compared with examples of assimilation and pluralism, they are a limited social process at present (S. Fong 1965, 1973; Kibria 2002; Onishi 1995).

The Japanese American community struggles to maintain its cultural identity while also paying homage to those who were interned during World War II. Paradoxically, as many see parallels between the collective guilt forced on people of Japanese ancestry during the 1940s and profiling of Arab and Muslim Americans, a few are seeking to justify the internment. Books and even a public middle school named after an internee in Washington state have been criticized; critics feel that when internment was taught it was too biased and that arguments for internment being the correct action should be included. For many Japanese Americans, the more things change, the more they stay the same (Malkin 2004; Tizon 2004).

It would be incorrect to interpret assimilation as an absence of protest. Because a sizable segment of the college youth of the 1960s and early 1970s held militant attitudes and because the Sansei are more heterogeneous than their Nisei and Issei relatives, it was to be expected that some Japanese Americans, especially the Sansei, would be politically active. For example, Japanese and other Asian Americans have emerged as activists for environmental concerns ranging from contaminated fish to toxic working conditions, and the targets of Japanese Americans' anger have included the apparent rise in hate crimes in the United States against Asian Americans in the 1990s. They also lobbied for passage of the Civil Rights



Restoration Act, extending reparations to the evacuees. They have expressed further activism through Hiroshima Day ceremonies, marking the anniversary of the detonation in World War II of the first atomic bomb over a major Japanese city. Also, each February, a group of Japanese American youths makes a pilgrimage to the site of the Tule Lake evacuation camp in a "lest we forget" observance. Such protests are modest, but they are a militant departure from the almost passive role played by the Nisei (Cart 2006).

Is pluralism developing? Japanese Americans show little evidence of wanting to maintain a distinctive way of life. The Japanese values that have endured are attitudes, beliefs, and goals shared by and rewarded by the White middle class in America. All Asian Americans, not only Japanese Americans, are caught in the middle. Any Asian American is culturally a part of a society that is dominated by a group that excludes him or her because of racial distinctions.

# Conclusion

he presence of Asian and Pacific Islanders is unmistakable throughout much of the United States. As shown in Table 13.2, urban centers from coast to coast are homes of significant numbers of immigrants from Asia and their descendants.

Most White adults are confident that they can distinguish Asians from Europeans. Unfortunately, though, White Americans often cannot tell Asians apart from their physical appearance and are not disturbed about their confusion.

However, there are definite differences in the experience of the Chinese and the Japanese, as we have seen, in the United States. One obvious difference is in the degree of assimilation. The Chinese Americans have maintained their ethnic enclaves more than the Japanese Americans have. Chinatowns live on, both as welcomed halfway points for new arrivals and as enclaves where many make very low wages. However, Little Tokyos are few because of the differences in the cultures of China and Japan. China was almost untouched by European influence, but even by the early 1900s, Japan had already been influenced by the West. Therefore, the Japanese arrived somewhat more assimilated than their Chinese counterparts. The continued migration of Chinese in recent years has also meant that Chinese Americans as a group have been less assimilated than Japanese Americans.

Both groups have achieved some success, but this success has not extended to all members. For Chinese Americans, a notable exception to success can be found in

#### TABLE 13.2 Cities with the Largest Asian Pacific Islander Concentrations 2000

City	Number of Asian Pacific Islanders	Proportion of City's Population
New York City	792,477	9.9%
Los Angeles	375,167	10.2
San Jose	243,959	27.3
San Francisco	243,409	31.3
Honolulu	233,045	62.7
San Diego	172,821	14.1
Chicago	127,762	4.4
Houston	104,876	5.4
Fremont, California	75,984	37.4
Seattle	75,769	13.4



Chinatowns, which, behind the tourist front, are much like other poverty-stricken areas in American cities. Neither Chinese Americans nor Japanese Americans have figured prominently in the executive offices of the nation's large corporations and financial institutions. Compared with other racial and ethnic groups, Asian Americans have shown little interest in political activity on their own behalf.

However, the success of Asian Americans, especially that of the Japanese Americans, belongs to them, not to U.S. society. First, Asian Americans have been considered successful only because they conform to the dominant society's expectations. Their acceptance as a group does not indicate growing pluralism in the United States.

Second, the ability of the Nisei, in particular, to recover from the camp experience cannot be taken as a precedent for other racial minorities. The Japanese Americans left the camps a skilled group, ambitious to overcome their adversity and placing a cultural emphasis on formal education. They entered a booming economy in which Whites and others could not afford to discriminate even if they wanted to. African Americans after slavery and Hispanic immigrants have entered the economy without skills at a time when the demand for manual labor has been limited. Many of them have been forced to remain in a marginal economy, whether that of the ghetto, the barrio, or subsistence agriculture. For Japanese Americans, the post–World War II period marked the fortunate coincidence of their having assets and ambition when they could be used to full advantage.

Third, some Whites use the success of the Asian Americans to prop up their own prejudice. Bigoted people twist Asian American success to show that racism cannot possibly play a part in another group's subordination. If the Japanese or Chinese can do it, why cannot African Americans, the illogical reasoning goes. More directly, Japanese Americans' success may serve as a scapegoat for another's failure ("They advanced at my expense") or as a sign that they are clannish or too ambitious. Regardless of what a group does, a prejudiced eye will always view it as wrong.

As for other racial and ethnic minorities, assimilation seems to be the path most likely to lead to tolerance but not necessarily to acceptance. However, assimilation has a price that is well captured in the Chinese phrase *Zhancao zhugen:* "To eliminate the weeds, one must pull out their roots." To work for acceptance means to uproot all traces of one's cultural heritage and former identity (Wang 1991).

evacuees 361 hui kuan 355 Issei 359

## **Key Terms**

Kibei 359 Nisei 359 Sansei 359

tongs 355 tsu 354 Yonsei 359

### **Review Questions**

- 1. What has been the legacy of the "yellow peril"?
- 2. What made the placement of Japanese Americans in internment camps unique?
- 3. In what respects does diversity characterize Chinatowns?
- 4. How has Japanese American assimilation been blocked in the United States?
- 5. What are the most significant similarities between the Chinese American and Japanese American experience? What are the differences?



# **Critical Thinking**

- 1. Considering the past as well as the present, are the moves made to restrict or exclude Chinese and Japanese Americans based on economic or racist motives?
- **2.** What events can you imagine that could cause the United States to again identify an ethnic group for confinement in some type of internment camps?
- **3.** What stereotypical images of Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans can you identify in the contemporary media?

# Internet Connections—Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>

Follow the instructions found on page 35 of this text to access the features of Research Navigator<sup>TM</sup>. Once at the Web site, enter your Login Name and Password. Then, to use the ContentSelect database, enter keywords such as "Chinatowns," "model minority," and "Tule Lake," and the search engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology, and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.

# Asian Americans: Growth and Diversity

# CHAPTER OUTLINE

The "Model Minority" Image Explored LISTEN TO OUR VOICES "Being Pakistani, Muslim, and Female in America"

by Fatima Arain

Political Activity Diversity Among Asian Americans

Asian Indians Filipino Americans

RESEARCH FOCUS Arranged Marriages in America

Southeast Asian Americans Korean Americans

Hawaii and Its People

Conclusion

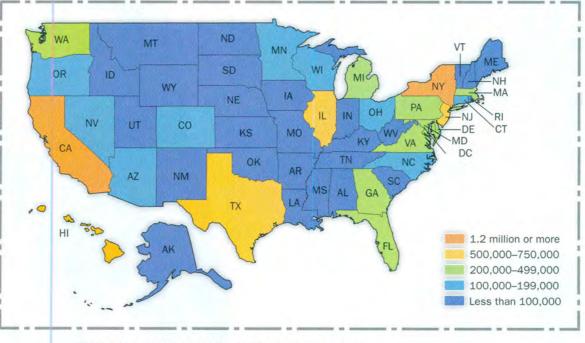
Key Terms/Review Questions/Critical Thinking/ Internet Connections—Research Navigator™



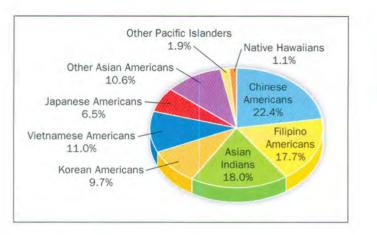
SIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS ARE A DIVERSE group that is one of the fastest-growing segments of the U.S. population. Asian Americans often are viewed as a model minority that has successfully overcome discrimination. This inaccurate image disguises lingering maltreatment and anti–Asian American violence. Furthermore, it denies Asian Americans the assistance afforded other racial minorities. Immigration is the primary source of growth among Asian Indians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, and Koreans. All Asian groups, along with Blacks and Whites (or Haoles, as they are known there), coexist in Hawaii. adison Nguyen won election to the city council of San Jose, California, the nation's tenth largest city, in 2006. This was a significant event because she became the city council's first Vietnamese American member. Although San Jose has a large Asian American community, she attracted a lot of White, African American, and Latino voters as well. Was her Vietnamese ancestry an issue? That leads us to the second remarkable aspect of her election for attorney Madison Nguyen defeated another Vietnamese American, Linda Nguyen, who directs the popular New Year Tet parade in the city.

Pulitzer prize–winning writer Jhumpa Lahiri has lived all thirty-nine years of her life in the United States, except for her first two in London. She still sees her home being as much in Calcutta as in Rhode Island where she grew up. Still to this day, despite all her success her writing has had in English, she sees her life as a shifting equation between being a Bengali Indian and an American (Lahiri 2006; Vuong 2006).

Madison Nguyen and Jhumpa Lahiri, despite being public figures, could be speaking for all Asian Americans who are often aware of the country from which they or their parents came and their position in the United States. An elected official and successful writer remind us that the legacy of immigration to the United States is not merely quaint turn-of-the-century black-and-white photos taken at Ellis Island. It is not merely a thickly accented elderly person telling of the "old country." Immigration, race, and ethnicity are being lived out among people of all ages, and for no collective group is this truer than for Asian Americans who are living throughout the United States (Figure 12.1).







F GURE 12.2 Asian Pacific Islanders, 2005

Source: Author based on American Community Survey 2005.

Asian Americans include groups such as Chinese Americans and Filipinos, whose nationality groups also include different linguistic groups and identifiable ethnic groups (Figure 12.2). Asian Americans also include ethnic groups such as the Hmong that do not correspond to any one nation. Finally, the U.S. population also includes Pacific Islanders, which include Hawaiians, Samoans, Tongans, and many smaller groups. Collectively, Asian Pacific Islanders in 2005 numbered 12.9 million—an 83 percent increase over 1990, compared with an overall population increase of only 16 percent.

Yet despite these large numbers—equivalent to the African American population after World War II—Asian Americans feel ignored. They see "race and ethnicity" in America framed as a Black–White issue or, more recently, as a "triracial" issue including Hispanics. But where are the Asian Americans in these pictures of the United States? For example, tens of thousands of Asian Americans, especially Vietnamese Americans, were displaced by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, but they received little media notice. Immigration issues understandably focus on Latin America, but what about challenges facing Asians seeking legal entry to the United States or the Asian Americans who are already here?

We need to remember in raising all these large numbers that, as with all racial and ethnic groups, most of the time life is played out on the individual level. In "Listen to Our Voices," a Pakistani American college student talks about what it is like to be immersed in American culture while also fully aware of the very different cultural tradition of her family.

To comprehend better the collective picture of Asian Americans, we will first consider the powerful image that many people have of Asian Americans of constituting some kind of perfect, model minority. We will then turn our attention to the role they play politically in the United States.

We will then consider four of the larger groups—Filipinos, Asian Indians, Southeast Asians, and Koreans—in greater depth. The chapter concludes by examining the coexistence of a uniquely mixed group of peoples—Hawaiians—among whom Asian Americans form the numerical majority. Chapter 13 concentrates on the Chinese and the Japanese, the two Asian groups with the longest historical tradition in the United States.

# The "Model Minority" Image Explored

"Asian Americans are a success! They achieve! They succeed! There are no protests, no demands. They just do it!" This is the general image that people in the United States so often hold of Asian Americans as a group. They constitute a **model or ideal minority** because, although they have experienced prejudice and discrimination, they seem to have succeeded economically, socially, and educationally without resorting to

#### model or ideal minority

A group that, despite past prejudice and discrimination, succeeds economically, socially, and educationally without resorting to political or violent confrontations with Whites.





# loices Listen to Our Voices Listen to Our

## BEING PAKISTANI, MUSLIM, AND FEMALE IN AMERICA BY FATIMA ARAIN

t first glance, I may look like a "Whitewashed" Pakistani American. I would not necessarily blame some for thinking this way. After all, I listen to indie and punk music; I have a White boyfriend; and most of my friends are White. However, it was not always this way.

My parents moved to the United States separately within 10 years of each other, in the 60's and 70's. Upon arrival, they knew that they were going to raise their children in American culture. So, naturally, when we were born they taught us Urdu, fed us Pakistani food, and dressed us in South Asian attire. We had Qur'an lessons and went to the mosque multiple times a week until we went off to college.

Originally, my parents settled in Brooklyn, but after they realized that they did not want to raise children in an urban environment, they finally settled in a western suburb of Milwaukee called Brookfield. Brookfield is almost 100% White. The minorities that do exist in the city are generally of East Asian or South Asian descent. There are hardly any African American or Latino residents. In my first years in Brookfield, I was made aware of my distinctiveness. I knew that I was different from most of the students. Still, I was raised to be proud of my heritage. I think that a huge reason that I was accepted in my community was because I also came from a wealthy family. Had I been in a similar city with similar racial demographics, without my wealthy background, I trust that I would not have had good experiences with my peers.

Gradually, Muslims became a more prominent part of Milwaukee. Our mosque grew with immigrants from South Asian and Arab countries. Since I was at the mosque all the time, I made many Muslim friends who understood the difficulties affiliated with growing up as a minority in a largely White area. However, being a part of Brookfield's community also led to me creating friendships with non-Muslim White youth as well.

In order to create a stronger sense of pride in our culture, my parents made it a point to travel to many Muslim countries. In my lifetime, I traveled to Pakistan several times, as well as Morocco, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan. However, my parents knew that it was important for us to learn

political or violent confrontations with Whites. Some observers point to the existence of a model minority as a reaffirmation that anyone can get ahead in the United States. Proponents of the model minority view declare that because Asian Americans have achieved success, they have ceased to be subordinate and are no longer disadvantaged. This is only a variation of blaming the victim; with Asian Americans, it is "praising the victim." An examination of aspects of their socioeconomic status will allow a more thorough exploration of this view (Fong 2002; Hurh and Kim 1989; Thrupkaew 2002).

#### Education and the Economy

Asian Americans as a group have impressive school enrollment rates in comparison to the total population. In 2004, 49.4 percent of Asian Americans 25 years old or older held bachelor's degrees, compared with 30.6 percent of the White population (Table 12.1).



# es Listen to Our Voices Listen to Our Voices

about other cultures as well. Therefore, we traveled to Europe and all parts of the United States. Most of all, my parents wanted us to be proud to be a part of our country.

When I was a junior in high school, my friend told me that he would love for me to be a part of a program affiliated with the American Civil Liberties Union in Wisconsin. The program, which was targeted towards Milwaukee area high school students, created awareness about racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, and religious discrimination. For the first time in my life, I was working with African American, Latino and Latina, and Jewish youth side by side on a regular basis. Similarly, it was the first time that I had ever had friends that were not either White, Muslim, or East Asian. I suddenly became aware of all the prejudices that were around me all the time.

The experience was so life-changing that, when senior year rolled around, I decided that I had to go to a college that was diverse. When I got to college, however, I was extremely disappointed. I was appalled to see the self-segregation amongst all the different ethnic and racial groups on campus. Right away, I befriended everybody I could. I went out of my way to be friends with South Asian students but, to my dismay, I was rejected based on the fact that I was willing to be friends with other people besides Muslims. I realized that this must be a problem for many minority students. We will always face the issue of being either too American ("White-washed," "oreo," etc.), or not American enough ("fresh off the boat").

Now, as I am getting older, I face the challenges of finding a suitable mate. My parents are obsessed with the idea of their daughter marrying a Pakistani Muslim. However, my boyfriend is a White Catholic. These are not problems that are exclusive to my life. I think that a lot of first-generation Americans face these issues as well.

Overall, I do not think that the problems that I have faced have held me back. I have had an extremely rich experience as far as multiculturalism is concerned. I have been exposed to a lot. However, being a minority does not necessarily mean that I am automatically more cultured than a White American. My parents went out of their way to make sure that we were not only proud of their culture, but of ours as well. I know very few Pakistani families who have tried to achieve that. Even though I was not exposed to class and economic diversity until later in my life, I still had a chance to have those experiences.

Source: F. Arain 2006.

These rates vary among Asian American groups, with Asian Indians, Chinese Americans, and Japanese Americans having higher levels of educational achievement than others.

This encouraging picture does have some qualifications, however, which call into question the optimistic model minority view. According to a study of California's state university system, although Asian Americans often are viewed as successful overachievers, they have unrecognized and overlooked needs and experience discomfort and harassment on campus. As a group, they also lack Asian faculty and staff members to whom they can turn for support. They confront many identity issues and have to do a "cultural balancing act" along with all the usual pressures faced by college students. The report noted that an "alarming number" of Asian American students appear to be experiencing intense stress and alienation, problems that have often been "exacerbated by racial harassment" (Ohnuma 1991; Zhou 2004).

Even the positive stereotype of Asian American students as "academic stars" or "whiz kids" can be burdensome to the people so labeled. Asian Americans who do only

TABLE 12.1         Selected Social and Economic Characteristics		
	Non-Hispanic White	Asian Americans
Percentage completing college, 25 years old and older	30.6%	49.4%
Percentage unemployed	5.1%	5.1%
Percentage of households with a single parent	18.2%	18.6%

Source: Author based on Asian and Pacific Islander detailed tables (PPL-184) from 2004 Current Population Survey.					
Note: Income and poverty data for 2003; other data for 2004.					
Over \$50,000	54.4%	48.1%			
Below \$10,000	7.1%	10.7%			
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Percentage of people living below poverty level	8.2%	11.8%			

modestly well in school may face criticism from their parents or teachers for their failure to conform to the "whiz kid" image. Some Asian American youths disengage from school when faced with these expectations or receive little support for their interest in vocational pursuits or athletics (Kibria 2002).

That Asian Americans as a group work in the same occupations as Whites suggests that they have been successful, and many have. However, the pattern shows some differences. Asian immigrants, like other minorities and immigrants before them, are found disproportionately in the low-paying service occupations. At the same time, they are also concentrated at the top in professional and managerial positions. Yet as we will see, they rarely reach the very top. They hit the glass ceiling (as described in Chapter 3) or, as some others say, try to "climb a broken ladder," before they reach management. In 2002, only 2 percent of 11,500 people who serve on the boards of the nation's 1,000 largest corporations were Asian American (G. Strauss 2002).

The absence of Asian Americans as top executives also indicates that their success is not complete. Asian Americans have done well in small businesses and modest agricultural ventures. Although self-employed and managing their own businesses, Asian Americans have had very modest-sized operations. Because of the long hours, the income from such a business may be below prevailing wage standards, so even when they are business owners, they may still constitute cheap labor, although they also get the profits. Chinese restaurants, Korean American cleaning businesses and fruit and vegetable stores, and motels, gasoline stations, and newspaper vending businesses operated by Asian Indians fall into this category.

Asian Americans, therefore, are typical of what sociologists call middlemen minorities, groups that occupy middle positions rather than positions at the bottom of the social scale, where many racial and ethnic minorities typically are located, at least in the early years of residence here. Asian Americans involved in small businesses tend to maintain closer ties with other Asian Americans than do people who join larger corporations. These ethnic owners generally hire other ethnics, who are paid low wages in exchange for paternalistic benefits such as on-the-job training or even assistance in creating their own middleman businesses. However, the present high proportion of Asian Americans as middlemen often is the result of exclusion from other work, not of success. Furthermore, serving as shopkeepers, for example, often contributes to their outsider status because they are resented by both the economic movers of a community and the customers they serve (Bonacich 1988; Bonacich and Modell 1981; Kim and Kim 1998).

Another misleading sign of the apparent success of Asian Americans is their high incomes as a group. Like other elements of the image, however, this deserves closer inspection. Asian American family income approaches parity with that of Whites because of their greater achievement than Whites in formal schooling. If we look at specific

#### middlemen minorities

Groups such as Japanese Americans that typically occupy middle positions in the social and occupational stratification system.





educational levels, Whites earn more than their Asian counterparts of the same age. Asian Americans' average earnings increased by at least \$2,300 for each additional year of schooling, whereas Whites gained almost \$3,000. As we see in Table 12.1, Asian Americans as a group have significantly more formal schooling but actually have lower house-hold family income. We should note that, to some degree, some Asian Americans' education is from overseas and, therefore, may be devalued by U.S. employers. Yet in the end, educational attainment does pay off as much if you are of Asian descent as it does for White non-Hispanics (F. Wu 2002; Zeng and Xie 2004; Zhou and Kamo 1994).

There are striking contrasts among Asian Americans. Nevertheless, for every Asian American family with an annual income of \$75,000 or more, another earns less than \$10,000 a year. In New York City's Chinatown neighborhood, about one-quarter of all families live below the poverty level. In San Diego, dropout rates were close to 60 percent among Southeast Asians in 1997. Even successful Asian Americans continue to face obstacles because of their racial heritage. According to a study of three major public hospitals in Los Angeles, Asian Americans account for 34 percent of all physicians and nurses but fill only 11 percent of management positions at these hospitals (Dunn 1994; Reeves and Bennett 2003; Sengupta 1997).

At first, one might be puzzled to see criticism of a positive generalization such as "model minority." Why should the stereotype of adjusting without problems be a disservice to Asian Americans? The answer is that this incorrect view helps to exclude Asian Americans from social programs and conceals unemployment and other social ills. For example, Asian American participation has been questioned in **set-aside** programs that stipulate government contracts must be awarded to a minimum proportion of minority-owned business. More and more local governments are eliminating Asian Americans from the definition of minority in their set-aside programs, essentially buying into the model minority myth (Committee of 100 2001).

#### The Door Half Open

Despite the widespread belief that they constitute a model minority, Asian Americans are victims of both prejudice and violence. Reports released annually by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (2002) chronicle incidents of suspected and proven anti–Asian American incidents that occur. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, anti-Asian violence increased dramatically for several months in the United States. The first fatality was an Indian American who was shot and killed by a gunman in Mesa, Arizona, shouting, "I stand for America all the way."

Asian Americans are subject to stereotypes, one of which, "straight-A student," reflects the model minority image. Source: © 2001 Oliver Chin. Reprinted by permission of Oliver Chin.

#### set-asides

Programs stipulating that a minimum proportion of government contracts must be awarded to minority-owned businesses.



#### yellow peril

A term denoting a generalized prejudice toward Asian people and their customs. This anti–Asian American feeling is built on a long cultural tradition. The term *yellow peril* dates back to the view of Asian immigration, particularly from China, as unwelcome. **Yellow peril** came to refer to the generalized prejudice toward Asian people and their customs. The immigrants were characterized as heathen, morally inferior, drug addicted, savage, or lustful. Although the term was first used around the turn of the twentieth century, this anti-Asian sentiment is very much alive today. Many contemporary Asian Americans find this intolerance very unsettling given their conscientious efforts to extend their education, seek employment, and conform to the norms of society (Hurh 1994).

What explains the increase in violence against Asian Americans? Prejudice against Asian Americans is fueled by how they are represented in the media. The Asian American Journalists Association (2000) annually conducts a "media watch" to identify how mainstream news media use ethnic slurs and stereotypes, demonstrate insensitivity, and otherwise exhibit bias in reporting. We can identify several ways in which this occurs—some subtle, some overt:

- Inappropriate use of clichés. News reports use the term Asian invasion even when referring to a small number of Asian Americans. For example, a 1994 Sports Illustrated article about Asians trying out for major league baseball teams was billed "Orient Express" and "Asian Invasion," yet the story noted only two Asians as examples.
- Mistaken identity. Not only are Asians identified by the wrong nationality, but also American citizens of Asian descent are presented as if they were foreigners.
- Overgeneralization. Inappropriate assumptions are made and too widely applied. For example, a newspaper article discussing the growth of Chinatown was headlined "There Goes the Neighborhood," implying that any increase in the number of Chinese Americans was undesirable.
- *Ethnic slurs.* Although the print media generally take great pains to avoid racially derogatory terms, radio talk shows offer frequent examples of racism.
- Inflammatory reporting. Unbalanced coverage of such events as World War II or Asian investment in the United States can needlessly contribute to ill feelings.
- Japan bashing. News accounts may unfairly blame Asian nations for economic problems in the United States. For example, as Japan-based automakers gained a foothold in the United States, much of the coverage failed to note that U.S. carmakers had not maintained their own competitive advantage.
- Media invisibility. News reports may ignore Asian Americans and rarely seek their views on issues related to Asia.
- Model minority. This positive portrayal can also have a negative effect.

Many Asian Americans seek out less traditional media outlets given the lack of Asian or Asian American images. Many Korean Americans followed with great interest the exploits of *Damo*, the multiepisode series of a female undercover detective in seventeenth-century Korea.





In its own way, each of these biases contributes to the unbalanced view we have developed of the large, diverse Asian American population.

The resentment against Asian Americans is not limited to overt incidents of violence. Like other subordinate groups, Asian Americans are subject to institutional discrimination. For example, some Asian American groups have large families and find themselves subject to zoning laws stipulating the number of people per room, which make it difficult to live together. Kinfolk are unable to take in family members legally. Whereas we may regard these family members as distant relatives, many Asian cultures view cousins, uncles, and aunts as relatives to whom they have a great deal of familial responsibility.

The marginal status of Asian Pacific Islanders leaves them vulnerable to both selective and collective oppression. In 1999, news stories implicated Wen Ho Lee, a nuclear physicist at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, as a spy for China. Subsequent investigation, during which Lee was imprisoned under very harsh conditions, concluded that the naturalized citizen scientist had indeed downloaded secret files to an unsecured computer, but there was no evidence that the information ever went further.

In the aftermath of the Wen Ho Lee incident, a new form of racial profiling emerged. We introduced **racial profiling** in Chapter 2 as any police-initiated action that relies on race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than a person's behavior. Despite Lee's being found not guilty, Asian Americans were viewed as security risks. A survey found that 32 percent of the people in the United States felt that Chinese Americans are more loyal to China than to the United States. In fact, the same survey showed that 46 percent were concerned about Chinese Americans passing secrets to China. Subsequent studies found that Asian Americans were avoiding top-secret science labs for employment because they became subject to racial profiling at higher security levels (Committee of 100 2001; Department of Energy 2000; Lee with Zia 2006 F. Wu 2002).

For young Asian Americans, life in the United States often is a struggle for one's identity when their heritage is so devalued by those in positions of influence. Sometimes identity means finding a role in White America; other times, it involves finding a place among Asian Americans collectively and then locating oneself within one's own racial or ethnic community.

# **Political Activity**

Against this backdrop of prejudice, discrimination, and searching for one's identity, it would not be surprising to see Asian Americans seeking to recognize themselves. Historically, Asian Americans have followed the pattern of other immigrant groups: They bring organizations from the homeland and later develop groups to respond to the



#### racial profiling

Any arbitrary police-initiated action based on race, ethnicity, or natural origin rather than a person's behavior.

Compared to the other groups discussed in this book, the national political agenda has paid almost no attention to issues particular to Asian Americans. Source: Tak Toyoshima.



special needs identified in the United States. Recently, during the expressions of antiimmigrant sentiment that began in the late 1990s and that were given a boost by antialien feelings after 9/11, Asian Americans staged demonstrations in several cities, seeking to persuade people to become citizens and register to vote.

These efforts, similar to the recent steps taken by Hispanic groups discussed in previous chapters, have also met with mixed success. Asians and Pacific Islanders' political clout is still developing; many still are not citizens. At the time of the 2004 election, 32.5 percent were not citizens and were, therefore, ineligible to vote, compared with 41 percent of Hispanics and 2 percent of non-Hispanic Whites (Holder 2006).

For newly arrived Asians, grassroots organizations and political parties are a new concept. With the exception of Asian Indians, the immigrants come from nations where political participation was unheard of or looked upon with skepticism and sometimes fear. Using the sizable Chinese American community as an example, we can see why Asian Americans have been slow to achieve political mobilization. At least six factors have been identified that explain why Chinese Americans—and, to a large extent, Asian Americans in general—have not been more active in politics:

- 1. To become a candidate means to take risks, invite criticism, be assertive, and be willing to extol one's virtues. These traits are alien to Chinese culture.
- **2.** Older people remember when discrimination was blatant, and they tell others to be quiet and not attract attention.
- **3.** As noted earlier, many recent immigrants have no experience with democracy and arrive with a general distrust of government.
- 4. Like many new immigrant groups, Chinese Americans have concentrated on getting ahead economically and educating their children rather than thinking in terms of the larger community.
- 5. The careers that the brightest students pursue tend to be in business and science rather than law or public administration and, therefore, do not provide preparation for politics.
- 6. Chinatowns notwithstanding, Chinese and other Asian American groups are dispersed and cannot control the election of even local candidates.



Democrat Tammy Duckworth was named Illinois Director of Veterans' Affairs after an unsuccessfully attempt for Congress. Duckworth, a trained helicopter pilot who lost both her legs in the Iraq War where she rose to the rank of major, is of mixed European, Thai, and Chinese ancestry.



On the other hand, both Democrats and Republicans are increasingly regarding Asian Americans as a future political force in the United States (Gross 1989; Holmes 1996).

Many political observers expect Asian Americans to favor Democratic candidates, as most Latinos and especially African Americans do. Indeed, in the 2000 elections, the majority of Asian Americans favored Democratic candidates, compared with 43 percent of Whites. However, the Republicans, nationally and locally, continue to try to cut into this Democratic preference among these voters. In local politics, it is much easier to see Asian Americans getting involved in city council and school board elections, where they can more readily see the immediate impact of the democratic process on their lives (L. Romney 2004).

# **Diversity Among Asian Americans**

The political activity of Asian Pacific Islanders occurs within a complex segment of the population: Asian Americans who reflect the diversity of their native lands. Asia is a vast region, holding more than half the world's population. The successive waves of immigrants to the United States from that continent have been composed of a large number of nationalities and cultures. In addition to the seven groups listed in Figure 12.2, the Census Bureau enumerates forty-seven groups, as shown in Table 12.2. Given this variety among Asian Pacific Islanders, we can apply to Asian Americans several generalizations made earlier about Native Americans. Both groups are a collection of diverse peoples with distinct linguistic, social, and geographic backgrounds.

Asian	Pacific Islander
Asian Indian	Polynesian
Bangladeshi	Native Hawaiian
Bhutanese	Samoan
Burmese	Tongan
Cambodian	Tahitian
Chinese	Tokelauan
Filipino	Micronesian
Hmong	Guamanian or Chamorro
Indo Chinese	Mariana Islander
ndonesian	Saipanese
wo Jiman	Palauan
lapanese	Carolinian
Korean	Kosraean
Laotian	Pohnpeian
Malaysian	Chuukese
Maldivian	Yapese
Vepalese	Marshallese
Okinawan	I-Kiribati
Pakistani	Melanesian
Singaporean	Fijian
Sri Lankan	Papua New Guinean
faiwanese	Solomon Islander
<sup>-</sup> hai	Ni-Varnualu
lietnamese	
ote: Groups as enumerated separately in the 2000 census.	



Asian Americans, like Native Americans, are not evenly distributed across the United States. To lump these people together ignores the sharp differences between them. Any examination of Asian Americans quickly reveals their diversity, which will be apparent as we focus on individual Asian American groups, beginning with the largest group, Asian Indians.

# **Asian Indians**

The second largest Asian American groups (after Chinese Americans) are the immigrants from India and their descendants numbering more than 2.3 million. Sometimes the immigrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka are also included in this group.

#### Immigration

Like several other Asian immigrant groups, Asian Indians (or East Indians) are recent immigrants. Only 17,000 total came from 1820 to 1965, with the majority of those arriving before 1917. These pioneers were subjected to some of the same anti-Asian measures passed to restrict Chinese immigration. In the ten years after the Immigration and Naturalization Act, which eliminated national quotas, more than 110,000 arrived (Takaki 1989).

Immigration law, although dropping nationality preferences, gave priority to the skilled, so the Asian Indians arriving in the 1960s through the 1980s tended to be urban, educated, and English speaking. Three times the proportion of Asian Indians aged 25 and older had a college degree, compared with the general population. These families experienced a smooth transition from life in India to life in the United States. They usually settled here in urban areas or located near universities or medical centers. Initially, they flocked to the Northeast, but by 1990, California had edged out New York as the state with the largest concentration of Asian Indians. The growth of Silicon Valley information technology furthered the increase of Asian Indian professionals in northern California (Boxall 2001; Mogelonsky 1995).

More recent immigrants, sponsored by earlier immigrant relatives, are displaying less facility with English, and the training they have tends to be less easily adapted to the U.S. workplace. They are more likely to work in service industries, usually with members of their extended families. They are often in positions that many Americans



Reflecting the growth of the Indian American population, the landscape is changing. A Hindu priest makes his way toward the entrance to the largest Hindu temple in the United States, which is located outside Chicago. reject because of the long hours, the seven-day workweek, and vulnerability to crime. Consequently, Asian Indians are as likely to be cab drivers or managers of motels or convenience stores as they are to be physicians or college teachers. Asian Indians see the service industries as transitional jobs to acclimatize them to the United States and to give them the money they need to become more economically self-reliant (Kalita 2003; Levitt 2004; Varadarajan 1999).

#### The Present Picture

It is difficult to generalize about Asian Indians because, like all other Asian Americans, they reflect a diverse population. With more than 1 billion people in 2000, India is soon to be the most populous nation in the world. Diversity governs every area. The Indian government recognizes eighteen official languages, each with its own cultural heritage. Some can be written in more than one type of script. Hindus are the majority in India and also among the immigrants to the United States, but significant religious minorities include Sikhs, Muslims, Jains, and Zoroastrians (Kurien 2004).

Religion among Asian Indians presents an interesting picture. Among initial immigrants, religious orthodoxy often is stronger than it is in India. Immigrants try to practice the Hindu and Muslim faiths true to their practices in India rather than joining the Caribbean versions of these major faiths already established in the United States by other immigrant groups. Although other Indian traditions are maintained, older immigrants see challenges not only from U.S. culture but also from pop culture from India, which is imported through motion pictures and magazines. It is a very dynamic situation as the Asian Indian population moves into the twenty-first century (Lessinger 1995; Rangaswamy 2005).

Maintaining traditions within the family household is a major challenge for Indian immigrants to the United States. These ties remain strong, and many Indians see themselves more connected to their relatives 10,000 miles away than Americans are to their kinfolk less than a hundred miles away. Parents are concerned about the erosion of traditional family authority among the desi. **Desi** (pronounced "DAY-see") is a colloquial name for people who trace their ancestry to South Asia, especially India.

Indian children, dressed like their peers, go to fast-food restaurants and eat hamburgers while out on their own, yet both Hindus and Muslims are vegetarian by practice. Sons do not feel the responsibility to the family that tradition dictates. Daughters, whose occupation and marriage could, in India, be closely controlled by the family, assert their right to choose work and, in an even more dramatic break from tradition, select a husband.

In "Research Focus," we consider one cultural practice faced by Indian and some other immigrant groups not a part of American mainstream culture: arranged marriages.

## **Filipino Americans**

Little has been written about the Filipinos, although they are the third-largest Asian American group in the United States, with 2.2 million people now living here. Social science literature considers them Asians for geographic reasons, but physically and culturally, they also reflect centuries of Spanish colonial rule and the more recent colonial and occupation governments of the United States.

#### Immigration Patterns

Immigration from the Philippines is documented during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; it was relatively small but significant enough to create a "Manila Village" along the Louisiana coast around 1750. Increasing numbers of Filipino immigrants came as American nationals when, in 1899, the United States gained possession of the Philippine

# ? ASK Yourself

What are some of the advantages that can been seen in arranged marriages?

#### desi

Colloquial name for people who trace their ancestry to South Asia, especially India and Pakistan.



# Focus Research Focus Research Foc

### ARRANGED MARRIAGES IN AMERICA

The question becomes not does he or she love me but who do my parents want me to marry. An **arranged marriage** is when others choose the marital partners not based on any preexisting mutual attraction. Indeed, typically in arranged marriages the couple does not even know one another.

The idea of arranged marriages seems strange to most youth growing up in the United States whose culture romanticizes finding Mr. or Ms. Right. In an arranged marriage, the boy and girl start off on neutral ground with no expectations of each other. Then understanding develops between them as the relationship matures. The couple selected is assumed to be compatible because they are chosen from very similar social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. In an arranged marriage, the couple works to achieve the mutual happiness they expect to find. In contrast, in a romantic or sentimental marriage, couples start off from a high ground of dreams and illusions where there is little likelihood for things to get better and there are great chances of failure, as some of the dreams do not materialize after marriage.

Historically arranged marriages are not unusual and even today are common in many parts of Asia and Africa. In cultures where arranged marriage is common, young people tend to be socialized to expect and look forward to such unions. But what happens in cultures that send very different messages? For example, immigrants from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh may desire that their children enter an arranged union, but their children are growing up in culture where most of their schoolmates are obsessed with dating as a prelude to marriage and endlessly discuss the latest episodes of *Bachelor* and *Bachelorette*.

Studies of young people in countries like Canada and the United States whose parents still cling to the tradition of arranging their children's marriage document the

Islands at the conclusion of the Spanish-American War. In 1934, the islands gained commonwealth status. The Philippines gained their independence in 1948 and with it lost their unrestricted immigration rights. Despite the close ties that remained, immigration was sharply restricted to only 50 to 100 people annually until the 1965 Immigration Act lifted these quotas. Before the restrictions were removed, pineapple growers in Hawaii lobbied successfully to import Filipino workers to the islands.

Besides serving as colonial subjects of the United States, Filipinos played another role in this country. The U.S. military accepted Filipinos in selected positions. In particular, the Navy put Filipino citizens to work in kitchens. Filipino veterans of World War II believed that their U.S. citizenship would be expedited. This proved untrue; the problem was only partially resolved by a 1994 federal court ruling. However, many of these veterans felt they were regarded not as former Navy employees but as unwanted immigrants (Espiritu 1996; Posadas 1999).

Filipino immigration can be divided into four distinct periods:

- 1. The first generation, immigrating in the 1920s, was mostly male and employed in agricultural labor.
- **2.** A second group, also arriving in the early twentieth century, immigrated to Hawaii to serve as contract workers on Hawaii's sugar plantations.

#### arranged marriage

Others choose one's marital partners not based on any pre-existing mutual attraction.



# esearch Focus Research Focus Research

challenges this represents. Many young people do still embrace the tradition of their parents. As one first-year female Princeton student of Indian ancestry puts it, "In a lot of ways it's easier. I don't have pressure to look for a boyfriend" (Herschthal 2004). Young people like her will look to their parents and other relatives to finalize a mate or even accept a match with a partner who has been selected in the country of their parents. Systematic, nationwide studies are lacking, but available research points to a trend away from arranged marriages toward romantic marriages even when the couples entered such unions over family objections.

Change has brought with it some variations as expectation for formally arranged marriages has been modified to *assisted marriages* in which parents identify a limited number of possible mates based on what is referred to as "bio-data"—screening for caste, family background, and geography. Children get final veto power but rarely head out on their own when seeking a mate. Young men and women may date on their own but, when it comes to marrying, they limit themselves to a very narrow field of eligibles brought to them by their parents. The combination of arranged and assisted marriages has meant that Indian immigrants have the highest rates of ethnic endogamy of any major immigrant group in the United States—about 90 percent in-group marriage in 2003.

For thousands of young people the pattern is not bringing a possible spouse home to meet the future in-laws but the other way around. Her father introduced Leona Singh of California, 25 years old, to an appropriate future mate living in Iowa. They met in the company of relatives and then went out alone. They married several months later when they felt they were "90 percent certain." Years later she looked back, "From the beginning, I felt there was a physical chemistry, but it took years to develop a mature bond, and I guess you could call that love" (Bellafante 2005 A15).

Sources: Bellafante 2005; Herschthal 2004; Talbane and Hasanau 2000; Zaidi and Shuraydi 2002.

- 3. The post-World War II arrivals included many war veterans and wives of U.S. soldiers.
- 4. The newest immigrants, who include many professionals (physicians, nurses, and others), arrived under the 1965 Immigration Act (Min 1995; Posadas 1999).

As in other Asian groups, the people are diverse. Besides these stages of immigration, the Filipinos can also be defined by various states of immigration (different languages, regions of origin, and religions), distinctions that sharply separate people in their homeland as well. In the Philippines and among Filipino immigrants to the United States, eight distinct languages with an estimated 200 dialects are spoken. Yet assimilation is under way; a 1995 survey showed that 47 percent of younger Filipino Americans speak only English and do not speak Tagalog, the primary language of the Philippine people (Kang 1996; Pido 1986).

#### The Present Picture

The Filipino population increased dramatically when restrictions on immigration were eased in 1965. More than two-thirds of the new arrivals qualified for entry as professional and technical workers, but like Koreans, they have often worked at jobs ranked below those they left in the Philippines. Surprisingly, U.S.-born Filipinos often





Filipino American World War II veterans protested in 1997 for full veterans' benefits for Filipinos who served in World War II.

> have less formal schooling and lower job status than the newer arrivals. They come from poorer families that are unable to afford higher education, and they have been relegated to unskilled work, including migrant farm work. Their poor economic background means that they have little start-up capital for businesses. Therefore, unlike other Asian American groups, Filipinos have not developed small business bases such as retail or service outlets that capitalize on their ethnic culture.

> Yet there is a significant segment of the immigration from the Philippines that constitutes a more professional educated class in the area of health professionals. Although a positive human resource for the United States, it has long been a brain drain on the medical establishment of the Philippines. This is apparent when we consider areas in the United States that reflect Filipino settlement in the last forty years. For example, in metropolitan Chicago, Filipino Americans have household incomes 30 percent higher than the general population and higher than that of Asian Indians. When the United States ceased giving preference to physicians from abroad, doctors in the Philippines began to enter the United States retrained as nurses, which dramatically illustrates the incredible income differences between the United States and the Philippines (Espiritu and Wolf 2001; Kim 2006; Lau 2006b; Zarembro 2004).

> Despite their numbers, no significant single national Filipino social organization has formed, for several reasons. First, Filipinos' strong loyalty to family (*sa pamilya*) and church, particularly Roman Catholicism, works against time-consuming efforts to create organizations that include a broad spectrum of the Filipino community. Second, their diversity makes forming ties here problematic. Divisions along regional, religious, and linguistic lines present in the Philippines persist in the United States. Third, although Filipinos have organized many groups, they tend to be clublike or fraternal. They do not seek to represent the general Filipino population and, therefore, remain largely invisible to Anglos. Fourth, although Filipinos initially stayed close to events in their homeland, they show every sign of seeking involvement in broader non-Filipino organizations and avoiding group exclusiveness. The two terms of Filipino American Benjamin Cayetano as governor of Hawaii from 1994 to 2002 are an example of such involvement in mainstream political organizations (Bonus 2000; Espiritu 1996; Kang 1996; Lau 2006b; Posadas 1999).

## Southeast Asian Americans

The people of Southeast Asia—Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians—were part of the former French Indochinese Union. *Southeast Asian* is an umbrella term used for convenience; the peoples of these areas are ethnically and linguistically diverse. Ethnic Laotians constitute only half of the Laotian people, for example; a significant number of Mon-Khmer, Yao, and Hmong form minorities. Numbering more than 2.1 million in 2005, Vietnamese Americans are the largest group, with 1.4 million members, or 11 percent of the total Asian American population (see Figure 12.2).

#### The Refugees

The problem of U.S. involvement in Indochina did not end when all U.S. personnel were withdrawn from South Vietnam in 1975. The final tragedy was the reluctant welcome given to the refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos by Americans and people of other nations. One week after the evacuation of Vietnam in April 1975, a Gallup poll reported that 54 percent of Americans were against giving sanctuary to the Asian refugees, with 36 percent in favor and 11 percent undecided. The primary objection to Vietnamese immigration was that it would further increase unemployment (Schaefer and Schaefer 1975).

Many Americans offered to house refugees in their homes, but others declared that the United States had too many Asians already and was in danger of losing its "national character." This attitude toward the Indochinese has been characteristic of the feeling that Harvard sociologist David Riesman called the **gook syndrome**. *Gook* is a derogatory term for an Asian, and the syndrome refers to the tendency to stereotype these people in the worst possible light. Riesman believed that the American news media created an unflattering image of the South Vietnamese and their government, leading the American people to believe they were not worth saving (Luce 1975).

The initial 135,000 Vietnamese refugees who fled in 1975 were joined by more than a million running from the later fighting and religious persecution that plagued Indochina. The United States accepted about half of the refugees, some of them the socalled boat people, primarily Vietnamese of ethnic Chinese background, who took to the ocean in overcrowded vessels, hoping that some ship would pick them up and offer sanctuary. Hundreds of thousands were placed in other nations or remain in overcrowded refugee camps administered by the United Nations.

#### The Present Picture

Like other immigrants, the refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia face a difficult adjustment. Few expect to return to their homeland for visits, and fewer expect to return there permanently. Therefore, many look to the United States as their permanent home and the home of their children. However, the adult immigrants still accept jobs well below their occupational positions in Southeast Asia; geographic mobility has been accompanied by downward social mobility. For example, only a small fraction of refugees employed as managers in Vietnam have been employed in similar positions in the United States.

Language is also a factor in adjustment by the refugees; a person trained as a manager cannot hold that position in the United States until he or she is fairly fluent in English. The available data indicate that refugees from Vietnam have increased their earnings rapidly, often by working long hours. Partly because Southeast Asians comprise significantly different subgroups, assimilation and acceptance are not likely to occur at the same rate for all.

Although most refugee children spoke no English upon their arrival here, they have done extremely well in school. Studies indicate that immigrant parents place

#### gook syndrome

David Riesman's phrase describing Americans' tendency to stereotype Asians and to regard them as all alike and undesirable.





Vietnamese Americans are sometimes divided over their loyalty to their "home country." Some Vietnamese in the United States make a point of displaying the "heritage flag" on the left that was last used by South Vietnam. They regard those who display the flag on the right, the flag of Vietnam and formerly North Vietnam, as embracing the past injustices committed under communism.

great emphasis on education and are pleased by the prospect of their children going to college—something very rare in their homelands. The children do very well with this encouragement, which is not unlike that offered by Mexican immigrants to their children, as we discussed in Chapter 10. It remains to be seen whether this motivation will decline as the next young generation looks more to their American peers as role models.

The picture for young Southeast Asians in the United States is not completely pleasant. Crime is present in almost all ethnic groups, but some fear that in this case it has two very ugly aspects. Some of this crime may represent reprisals for the war: anti-Communists and communist sympathizers who continue their conflicts here. At the same time, gangs are emerging as young people seek the support of close-knit groups even if they engage in illegal and violent activities. Of course, this pattern is very similar to that followed by all groups in the United States. Indeed, defiance of authority can be regarded as a sign of assimilation. Another unpleasant but well-documented aspect of the present picture is the series of violent episodes directed at Southeast Asians by Whites and others expressing resentment over their employment or even their mere presence (Alvord 2000; Zhou and Bankston 1998).

In contrast to its inaction concerning earlier immigrant groups, the federal government involved itself conspicuously in locating homes for the refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Pressured by many communities afraid of being overwhelmed by immigrants, government agencies attempted to disperse the refugees throughout the nation. Such efforts failed, mostly because the refugees, like European immigrants before them, sought out their compatriots. As a result, Southeast Asian communities and neighborhoods have become visible, especially in California and Texas. In such areas, where immigrants from Asia have reestablished some cultural practices from their homeland, a more pluralistic solution to their adjustment seems a possible alternative to complete assimilation. Also, Southeast Asians living outside metropolitan areas may make frequent trips to major urban areas, where they can stock up on food, books, and even videotapes in their native language (Aguillar-San Juan 1998; Mui 2001).

In 1995, the United States initiated normal diplomatic relations with Vietnam, which is leading to more movement between the nations. Gradually, Vietnamese Americans are re-

341

turning to visit but generally not to take up permanent residence. **Viet Kieu**, Vietnamese living abroad, are making the return—some 270,000 in 1996 compared with only 80,000 four years earlier. Generational issues are also merging as time passes. In Vietnamese communities from California to Virginia, splits emerge over a powerful symbol—under what flag to unite a nationality. Merchants, home residents, and college Vietnamese student organizations take a stand by whether they decide to display the yellow with red bars flag of the now-defunct South Vietnam, sometimes called the "heritage flag," or the red with yellow star flag of the current (and communist) Vietnam (Avila 2004; Lamb 1997).

Meanwhile, for the more than 1.4 million Vietnamese Americans who remain, settlement patterns here vary. Little Saigons can be found in major cities in the United States long after the former South Vietnam capital of Saigon became Ho Chi Min City. Like many other immigrant groups in the second generation, some have moved into suburbs where residential patterns tend to be rather dispersed but one can still spot mini-malls with Vietnamese restaurants and grocery stores—some even sporting a sloping red-tiled roof. Other Vietnamese Americans remain in rural areas such as the Gulf Coast fisherman left homeless by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 (Aguilar-San Juan 2005; M. Cooper 2005).

#### **Case Study: A Hmong Community**

Wausau (population 38,000) is a community in rural Wisconsin, best known, perhaps, for the insurance company bearing its name. To sociologists, it is distinctive for its sizable Hmong (pronounced "Mong") population. Hmong come from rural areas of Laos and Vietnam where they had been recruited to work for the CIA during the Vietnam War. This association made life very difficult for them after the United States pulled out. Hence, many immigrated and the United States has a relatively open policy to their becoming permanent residents. Wausau finds itself with the greatest percentage of Hmong of any city in Wisconsin. Hmong and a few other Southeast Asians account for 12 percent of the city's population and 25 percent of its public school students (Chan 1994: T. Jones 2003; Torriero 2004a).

The Hmong, who now number 186,000, immigrated to the United States from Laos and Vietnam after the end of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam in April 1975. Like other refugees at the time, the first Hmong came to Wausau invited by religious groups. Others followed as they found the surrounding agricultural lands were places they could find work. Coming from a very rural peasant society, the immigrants faced dramatic adjustment upon arrival in the United States (Hein 2000; T. Jones 2003).



Despite objections by the Hmong and sympathetic White citizens, a Wisconsin county with a large presence of Hmong made English the official language—a move with little practical significance but one that spoke loudly in terms of symbolism.

#### Viet Kieu

Vietnamese living abroad such as in the United States.

Wausau school officials believed that progress in teaching the Hmong English was stymied because the newcomers continued to associate with each other and spoke only their native tongue. In the fall of 1993, the Wausau school board decided to distribute the Hmong and other poor students more evenly by restructuring its elementary schools in a scheme that required two-way busing.

Recalls of elected officials are rare in the United States, but in December 1993, opponents of the busing plan organized a special election that led to the removal of the five board members. This left the Wausau board with a majority who opposed the busing plan that had integrated Asian American youngsters into mostly White elementary schools. By 2006, neighborhood schools played an important role in Wausau so that among elementary schools, the proportion of Hmong children ranged from 2 percent Hmong, to 52 percent (Seibert 2002; Wausau School District 2006).

How events will unfold in Wausau are unclear. However, positive signs are identifiable in Wausau and other centers of Hmong life in the United States. Immigrants and their children are moving into nonagricultural occupations. Enrollment in citizenship classes is growing. The Wausau Area Hmong Mutual Association, funded by a federal grant and the local United Way, offers housing assistance. Although many struggle to make a go of it economically, large numbers are able to move off public assistance. Language barriers and lack of formal schooling still are barriers encountered by older Hmong residents, but the younger generation is emerging to face some of the same identity and assimilation questions experienced by other Asian American groups (Peckham 2002).

The challenges facing the Hmong extend well beyond Wausau, Wisconsin. In other cities with concentrations of Hmong immigrants, disputes break out over contemporary U.S. policies. Hmong were recruited by the U.S. military intelligence in the Vietnam War to gather information about communists. To this day, occasional violence occurs in the Hmong community over whether the United States might lift trade barriers with the communist-run government of Laos. Finally in 2004, the United States, recognizing the special role that the Hmong people played in the Vietnam conflict era, agreed to accept thousands of Hmong people that had been in overseas refugee camps for thirty years (Aglionby 2004; Torriero 2004b).

## **Korean Americans**

The population of Korean Americans, with more than 1.2 million in 2005 (see Figure 12.2), is now the fifth largest Asian American group, yet Korean Americans often are overlooked in studies in favor of groups such as Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans, who have a longer historical tradition.

#### **Historical Background**

Today's Korean American community is the result of three waves of immigration. The initial wave of a little more than 7,000 immigrants came to the United States between 1903 and 1910, when laborers migrated to Hawaii. Under Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945), Korean migration was halted except for a few hundred "picture brides" allowed to join their prospective husbands.

The second wave took place during and after the Korean War, accounting for about 14,000 immigrants from 1951 through 1964. Most of these immigrants were war orphans and wives of American servicemen. Little research has been done on these first two periods of immigration.

The third wave was initiated by the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, which made it much easier for Koreans to immigrate. In the four years before passage of the act, Koreans accounted for only 7 of every 1,000 immigrants. In the first four years

343

after the act's passage, 38 of every 1,000 immigrants to the United States were Korean. This third wave, which continues today, reflects the admission priorities set up in the 1965 immigration law. These immigrants have been well educated and have arrived in the United States with professional skills (Min 1995).

However, many of the most recent immigrants must at least initially settle for positions of lower responsibility than those they held in Korea and must pass through a period of "exigency" or disenchantment, as described in Chapter 2. The problems documented reflect the pain of adjustment: stress, loneliness, alcoholism, family strife, and mental disorders. Korean American immigrants who accompanied their parents to the United States when young now occupy a middle, marginal position between the cultures of Korea and the United States. They have also been called the **ilchomose**, or "1.5 generation." Today, they are middle-aged, remain bilingual and bicultural, and tend to form the professional class in the Korean American community (Hurh 1998; Kim 2006).

#### The Present Picture

Today's young Korean Americans face many of the cultural conflicts common to any initial generation born in a new country. The parents may speak the native tongue, but the signs on the road to opportunity are in the English language, and the road itself runs through U.S. culture. It is very difficult to maintain a sense of Korean culture in the United States; the host society is not particularly helpful. Although the United States fought a war there and U.S. troops remain in South Korea, Korean culture is very foreign to contemporary Americans. In the few studies of attitudes toward Koreans, White Americans respond with vague, negative attitudes or simply lump Korean Americans with other Asian groups.

Studies by social scientists indicate that Korean Americans face many problems typical for immigrants, such as difficulties with language. In Los Angeles, home to the largest concentration, more than 100 churches have only Korean-language services, and local television stations feature several hours of Korean programs. The Korean immigrants' high level of education should help them cope with the challenge. Although Korean Americans stress conventional Western schooling as a means to success, Korean schools have also been established in major cities. Typically operated on Saturday afternoons, they offer classes in Korean history, customs, music, and language to help students maintain their cultural identity (Abelmann and Lie 1995; Hurh and Kim 1982, 1984; D. Lee 1992).



#### ilchomose

The 1.5 generation of Korean Americans-those who immigrated into the United States as children.

A large proportion of Asian Americans work as shop managers in neighborhoods serving minority clientele. A though typically the relationships are businesslike, for many low-income residents their only interaction with local merchants is with Asian Americans including this Korean American, shop owner pictured here. Korean American women commonly participate in the labor force, as do many other Asian American women. About 60 percent of U.S.-born Korean American women and half the women born abroad work in the labor force. These figures may not seem striking compared with the data for White women, but the cultural differences make the figures more significant. Korean women come here from a family system with established, well-defined marital roles: The woman is expected to serve as homemaker and mother only. Although these roles are carried over to the United States, because of their husbands' struggles to establish themselves, women are pressed to help support their families financially as well.

Many Korean American men begin small service or retail businesses and gradually involve their wives in the business. Wages do not matter as the household mobilizes to make a profitable enterprise out of a marginal business. Under economic pressure, Korean American women must move away from traditional cultural roles. However, the move is only partial; studies show that despite the high rate of participation in the labor force by Korean immigrant wives, first-generation immigrant couples continue in sharply divided gender roles in other aspects of daily living.

Korean American businesses are seldom major operations; most are small. They do benefit from a special form of development capital (or cash) used to subsidize businesses, called a **kye** (pronounced "kay"). Korean Americans pool their money through the kye, an association that grants members money on a rotating basis to allow them to gain access to additional capital. Kyes depend on trust and are not protected by laws or insurance, as bank loans are. Kyes work as follows. Say, for example, that twelve people agree to contribute \$500 a year. Then, once a year, one of these individuals receives \$6,000. Few records are kept because the entire system is built on trust and friendship. Rotating credit associations are not unique to Korean Americans; West Indians and Ethiopians have used them in the United States, for example. Not all Korean business entrepreneurs use the kye, but it does represent a significant source of capital. A 1984 Chicago survey revealed that 34 percent of Korean merchants relied on a kye.

In the early 1990s, nationwide attention was given to the friction between Korean Americans and other subordinate groups, primarily African Americans but also Hispanics. In New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago, Korean American merchants confronted African Americans who were allegedly robbing them. The African American neighborhood groups sometimes responded with hostility to what they perceived as the disrespect and arrogance of the Korean American entrepreneurs toward their Black customers. Such friction is not new; earlier generations of Jewish, Italian, and Arab merchants encountered similar hostility from what to outsiders seems an unlikely source, another oppressed subordinate group. The contemporary conflict was dramatized in Spike Lee's 1989 movie *Do the Right Thing*, in which African Americans and Korean Americans clashed. The situation arose because Korean Americans are the latest immigrant group prepared to cater to the needs of the inner city that has been abandoned by those who have moved up the economic ladder (Hurh 1998; Kang and Richardson 2002).

The tension that can arise between subordinate groups gained national attention during the 1992 riots in south central Los Angeles. In that city's poor areas, the only shops in which to buy groceries, liquor, or gasoline are owned by Korean immigrants. They have largely replaced the White business owners who left the ghetto area after the 1965 Watts riot. African Americans were well aware of the dominant role Korean Americans played in their local retail market. The 1991 fatal shooting of a 15-year-old Black girl by a Korean grocer in a dispute over a payment for orange juice had previously fueled some Blacks' resentment of the Koreans. The resentment grew when the grocer, convicted of manslaughter, had her prison sentence waived by a judge in favor of a five-year probation period.

#### kye

Rotating credit system used by Korean Americans to subsidize the start of businesses

345

The 1992 riots focused in part on retailers in south central Los Angeles and, therefore, on Korean Americans. During the unrest, 2,000 Korean businesses valued at \$400 million were destroyed. Desire to succeed had led Korean Americans to the inner city, where they did not face competition from Whites. But it also meant that they had to deal on a daily basis with the frustration of another minority group. As a direct outgrowth of the violence and tension, numerous cross-ethnic groups have been organized in Los Angeles and other cities, such as Chicago and New York City, to improve relations between Korean Americans and other subordinate groups (Yi 2006).

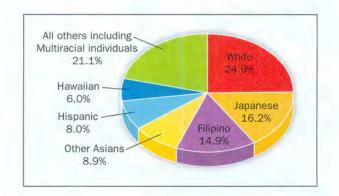
Among Korean Americans, the church is the most visible organization holding the group together. Half the immigrants were affiliated with Christian churches before immigrating. One study of Koreans in Chicago and Los Angeles found that 70 percent were affiliated with Korean ethnic churches, mostly Presbyterian, with small numbers of Catholics and Methodists. Korean ethnic churches are the fastest-growing segment of the Presbyterian and Methodist faiths. The church performs an important function, apart from its religious one, in giving Korean Americans a sense of attachment and a practical way to meet other Korean Americans. The churches are much more than simply sites for religious services; they assume multiple secular roles for the Korean community. As the second generation seeks a church with which to affiliate as adults, they may find the ethnic church and its Korean-language services less attractive, but for now, the fellowship in which Korean Americans participate is both spiritual and ethnic (Kwon et al. 2001).

# Hawaii and Its People

The entire state of Hawaii (or Hawai'i) appears to be the complete embodiment of cultural diversity. Nevertheless, despite a dramatic blending of different races living together, prejudice, discrimination, and pressure to assimilate are very much present in Hawaii. As we will see, life on the island is much closer to that in the rest of the country than to the ideal of a pluralistic society. Hawaii's population is unquestionably diverse, as shown in Figure 12.3. To grasp contemporary social relationships, we must first understand the historical circumstances that brought races together on the islands: the various Asian peoples and the **Haoles** (pronounced "hah-oh-lehs"), the term often used to refer to Whites in Hawaii.

#### Historical Background

Geographically remote, Hawaii was initially populated by Polynesian people who had their first contact with Europeans in 1778, when English explorer Captain James Cook arrived. The Hawaiians (who killed Cook) tolerated the subsequent arrival of plantation operators and missionaries. Fortunately, the Hawaiian people were united under a monarchy and



Haoles Hawaiian term for Caucasians.

#### FIGURE 12.3 Hawaii: Racial Composition, 2005

Source: Author based on the American Community Survey 2005, Bureau of the Census.

received respect from the European immigrants, a respect that developed into a spirit of goodwill. Slavery was never introduced, even during the colonial period, as it was in so many areas of the Western Hemisphere. Nevertheless, the effect of the White arrival on the Hawaiians themselves was disastrous. Civil warfare and disease had reduced the number of full-blooded natives to fewer than 30,000 by 1900, and the number is probably well under 10,000 now. Meanwhile, large sugarcane plantations imported laborers from China, Portugal, Japan, and, in the early 1900s, the Philippines, Korea, and Puerto Rico.

In 1893, a revolution encouraged by foreign commercial interests overthrew the monarchy. During the revolution, the United States landed troops, and five years later, Hawaii was annexed as a territory to the United States. The 1900 Organic Act guaranteed racial equality, but foreign rule dealt a devastating psychological blow to the proud Hawaiian people. American rule had mixed effects on relations between the races. Citizenship laws granted civil rights to all those born on the islands, not just the wealthy Haoles. However, the anti-Asian laws still applied, excluding the Chinese and Japanese from political participation.

The twentieth century witnessed Hawaii's transition from a plantation frontier to the fiftieth state and an integral part of the national economy. During that transition, Hawaii became a strategic military outpost, although that role has had only a limited effect on race relations. Even the attack on Pearl Harbor had little influence on Japanese Americans in Hawaii.

#### The Present Picture

Hawaii has achieved some fame for its good race relations. Tourists, who are predominantly White, have come from the mainland and have seen and generally accepted the racial harmony. Admittedly, Waikiki Beach, where large numbers of tourists congregate, is atypical of the islands, but even their tourists cannot ignore the differences in intergroup relations. If they look closely they will see that the low-wage workers in the resorts and tourist industry tend to be disproportionately of Asian descent (Adler and Adler 2005).

One clear indication of the multicultural nature of the islands is the degree of exogamy: marrying outside one's own group. The out-group marriage rate varies annually but seems to be stabilizing; about 45 percent of all marriages performed in the state involving residents are exogamous. The rate varies by group, from a low of 41 percent among Haoles to 62 percent among Chinese Americans (Hawaii Department of Health 2001, Table 80).



A 2001 march of 1,500 people through downtown Honolulu protesting that insufficient progress has been made in the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. Note they are flying the Hawaiian state flag upside down.





A closer look shows that equality between the people is not absolute, let alone between the races as groups. The pineapple and sugarcane plantation legacy persists. As recently as 1972, an estimate placed 97 percent of Hawaiian workers in the employ of forty landholders. One estate alone owned nearly one-tenth of the state's territory. Native Hawaiians tend to be least well off, working land they do not own. Japanese Americans and Haoles dominate the economy. The **AJAs** (Americans of Japanese ancestry, as they are called in Hawaii) are especially important in education, where they account for nearly 58 percent of teachers, and in politics, where they dominate. The political activity of the AJAs certainly contrasts to that of mainland Japanese Americans. The majority of the state legislators are AJAs. Chinese Americans have been successful in business in Hawaii, but almost all top positions are filled by Haoles. Recent immigrants from Asia and, more significantly, even long-term residents of Filipino and Hawaiian descent showed little evidence of sharing in Hawaii's overall picture of affluence (Kaser 1977; W. Turner 1972; Wright and Gardner 1983).

Prejudice and discrimination are not alien to Hawaii. Attitudinal surveys show definite racial preferences and sensitivity to color differences. Housing surveys taken before the passage of civil rights legislation showed that many people were committed to nondiscrimination, but racial preferences were still present. Certain groups sometimes dominate residential neighborhoods, but there are no racial ghettos. The various racial groups are not distributed uniformly among the islands, but they are clustered rather than sharply segregated.

Discrimination by exclusive social clubs exists but is diminishing. Groups such as the Rotary and Lions' clubs opened their doors to Asians in Hawaii before they did on the mainland. Undoubtedly, Hawaii has gradually absorbed the mainland's racial consciousness, but a contrast between the islands and the rest of the nation remains. Evidence of racial harmony is much more abundant. Hawaii has never known forced school segregation, Jim Crow laws, slavery, or laws prohibiting racial intermarriage.

The multiracial character of the islands will not change quickly, but the identity of the native Hawaiians has already been overwhelmed. Though rich in cultural heritage, they tend to be very poor and often view the U.S. occupation as the beginning of their cultural and economic downfall. For centuries they traditionally placed the earthly remains of their loved ones in isolated caves. However, as these "archaeological sites" were found by Haoles, the funeral remains made their way to the Bishop Museum, which is the national historical museum located in Honolulu. Now Native Hawaiians are using the Native American Graces and Protection Act (NAGPRA) described in Chapter 6 to get the remains back and rebury them appropriately (LaDuke 2006).

"*E Heluuelu Kaqkou*," Nako'hlani Warrington tells her third graders ("Let's read together"). She has no need to translate because is teaching at the public immersion school where all instruction is in the Hawaiian language. Not too long ago it was assumed that Hawaiian would only be spoken by linguistic scholars, but efforts to revive it in general conversation have resulted in its use well beyond "Aloha." In 1983, only 1,500 people were considered native speakers; now native speakers number 68,000. This goes well beyond symbolic ethnicity. Language perpetuity is being combined with a solid grade school education (Edles 2004; Staton 2004b).

The **sovereignty movement** is the effort by the indigenous people of Hawaii to secure a measure of self-government and restoration of their lands. Its roots and significance to the people are very similar to the sovereignty efforts by tribal people on the continental United States. The growing sovereignty movement has also sought restoration of the native Hawaiian land that has been lost to Anglos over the last century or compensation for it. Sometimes, the native Hawaiians successfully form alliances with environmental groups that want to halt further commercial development on the islands. In 1996, a native Hawaiian vote was held seeking a response to the question, "Shall the Hawaiian people elect delegates to propose a native Hawaiian government?" The results indicated that

#### AJAs

Americans of Japanese ancestry in Hawaii.

sovereignty movement Effort by the indigenous people of Hawaii to secure a measure of self-government and restoration of their lands.



#### panethnicity

The development of solidarity between ethnic subgroups, as reflected in the terms Hispanic or Asian American. 73 percent voting were in favor of such a government structure. Since then, the state Office of Hawaiian Affairs has sought to create a registry of Hawaiians that is only about halfway to having all the estimated 200,000 people of significant Hawaiian descent on the islands to come forward (Cart 2001; Staton 2004a; Ward 1996).

Up to the present, Hawaii's congressional delegation has sought passage of the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, or the Akaka Bill as it is called after the state Senator's Daniel Akaka. It would give people of Hawaiian ancestry more say over resources, would provide affordable housing, take steps to preserve culture, and create a means by which they could better express their grievances. A recent vote in 2006 passed the House but fell short by four votes of overcoming a legislative roadblock to prevent it from even being discussed on the floor of the Senate (Akaka 2006; Niesse 2006).

In an absolute sense, Hawaii is not a racial paradise. Certain occupations and even social classes tend to be dominated by a single racial group. Hawaii is not immune to intolerance, and it is expected that the people will not totally resist prejudice as the island's isolation is reduced. However, newcomers to the islands do set aside some of their old stereotypes and prejudices. The future of race relations in Hawaii is uncertain, but relative to the mainland and much of the world, Hawaii's race relations are characterized more by harmony than by discord.

# Conclusion

D espite the diversity among groups of Asian Americans or Asian Pacific Islanders, they have spent generations being treated as a monolithic group. Out of similar experiences have come panethnic identities in which people share a self-image, as do African Americans or Whites of European descent. As we noted in Chapter 1, **panethnicity** is the development of solidarity between ethnic subgroups. Are Asian Americans finding a panethnic identity? It is true that, in the United States, extremely different Asian nationalities have been lumped together in past discrimination and present stereotyping. Asian Americans now see the need to unify their diverse subgroups. After centuries of animosity between ethnic groups in Asia, any feelings of community among Asian Americans must develop anew here; they bring none with them.

Asian Americans are a rapidly growing group, with about 13 million now living in the United States. Despite striking differences between them, they are often viewed as if they arrived all at once and from one culture. Also, they are often characterized as a successful or model minority. However, individual cases of success and some impressive group data do not imply that the diverse group of peoples who make up the Asian American community are uniformly successful. Indeed, despite high levels of formal schooling, Asian Americans earn far less than Whites with comparable education and continue to be victims of discriminatory employment practices. The diversity within the Asian American community belies the similarity suggested by the panethnic label *Asian American.* Chinese and Japanese Americans share a history of several generations in the United States. Filipinos are veterans of a half-century of direct U.S. colonization and a cooperative role with the military. In contrast, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Japanese are associated in a negative way with three wars. Korean Americans come from a nation that still has a major U.S. military presence and a persisting "cold war" mentality. Korean Americans and Chinese Americans have taken on middleman roles, whereas Filipinos, Asian Indians, and Japanese Americans tend to avoid the ethnic enclave pattern.

Who are the Asian Americans? This chapter has begun to answer that question by focusing on four of the larger groups: Asian Indians, Filipino Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, and Korean Americans. Hawaii is a useful model because its harmonious social relationships cross racial lines. Although it is not an interracial paradise, Hawaii does illustrate that, given proper historical and economic conditions, continuing conflict is not inevitable. Chinese and Japanese Americans, the subjects of Chapter 13, have experienced problems in American society despite striving to achieve economic and social equality with the dominant culture. AJAs 347 arranged marriage 336 desi 335 gook syndrome 339 Haoles 345

# **Key Terms**

ilchomose 343 kye 344 middlemen minorities 328 model or ideal minority 325 panethnicity 348

racial profiling 331 set-asides 329 sovereignty movement 347 Viet Kieu 341 yellow peril 330

## **Review Questions**

- 1. How is the model minority image a disservice to both Asian Americans and other subordinate racial and ethnic groups?
- 2. In what respects has the mass media image of Asian Americans been both undifferentiated and negative?
- **3.** How has the tendency of many Korean Americans to help each other been an asset but also been viewed with suspicion by those outside their community?
- 4. What critical events or legislative acts increased each Asian American group's immigration into the United States?
- **5.** To what degree do race relations in Hawaii offer both promise and a chilling dose of reality to the future of race and ethnicity on the mainland?

# **Critical Thinking**

- 1. How is the model minority image reinforced by images in the media?
- **2.** Coming of age is difficult for anyone, given the ambiguities of adolescence in the United States. How is it doubly difficult for the children of immigrants? How do you think the immigrants themselves, such as those from Asia, view this process?
- **3.** *American Indians, Hispanics,* and *Asian Americans* are all convenient terms to refer to diverse groups of people. Do you see these broad umbrella terms as being more appropriate for one group than for the others?

# Internet Connections—Research Navigator™

Follow the instructions found on page 35 of this text to access the features of Research Navigator<sup>™</sup>. Once at the Web site, enter your Login Name and Password. Then, to use the ContentSelect database, enter keywords such as "arranged marriages," "desi," and "Hmong," and the search engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology, and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.

# Asian Americans

# CHAPTER 9

# "Model Minorities"?

variety of groups from Asia are becoming increasingly prominent in the United States. Although they are often seen as the same and classified into a single category in government reports, these groups vary in their languages, in their cultural and physical characteristics, and in their experiences in the United States. Some of these groups are truly newcomers to America, but others have roots in this country stretching back for more than 150 years.

In this chapter, we will begin with an overview of the largest Asian American groups and then briefly examine the traditions and customs that they bring with them to America. We will then focus on the two oldest Asian American groups, Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans, and cover some of the newer Asian groups more briefly. Throughout the chapter, we will be especially concerned with the perception that Asian Americans in general and Chinese and Japanese Americans in particular are *"model minorities"*: successful, affluent, highly educated people who do not suffer from the problems usually associated with minority group status. How accurate is this view? Have Asian Americans forged a pathway to upward mobility that could be followed by other groups? Do the concepts and theories that have guided this text (particularly the Blauner and Noel hypotheses) apply? Does the success of these groups mean that the United States is truly an open, fair, and just society? We explore these questions throughout the chapter.



Exhibit 9.1 lists the largest Asian American groups and illustrates their diversity. As was the case with American Indians and Hispanic Americans, *Asian American* is a convenient label imposed by the larger society (and by government agencies like the Census Bureau) that de-emphasizes the differences between the groups. The six largest groups are distinct from each other in culture and physical appearance, and each has had its own unique experience in America. A variety of smaller Asian American groups (Hmongs, Pakistanis, Cambodians, and Laotians, for example), not covered in this chapter, further add to this diversity.

Several features of Exhibit 9.1 are worth noting. First, Asian Americans are a small fraction of the total U.S. population. Even when aggregated, they account for less than 5% of all Americans. In contrast, African Americans and Hispanic Americans are each more than 12% of the total population (see Exhibit 1.1). Second, most Asian American groups have grown dramatically in recent decades, largely because of high rates of immigration since the 1965 changes in U.S. immigration policy. All of the groups listed in Exhibit 9.1 grew faster than the total population between 1990 and 2006. The Japanese American population grew at the

		here success	The states		CALLER DE C
Group	1990	2000	2006	Growth (Number of Times Larger), (1990–2006)	Percentage of Total Population, 2006
Chinese	1,645,472	2,633,849	3,565,458	2.2	1.2
Filipino	1,406,770	2,089,701	2,915,745	2.1	1.0
Asian Indians	815,447	1,785,336	2,662,112	3.3	0.9
Vietnamese	614,547	1,171,776	1,599,394	2.6	0.5
Koreans	798,849	1,148,951	1,520,703	1.9	0.5
Japanese	847,562	958,945	1,221,773	1.4	0.4
All Asian American Groups	6,908,638	11,070,913	14,656,608	2.1	4.5
Percentage of U.S. Population	2.8%	3.9%	4.5%	2.2	
Total U.S. Population	248,710,000	281,422,000	299,398 <mark>,48</mark> 5	1.2	

# Size and Growth of Asian American Groups by Nation or Territory of Origin, 1990–2006 (Alone and in Combination)

SOURCE: 1990: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990); 2000: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000f); 2006: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).

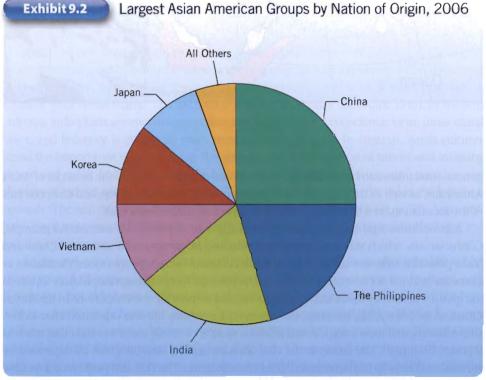
Exhibit 9.1

slowest rate (largely because immigration from Japan has been low in recent decades), but the number of Asian Indians more than tripled, and several other groups more than doubled. This rapid growth is projected to continue for decades to come, and the impact of Asian Americans on everyday life and American culture will increase accordingly. Today, fewer than 5 out of every 100 Americans are in this group, but this ratio will grow to nearly 10 out of every 100 by the year 2050 (see Exhibit 1.1). The relative sizes of the largest Asian American groups are presented in Exhibit 9.2, and their nations of origin are displayed in Exhibit 9.3.

Like Hispanic Americans, most Asian American groups have a high percentage of foreign-born members. The great majority of four of the six groups listed in Exhibit 9.4 are first generation, and even Japanese Americans, the lowest-ranked group, more than double the national norm for foreign-born members.

## Origins and Cultures

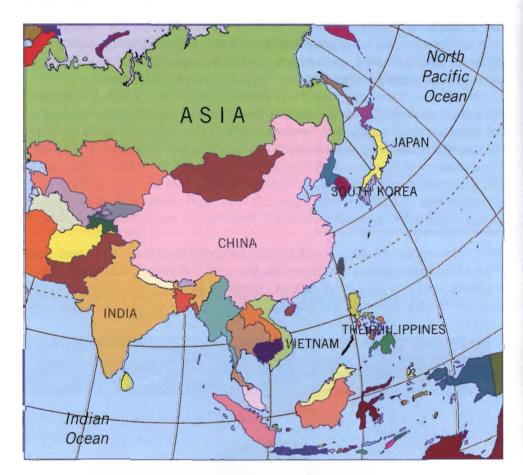
Asian Americans have brought a wealth of traditions to the United States. They speak many different languages and practice religions as diverse as Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. Asian cultures predate the founding of the United States by centuries or even millennia. Although no two of these cultures are the same, some



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).

Exhibit 9.3

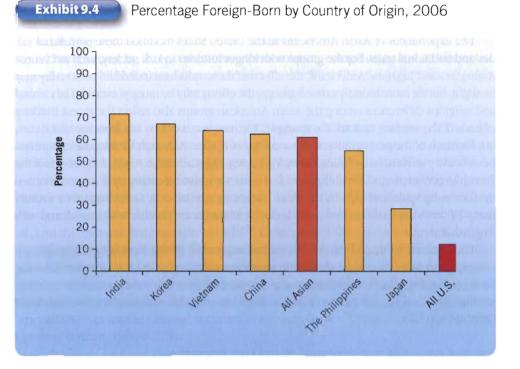
Map Showing China, the Philippines, India, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan



general similarities can be identified. These cultural traits have shaped the behavior of Asiam Americans, as well as the perceptions of members of the dominant group, and compose patt of the foundation on which Asian American experiences have been built.

Asian cultures tend to stress group membership over individual self-interest. For example, Confucianism, which was the dominant ethical and moral system in traditional China and had a powerful influence on many other Asian cultures, counsels people to see themselves as elements in larger social systems and status hierarchies. Confucianism emphasizes loyalty to the group, conformity to societal expectations, and respect for one's superiors. In traditional China, as in other Asian societies, the business of everyday life was organized around kinship relations, and most interpersonal relations were with family members and other relatives (Lyman, 1974, p. 9). The family or the clam often owned the land on which all depended for survival, and kinship ties determined inheritance patterns. The clan also performed a number of crucial social functions, including arranging marriages, settling disputes between individuals, and organizing festivals and holidays.

UNDERSTANDING DOMINANT-MINORITY RELATIONS;



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).

Asian cultures stress sensitivity to the opinions and judgments of others and the importance of avoiding public embarrassment and not giving offense. Especially when discussing Japanese culture, these cultural tendencies are often contrasted with Western practices in terms of "guilt versus shame" and the nature of personal morality (Benedict, 1946). In Western cultures, individuals are encouraged to develop and abide by a conscience, or an inner moral voice, and behavior is guided by one's personal sense of guilt. In contrast, Asian cultures stress the importance of maintaining the respect and good opinion of others and avoiding shame and public humiliation. Group harmony, or *wa* in Japanese, is a central concern, and displays of individualism are discouraged. These characteristics are reflected in the Japanese proverb "The nail that sticks up must be hammered down" (Whiting, 1990, p. 70). Asian cultures emphasize proper behavior, conformity to convention and the judgments of others, and avoiding embarrassment and personal confrontations ("saving face").

Traditional Asian cultures were male dominated, and women were consigned to subordinate roles. A Chinese woman was expected to serve first her father, then her husband, and, if widowed, her eldest son. Confucianism also decreed that women should observe the Four Virtues: chastity and obedience, shyness, a pleasing demeanor, and skill in the performance of domestic duties (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 200). Women of high status in traditional China symbolized their subordination by binding their feet. This painful, crippling practice began early in life and required women to wrap their feet tightly to keep them artificially small. The bones in the arch were broken so that the toes could be bent under the foot, further decreasing the size of the foot. Bound feet were considered beautiful, but they also immobilized women and were intended to prevent them from "wandering away" from domestic and household duties (Jackson, 2000; Takaki, 1993, pp. 209–210).

The experiences of Asian Americans in the United States modified these patriarchal values and traditional traits. For the groups with longer histories in U.S. society, such as Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans, the effects of these values on individual personality may be slight, but for more recently arrived groups, the effects may be more powerful. The cultural and religious differences among the Asian American groups also reflect the recent histories of each of the sending nations. For example, Vietnam was a colony of China for 1,000 years, but for much of the past century, it was a colony of France. Although Vietnamese culture has been heavily influenced by China, many Vietnamese are Catholic, a result of the efforts of the French to convert them. The Philippines and India were also colonized by Western nations the former by Spain and then by the United States and the latter by Great Britain. As a result, many Filipinos are Catholic, and many Indian immigrants are familiar with English and with Anglo culture.

These examples are, of course, the merest suggestion of the diversity of these groups. In fact, Asian Americans, who share little more than a slight physical resemblance and some broad cultural similarities, are much more diverse than Hispanic Americans, who are overwhelmingly Catholic and share a common language and a historical connection with Spain (Min, 1995, p. 25).

Contact Situations and the Development of the Chinese American and Japanese American Communities

The earliest Asian groups to arrive in substantial numbers were from China and Japan. Their contact situations not only shaped their own histories but also affected the present situation of all Asian Americans in many ways. As we will see, the contact situations for both Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans featured massive rejection and discrimination. Both groups adapted to the racism of the larger society by forming enclaves, a strategy that eventually produced some major benefits for their descendants.

### Chinese Americans

Early Immigration and the Anti-Chinese Campaign. Immigrants from China to the United States began to arrive in the early 1800s and were generally motivated by the same kinds of social and economic forces that have inspired immigration everywhere for the past two centuries. Chinese immigrants were "pushed" to leave their homeland by the disruption of traditional social relations, caused by the colonization of much of China by more industrialized European nations, and by rapid population growth (Chan, 1990; Lyman, 1974; Tsai, 1986). At the same time, these immigrants were "pulled" to the West Coast of the United States by the Gold Rush of 1849 and by other opportunities created by the development of the West.

The Noel hypothesis (see Chapter 4) provides a useful way to analyze the contact situation that developed between Chinese and Anglo-Americans in the mid-19th century. As you recall, Noel argues that racial or ethnic stratification will result when a contact situation is characterized by three conditions: ethnocentrism, competition, and a differential in power. Once all three conditions were met on the West Coast, a vigorous campaign against the Chinese began, and the group was pushed into a subordinate, disadvantaged position.

Ethnocentrism based on racial, cultural, and language differences was present from the beginning, but at first, competition for jobs between Chinese immigrants and native-born workers was muted by a robust, rapidly growing economy and an abundance of jobs. At first, politicians, newspaper editorial writers, and business leaders praised the Chinese for their industriousness and tirelessness (Tsai, 1986, p. 17). Before long, however, the economic boom slowed, and the supply of jobs began to dry up. The Gold Rush petered out, and the transcontinental railroad, which thousands of Chinese workers had helped to build, was completed in 1869. The migration of Anglo-Americans from the East continued, and competition for jobs and other resources increased. An anti-Chinese campaign of harassment, discrimination, and violent attacks began. In 1871, in Los Angeles, a mob of "several hundred whites shot, hanged, and stabbed 19 Chinese to death" (Tsai, 1986, p. 67). Other attacks against the Chinese occurred in Denver; Seattle; Tacoma; and Rock Springs, Wyoming (Lyman, 1974, p. 77).

As the West Coast economy changed, the Chinese came to be seen as a threat, and elements of the dominant group tried to limit competition. The Chinese were a small group there were only about 100,000 in the entire country in 1870—and by law, they were not permitted to become citizens. Hence, they controlled few power resources with which to withstand these attacks. During the 1870s, Chinese workers were forced out of most sectors of the mainstream economy, and in 1882, the anti-Chinese campaign experienced its ultimate triumph when the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, banning virtually all immigration from China. The act was one of the first restrictive immigration laws and was aimed solely at the Chinese. It established a "rigid competitive" relationship between the groups (see Chapter 5) and eliminated the threat presented by Chinese labor by excluding Chinese from American society.

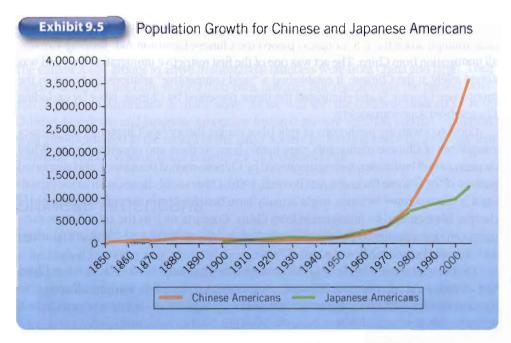
Consistent with the predictions of split labor market theory (see Chapter 3), the primary antagonists of Chinese immigrants were native-born workers and organized labor. White owners of small businesses, feeling threatened by Chinese-owned businesses, also supported passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act (Boswell, 1986). Other social classes, such as the capitalists who owned larger factories, might actually have benefited from the continued supply of cheaper labor created by immigration from China. Conflicts such as the anti-Chinese campaign can be especially intense because they can confound racial and ethnic antagonisms with disputes between different social classes.

The ban on immigration from China remained in effect until World War II, when China was awarded a yearly quota of 105 immigrants in recognition of its wartime alliance with the United States. However, large-scale immigration from China did not resume until federal policy was revised in the 1960s.

Population Trends and the "Delayed" Second Generation. Following the Chinese Exclusion Act, the number of Chinese in the United States actually declined (see Exhibit 9.5),

as some immigrants passed away or returned to China and were not replaced by newcomers. The huge majority of Chinese immigrants in the 19th century had been young adult male sojourners who intended to work hard, save money, and return to their homes in China (Chan, 1990, p. 66). After 1882, it was difficult for anyone from China, male or female, to enter the United States, and the Chinese community in the United States remained overwhelmingly male for many decades. At the end of the 19th century, for example, males outnumbered females by more than 25 to 1, and the sex ratio did not approach parity for decades (Wong, 1995, p. 64; see also Ling, 2000). The scarcity of Chinese women in the United States delayed the second generation (the first born in the United States), and it wasn't until the 1920s, 80 years after immigration began, that as many as one third of all Chinese in the United States were native-born (Wong, 1995, p. 64).

The delayed second generation may have reinforced the exclusion of the Chinese American community, which began as a reaction to the overt discrimination of the dominant group (Chan, 1990, p. 66). The children of immigrants are usually much more acculturated, and their language facility and greater familiarity with the larger society often permits them to represent the group and speak for it more effectively. In the case of Chinese Americans (and other Asian groups), members of the second generation were citizens of the United States by birth, a status from which the immigrants were barred, and they had legal and political rights not available to their parents. Thus, the decades-long absence of a more Americanized, English-speaking generation increased the isolation of Chinese Americans.



SOURCE: Kitano (1980, p. 562); Lee (1998, p. 15); U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a); Xie & Goyette (2004).

The Ethnic Enclave, The Chinese became increasingly urbanized as the anti-Chinese campaign and rising racism took their toll. Forced out of towns and smaller cities, they settled in larger urban areas, such as San Francisco, which offered the safety of urban anonymity and ethnic neighborhoods where the old ways could be practiced and contact with the hostile larger society minimized. Chinatowns had existed since the start of the immigration, and they now took on added significance as safe havens from the storm of anti-Chinese venom. The Chinese withdrew to these neighborhoods and became an "invisible minority" (Tsai, 1986, p. 67).

These early Chinatowns were ethnic enclaves like those founded by Jews on the East Coast and the more recently founded Cuban community in Miami, and a similar process formed them. The earliest urban Chinese included merchants and skilled artisans who, like the early wave of Cuban immigrants, were experienced in commerce (Chan, 1990, <image>

of there are a solution the second

p. 44). They established businesses and retail stores that were typically small in scope and modest in profits. As the number of urban Chinese increased, the market for these enterprises became larger and more spatially concentrated. New services were required, the size of the cheap labor pool available to Chinese merchants and entrepreneurs increased, and the Chinatowns became the economic, cultural, and social centers of the community.

Within the Chinatowns, elaborate social structures developed that mirrored traditional China in many ways. The enforced segregation of the Chinese in America helped preserve much of the traditional food, dress, language, values, and religions of their homeland from the pressures of Americanization. The social structure was based on a variety of types of organizations, including family and clan groups and **huiguan**, or associations based on the region or district in China from which the immigrant had come. These organizations performed various, often overlapping, social and welfare services, including settling disputes, aiding new arrivals from their regions, and facilitating the development of mutual aid networks (Lai, 1980, p. 221; Lyman, 1974, pp. 32–37, 116–118). Life was not always peaceful in Chinatown, and there were numerous disputes over control of resources and the organizational infrastructure. In particular, secret societies called **tongs** contested the control and leadership of the merchant-led huiguan and the clan associations. These sometimes bloody conflicts were sensationalized in the American press as "Tong Wars," and they contributed to the popular stereotypes of Asians as exotic, mysterious, and dangerous (Lai, 1980, p. 222; Lyman, 1974, pp. 37–50).

#### Photo 9.1

Japanese American farmer hauling cauliflower, 1942. Within weeks, he will be in an internment camp.

© Corbis.

Despite these internal conflicts, American Chinatowns evolved into highly organized, largely self-contained communities, complete with their own leadership and decisionmaking structures. The internal "city government" of Chinatown was the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA). Dominated by the larger huiguan and clans, the CCBA coordinated and supplemented the activities of the various organizations and represented the interests of the community to the larger society.

The local CCBAs, along with other organizations, also attempted to combat the anti-Chinese campaign, speaking out against racial discrimination and filing numerous lawsuits to contest racist legislation (Lai, 1980, p. 223). The effectiveness of the protest efforts was handicapped by the lack of resources in the Chinese community and by the fact that Chinese immigrants could not become citizens. Attempts were made to mobilize international pressure to protest the treatment of the Chinese in the United States. At the time, however, China was itself colonized and dominated by other nations (including the United States). China was further weakened by internal turmoil and could mount no effective assistance for its citizens in the United States (Chan, 1990, p. 62).

Survival and Development. The Chinese American community survived despite the widespread poverty, discrimination, and pressures created by the unbalanced sex ratio. Members of the group began to seek opportunities in other regions, and Chinatowns appeared and grew in New York, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and many other cities.

The patterns of exclusion and discrimination that began during the 19th-century anti-Chinese campaign were common throughout the nation and continued well into the 20th century. Chinese Americans responded by finding economic opportunity in areas where dominant group competition for jobs was weak, continuing their tendency to be an "invisible" minority group. Very often, they started small businesses that either served other members of their own group (restaurants, for example) or relied on the patronage of the general public (laundries, for example). The jobs provided by these small businesses were the economic lifeblood of the community but were limited in the amount of income and wealth they could generate. Until recent decades, for example, most restaurants served primarily other Chinese, especially single males. Since their primary clientele was poor, the profit potential of these businesses was sharply limited. Laundries served the more affluent dominant group, but the returns from this enterprise declined as washers and dryers became increasingly widespread in homes throughout the nation. The population of Chinatown was generally too small to sustain more than these two primary commercial enterprises (Zhou, 1992, pp. 92–94).

As the decades passed, the enclave economy and the complex subsociety of Chinatown evolved. However, discrimination, combined with defensive self-segregation, ensured the continuation of poverty, limited job opportunities, and substandard housing. Relatively hidden from general view, Chinatown became the world in which the second generation grew to adulthood.

**The Second Generation**. Whereas the immigrant generation generally retained its native language and customs, the second generation was much more influenced by the larger culture. The institutional and organizational structures of Chinatown were created to serve the older, mostly male immigrant generation, but younger Chinese Americans tended to look beyond the enclave to fill their needs. They came in contact with the larger society through schools, churches, and voluntary organizations such as the YMCA and YWCA.

They abandoned many traditional customs and were less loyal to and interested in the clan and regional associations that the immigrant generation had constructed. They founded organizations of their own that were more compatible with their Americanized lifestyles (Lai, 1980, p. 225).

As with other minority groups, World War II was an important watershed for Chinese Americans. During the war, job opportunities outside the enclave increased, and after the war, many of the 8,000 Chinese Americans who served in the armed forces were able to take advantage of the GI Bill to further their education (Lai, 1980, p. 226). In the 1940s and 1950s, many second-generation Chinese Americans moved out of the enclave, away from the traditional neighborhoods, and pursued careers in the larger society. This group was mobile and Americanized, and with educational credentials comparable to the general population, they were prepared to seek success outside Chinatown.

In another departure from tradition, the women of the second generation also pursued education, and as early as 1960, median years of schooling for Chinese American women were slightly higher than for Chinese American men (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 48). Chinese American women also became more diverse in their occupational profile as the century progressed. In 1900, three quarters of all employed Chinese American women worked in manufacturing (usually in garment industry sweatshops or in canning factories) or in domestic work. By 1960, less than 2% were in domestic work, 32% were in clerical occupations, and 18% held professional jobs, often as teachers (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 209–211).

An American Success Story? The men and women of the second generation achieved considerable educational and occupational success and helped to establish the idea that Chinese Americans are a "model minority." A closer examination reveals, however, that the old traditions of anti-Chinese discrimination and prejudice continued to limit the life chances of even the best-educated members of this generation. Second-generation Chinese Americans earned less, on the average, and had less-favorable occupational profiles than comparably educated white Americans, a gap between qualifications and rewards that reflects persistent discrimination. Kitano and Daniels (1995, p. 50) conclude, for example, that although well-educated Chinese Americans could find good jobs in the mainstream economy, the highest, most lucrative positions—and those that required direct supervision of whites—were still closed to them (see also Hirschman & Wong, 1984).

Furthermore, many Chinese Americans, including many of those who stayed in the Chinatowns to operate the enclave economy, and the immigrants who began arriving after 1965, do not fit the image of success at all. A large percentage of these Chinese Americans face the same problems as do members of other colonized, excluded, exploited minority groups of color. They rely for survival on low-wage jobs in the garment industry, the service sector, and the small businesses of the enclave economy and are beset by poverty and powerlessness, much like the urban underclass segments of other groups.

Thus, Chinese Americans can be found at both ends of the spectrum of success and affluence, and the group is often said to be "bipolar" in its occupational structure (see Barringer, Takeuchi, & Levin, 1995; Takaki, 1993, pp. 415–416; Wong, 1995, pp. 77–78; Zhou & Logan, 1989). Although a high percentage of Chinese Americans are found in more desirable occupations—sustaining the idea of Asian success—others, less visible, are concentrated at the lowest levels of the society. Later in this chapter, we will again consider the socioeconomic status of Chinese Americans and the accuracy of the image of success and affluence.

## Japanese Americans

Immigration from Japan began to increase shortly after the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 took effect, in part to fill the gap in the labor supply created by the restrictive legislation (Kitano, 1980). The 1880 census counted only a few hundred Japanese in the United States, but the group increased rapidly over the next few decades. By 1910, the Japanese in the United States outnumbered the Chinese and remained the larger of the two groups until large-scale immigration resumed in the 1960s (see Exhibit 9.5).

The Anti-Japanese Campaign. The contact situation for Japanese immigrants resembled that of the Chinese. They immigrated to the same West Coast regions as the Chinese, entered the labor force in a similar position, and were a small group with few power resources. Predictably, the feelings and emotions generated by the anti-Chinese campaign transferred to them. By the early 1900s, an anti-Japanese campaign to limit competition was in full swing. Efforts were being made to establish a rigid competitive system of group relations and to exclude Japanese immigrants in the same way the Chinese had been barred (Kitano, 1980, p. 563; Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 59–60; Petersen, 1971, pp. 30–55).

Japanese immigration was partly curtailed in 1907 when a "gentlemen's agreement" was signed between Japan and the United States limiting the number of laborers Japan would allow to emigrate (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 59). This policy remained in effect until the United States changed its immigration policy in the 1920s and barred immigration from Japan completely. The end of Japanese immigration is largely responsible for the slow growth of the Japanese American population displayed in Exhibit 9.5.

Most Japanese immigrants, like the Chinese, were young male laborers who planned to eventually return to their homeland or bring their wives after they were established in their new country (Duleep, 1988, p. 24). The agreement of 1907 curtailed the immigration of men, but because of a loophole, females were able to continue to immigrate until the 1920s. Japanese Americans were thus able to maintain a relatively balanced sex ratio, marry, and begin families, and a second generation of Japanese Americans began to appear without much delay. Native-born Japanese numbered about half of the group by 1930 and were a majority of 63% on the eve of World War II (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 59).

The anti-Japanese movement also attempted to dislodge the group from agriculture. Many Japanese immigrants were skilled agriculturists, and farming proved to be their most promising avenue for advancement (Kitano, 1980, p. 563). In 1910, between 30% and 40% of all Japanese in California were engaged in agriculture; from 1900 to 1909, the number of independent Japanese farmers increased from fewer than 50 to about 6,000 (Jibou, 1988, p. 358).

Most of these immigrant farmers owned small plots of land, and they made up only a minuscule percentage of West Coast farmers (Jibou, 1988, pp. 357–358). Nonetheless, their presence and relative success did not go unnoticed and eventually stimulated discriminatory legislation, most notably the Alien Land Act, passed by the California legislature in 1913 (Kitano, 1980, p. 563). This bill made aliens who were ineligible for citizenship (effectively meaning only immigrants from Asia) to be also ineligible to own land. The act did not achieve its goal of dislodging the Japanese from the rural economy. They were able to dodge the discriminatory legislation by various devices, mostly by putting titles of land in the names of their American-born children, who were citizens by law (Jibou, 1988, p. 359).

The Alien Land Act was one part of a sustained campaign against the Japanese in the United States. In the early decades of this century, the Japanese were politically disenfranchised and segregated from dominant group institutions in schools and residential areas. They were discriminated against in movie houses, swimming pools, and other public facilities (Kitano & Daniels, 1988, p. 56). The Japanese were excluded from the mainstream economy and confined to a limited range of poorly paid occupations (see Yamato, 1994). Thus, there were strong elements of systematic discrimination, exclusion, and colonization in their overall relationship with the larger society.

The Ethnic Enclave. Spurned and disparaged by the larger society, the Japanese, like the Chinese, constructed a separate subsociety. The immigrant generation, called Issei (from the Japanese word *ichi*, meaning "one"), established an enclave in agriculture and related enterprises, a rural counterpart of the urban enclaves constructed by other groups we have examined.

By World War II, the Issei had come to dominate a narrow but important segment of agriculture on the West Coast, especially in California. Although the Issei were never more than 2% of the total population of California, Japanese-American-owned farms produced as much as 30% to 40% of various fruits and vegetables grown in that state. As late as 1940, more than 40% of the Japanese American population was involved directly in farming, and many more were dependent on the economic activity stimulated by agriculture, including the marketing of their produce (Jibou, 1988, pp. 359–360). Other Issei lived in urban areas, where they were concentrated in a narrow range of businesses and services, such as domestic service and gardening, some of which catered to other Issei and some of which served the dominant group (Jibou, 1988, p. 362).

Japanese Americans in both the rural and urban sectors maximized their economic clout by doing business with other Japanese-owned firms as often as possible. Gardeners and farmers purchased supplies at Japanese-owned firms, farmers used other members of the group to haul their products to market, and businesspeople relied on one another and mutual credit associations, rather than dominant group banks, for financial services. These networks helped the enclave economy to grow and also permitted the Japanese to avoid the hostility and racism of the larger society. However, these very same patterns helped sustain the stereotypes that depicted the Japanese as clannish and unassimilable. In the years before World War II, the Japanese American community was largely dependent for survival on their networks of cooperation and mutual assistance, not on Americanization and integration.

The Second Generation (Nisei). In the 1920s and 1930s, anti-Asian feelings continued to run high, and Japanese Americans continued to be excluded and discriminated against despite (or perhaps because of) their relative success. Unable to find acceptance in Anglo society, the second generation, called Nisei, established clubs, athletic leagues, churches, and a multitude of other social and recreational organizations within their own communities (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 63). These organizations reflected the high levels of Americanization of the Nisei and expressed values and interests quite compatible with those of the dominant culture. For example, the most influential Nisei organization was the Japanese American Citizens League, whose creed expressed an ardent patriotism that was to be sorely tested: "I am proud that I am an American citizen... I believe in [American] institutions, ideas and traditions; I glory in her heritage; I boast of her history, I trust in her future" (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 64).

Although the Nisei enjoyed high levels of success in school, the intense discrimination and racism of the 1930s prevented most of them from translating their educational achievements into better jobs and higher salaries. Many occupations in the mainstream economy were closed to even the best-educated Japanese Americans, and anti-Asian prejudice and discrimination did not diminish during the hard times and high unemployment of the Great Depression in the 1930s. Many Nisei were forced to remain within the enclave, and in many cases, jobs in the produce stands and retail shops of their parents were all they could find. Their demoralization and anger over their exclusion were eventually swamped by the larger events of World War II.

The Relocation Camps. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, killing almost 2,500 Americans. President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war the next day. The preparations for war stirred up a wide range of fears and anxieties among the American public, including concerns about the loyalty of Japanese Americans. Decades of exclusion and anti-Japanese prejudice had conditioned the dominant society to see Japanese Americans as sinister, clannish, cruel, unalterably foreign, and racially inferior. Fueled by the ferocity of the war itself and fears about a Japanese invasion of the mainland, the tradition of anti-Japanese racism laid the groundwork for a massive violation of civil rights.

Two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which led to the relocation of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. By the late summer of 1942, more than 110,000 Japanese Americans, young and old, male and female—virtually the entire West Coast population—had been transported to **relocation camps**, where they were imprisoned behind barbed-wire fences patrolled by armed guards. Many of these people were American citizens, yet no attempt was made to distinguish between citizen and alien. No trials were held, and no one was given the opportunity to refute the implicit charge of disloyalty.

The government gave families little notice to prepare for evacuation and secure their homes, businesses, and belongings. They were allowed to bring only what they could carry, and many possessions were simply abandoned. Businesspeople sold their establishments and farmers sold their land at panic sale prices. Others locked up their stores and houses and walked away, hoping that the evacuation would be short-lived and their possessions undisturbed.

The internment lasted for nearly the entire war. At first, Japanese Americans were not permitted to serve in the armed forces, but eventually more than 25,000 escaped the camps by volunteering for military service. Nearly all of them served in segregated units or in intelligence work with combat units in the Pacific Ocean. Two all-Japanese combat units served in Europe and became the most decorated units in American military history (Kitano, 1980, p. 567). Other Japanese Americans were able to get out of the camps by means other than the military. Some, for example, agreed to move to militarily nonsensitive areas far away from the West Coast (and their former homes). Still, when the camps closed at the end of the war, about half of the original internees remained (Kitano & Daniels, 1988, p. 64).

The strain of living in the camps affected Japanese Americans in a variety of ways. Lack of activities and privacy, overcrowding, boredom, and monotony were all common complaints. Narrative Portrait 1 in this chapter summarizes the experiences of one Japanese American.

## Prejudice and Discrimination Against Japanese Americans

N December 7, 1941, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Fear of a Japanese invasion and of subversive acts by Japanese Americans prompted President Franklin D. Roosevelt to sign Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. The order designated the West Coast as a military zone from which "any or all persons may be excluded." Although not specified in the order, Japanese Americans were singled out for evacuation. More than 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry were removed from California, southern Arizona, and western Washington and Oregon and sent to 10 relocation camps. Those forcibly removed from their homes, businesses, and possessions included Japanese immigrants who were legally forbidden to become U.S. citizens (Issei), the American born (Nisei), and children of the American born (Sansei).

Photo Essay 1



It storm blows at this War Relocation Authority center (Manzanar) we evacuees of Japanese ancestry spent the duration of World War II. Wornia; July 3, 1942)

oribis/Dorothea Lange.

ons of Japanese ancestry arrive at the Santa Anita Assembly Center from San Pedro. wees lived at this center at the former Santa Anita race track before being moved d to relocation centers. (Arcadia, CA; April 5, 1942)

ribis//Clem Albers.



After the intermment of Japanese Americans from the Seattle region, barber G. S. Hante points proudly to his bigoted sign that reads, "We Don't Want Any Japs Back Here... EVER!"

@ Bettmann/Corbis.



#### Narrative Portrait 1

## The Relocation

oseph Kurihara was born in Hawaii in 1895. He moved to California at age 20 and served with the U.S. Army in World War I, completed a college education, and was a businessman working within the Japanese American enclave until World War II. He worked actively to promote acculturation and better relations with the larger society during the interwar years. He was sent to the relocation camp at Manzanar, California, in the spring of 1942 and continued to play an active role in the dislocated Japanese American community. Although he had never visited Japan and had no interest or connection with the country of his parents' birth, his experiences in the camp were so bitter that he renounced his American citizenship and expatriated to Japan following the war.

#### We Were Just Japs

#### **Joseph Kurihara**

[The evacuation]... was really cruel and harsh. To pack and evacuate in forty-eight hours was an impossibility. Seeing mothers completely bewildered with children crying from want and peddlers taking advantage and offering prices next to robbery made me feel like murdering those responsible without the slightest compunction in my heart.

The parents may be aliens but the children are all American citizens. Did the government of the United States intend to ignore their rights regardless of their citizenship? Those beautiful furnitures [sic] which the parents bought to please their sons and daughters, costing hundreds of dollars were robbed of them at the single command, "Evacuate!" Here my first doubt of American Democracy crept into the far corners of my heart with the sting that I could not forget. Having had absolute confidence in Democracy, I could not believe my very eyes what I had seen that day. America, the standard bearer of Democracy had committed the most heinous crime in its history....

[The camp was in an area that is largely desert.] The desert was bad enough. The . . . barracks made it worse. The constant cyclonic storms loaded with sand and dust made it worst. After living in well furnished homes with every modern convenience and suddenly forced to live the life of a dog is something which one can not so readily forget. Down in our hearts we cried and cursed this government every time when we were showered with sand. We slept in the dust; we breathed the dust; and we ate the dust. Such abominable existence one could not forget, no matter how much we tried to be patient, understand the situation, and take it bravely. Why did not the government permit us to remain where we were? Was it because the government was unable to give us the protection? I have my doubt. The government could have easily declared Martial Law to protect us.

It was not the question of protection. It was because we were Japs! Yes, Japs!

After corralling us like a bunch of sheep in a hellish country, did the government treat us like citizens? No! We were treated like aliens regardless of our rights. Did the government think we were so without pride to work for \$16.00 a month when people outside were paid \$40.00 to \$50.00 a week in the defense plants? Responsible government officials further told us to be loyal and that to enjoy our rights as American citizens we must be ready to die for the country. We must show our loyalty. If such is the case, why are the veterans corralled like the rest of us in the camps? Have they not proven their loyalty already? This matter of proving one's loyalty to enjoy the rights of an American citizen was nothing but a hocus-pocus.

My American friends... no doubt must have wondered why I renounced my citizenship. This decision was not that of today or yesterday. It dates back to the day when General DeWitt [the officer in charge of the evacuation] ordered evacuation. It was confirmed when he flatly refused to listen even to the voices of the former World War Veterans and it was doubly confirmed when I entered Manzanar. We who already had proven our loyalty by serving in the last World War should have been spared. The veterans asked for special consideration but their requests were denied. They too had to evacuate like the rest of the Japanese people, as if they were aliens.

I did not expect this of the Army.... I expected that at least the Nisei would be allowed to remain. But to General DeWitt, we were all alike. "A Jap's a Jap. Once a Jap, always a Jap." ... I swore to become a Jap 100 percent and never to do another day's work to help this country fight this war. My decision to renounce my citizenship there and then was absolute.

[Just before he left for Japan (in 1946), Kurihara wrote:]

It is my sincere desire to get over there as soon as possible to help rebuild Japan politically and economically. The American Democracy with which I was infused in my childhood is still unshaken. My life is dedicated to Japan with Democracy my goal.

SOURCE: Swaine, Thomas, & Nishimoto, Richard S. (1946). *The Spoilage*, pp. 363–369. Berkeley: University of California Press. Retrieved February 11, 2005, from http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8420/kurihara.html.

The camps disrupted the traditional forms of family life, as people had to adapt to barracks living and mess hall dining. Conflicts flared between those who counseled caution and temperate reactions to the incarceration and those who wanted to protest in more vigorous ways. Many of those who advised moderation were Nisei intent on proving their loyalty and cooperating with the camp administration.

Despite the injustice and dislocations of the incarceration, the camps did reduce the extent to which women were relegated to a subordinate role. Like Chinese women, Japanese women were expected to devote themselves to the care of the males of their family. In Japan, for example, education for females was not intended to challenge their intellect so much as to make them better wives and mothers. In the camps, however, pay for the few jobs available was the same for both men and women, and the mess halls and small living quarters freed women from some of the burden of housework. Many took advantage of the free time to take classes to learn more English and other skills. The younger women were able to meet young men on their own, weakening the tradition of family controlled, arranged marriages (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 225–229).

Some Japanese Americans protested the incarceration from the start and brought lawsuits to end the relocation program. Finally, in 1944, the Supreme Court ruled that detention was unconstitutional. As the camps closed, some Japanese American individuals and organizations began to seek compensation and redress for the economic losses the group had suffered. In 1948, Congress passed legislation to authorize compensation to Japanese Americans. About 26,500 people filed claims under this act. These claims were eventually settled for a total of about \$38 million—less than one tenth of the actual economic losses. Demand for meaningful redress and compensation continued, and in 1988, Congress passed a bill granting reparations of about \$20,000 in cash to each of the 60,000 remaining survivors of the camps. The law also acknowledged that the relocation program had been a grave injustice to Japanese Americans (Biskupic, 1989, p. 2879).

The World War II relocation devastated the Japanese American community and left it with few material resources. The emotional and psychological damage inflicted by this experience is incalculable. The fact that today, only six decades later, Japanese Americans are equal or superior to national averages on measures of educational achievement, occupational prestige, and income is one of the more dramatic transformations in minority group history.

Japanese Americans After World War II. In 1945, Japanese Americans faced a world very different from the one they had left in 1942. To escape the camps, nearly half of the group had scattered throughout the country and lived everywhere but on the West Coast. As Japanese Americans attempted to move back to their former homes, they found their fields untended, their stores vandalized, their possessions lost or stolen, and their lives shattered. In some cases, there was simply no Japanese neighborhood to return to; the Little Tokyo area of San Francisco, for example, was now occupied by African Americans who had moved to the West Coast to take jobs in the defense industry (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 231).

Japanese Americans themselves had changed as well. In the camps, the Issei had lost power to the Nisei. The English-speaking second generation had dealt with the camp administrators and held the leadership positions. Many Nisei had left the camps to serve in the armed forces or to find work in other areas of the country. For virtually every American minority group, the war brought new experiences and a broader sense of themselves, the nation, and the world. A similar transformation occurred for the Nisei. When the war ended, they were unwilling to rebuild the Japanese community as it had been before.

Like second-generation Chinese Americans, the Nisei had a strong record of success in school, and they also took advantage of the GI Bill to further their education. When anti-Asian prejudice began to decline in the 1950s and the job market began to open, the Nisei were educationally prepared to take advantage of the resultant opportunities (Kitano, 1980, p. 567).

The Issei-dominated enclave economy did not reappear after the war. One indicator of the shift away from an enclave economy was the fact that the percentage of Japanese American women in California who worked as unpaid family laborers (i.e., worked in family-run businesses for no salary) declined from 21% in 1940 to 7% in 1950 (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 231). Also, between 1940 and 1990, the percentage of the group employed in agriculture declined from about 50% to 3%, and the percentage employed in personal services fell from 25% to 5% (Nishi, 1995, p. 116).

By 1960, Japanese Americans had an occupational profile very similar to that of whites except that they were actually overrepresented among professionals. Many were employed in the primary economy, not in the ethnic enclave, but there was a tendency to choose "safe" careers (e.g., in engineering, optometry, pharmacy, accounting) that did not require extensive contact with the public or supervision of whites (Kitano & Daniels, 1988, p. 70).

Within these limitations, the Nisei, their children (Sansei), and their grandchildren (Yonsei) have enjoyed relatively high status, and their upward mobility and prosperity have contributed to the perception that Asian Americans are a "model minority." An additional factor contributing to the high status of Japanese Americans (and to the disappearance of Little Tokyos) is that unlike Chinese Americans, immigrants from Japan have been few in number, and the community has not had to devote many resources to newcomers. Furthermore, recent immigrants from Japan tend to be highly educated professional people whose socioeconomic characteristics add to the perception of success and affluence.

The Sansei and Yonsei are highly integrated into the occupational structure of the larger society. Compared with their parents, their connections with their ethnic past are more tenuous, and in their values, beliefs, and personal goals, they resemble dominant group members of similar age and social class (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 79–81; also see Spickard, 1996).

## **Comparing Minority Groups**

What factors account for the differences in the development of Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans and other racial minority groups? First, unlike the situation of African Americans in the 1600s and Mexican Americans in the 1800s, the dominant group had no desire to control the labor of these groups. The contact situation featured economic competition (e.g., for jobs) during an era of rigid competition between groups (see Exhibit 5.5), and Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans were seen as a threat to security that needed to be eliminated, not as a labor pool that needed to be controlled. Second, unlike American Indians, Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans in the early 20th century presented no military danger to the larger society, so there was little concern with their activities once the economic threat had been eliminated. Third, Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans had the ingredients and experiences necessary to form enclaves. The groups were allowed

to "disappear," but unlike other racial minority groups, the urban location of their enclaves left them with opportunities for schooling for later generations. As many scholars argue, the particular mode of incorporation developed by Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans is the key to understanding the present status of these groups.

## Contemporary Immigration From Asia

Immigration from Asia has been considerable since the 1960s, averaging close to 300,000 per year and running about 30% to 35% of all immigrants. As was the case with Hispanic immigrants, the sending nations are considerably less developed than the United States, and the primary motivation for most of these immigrants is economic. However, the Asian immigrant stream also includes a large contingent of highly educated professionals seeking opportunities to practice their careers and expand their skills. While these more elite immigrants contribute to the image of "Asian success," other Asian immigrants are low skilled, less educated, and undocumented. Thus, this stream of immigrants, like Chinese Americans, is "bipolar" and includes a healthy representation of people from both the top and the bottom of the occupational and educational hierarchies.

Of course, other factors besides mere economics attract these immigrants to the United States. The United States has maintained military bases throughout the region (including South Korea and the Philippines) since the end of World War II, and many Asian immigrants are the spouses of American military personnel. Also, U.S. involvement in the war in Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s created interpersonal ties and governmental programs that drew refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

As before, rather than attempting to cover all the separate groups in this category, we will concentrate on four case studies and consider immigrant groups from India, Vietnam, Korea, and the Philippines. Together, these four groups make up about half of all immigrants from Asia.

### Four Case Studies

These groups are small, and they all include a high percentage of foreign-born members (see Exhibits 9.2 and 9.4). The groups are quite variable in their backgrounds, their occupational profiles, their levels of education, and their incomes. In contrast with Hispanic immigrants, however, they tend to have higher percentages of members who are fluent in English, higher levels of education, and relatively more members prepared to compete for good jobs in the American job market.

As we have done so often, we must note the diversity across these four groups. First, we can repeat the point that the category "Asian American" is an arbitrary designation imposed on peoples who actually have little in common and who come from nations that vary in language, culture, religion, "racial" characteristics, and scores of other ways. More specifically, these four groups are quite different from each other. Perhaps the most striking contrast is between immigrants from India, many of whom are highly educated and skilled, and Vietnamese Americans, who have a socioeconomic profile that in some ways resembles

non-Asian racial minorities in the United States. Part of the difference between these two groups relates to their contact situations and can be illuminated by applying the Blauner hypothesis. Immigrants from India are at the "immigrant" end of Blauner's continuum. They bring strong educational credentials and are well equipped to compete for favorable positions in the occupational hierarchy. The Vietnamese, in contrast, began their American experience as a refugee group fleeing the turmoil of war. Although they do not fit Blauner's "conquered or colonized" category, most Vietnamese Americans had to adapt to American society with few resources and few contacts with an established immigrant community. The consequences of these vastly different contact situations are suggested by the data presented in the exhibits at the end of this chapter.

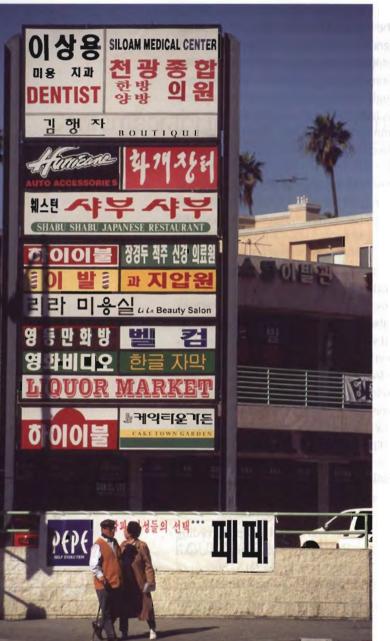
These groups also vary in their settlement patterns. Most are concentrated along the West Coast, but Indians are roughly equally distributed on both the East and West Coasts, and Vietnamese have a sizable presence in Texas, in part related to the fishing industry along the Gulf Coast.

Asian Indians. India is the second most populous nation in the world, and its huge population of more than a billion people incorporates a wide variety of different languages (India has 19 official languages, including English), religions, and ethnic groups. Overall, the level of education is fairly low: The population averages about 5 years of formal schooling and is about 61% literate ("Average Years of Schooling," n.d.). However, about 10% of the population does reach the postsecondary level of education, which means that there are roughly 100 million (10% of a billion) well-educated Indians looking for careers commensurate with their credentials. Because of the relative lack of development in the Indian economy, many members of this educated elite must search for career opportunities abroad, and not just in the United States. It is also important to note that as a legacy of India's long colonization by the British, English is the language of the educated. Thus, Indian immigrants tend to be not only well educated but also English speaking.

Immigration from India was low until the mid-1960s, and the group was quite small at that time. The group more than quadrupled in size between 1980 and 2000, and Indians are now the third-largest Asian American group (behind Chinese and Filipinos).

Immigrants from India tend to be a select, highly educated, and skilled group. According to the 2000 census, Indians are very overrepresented in some of the most prestigious occupations, including computer engineering, medicine, and college teaching (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000f). Immigrants from India are part of a worldwide movement of educated peoples from less developed countries to more developed countries. One need not ponder the differences in career opportunities, technology, and compensation for long to get some insight into the reasons for this movement. Other immigrants from India are more oriented to commerce and small business, and there is a sizable Indian ethnic enclave in many cities (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 96–111; Sheth, 1995).

KOPEANS. Immigration from Korea to the United States began early in the 20th century, when laborers were recruited to help fill the void in the job market left by the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. This group was extremely small until the 1950s, when the rate of immigration rose because of refugees and "war brides" after the Korean War. Immigration did not become substantial, however, until the 1960s. The size of the group increased fivefold in the 1970s and tripled between 1980 and 2000 but is still only 0.5% of the total population.



#### Photo 9.2

Store signs in "Koreatown," Los Angeles.

© Nik Wheeter/Corbis.

(see also Pollard & O'Hare, 1999; Kim, Hurh, & Fernandez, 1989; Logan, Alba, & McNulty, 1994; Min, 1995, pp. 208–212).

As is the case for other groups that have pursued this course, the enclave allows Korean Americans to avoid the discrimination and racism of the larger society yet survive in an economic niche in which lack of English fluency is not a particular problem. However, the enclave has its perils and its costs. For one thing, the success of Korean enterprises depends heavily on the mutual assistance and financial support of other Koreans and the willingness of family members to work long hours for little or no pay (recall the story of Kim Park from

Recent immigrants from Korea consist mostly wof families and include many highly educated people. Although differences in culture, language. and race make Koreans visible targets of discrimination, the high percentage of Christians among them (about 30% of South Koreans are Christian: see "Religion Statistics," n.d.) may help them appear more "acceptable" to the dominant group. Certainly, Christian church parishes play a number of important roles for the Korean American community, offering assistance to newcomers and the less fortunate, serving as a focal point for networks of mutual assistance, and generally assisting in the completion of the myriad chores to which immigrant communities must attend (e.g., government paperwork, registering to vote, etc.) (Kitano & Daniels, 2001, p. 123).

Korean American immigrants have formed an enclave, and the group is heavily involved in small businesses and retail stores, particularly fruit and vegetable retail stores, or greengroceries. According to one study, Koreans had the second-highest percentage of self-employment among immigrant groups (Greeks were the highest), with about 24% of the group in this occupational category (Kritz & Girak, 2004, p. 36). Another data source, also based on the 2000 census, shows that Koreans have the highest rate of business ownership among 11 different minority groups (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002), including other enclave minorities. Japanese Americans had the second-highest rate (108 businesses per 1,000 population), Chinese Americans were third (104 per 1,000 population), and Cuban Americans were fourth (101 per 1,000 population). In contrast, racial minority groups with strong histories of colonization and exclusion were at the bottom of the rankings: African Americans (24 businesses per 1,000) and Puerto Ricans (21 per 1,000)

Chapter 1). These resources would be weakened or destroyed by acculturation, integration, and the resultant decline in ethnic solidarity. Only by maintaining a distance from the dominant culture and its pervasive appeal can the infrastructure survive.

Furthermore, the economic niches in which Mom-and-Pop greengroceries and other small businesses can survive are often in deteriorated neighborhoods populated largely by other minority groups. There has been a good deal of hostility and resentment expressed against Korean shop owners by African Americans, Puerto Ricans, and other urbanized minority groups. For example, anti-Korean sentiments were widely expressed in the 1992 Los Angeles riots that followed the acquittal of the policemen who had been charged in the beating of Rodney King. Korean-owned businesses were some of the first to be looted and burned, and when asked why, one participant in the looting said simply, "Because we hate 'em. Everybody hates them" (Cho, 1993, p. 199). Thus, part of the price of survival for many Korean merchants is to place themselves in positions in which antagonism and conflict with other minority groups is common (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 112–129; Light & Bonacich, 1988; Min, 1995, pp. 199–231; see also Hurh, 1998).

Filipino Americans. Ties between the United States and the Philippines were established in 1898 when Spain ceded the territory after its defeat in the Spanish-American war. The Philippines achieved independence following World War II, but the United States has maintained a strong military presence there for much of the past 60 years. The nation has been heavily influenced by American culture, and English remains one of two official languages. Thus, Filipino immigrants are often capable of conversation in English, at least as a second language (see Exhibit 9.6, page 430, on language acculturation).

Today, Filipinos are the second-largest Asian American group, but their numbers became sizable only in the last few decades. There were fewer than 1,000 Filipinos in the United States in 1910, and by 1960, the group still numbered fewer than 200,000. Most of the recent growth has come from increased post-1965 immigration. The group more than doubled in size between 1980 and 2000.

Many of the earliest immigrants were agricultural workers recruited for the sugar plantations of Hawaii and the fields of the West Coast. Because the Philippines was a U.S. territory, Filipinos could enter without regard to immigration quotas until 1935, when the nation became a self-governing commonwealth.

The most recent wave of immigrants is diversified, and like Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans are "bipolar" in their educational and occupational profiles. Many recent immigrants have entered under the family preference provisions of the U.S. immigration policy. These immigrants are often poor and compete for jobs in the low-wage secondary labor market (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, p. 94). More than half of all Filipino immigrants since 1965, however, have been professionals, many of them in the health and medical fields. Many female immigrants from the Philippines were nurses actively recruited by U.S. hospitals to fill gaps in the labor force (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 245). Thus, the Filipino American community includes some members in the higher-wage primary labor market and others who are competing for work in the low-wage secondary sector (Agbayani-Siewart & Revilla, 1995; Espiritu, 1996; Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 83–94; Mangiafico, 1988; Posadas, 1999).

Vietnamese. A flow of refugees from Vietnam began in the 1960s as a direct result of the war in Southeast Asia. The war began in Vietnam but expanded when the United States

attacked Communist forces in Cambodia and Laos. Social life was disrupted, and people were displaced throughout the region. In 1975, when Saigon (the South Vietnamese capital) fell and the U.S. military withdrew, many Vietnamese and other Southeast Asians who had collaborated with the United States and its allies fled in fear for their lives. This group included high-ranking officials and members of the region's educational and occupational elite. Later groups of refugees tended to be less well educated and more impoverished. Many Vietnamese waited in refugee camps for months or years before being admitted to the United States, and they often arrived with few resources or social networks to ease their transition to the new society (Kitano & Daniels, 1995, pp. 151–152). The Vietnamese are the largest of the Asian refugee groups, and contrary to Asian American success stories and notions of model minorities, they have incomes and educational levels that are sometimes comparable to colonized minority groups (see Exhibits 9.11 to 9.16 and the Appendix).

## **Contemporary Relations**

In this section, we once more use our guiding concepts to assess the situation of Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans and the other Asian groups discussed in the next chapter. This section is organized around the same concepts used in previous case study chapters.

## Prejudice and Discrimination

American prejudice against Asians first became prominent during the anti-Chinese movement of the 19th century. The Chinese were believed to be racially inferior, docile, and subservient, but also cruel and crafty, despotic, and threatening (Lai, 1980, p. 220; Lyman, 1974, pp. 55–58). The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was justified by the idea that the Chinese were unassimilable and could never be part of U.S. society. The Chinese were seen as a threat to the working class, to American democracy, and to other American institutions. Many of these stereotypes and fears transferred to the Japanese later in the 19th century and then to other groups as they, in turn, arrived in the United States. The social distance scales presented in Exhibit 3.4 provide the only long-term record of anti-Asian prejudice in the society as a whole. In 1926, the five Asian groups included in the study were grouped in the bottom third of the scale, along with other racial and colonized minority groups. Twenty years later, in 1946, the Japañese had fallen to the bottom of the rankings, and the Chinese had risen seven positions, changes that reflect America's World War II conflict with Japan and alliance with China. This suggests that anti-Chinese prejudice may have softened during the war as distinctions were made between "good" and "bad" Asians. For example, an item published in a 1941 issue of Time magazine, "How to Tell Your Friends From the Japs," provided some tips for identifying "good" Asians: "The Chinese expression is likely to be more placid, kindly, open; the Japanese more positive, dogmatic, arrogant.... Japanese are nervous in conversation, laugh loudly at the wrong time" (p. 33).

In more recent decades, the average social distance scores of Asian groups have fallen even though the ranking of the groups has remained relatively stable. The falling scores probably reflect the society-wide increase in tolerance and the shift from blatant prejudice to modern racism that we discussed in Chapter 3. However, the relative position of Asians in the American hierarchy of group preferences has remained remarkably consistent since the 1920s. This stability may reflect the cultural or traditional nature of much of American anti-Asian prejudice.

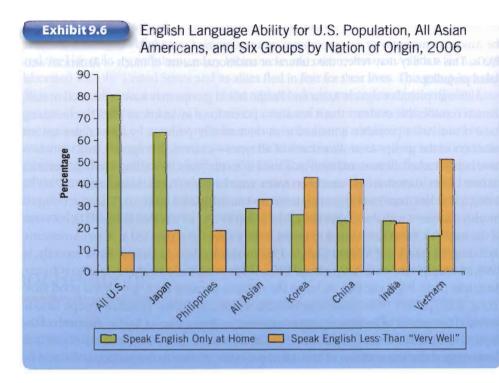
Although prejudice against Asian and Pacific Island groups may have weakened overall, there is considerable evidence that it remains a potent force in American life. The continuing force of anti-Asian prejudice is marked most dramatically, perhaps, by hate crimes against members of the group. Asian Americans of all types—citizens, immigrants, and tourists have been attacked, beaten, and even murdered in recent years. According to official statistics on hate crimes, there were 231 attacks on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders<sup>1</sup> in 2005 (FBI, 2006), a little less than 5% of all racially motivated racially based incidents. This percentage is roughly consistent with the relative size of the group in U.S. society (see Exhibit 9.1), but some of the most notorious hate crimes in recent history have been directed at Asian Americans, including the murder of Vincent Chin in 1982 by autoworkers in Detroit. More recently, in 1996, an unemployed meat cutter named Robert Page murdered a randomly selected Chinese American male. Page said that he hated the Chinese because they "got all the good jobs" (Fong, 2002, p. 162). Other attacks include the murder of Filipino postman Joseph Ileto in 1999 and the murder of an Indian gas station owner in Mesa, Arizona, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Incidents such as these suggest that the tradition of anti-Asian prejudice is close to the surface and could be activated under the right combination of competition and threat.

Asian Americans have also been the victims of "positive" stereotypes. The perception of Asian Americans as a "model minority" is exaggerated and, for some Asian American groups, simply false. This label has been applied to these groups by the media, politicians, and others. It is not an image that the Asian American groups themselves developed or particularly advocate. As you might suspect, people who apply these labels to Asian Americans have a variety of hidden moral and political agendas, and we explore these dynamics later in this chapter.

## Assimilation and Pluralism

Acculturation. The extent of acculturation of Asian Americans is highly variable from group to group, Japanese Americans represent one extreme. They have been a part of American society for more than a century, and the current generations are highly acculturated. Immigration from Japan has been low throughout the century and has not revitalized the traditional culture or language. As a result, Japanese Americans are the most acculturated of the Asian American groups, as illustrated in Exhibit 9.6. Japanese Americans have the highest percentage of members who speak only English at home and the lowest percentage, along with Filipinos, who speak English "less than very well."

Chinese Americans, in contrast, are highly variable in their extent of acculturation. Many are members of families who have been American for generations and are highly acculturated. Others, including many here illegally, are new immigrants who have little knowledge of English or of Anglo culture. In this dimension, as in occupations, Chinese Americans are "bipolar." This great variability within the group makes it difficult to characterize their overall degree of acculturation.



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).



Photo 9.3

Street signs in Chinatown, San Francisco.

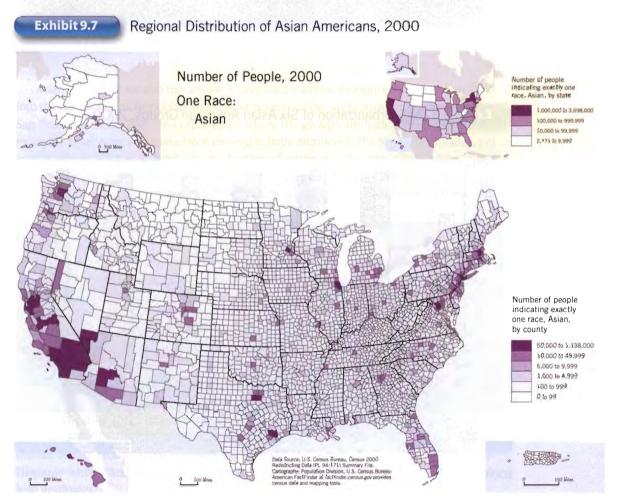
Chinkstock/Corbis.

Secondary Structural Assimilation. We will cover this complex area in roughly the order followed in previous chapters. The Appendix presents additional information on the relative standing of Asian American groups.

*Residence.* Exhibit 9.7 shows the regional concentrations of all Asian Americans. The tendency to reside on either coast and around Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York stands out clearly. Note also the sizable concentrations in a variety of metropolitan areas, including Chicago, Atlanta, Miami, Denver, and Houston.

Asian Americans in general are highly urbanized, a reflection of the entry conditions of recent immigrants as well as the appeal of ethnic neighborhoods, such as Chinatowns, with long histories and continuing vitality. As displayed in Exhibit 9.8, all six Asian American groups discussed in this chapter are more than 90% urbanized, and several approach the 100% mark.

Asian Americans are much less residentially segregated than either African Americans or Hispanic Americans in all four regions. Exhibit 9.9 shows the average dissimilarity index for 220 metropolitan areas using the same format as in the previous three chapters. Asian Americans are not "extremely" (dissimilarity scores greater than .60) segregated in any region, but the level of residential segregation is holding steady or slightly rising, a reflection of high rates of immigration and the tendency for newcomers to settle close to other members of their group.



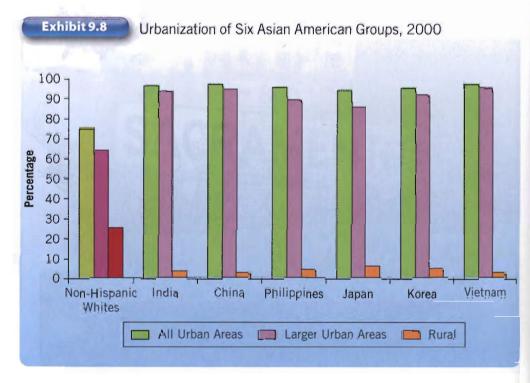
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000e).

#### Photo 9.4

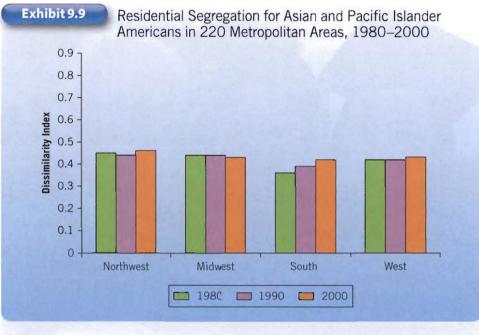
Multiple generations of Vietnamese in Clarendon, Arlington County, Virginia, a neighborhood with a high concentration of Vietnamese.

© Wally McNamee/Corbis.





SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000f).



#### SOURCE: Iceland, Weinberg, & Steinmetz (2002, p. 43).

Asian Americans are also moving away from their traditional neighborhoods and enclaves into the suburbs of metropolitan areas, most notably in the areas surrounding Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and other cities where the groups are highly concentrated. For example, Asian Americans have been moving in large numbers to the San Gabriel Valley, just east of downtown Los Angeles. Once a bastion of white, middle-class suburbanites, these areas have taken on a distinctly Asian flavor in recent years. Monterey Park, once virtually all white, is now 62% Chinese and is often referred to as "America's first suburban Chinatown" or the "Chinese Beverly Hills" (Fong, 2002, p. 49).

*Education.* The extent of school segregation for Asian Americans for the 1993–1994 and the 2005–2006 school years is displayed in Exhibit 9.10, as was done in previous chapters. In the 2005–2006 school year, Asian American children were much less likely to attend "majority-minority" or extremely segregated schools than either Hispanic American or African American children. However, the extent of school segregation has increased over the time period, a reflection of the pattern of residential segregation in Exhibit 9.9.

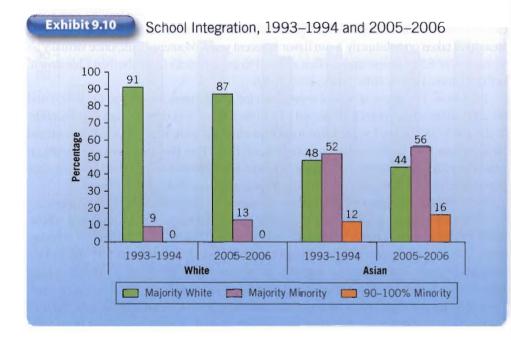
The extent of schooling for Asian Americans and for Chinese and Japanese Americans is very different from that for other U.S. racial minority groups. Considered as a whole, Asian Americans compare favorably with society-wide standards for educational achievement, and they are above those standards on many measures. Exhibit 9.11 shows that most Asian American groups are equal to or higher than non-Hispanic whites in high school education and far higher in college education, a pattern that has been very much reinforced by the high levels of education of many recent Asian immigrants. Four of the six Asian groups have a higher percentage of high school graduates than non-Hispanic whites, and all groups except the Vietnamese have a higher percentage of college graduates.

#### Photo 9.5

An Asian American family celebrates a graduation.

© moodboard/Corbis.





SOURCE: Fry (2007).

## Week 9:

## **HEALEY**:

Colonization, Immigration, Ethnic Enclaves

## SCHAEFER:

**Hispanic Americans** 

## SCHAEFER:

Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans

## Hispanic Americans CHAPTER

# Colonization, Immigration, and Ethnic Enclaves

he United States is home to many different Spanish-origin groups. Before the Declaration of Independence was signed, before slavery began, even before Jamestown was founded, the ancestors of some of these groups were already in North America. Other Hispanic groups are recent immigrants and new members of U.S. society. The label *Hispanic American* includes a number of groups that are diverse and distinct from each other. These groups connect themselves to a variety of traditions; like the larger society, they are dynamic and changeable, unfinished and evolving. Hispanic Americans share a language and some cultural traits but do not generally think of themselves as a single social entity. Many identify with their nationalorigin groups (e.g., Mexican American) rather than broader, more encompassing labels.

In this chapter, we look at the development of Hispanic American groups over the past century, examine their contemporary relations with the larger society, and assess their current status. We focus on the three largest Hispanic groups, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban Americans, but include several smaller groups as well: Exhibit 8.1 shows the size of the largest Hispanic groups and some information

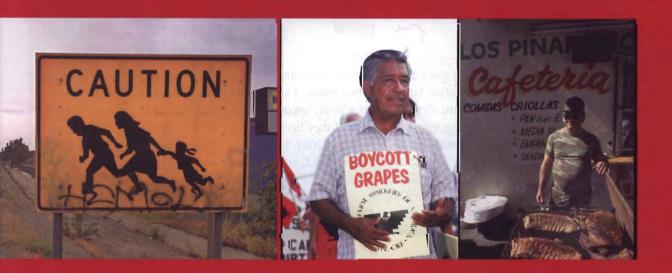


Exhibit 8.1 Size and Growth of Hispanic Groups by Nation or Territory of Origin, 1990-2006

Country of Origin	1990	2000	2006	Growth (Number of Times Larger), 1990–2006	Percentage of Total Population, 2006
Mexico	13,496,000	20,641,000	28,339,354	2.1	9.5
Puerto Rico <sup>a</sup>	2,728,000	3,406,000	3,987,947	1.5	1.3
Cuba	1,044,000	1,242,000	1,520,276	1.5	0.5
Dominican Republic	520,521	799,768	1,217,225	2.3	0.4
El Salvador	565,081	708,741	1,371,666	2.4	0.5
Colombia	378,726	496,748	801,363	2.1	0.3
Other Hispanics <sup>b</sup>	3,621,672	4,794,763	7,014,447	1.9	2.3
Total Hispanic	22,355,990	32,091,000	44,252,278	2.0	14.8
Percentage of U.S. Population	9.0%	11.4%	.14.8%		
Total U.S. Population	248,710,000	281,422,000	299,398,485	1.2	

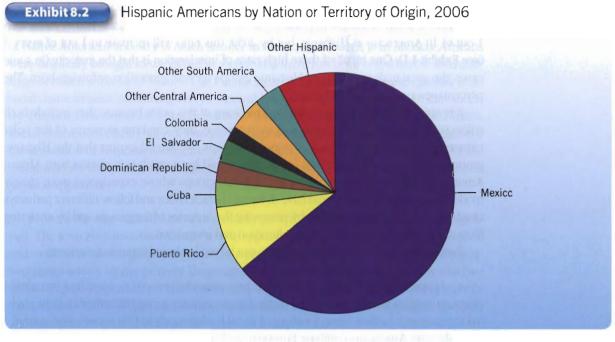
SOURCE: 1990: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990); 2000: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000f); 2006: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).

a. Living on U.S. mainland only.

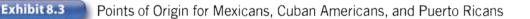
b. Includes people from Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, and many other nations.

on growth since 1990. Mexican Americans, the largest single group, are 9.5% of the total U.S. population (and about two thirds of all Hispanic Americans), but the other groups are small in size. Considered as a single group, however, Hispanic Americans are more than 14% of the total population, and they became the largest U.S. minority group, surpassing African Americans, in the spring of 2004. The relative sizes of the major subgroups of Latino Americans are displayed in Exhibit 8.2, and Exhibit 8.3 shows the countries of origin of the three largest Hispanic American groups.

Latinos are growing rapidly, partly because of their relatively high birthrates, but mainly because of immigration. The number of Mexican Americans more than doubled between 1990 and 2005, and Hispanic groups in general are growing at rates above the national



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).



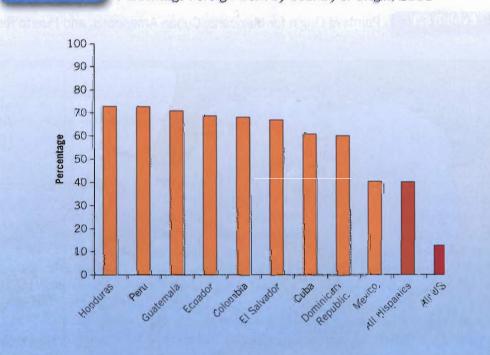


average. This growth is projected to continue well into the century, and Hispanic Americans will become an increasingly important part of life in the United States. Today, more than 1 out of 10 Americans is Hispanic, but by 2050, this ratio will increase to 1 out of every 4 (see Exhibit 1.1). One result of these high rates of immigration is that the majority (in some cases, the great majority) of many Hispanic groups are first generation or foreign-born. The percentages are displayed in Exhibit 8.4.

It is appropriate to discuss Hispanic Americans at this point because they include both colonized and immigrant groups, and in that sense, they combine elements of the polar extremes of Blauner's typology of minority groups. We would expect that the Hispanic groups that were more colonized in the past would have much in common with African Americans and Native Americans today. Hispanic groups whose experiences more closely model those of immigrants would have different characteristics and follow different pathways of adaptation. We test these ideas by reviewing the histories of the groups and by analyzing their current status and degree of acculturation and integration.

Two additional introductory comments can be made about Hispanic Americans:

• Hispanic Americans are partly an ethnic minority group (i.e., identified by cultural characteristics such as language) and partly a radial minority group (identified by their physical appearance). Latinos bring a variety of racial backgrounds to U.S. society. For example, most Mexican Americans combine European and Native American ancestries and are identifiable by their physical traits as well as by their culture and language. Puerto Ricans, in



Percentage Foreign-Born by Country of Origin, 2006

Exhibit 8.4

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007a).

contrast, are a mixture of white and black ancestry. The original inhabitants of the island, the Arawak and Caribe tribes, were decimated by the Spanish conquest, and the proportion of Native American ancestry is much smaller in Puerto Rico than it is in Mexico. Africans were originally brought to the island as slaves, and there has been considerable intermarriage between whites and blacks. The Puerto Rican population today varies greatly in its racial characteristics, combining every conceivable combination of white and African ancestry. Hispanic Americans are often the victims of racial discrimination in the United States. Racial differences often (but not always) overlap with cultural distinctions and reinforce the separation of Hispanic Americans from Anglo-American society. Even members of the group who are completely acculturated may still experience discrimination based on their physical appearance.

As is the case with all American minority groups, labels and group names are important. The term *Hispanic American* is widely applied to this group and might seem neutral and inoffensive to non-Hispanics. In fact, a recent survey shows that the preferred designation varies widely by the primary language and generation of the respondent. About two thirds of Spanish speakers and first-generation (foreign-born) individuals prefer to identify themselves in terms of their countries of origin, while a slight majority of English speakers and third-generation Hispanics prefer to be called simply "American" (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). An earlier study showed that a sizable majority (67%) of the group prefer the Hispanic label to Latino (Jones, 2001). At any rate, both the Hispanic and Latino labels are similar to American Indian, in that they were invented and applied by the dominant group and may reinforce the mistaken perception that all Spanish-speaking peoples are the same. Also, the term *Hispanic* highlights Spanish heritage and language but does not acknowledge the roots of these groups in African American and Native American civilizations. Further, the label is sometimes mistakenly applied to immigrant groups that bring French, Portuguese, or English traditions (e.g., Haitians, Brazilians, and Jamaicans, respectively). On the other hand, the Latino label stresses the common origins of these groups in Latin America and the fact that each culture is a unique blend of diverse traditions. In this chapter, the terms Latino and Hispanic are used interchangeably.1

## Mexican Americans

We applied the Noel and Blauner hypotheses to this group in Chapter 4. Mexicans were conquered and colonized in the 19th century and used as a cheap labor force in agriculture, ranching, mining, railroad construction, and other areas of the dominant group economy in the Southwest. In the competition for control of land and labor, they became a minority group, and the contact situation left them with few power resources with which to pursue their self-interests.

By the dawn of the 20th century, the situation of Mexican Americans resembled that of American Indians in some ways. Both groups were small, numbering about 0.5% of the total population (Cortes, 1980, p. 702). Both differed from the dominant group in culture and language, and both were impoverished, relatively powerless, and isolated in rural areas distant from the centers of industrialization and modernization. In other ways, Mexican Americans

resembled African Americans in the South in that they also supplied much of the labor power for the agricultural economy of their region and both were limited to low-paying occupations and subordinate status in the social structure. All three groups were colonized and, at least in the early decades of the 20th century, lacked the resources to end their exploitation and protect their cultural heritages from continual attack by the dominant society (Mirandé, 1985, p. 32).

There were also some important differences in the situation of Mexican Americans and the other two colonized minority groups. Perhaps the most crucial difference was the proximity of the sovereign nation of Mexico. Population movement across the border was constant, and Mexican culture and the Spanish language were continually rejuvenated, even as they were attacked and disparaged by Anglo-American society.

### Photo 8.1

Dancers celebrate Cinco de Mayo, Mexican Independence Day.

C Morton Beebe/Corbis.



## Cultural Patterns

Besides language differences, Mexican American and Anglo-American cultures differ in many ways. Whereas the dominant society is largely Protestant, the overwhelming majority

of Mexican Americans are Catholic, and the church remains one of the most important institutions in any Mexican American community. Religious practices also vary; Mexican Americans (especially men) are relatively inactive in church attendance, preferring to express their spiritual concerns in more spontaneous, less routinized ways.

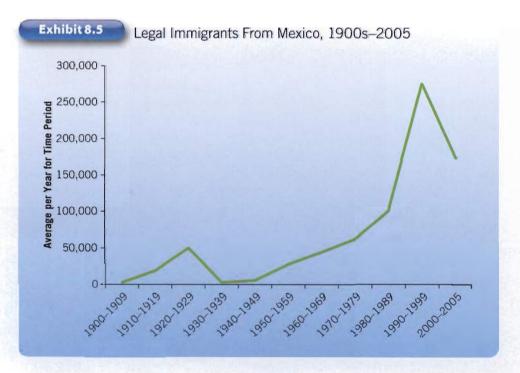
In the past, everyday life among Mexican Americans was often described in terms of the "culture of poverty" (see Chapter 6), an idea originally based on research in several different Hispanic communities (see Lewis, 1959, 1965, 1966). This perspective asserts that Mexican Americans suffer from an unhealthy value system that includes a weak work ethic, fatalism, and other negative attitudes. Today, this characterization is widely regarded as exaggerated or simply mistaken. More recent research shows that the traits associated with the culture of poverty tend to characterize people who are poor and uneducated, rather than any particular racial or ethnic group. In fact, a number of studies show that there is little difference between the value systems of Mexican Americans and other Americans of similar length of residence in the United States, social class, and educational background (e.g., see Buriel, 1993; Moore & Pinderhughes, 1993; Pew Hispanic Center, 2005, p. 20; Valentine & Mosley, 2000).

Another area of cultural difference involves machismo, a value system that stresses male dominance, honor, virility, and violence. The stereotypes of the dominant group exaggerate the negative aspects of machismo and often fail to recognize that machismo can also be expressed through being a good provider and a respected father, as well as in other nondestructive ways. In fact, the concern for male dignity is not unique to Hispanics and can be found in many cultures in varying strengths and expressions, including Anglo-American. Thus, this difference is one of degree rather than kind (Moore & Pachon, 1985). Compared with Anglo-Americans, Mexican Americans tend to place more value on family relations and obligations. Strong family ties can be the basis for support networks and cooperative efforts but can also conflict with the emphasis on individualism and individual success in the dominant culture. For example, strong family ties may inhibit geographical mobility and people's willingness to pursue educational and occupational opportunities distant from their home communities (Moore, 1970, p. 127).

These cultural and language differences have inhibited communication with the dominant group and have served as the basis for excluding Mexican Americans from the larger society. However, they also have provided a basis for group cohesion and unity that has sustained common action and protest activity.

## Immigration

Although Mexican Americans originated as a colonized minority group, their situation since the early 1900s (and especially since the 1960s) has been largely shaped by immigration. The numbers of legal Mexican immigrants to the United States are shown in Exhibit 8.5. The fluctuations in the rate of immigration can be explained by conditions in Mexico; the varying demand for labor in the low-paying, unskilled sector of the U.S. economy; broad changes in North America and the world; and changing federal immigration policy. As you will see, competition, one of the key variables in Noel's hypothesis, has shaped the relationships between Mexican immigrants and the larger American society.



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2007).

#### Narrative Portrait 1

## The Meaning of Macho

ords as well as people can immigrate, and in both cases, the process can be transforming. In the following passage, Rose Guilbault (1993), a newspaper editor and columnist, reflects on the meaning of one term that has become central to the dominant group's view of Hispanic males. The image evoked by the term macho changed from positive to negative as it found its way into American English, a process that reflects dominant-minority relations and partly defines them.

#### Americanization Is Tough on "Macho"

#### **Rose Del Castillo Guilbault**

What is macho? That depends on which side of the border you come from.... The negative connotations of macho in this country are troublesome to Hispanics.

The Hispanic macho is manly, responsible, hardworking, a man in charge, a patriarch. A man who expresses strength through silence....

The American macho is a chauvinist, a brute, uncouth, loud, abrasive, capable of inflicting pain, and sexually promiscuous.

Quintessential macho models in this country are Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Charles Bronson.... They exude toughness, independence, masculinity. But a closer look reveals their machismo is really violence masquerading as courage, sullenness disguised as silence and irresponsibility camouflaged as independence....

In Spanish, macho ennobles Latin males. In English it devalues them. This pattern seems consistent with the conflicts ethnic minority males experience in this country. Typically the cultural traits other societies value don't translate as desirable characteristics in America. I watched my own father struggle with these cultural ambiguities. He worked on a farm for 20 years. He laid down miles of irrigation pipe, carefully plowed long, neat rows in fields, . . . stoically worked 20-hour days during the harvest season, accepting the long hours as part of agricultural work. When the boss complained or upbraided him for minor mistakes, he kept quiet, even when it was obvious that the boss had erred.

He handled the most menial tasks with pride. At home he was a good provider.... Americans regarded my father as decidedly un-macho. His character was interpreted as non-assertive, his loyalty non-ambition, and his quietness, ignorance. I once overheard the boss's son blame him for plowing crooked rows.... My father merely smiled at the lie, knowing the boy had done it, ... confident his good work was well-known.... Seeing my embarrassment, my father dismissed the incident, saying "They're the dumb ones. Imagine me fighting with a kid." I tried not to look at him with American eyes because sometimes the reflection hurt....

In the United States, I believe it was the feminist movement of the early '70s that changed macho's meaning. Perhaps my generation of Latin women was in part responsible. I recall Chicanas complaining about the chauvinistic nature of Latin men and the notion they wanted their women barefoot, pregnant, and in the kitchen. The generalization that Latin men embodied chauvinistic traits led to this... twist of semantics. Suddenly a word that represented something positive in one culture became a negative stereotype in another....

The impact of language in our society is undeniable. And the misuse of macho hints at a deeper cultural misunderstanding that extends beyond mere word definitions.

SOURCE: Guilbault, Rose Del Castillo (1993). "Americanization Is Tough on 'Macho." In D. La Guardia & H. Guth (Eds.), *American Voices*, pp. 163–165. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Press. First published in "This World," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 20, 1989. Push and Pull. Like the massive wave of immigrants from Europe that arrived between the 1820s and the 1920s (see Chapter 2), Mexicans have been pushed from their homeland and toward the United States by a variety of sweeping changes in their society and in the global system of societies. European immigration was propelled by the fundamental changes in European society wrought by industrialization, urbanization, and rapid population growth. Mexican immigrants have been motivated by similarly broad forces, including continuing industrialization and globalization.

At the heart of the immigration lies a simple fact: The almost 2,000-mile-long border between Mexico and the United States is the longest continuous point of contact between a less developed and a more developed nation in the world. For the past century, the United States has developed faster than Mexico, moving from an industrial to a postindustrial society and sustaining a substantially higher standard of living. The continuing wage gap between the two nations has made even menial work in the North attractive to millions of Mexicans (and other Central and South Americans). The less-developed Mexican economy has been unable to supply full employment for its population, creating a symbiotic gap between the two nations: Mexico has generally produced a large number of people who need work, and the United States has offered jobs that pay more—often much more—than the wages available south of the border. Just as the air flows from high to low pressure, people move from areas of lower to higher economic opportunities. The flow is not continuous, however, and has been affected by conditions in both the sending and receiving nations.

## Conditions in Mexico, Fluctuating Demand for Labor, and Federal Immigration Policy

Generally, for the past 100 years, Mexico has served as a reserve pool of cheap labor for the benefit of U.S. businesses, agricultural interests, and other groups, and the volume of immigration largely reflects changing economic conditions in the United States. Immigration increased with good times in the United States and decreased when times were bad, a pattern reinforced by the policies and actions of the federal government. The most important events in the complex history of Mexican immigration to the United States are presented in Exhibit 8.6, along with some comments regarding the nature of the event and its effects.

Prior to the early 1900s, the volume of immigration was generally low and largely unregulated. People crossed the border—in both directions—as the need arose, informally and without restriction. The volume of immigration and concern about controlling the border began to rise with the increase of political and economic turmoil in Mexico in the early decades of the 20th century but still remained a comparative trickle.

Immigration increased in the 1920s when federal legislation curtailed the flow of dheap labor from Europe and then decreased in the 1930s when hard times came to the United States (and the world) during the Great Depression. Many Mexicans in the United States returned home during that decade, sometimes voluntarily, often by force. As competition for jdbs increased, efforts began to expel Mexican laborers, just as the Noel hypothesis would predict. The federal government instituted a **repatriation** campaign aimed specifically at deporting

#### Exhibit 8.6

#### Significant Dates in Mexican Immigration

Dates	Event	Result	Effect on Immigration
1910	Mexican Revolution	Political turmoil and unrest in Mexico	Increased
Early 20th century	Mexican industrialization	Many groups (especially rural peasants) displaced	Increased
1920s	U.S. passes the National Origins Act of 1924	Decreased immigration from Europe	Increased
1930s	Great Depression	Decreased demand for labor and increased competition for jobs leads to repatriation campaign	Decreased, many return to Mexico
1940s	World War II	Increased demand for labor leads to Bracero Guest Worker Program	Increased
1950s	Concern over illegal immigrants	Operation Wetback	Decreased, many return to Mexico
1965	Repeal of National Origins Act	New immigration policy gives high priority to close family of citizens	Increased (see Exhibit 8.5)
1986	IRCA	Illegal immigrants given opportunity to legalize status	Many illegal immigrants gain legal status
1994	NAFTA	Borders more open, many groups in Mexico (especially rural peasants) displaced	increased

IRCA: Immigration Reform and Control Act. NAFTA: North American Free Trade Agreement.

illegal Mexican immigrants. In many localities, repatriation was pursued with great zeal, and the campaign intimidated many legal immigrants and native-born Mexican Americans into moving to Mexico. The result was that the Mexican American population of the United States declined by an estimated 40% during the 1930s (Cortes, 1980, p. 711).

When the depression ended and U.S. society began to mobilize for World War II, federal policy toward immigrants from Mexico changed once more as employers again turned to Mexico for workers. In 1942, the *Bracero program* was initiated to permit contract laborers, usually employed in agriculture and other areas requiring unskilled labor, to work in the United States for a limited amount of time. When their contracts expired, the workers were required to return to Mexico.

The Bracero program continued for several decades after the end of the war and was a crucial source of labor for the American economy. In 1960 alone, braceros supplied 26% of the nation's seasonal farm labor (Cortes, 1980, p. 703). The program generated millions of dollars of profit for growers and other employers, because they were paying braceros much less than American workers would have received (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 79–80).

At the same time that the Bracero program permitted immigration from Mexico, other programs and agencies worked to deport undocumented (or illegal) immigrants, large numbers of whom entered the United States with the braceros. Government efforts reached a peak in the early 1950s with "**Operation Wetback**," a program under which federal authorities deported almost 4 million Mexicans (Grebler, Moore, & Guzman, 1970, p. 521).

During Operation Wetback, raids on the homes and places of business of Mexican Americans were common, and authorities often ignored their civil and legal rights. In an untold number of cases, U.S. citizens of Mexican descent were deported along with illegal immigrants. These violations of civil and legal rights have been a continuing grievance of Mexican Americans (and other Latinos) for decades (Mirandé, 1985, pp. 70–90).

In 1965, the overtly racist national immigration policy incorporated in the 1924 National Origins Act (see Chapter 2) was replaced by a new policy that gave a high priority to immigrants who were family and kin of U.S. citizens. The immediate family (parents, spouses, and children) of U.S. citizens could enter without numerical restriction. Some numerical restrictions were placed on the number of immigrants from each sending country, but about 80% of these restricted visas were reserved for other close relatives of citizens. The remaining 20% of the visas went to people who had skills needed in the labor force (Bouvier & Gardner, 1986, pp. 13–15, 41; Rumbaut, 1991, p. 215).

Immigrants have always tended to move along chains of kinship and other social relationships, and the new policy reinforced those tendencies. The social networks connecting Latin America with the United States expanded, and the rate of immigration from Mexico increased sharply after 1965 (see Exhibit 8.5) as immigrants became citizens and sent for other family members.

Most of the Mexican immigrants, legal as well as undocumented, who have arrived since 1965 continue the pattern of seeking work in the low-wage, unskilled sectors of the labor market in the cities and fields of the Southwest. For many, work is seasonal or temporary. When the work ends, they often return to Mexico, commuting across the border as has been done for decades.

In 1986, Congress attempted to deal with illegal immigrants, most of whom were thought to be Mexican, by passing the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). This legislation allowed illegal immigrants who had been in the country continuously since 1982 to legalize their status. According to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (1993, p. 17), about 3 million people, 75% of them Mexican, have taken advantage of this provision, but this program has not slowed the volume of illegal immigration. In 1988, at the end of the amnesty application period, there were still almost 3 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. In 2006, the number of undocumented immigrants was estimated at 11.6 million (Hoefer, Rytina, & Campbell, 2007).

Immigration From Mexico Today. Mexican immigration to the U.S. continues to reflect the difference in level of development and standard of living between the two societies. Mexico remains a much more agricultural nation and continues to have a much lower

standard of living, as measured by average wages, housing quality, health care, or any number of other criteria. About 40% of Mexicans live in poverty, and the population is growing rapidly, faster than good jobs can be provided. Thus, many Mexicans are unable to find a secure place in their home economy and are drawn to the opportunities for work provided by their affluent northern neighbor. Mexicans have lower levels of education, averaging just over 7 years of schooling ("Average Years of Schooling," n.d.), and consequently, they bring much lower levels of job skills and continue to compete for work in the lower levels of the U.S. job structure.



The impetus to immigrate has been reinforced by the recent globalization of the Mexican economy. In the past, the Mexican government insulated its economy from foreign competition with a variety of tariffs and barriers. These protections have been abandoned over the past several decades, and Mexico, like many less developed nations, has opened its doors to the world economy. The result has been a flood of foreign goods and capital, which, while helpful in some parts of the economy, has disrupted social life and forced many Mexicans, especially the poor and rural dwellers, out of their traditional way of life.

Probably the most significant changes to Mexican society have come from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Starting in 1994, this policy united the three nations of North America in a single trading zone. U.S. companies began to move their manufacturing operations to Mexico, attracted by lower wages, less stringent environmental regulations, and weak labor unions. They built factories, called *maquiladoras*, along the border and brought many new jobs to the Mexican economy. However, other jobs—no longer protected from global competition—were lost, more than offsetting these gains, and Mexican wages have actually declined since NAFTA, increasing the already large number of Mexicans living in poverty. One analyst estimates that over 2½ million families have been driven out of the rural economy because they cannot compete with U.S. and Canadian agribusinesses (Faux, 2004).

Thus, globalization in general and NAFTA in particular seem to have reinforced the longterm relationship between the two nations. Mexico, like other nations of the less developed "South," continues to produce a supply of unskilled, less-educated workers, while the United States, like other nations of the more developed and industrialized "North," provides a seemingly insatiable demand for cheap labor. Compared with what is available at home, the wages in *el Norte* are quite attractive, even when the jobs are at the margins of the mainstream economy or in the irregular, underground economy (e.g., day laborers paid off the books, illegal sweatshop jobs in the garment industry, and sex work) and even when the journey

#### Photo 8.2

A California road sign warns motorists to watch for migrant workers crossing the highway.

Christopher Morris/Corbis.

#### Photo 8.3

These undocumented immigrants were apprehended by the Border Patrol and are being prepared for deportation.

C Ann Johansson/Corbis.



requires Mexican immigrants to break American laws, pay large sums of money to "coyotes" to guide them across borders, and live in constant fear of raids by *La Migra*.

#### The Continuing Debate Over Immigration Policy

Immigration has once again become a hotly debated issue in the United States. How many immigrants should be admitted? From which nations? With what skills? Should the relatives of U.S. citizens continue to receive a high priority? And, perhaps the issue that generates the most passion, what should be done about illegal immigrants?

Virtually all of these questions, even those that are phrased in general, abstract terms, are mainly about the large volume of immigration from Mexico and the porous U.S. southern border.

The federal government is attempting to reduce the flow by building a wall on the border with Mexico and beefing up the Border Patrol, with both increased personnel and more high-tech surveillance technology. Still, communities across the nation—not just in border states—are feeling the impact of Mexican immigration and wondering how to respond. Many citizens support extreme measures to close the borders—bigger, thicker walls and even the use of deadly force—while others ponder ways to absorb the newcomers without disrupting or bankrupting local school systems, medical facilities, or housing markets. The nation is divided on many of the issues related to immigration. For example, a May 2006 poll indicated that the public is nearly evenly split on whether immigration should be kept at present levels (39%) or decreased (34%). In the same poll, a healthy minority of respondents chose a third alternative: 22% felt that immigration should be increased (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006).

A variety of reforms for immigration policy have been proposed and continue to be debated. One key issue is the treatment of illegal immigrants: Should the undocumented be summarily deported, or should some provision be made for them to legalize their status, as was done in the IRCA legislation of 1986? If the latter, should the opportunity to attain legal status be extended to all or only to immigrants who meet certain criteria (e.g., those with steady jobs and clean criminal records)? Many feel that amnesty is unjust because immigrants who entered illegally have, after all, broken the law and should be punished. Others point to the economic contributions and the damage to the economy that would result from summary, mass expulsions. Still others worry about the negative impact illegal immigrants might be having on the job prospects for the less skilled members of the larger population, including the urban underclass that is disproportionately minority. We address some of these issues later in this chapter and in Chapters 9 and 10.

Immigration, Colonization, and Intergroup Competition. Three points can be made about Mexican immigration to the United States. First, the flow of population from Mexico was and is stimulated and sustained by powerful political and economic interests in the United States. Systems of recruitment and networks of communication and transportation have been established to routinize the flow of people and make it a predictable source of labor for the benefit of U.S. agriculture and other employers. The movement of people back and forth across the border was well established long before current efforts to regulate and control it. Depending on U.S. policy, this immigration is sometimes legal and encouraged and sometimes illegal and discouraged. Regardless of the label, the river of people has been steadily flowing for decades in response to opportunities for work in the North (Portes, 1990, pp. 160–163).

Second, Mexican immigrants enter a social system in which a colonized status for the group has already been established. The paternalistic traditions and racist systems that were established in the 19th century shaped the positions that were open to Mexican immigrants in the 20th century. Mexican Americans continued to be treated as a colonized group despite the streams of new arrivals, and the history of the group in the 20th century has many parallels with African Americans and American Indians. Thus, Mexican Americans might be thought of as a colonized minority group that happens to have a large number of immigrants or, alternatively, as an immigrant group that incorporates a strong tradition of colonization.

Third, this brief review of the twisting history of U.S. policy on Mexican immigration should serve as a reminder that levels of prejudice, racism, and discrimination increase as competition and the sense of threat between groups increases. The very qualities that make Mexican labor attractive to employers have caused bitter resentment among those segments of the Anglo population who feel that their own jobs and financial security are threatened. Often caught in the middle, Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans have not had the resources to avoid exploitation by employers or rejection and discrimination by others. The ebb and flow of the efforts to regulate immigration (and sometimes even deport U.S. citizens of Mexican descent) can be understood in terms of competition, differentials in power, and prejudice.

## Developments in the United States

As the flow of immigration from Mexico fluctuated with the need for labor, Mexican Americans struggled to improve their status. In the early decades of the 20th century, like other colonized minority groups, they faced a system of repression and control in which they were accorded few rights and had little political power.

Continuing Colonization. Throughout much of the 20th century, Mexican Americans have been limited to less desirable, low-wage jobs. Split labor markets, in which Mexican Americans are paid less than Anglos for the same jobs, have been common. The workforce has often been further split by gender, with Mexican American women assigned to the worst jobs and receiving the lowest wages in both urban and rural areas (Takaki, 1993, pp. 318–319).

Men's jobs often took them away from their families to work in the mines and fields. In 1930, 45% of all Mexican American men worked in agriculture, with another 28% in unskilled nonagricultural jobs (Cortes, 1980, p. 708). The women were often forced by economic necessity to enter the job market; in 1930, they were concentrated in farmwork (21%), unskilled manufacturing jobs (25%), and domestic and other service work (37%) (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 76–77). They were typically paid less than both Mexican American men and Anglo women. In addition to their job responsibilities, Mexican American women had to maintain their households and raise their children, often facing these tasks without a spouse (Zinn & Eitzen, 1990, p. 84).

As the United States industrialized and urbanized during the century, employment patterns became more diversified. Mexican Americans found work in manufacturing, construction, transportation, and other sectors of the economy. Some Mexican Americans, especially those of the third generation or later, moved into middle- and upper-level occupations, and some began to move out of the Southwest. Still, Mexican Americans in all regions (especially recent immigrants) tended to be concentrated at the bottom of the occupational ladder. Women increasingly worked outside the home, but their employment was largely limited to agriculture, domestic service, and the garment industry (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 76–79; Cortes, 1980, p. 708).

Like African Americans in the segregated South, Mexican Americans were excluded from the institutions of the larger society by law and by custom for much of the 20th century. There were separate (and unequal) school systems for Mexican American children, and in many communities, Mexican Americans were disenfranchised and accorded few legal or civil rights. There were "whites-only" primary elections modeled after the Jim Crow system, and residential segregation was widespread. The police and the court system generally abetted or ignored the rampant discrimination against the Mexican American community. Discrimination in the criminal justice system and civil rights violations have been continual grievances of Mexican Americans throughout the century.

Protest and Resistance. Like all minority groups, Mexican Americans have attempted to improve their collective position whenever possible. The beginnings of organized resistance and protest stretch back to the original contact period in the 19th century, when protest was usually organized on a local level. Regional and national organizations made their appearance in the 20th century (Cortes, 1980, p. 709).

As with African Americans, Mexican Americans' early protest organizations were integrationist and reflected the assimilationist values of the larger society. For example, one of the earlier and more significant groups was the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), founded in Texas in 1929. LULAC promoted Americanization and greater educational opportunities for Mexican Americans. The group also worked to expand civil and political rights and to increase equality for Mexican Americans. LÜLAC fought numerous court battles against discrimination and racial segregation (Moore, 1970, pp. 143–145). The workplace has been a particularly conflictual arena for Mexican Americans. Split labor market situations increased anti–Mexican American prejudice; some labor unions tried to exclude Mexican immigrants from the United States, along with immigrants from Asia and Southern and Eastern Europe (Grebler et al., 1970, pp. 90–93).

At the same time, Mexican Americans played important leadership roles in the labor movement. Since early in the century, Mexican Americans have been involved in union organizing, particularly in agriculture and mining. When excluded by Anglo labor unions, they often formed their own unions to work for the improvement of working conditions. As the 20th century progressed, the number and variety of groups pursuing the Mexican American cause increased. During World War II, Mexican Americans served in the armed forces, and, as with other minority groups, this experience increased their impatience with the constraints on their freedoms and opportunities. After the war ended, a number of new Mexican American organizations were founded, including the Community Service Organization in Los Angeles and the American GI Forum in Texas. Compared with older organizations such as LULAC, the new groups were less concerned with assimilation per se, addressed a broad range of community problems, and attempted to increase Mexican American political power (Grebler et al., 1970, pp. 543–545).

ChiCanismo. The 1960s were a time of intense activism and militancy for Mexican Americans. A protest movement guided by an ideology called **Chicanismo began at** about the same time as the Black Power and Red Power movements. Chicanismo encompassed a variety of organizations and ideas, united by a heightened militancy and impatience with the racism of the larger society and strongly stated demands for justice, fairness, and equal rights. The movement questioned the value of assimilation and sought to increase awareness of the continuing exploitation of Mexican Americans; it adapted many of the tactics and strategies (marches, rallies, voter registration drives, etc.) of the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

Chicanismo is similar in some ways to the Black Power ideology (see Chapter 7). It is partly a reaction to the failure of U.S. society to implement the promises of integration and equality. It rejected traditional stereotypes of Mexican Americans, proclaimed a powerful and positive group image and heritage, and analyzed the group's past and present situation in American society in terms of victimization, continuing exploitation, and institutional discrimination. The inequalities that separated Mexican Americans from the larger society were seen as the result of deep-rooted, continuing racism and the cumulative effects of decades of exclusion. According to Chicanismo, the solution to these problems lay in group empowerment, increased militancy, and group pride, not in assimilation to a culture that had rationalized and abetted the exploitation of Mexican Americans (Acuna, 1988, pp. 307–358; Grebler et al., 1970, p. 544; Moore, 1970, pp. 149–154).

Some of the central thrusts of the 1960s protest movement are captured in the widespread adoption of **Chicanos**, which had been a derogatory term, as a group name for Mexican Americans. Other minority groups underwent similar name changes at about the same time. For example, African Americans shifted from *Negro* to *black* as a group designation. These name changes were not merely cosmetic; they marked fundamental shifts in group goals and desired relationships with the larger society. The new names came from the minority groups themselves, not from the dominant group, and they expressed the pluralistic themes of group pride, self-determination, militancy, and increased resistance to exploitation and discrimination.

Organizations and Leaders. The Chicano movement saw the rise of many new groups and leaders, one of the most important of whom was Reies Lopez Tijerina, who formed the Alianza de Mercedes (Alliance of Land Grants) in 1963. The goal of this group was to correct what Tijerina saw as the unjust and illegal seizure of land from Mexicans during the 19th century. The Alianza was militant and confrontational, and to bring attention to their cause, members of the group seized and occupied federal lands. Tijerina spent several years in jail as a result of his activities, and the movement eventually lost its strength and faded from view in the 1970s.

Another prominent Chicano leader was Rodolfo Gonzalez, who founded the Crusade for Justice in 1965. The crusade focused on abuses of Mexican American civil and legal rights and worked against discrimination by police and the criminal courts. In a 1969 presentation at a symposium on Chicano liberation, Gonzalez expressed some of the nationalistic themes of Chicanismo and the importance of creating a power base within the group (as opposed to assimilating or integrating):

Where [whites] have incorporated themselves to keep us from moving into their neighborhoods, we can also incorporate ourselves to keep them from controlling our neighborhoods. We . . . have to understand economic revolution. . . . We have to understand that liberation comes from self-determination, and to start to use the tools of nationalism to win over our barrio brothers. . . . We have to understand that we can take over the institutions within our community. We have to create the community of the Mexicano here in order to have any type of power. (Moquin & Van Doren, 1971, pp. 381–382)

#### Photo 8.4

César Chávez organized the United Farm Workers and led a national grape boycott.

© Najlah Feanny/Corbis.

A third important leader was José Angel Gutierrez, organizer of the party La Raza Unida (People United). La Raza Unida offered alternative candidates and ideas to Democrats and Republicans. Its most notable success was in Crystal City, Texas, where, in 1973, it succeeded in electing its entire slate of candidates to local office (Acuna, 1988, pp. 332–451).

Without a doubt, the best-known Chicano leader of the 1960s and 1970s was the late César Chávez, who organized the United Farm Workers, the first union to successfully represent migrant workers. Chávez was as much a labor leader as a leader of the Mexican American community, and he also organized African Americans, Filipinos, and Anglo-Americans. Migrant farmworkers have few economic or political resources, and the migratory nature of their work isolates them in rural areas and makes them difficult to contact. In the 1960s (and still today), many were undocumented immigrants who spoke little or no English and returned to the cities or to their countries of origin at the end of the season. As a group, farmworkers were nearly invisible in the social landscape of the United States in the 1960s, and

organizing this group was a demanding task. Chávez's success in this endeavor is one of the more remarkable studies in group protest.

Like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Chávez was a disciple of Gandhi and a student of nonviolent direct protest (see Chapter 7). His best-known tactic was the boycott; in 1965, he organized a grape-pickers' strike and a national boycott of grapes. The boycott lasted 5 years and ended when the growers recognized the United Farm Workers as the legitimate representative of farmworkers. Chávez and his organization achieved a major victory, and the agreement provided for significant improvements in the situation of the workers (for a biography of Chávez, see Levy, 1975).

Gender and the Chicano Protest Movement. Mexican American women were heavily involved in the Chicano protest movement. Jessie Lopez and Dolores Huerta were central figures in the movement to organize farmworkers and worked closely with César Chávez. However, as was the case for African American women, Chicano women encountered sexism and gender discrimination within the movement even as they worked for the benefit of the group as a whole. Their dilemmas are described by activist Sylvia Gonzales:

Along with her male counterpart, she attended meetings, organized boycotts, did everything asked of her.... But, if she [tried to assume leadership roles], she was met with the same questioning of her femininity which the culture dictates when a woman is not self-sacrificing and seeks to fulfill her own needs.... The Chicano movement seemed to demand self-actualization for only the male members of the group. (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, p. 83)

Despite these difficulties, Chicano women contributed to the movement in a variety of areas. They helped to organize poor communities and worked for welfare reform. Continuing issues include domestic violence, child care, the criminal victimization of women, and the racial and gender oppression that limits women of all minority groups (Amott & Matthaei, 1991, pp. 82–86; see also Mirandé & Enriquez, 1979, pp. 202–243).

## Mexican Americans and Other Minority Groups

Like the Black Power and Red Power movements, Chicanismo began to fade from public view in the 1970s and 1980s. The movement could claim some successes, but perhaps the clearest victory was in raising the awareness of the larger society about the grievances and problems of Mexican Americans. Today, many Chicanos continue to face poverty and powerlessness and continuing exploitation as a cheap agricultural labor force. The less-educated, urbanized segments of the group share the prospect of becoming a permanent urban underclass with other minority groups of color.

Over the course of the 20th century, the ability of Chicanos to pursue their self-interests has been limited by both internal and external forces. Like African Americans, the group has been systematically excluded from the institutions of the larger society. Continuing immigration from Mexico has increased the size of the group, but these immigrants bring few

resources with them that could be directly or immediately translated into economic or political power in the United States.

Unlike immigrants from Europe, who settled in the urban centers of the industrializing East Coast, Mexican Americans tended to work and live in rural areas distant from and marginal to urban centers of industrialization and opportunities for education, skill development, and upward mobility. They were a vitally important source of labor in agriculture and other segments of the economy but only to the extent that they were exploitable and powerless. As Chicanos moved to the cities, they continued to serve as a colonized, exploited labor force concentrated at the lower end of the stratification system. Thus, the handicaps created by discrimination in the past were reinforced by continuing discrimination and exploitation in the present, perpetuating the cycles of poverty and powerlessness.

At the same time, however, the flow of immigration and the constant movement of people back and forth across the border kept Mexican culture and the Spanish language alive. Unlike African Americans under slavery, Chicanos were not cut off from their homeland and native culture. Mexican American culture was attacked and disparaged, but, unlike African culture, it was not destroyed.

Clearly, the traditional model of assimilation does not describe the experiences of Mexican Americans very well. They have experienced less social mobility than European immigrant groups and have maintained their traditional culture and language more completely. Like African Americans, the group is split along lines of social class. Although many Mexican Americans (particularly of the third generation and later) have acculturated and integrated, a large segment of the group continues to fill the same economic role as their ancestors: an unskilled labor force for the development of the Southwest, augmented with new immigrants at the convenience of U.S. employers. In 2004, over 41% of employed Mexican Americans nearly double the percentage for non-Hispanic whites—were in the construction, unskilled labor, and farm sectors of the labor force (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2007a). For the less educated and for recent immigrants, cultural and racial differences combine to increase their social visibility, mark them for exploitation, and rationalize their continuing exclusion from the larger society.

## **Puerto Ricans**

Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States after the defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War of 1898. The island was small and impoverished, and it was difficult for Puerto Ricans to avoid domination by the United States. Thus, the initial contact between Puerto Ricans and U.S. society was made in an atmosphere of war and conquest. By the time Puerto Ricans began to migrate to the mainland in large numbers, their relationship to U.S. society was largely that of a colonized minority group, and they generally retained that status on the mainland.

## Migration (Push and Pull) and Employment

At the time of initial contact, the population of Puerto Rico was overwhelmingly rural and supported itself by subsistence farming and by exporting coffee and sugar. As the century

wore on, U.S. firms began to invest in and develop the island economy, especially the sugarcane industry. These agricultural endeavors took more and more of the land. Opportunities for economic survival in the rural areas declined, and many peasants were forced to move into the cities (Portes, 1990, p. 163).

Movement to the mainland began gradually and increased slowly until the 1940s. In 1900, there were about 2,000 Puerto Ricans living on the mainland. By the eve of World War II, this number had grown to only 70,000, a tiny fraction of the total population. Then, during the 1940s, the number of Puerto Ricans on the mainland increased more than fourfold, to 300,000, and during the 1950s, it nearly tripled, to 887,000 (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1976, p. 19).

This massive and sudden population growth was the result of a combination of circumstances. First, Puerto Ricans became citizens of the United States in 1917, so their movements were not impeded by international boundaries or immigration restrictions. Second, unemployment was a major problem on the island. The sugarcane industry continued to displace the rural population, urban unemployment was high, and the population continued to grow. By the 1940s, a considerable number of Puerto Ricans were available to seek work off the island and, like Chicanos, could serve as a cheap labor supply for U.S. employers.

Third, Puerto Ricans were "pulled" to the mainland by the same labor shortages that attracted Mexican immigrants during and after World War II. Whereas the latter responded to job opportunities in the West and Southwest, Puerto Ricans moved to the Northeast. The job profiles of these two groups were similar; both were concentrated in the low-wage, unskilled sector of the job market. However, the Puerto Rican migration began many decades after the Mexican migration, at a time when the United States was much more industrialized and urbanized. As a result, Puerto Ricans have been more concentrated than Mexican immigrants in urban labor markets (Portes, 1990, p. 164).

Movement between the island and the mainland was facilitated by the commencement of affordable air travel between San Juan and New York City in the late 1940s. New York had been the major center of settlement for Puerto Ricans on the mainland even before annexation. A small Puerto Rican community had been established in the city, and as with many groups, organizations and networks were established to ease the transition and help newcomers with housing, jobs, and other issues. Although they eventually dispersed to other regions and cities, Puerto Ricans on the mainland remain centered in New York City. More than two thirds currently reside in the cities of the Northeast (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2004b).

Economics and jobs were at the heart of the move to the mainland. The rate of Puerto Rican migration has followed the cycle of boom and bust, just as it has for Mexican immigrants. The 1950s, the peak decade for Puerto Rican migration, was a period of rapid U.S. economic growth. Migration was encouraged, and job recruiters traveled to the island to attract workers. By the 1960s, however, the supply of jobs on the island had expanded appreciably, and the average number of migrants declined from the peak of 41,000 per year in the 1950s to about 20,000 per year. In the 1970s, the U.S. economy faltered, unemployment grew, and the flow of Puerto Rican migration actually reversed itself, with the number of returnees exceeding the number of migrants in various years (ULS. Commission on Civil Rights, 1976, p. 25). The migrations continued: A little more than 3.4 million Puerto Ricans, or about 47% of all Puerto Ricans, were living on the mainland in 1999.

## Gender Images of Latinas

O ne part of the minority group experience is learning to deal with the stereotypes, images, and expectations of the larger society. Of course, everyone (even white males) has to respond to the assumptions of others, but given the realities of power and status, minority group members have fewer choices and a narrower range in which to maneuver: The images imposed by the society are harder to escape and more difficult to deny.

In her analysis, Judith Ortiz Cofer (1995), a writer, poet, professor of English, and Puerto Rican, describes some of the images and stereotypes of Latinas with which she has had to struggle and some of the dynamics that have created and sustained those images. She writes from her own experiences, but the points she makes illustrate many of the sociological theories and concepts that guide this text.

#### The Island Travels With You

Narrative Portrait 2

#### **Judith Ortiz Cofer**

On a bus trip from London to Oxford University... a young man, obviously fresh from a pub, spotted me and as if struck by inspiration went down on his knees in the aisle. With both hands over his heart he broke into an Irish tenor's rendition of "Maria" from West Side Story. My politely amused fellow passengers gave his lovely voice the round of gentle applause that it deserved. Though I was not quite as amused, I managed my version of an English smile: no show of teeth, no extreme contortions of the facial muscles—I was at this time in my life practicing reserve and cool.... But Maria had followed me to London, reminding me of a prime fact of my life: You can leave the island, master the English language, and travel as far as you can, but if you are a Latina,... the Island travels with you.

This is sometimes a very good thing—it may win you the extra minute of somebody's attention. But with some people, the same things can make you an island—not so much a tropical paradise as an Alcatraz, a place nobody wants to visit. As a Puerto Rican girl growing up in the United States and wanting like most children to "belong," I resented the stereotypes that my Hispanic appearance called forth from many people I met.

Our family lived in a large urban center in New Jersey during the sixties, where life was designed as a microcosm of my parents' casas on the island. We spoke Spanish, we ate Puerto Rican food bought at the bodega, and we practiced strict Catholicism....

As a girl, I was kept under strict surveillance, since virtue and modesty were, by cultural equation, the same as family honor. As a teenager, I was instructed on how to behave as a proper senorita. But it was a conflicting message girls got, since the Puerto Rican mothers also encouraged their daughters to look and act like women and to dress in clothes our Anglo friends found too "mature" for our age.... At a Puerto Rican festival, neither the music nor the colors we wore could be too loud. I still experience a vague sense of letdown when I'm invited to a "party" and it turns out to be a marathon conversation in hushed tones rather than a fiesta with salsa, laughter, and dancing—the kind of celebration I remember from my childhood....

Mixed cultural signals have perpetuated certain stereotypes—for example, that of the "Hot Tamale" or sexual firebrand. It is a ... view that the media have found easy to promote. In their special vocabulary, advertisers have designated "sizzling" and "smoldering" as the adjectives of choice for describing not only the foods but the women of Latin America....

It is custom, however, not chromosomes, that leads us to choose scarlet over pale pink. As young girls, we were influenced in our decisions about clothes and colors by the women ... who had grown up on a tropical island where the natural environment was a riot of primary colors, where showing your skin was one way to keep cool as well as to look sexy. Most important of all, on the island, women perhaps felt freer to dress and move more provocatively, since ... they were protected by the traditions, mores, and laws of a Spanish/ Catholic system of morality and machismo whose main rule was: You may look at my sister, but if you touch her I will kill you. The extended family and church structure could provide a young woman with a circle of safety in her small pueblo on the Island; if a man "wronged" a girl, everyone would close in to save her family honor....

Because of my education and proficiency with the English language, I have acquired many mechanisms for dealing with the anger I experience. This was not true for my parents, nor is it true for the many Latin women working at menial jobs who must put up with stereotypes about our ethnic group such as: "They make good domestics." This is another facet of the myth of the Latin women in the United States.... The myth of the Hispanic menial has been maintained by the same media phenomenon that made "Mammy" from *Gone With the Wind* America's idea of a black woman for generations: Maria, the housemaid or counter girl, is now indelibly etched into the national psyche. The big and little screens have presented us with the picture of the funny Hispanic maid, mispronouncing words and cooking up a spicy storm in the kitchen....

I am one of the lucky ones. My parents made it possible for me to acquire a stronger footing in the mainstream culture by giving me the chance at an education.... There are thousands of Latinas without the privilege of an education or the entrée into society that I have. For them, life is a struggle against the misconceptions perpetuated by the myth of the Latina as whore, domestic, or criminal. My personal goal in my public life is to try to replace the old pervasive stereotypes and myths about Latinas with a much more interesting set of realities. Every time I give a reading [of my poetry], I hope the stories I tell, the dreams and fears I examine in my work, can achieve some universal truth which will get my audience past the particulars of my skin color, my accent, or my clothes.

SOURCE: From Cofer, Judith Ortiz (1995). "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria." In her *The Latin Deli: Prose and Poetry*, pp. 148–154. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Copyright © 1993 by Judith Ortiz Cofer. Reprinted by permission of the University of Georgia Press.

The development of a Cuban American minority group bears little resemblance to the experience of either Chicanos or Puerto Ricans. As recently as the 1950s, there had not been much immigration from Cuba to the United States, even during times of labor shortages, and Cuban Americans were a very small group, numbering no more than 50,000 (Perez, 1980, p. 256).

## Immigration (Push and Pull)

The conditions for a mass immigration were created in the late 1950s, when a Marxist revolution brought Fidel Castro to power in Cuba. Castro's government was decidedly anti-American and began to restructure Cuban society along socialist lines. The middle and upper classes lost political and economic power, and the revolution made it difficult, even impossible, for Cuban capitalists to remain in business. Thus, the first Cuban immigrants to the United States tended to come from the more elite classes and included affluent and powerful people who controlled many resources.

The United States was a logical destination for those displaced by the revolution. Cuba is only 90 miles from southern Florida, the climates are similar, and the U.S. government, which was as anti-Castro as Castro was anti-American, welcomed the new antivals as political refugees fleeing from Communist tyranny. Prior social, cultural, and business ties also pulled the immigrants in the direction of the United States. Since gaining its independence in 1898, Cuba has been heavily influenced by its neighbor to the north, and U.S. companies helped to develop the Cuban economy. At the time of Castro's revolution, the Cuban political leadership and the more affluent classes were profoundly Americanized in their attitudes and lifestyles (Portes, 1990, p. 165). Furthermore, many Cuban exiles viewed southern Florida as an ideal spot from which to launch a counterrevolution to oust Castro.

Immigration was considerable for several years. More than 215,000 Cubans arrived between the end of the revolution and 1962, when an escalation of hostile relations resulted in the cutoff of all direct contact between Cuba and the United States. In 1965, an air link was reestablished, and an additional 340,000 Cubans made the journey. When the air connection was terminated in 1973, immigration slowed to a trickle once more. In 1980, however, the Cuban government permitted another period of open immigration. Using boats of every shape, size, and degree of seaworthiness, about 124,000 Cubans crossed to Florida. These immigrants are often referred to as the Marielitos, after the port of Mariel from which many of them departed. This wave of immigrants generated a great deal of controversy in the United States, because the Cuban government used the opportunity to rid itself of a variety of convicted criminals and outcasts. However, the Marielitos also included people from every segment of Cuban society, a fact that was lost in the clamor of concern about the "undesirables" (Portes & Manning, 1986, p. 58).

## **Regional Concentrations**

The overwhelming majority of Cuban immigrants settled in southern Florida, especially in Miami and the surrounding Dade County. Today, Cuban Americans remain one of the most

spatially concentrated minority groups in the United States, with 67% of all Cuban Americans residing in Florida, 52% in the Miami area alone (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001). This dense concentration has led to a number of disputes and conflicts between the Hispanic, Anglo-, and African American communities in the area. Issues have centered on language (see the Current Debates section in Chapter 2), jobs, and discrimination by the police and other gov-ernmental agencies. The conflicts have often been intense, and on more than one occasion, they have erupted into violence and civil disorder.

## Socioeconomic Characteristics

Compared with other streams of immigrants from Latin America, Cubans are, on the average, unusually affluent and well educated. Among the immigrants in the early 1960s were large numbers of professionals, landowners, and businesspeople. In later years, as Cuban society was transformed by the Castro regime, the stream included fewer elites, largely because there were fewer left in Cuba, and more political dissidents and working-class people. Today (as will be displayed in the exhibits presented later in this chapter), Cuban Americans rank higher than other Latino groups on a number of dimensions, a reflection of the educational and economic resources they brought with them from Cuba and the favorable reception they enjoyed from the United States (Portes, 1990, p. 169).

These assets gave Cubans an advantage over Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, but the differences between the three Latino groups run deeper and are more complex than a simple accounting of initial resources would suggest. Cubans adapted to U.S. society in a way that is fundamentally different from the experiences of the other two Latino groups.

## The Ethnic Enclave

Most of the minority groups we have discussed to this point have been concentrated in the unskilled, low-wage segments of the economy in which jobs are not secure and not linked to opportunities for upward mobility. Many Cuban Americans have bypassed this sector of the economy and much of the discrimination and limitations associated with it. Like several other groups, such as Jewish Americans, Cuban Americans are an enclave minority (see Chapter 2). An ethnic enclave is a social, economic, and cultural subsociety controlled by the group itself. Located in a specific geographical area or neighborhood inhabited solely or largely by members of the group, the enclave encompasses sufficient economic enterprises and social institutions to permit the group to function as a self-contained entity, largely independent of the surrounding community.

The first wave of Cuban immigrants brought with them considerable resources and business expertise. Although much of their energy was focused on ousting Castro and returning to Cuba, they generated enough economic activity to sustain restaurants, shops, and other small businesses that catered to the exile community.

As the years passed and the hope of a return to Cuba dimmed, the enclave economy grew. Between 1967 and 1976, the number of Cuban-owned firms in Dade County



#### Photo 8.5

This sparerib stand is one of many small businesses in "Little Havana" in Miami.

© Morton Beebe/Corbis.

increased ninefold, from 919 to about 8,000. Six years later, the number had reached 12,000. Most of these enterprises are small, but some factories employ hundreds of workers (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, pp. 20-21). In addition to businesses serving their own community, Cuban-owned firms are involved in construction, manufacturing, finance, insurance, real estate, and an array of other activities. Over the decades, Cuban-owned firms have become increasingly integrated into the local economy and increasingly competitive with firms in the larger society. The growth of economic enterprises has been paralleled by a growth in the number of other types of groups and organizations and in the number and quality of services available (schools, law firms, medical care, funeral parlors, etc.). The enclave has become a largely autonomous community capable of providing for its members from cradle to grave (Logan, Alba, & McNulty, 1994; Peterson, 1995; Portes & Bach, 1985, p. 59).

The fact that the enclave economy is controlled by the group itself is crucial; it separates the ethnic enclave from "the ghetto," or neighborhoods that are impoverished and segregated. In ghettos, members of other groups typically control the local economy; the profits, rents, and other resources flow out of the neighborhood. In the enclave, profits are reinvested and kept in the neighborhood. Group members can avoid the discrimination and limitations imposed by the larger society and can apply their skills, education, and talents in an atmosphere free from language barriers and prejudice. Those who might wish to venture into business for themselves can use the networks of cooperation and mutual aid for advice, credit, and other forms of assistance. Thus, the ethnic enclave provides a platform from which Cuban Americans can pursue economic success independent of their degree of acculturation or English language ability.

The effectiveness of the ethnic enclave as a pathway for adaptation is illustrated by a study of Cuban and Mexican immigrants, all of whom entered the United States in 1973. At the time of entry, the groups were comparable in levels of skills, education, and English language ability. The groups were interviewed on several different occasions, and although they remained comparable on many variables, there were dramatic differences between the groups that reflected their different positions in the labor market. The majority of the Mexican immigrants were employed in the low-wage job sector. Less than 20% were self-employed or employed by another person of Mexican descent. Conversely, 57% of the Cuban immigrants were self-employed or employed by another Cuban (i.e., they were involved in the enclave economy). Among the subjects in the study, self-employed Cubans

reported the highest monthly incomes (\$1,495), and Cubans otherwise employed in the enclave earned the second-highest incomes (\$1,111). The lowest incomes (\$880) were earned by Mexican immigrants employed in small, nonenclave firms; many of these people worked as unskilled laborers in seasonal, temporary, or otherwise insecure jobs (Portes, 1990, p. 173; see also Portes & Bach, 1985).

The ability of the Mexican immigrants to rise in the class system and compete for place and position was severely constrained by the weight of past discrimination, the preferences of employers in the present, and their own lack of economic and political power. Cuban immigrants who found jobs in the enclave did not need to expose themselves to American prejudices or rely on the job market of the larger society. They entered an immigrant context that had networks of mutual assistance and support and linked them to opportunities more consistent with their ambitions and their qualifications.

The fact that success came faster to the group that was less acculturated reverses the prediction of many theories of assimilation. The pattern has long been recognized by some leaders of other groups, however, and is voiced in many of the themes of Black Power, Red Power, and Chicanismo that emphasize self-help, self-determination, nationalism, and separation. However, ethnic enclaves cannot be a panacea for all immigrant or other minority groups. They develop only under certain limited conditions, namely, when business and financial expertise and reliable sources of capital are combined with a disciplined labor force willing to work for low wages in exchange for on-the-job training, future assistance and loans, or other delayed benefits. Enclave enterprises usually start on a small scale and cater only to other ethnics. Thus, the early economic returns are small, and prosperity follows only after years of hard work, if at all. Most important, eventual success and expansion beyond the boundaries of the enclave depend on the persistence of strong ties of loyalty, kinship, and solidarity. The pressure to assimilate might easily weaken these networks and the strength of group cohesion (Portes & Manning, 1986, pp. 61–66).

## Cuban Americans and Other Minority Groups

The adaptation of Cuban Americans contrasts sharply with the experiences of colonized minority groups and with the common understanding of how immigrants are "supposed" to acculturate and integrate. Cuban Americans are neither the first nor the only group to develop an ethnic enclave, and their success has generated prejudice and resentment from the dominant group and from other minority groups. Whereas Puerto Ricans and Chicanos have been the victims of stereotypes labeling them "inferior," higher-status Cuban Americans have been stereotyped as "too successful," "too clannish," and "too ambitious." The former stereotype commonly emerges to rationalize exploitative relationships; the latter expresses disparagement and rejection of groups that are more successful in the struggle to acquire resources (see Chapter 3). Nonetheless, the stereotype of Cubans is an exaggeration and a misperception that obscures the fact that poverty and unemployment are major problems for many members of this group (see the exhibits at the end of this chapter).

## New Hispanic Groups: Immigrants From the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Colombia

Immigration from Latin America, the Caribbean, and South America has been considerable, even excluding Mexico. As with other sending nations, the volume of immigration from these regions increased after 1965 and has averaged about 200,000 per year since the 1980s. Generally, Latino immigrants—not counting those from Mexico—have been 20% to 25% of all immigrants since the 1960s.

The sending nations for these immigrants are economically less developed, and most have long-standing relations with the United States. We have already discussed the roles that Mexico and Puerto Rico have historically played as sources of cheap labor and the ties that led Cubans to immigrate to the United States. Each of the other sending nations has been similarly linked to the United States, the dominant economic and political power in the region.

Although the majority of these immigrants bring educational and occupational qualifications that are modest by U.S. standards, they tend to be more educated, more urbanized, and more skilled than the average citizens of the nations from which they come. Contrary to widely held beliefs, these immigrants do not represent the poorest of the poor, the "wretched refuse" of their homelands. They tend to be rather ambitious, as evidenced by their willingness to attempt to succeed in a society that has not been notably hospitable to Latinos or people of color in the past. Most of these immigrants are not so much fleeing poverty or joblessness as they are attempting to pursue their ambitions and seek opportunities for advancement that are simply not available in their countries of origin (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, pp. 10–11).

This characterization applies to legal and unauthorized immigrants alike. In fact, the latter may illustrate the point more dramatically, because the cost of illegally entering the United States can be considerable, much higher than the cost of a legal entry. The venture may require years of saving money or the combined resources of a large kinship group. Forged papers and other costs of being smuggled into the country can easily amount to thousands of dollars, a considerable sum in nations in which the usual wage is a tiny fraction of the U.S. average (Orreniou, 2001, p. 7). Also, the passage can be extremely dangerous and can require a level of courage (or desperation) not often associated with the undocumented and illegal. Many Mexican would-be immigrants have died along the border, and many other immigrants have been lost at sea (for example, see "Dominicans Saved From Sea," 2004).

Rather than attempting to cover all South and Central American groups, we will select the three largest to serve as "case studies" and consider immigrants from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Colombia (see Exhibit 8.7). Together, these three groups have made up 7% to 8% of all immigrants in recent years and about 20% of the immigrants from Central and South America and the Caribbean. These groups had few members in the United States before the 1960s, and all have had high rates of immigration over the past four decades. However, the motivation of the immigrants and the immigration experience has varied from group to group, as we shall see later.

#### Three Case Studies

Each of the groups selected for case studies has a high percentage of foreign-born members (see Exhibit 8.4), and, predictably with so many members in the first generation, proficiency

#### Exhibit 8.7

Map of Central and South America and the Caribbean Showing the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and



in English is an important issue. Although Colombians approach national norms in education, the other two groups have relatively low levels of human capital (education), and all are well above national norms in terms of poverty.

Although these groups share some common characteristics, there are also important differences between them. They differ in their "racial" characteristics, with Dominicans being more African in appearance, Colombians more European, and Salvadorans more Indian. The groups tend to settle in different places. Dominicans and Colombians are clustered along the East Coast, particularly in New York, New Jersey, and Florida, but Salvadorans are more concentrated on the West Coast (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2003). Finally, the groups differ in the conditions of their entry or their contact situation, a difference that, as we have seen, is quite consequential. Salvadorans are more likely to be political refugees fleeing a brutal civil war and political repression, while Dominicans and Colombians are more likely to be motivated by economics and the employment possibilities offered in the United States. We will consider each of these groups briefly and explore some of these differences further.



#### Photo 8.6

Poverty and pollution in the Dominican Republic. This little girl plays in a destroyed boat in a polluted river that runs through her neighborhood.

> © Orlan do Barriá/erpa/Corluis.

**Dominicans.** The Dominican Republic shares the Caribbean island of Hispaniola with Haiti. The island economy is still largely agricultural, although the tourist industry has grown in recent years. Unemployment and poverty are major problems, and Dominicans average less than 5 years of education ("Average Years of Schooling," n.d.). Dominican immigrants, like those from Mexico, are motivated largely by economics, and they compete for jobs with Puerto Ricans, other immigrant groups, and native-born workers with lower levels of education and jobs skills. Although Dominicans are limited in their job options by the language barrier, they are somewhat advantaged by their willingness to work for lower wages, and they are especially concentrated in the service sector, as day laborers (men) or domestics (women). Dominicans maintain strong ties with home and are a major source of income and support for the families left behind.

In terms of acculturation and integration, Dominicans are roughly similar to Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, although some studies suggest that they are possibly the most impoverished immigrant group (see, for example, Camarota, 2002). A high percentage of Dominicans are undocumented, and many spend considerable money and take considerable risks to get to the United States. If these less visible members of the community were included in the official, government-generated statistics used in exhibits presented later in this chapter, it is very likely that the portrait of poverty and low levels of education and jobs skills would be even more dramatic.

SalVadOrans. El Salvador, like the Dominican Republic, is a relatively poor nation, with a high percentage of the population relying on subsistence agriculture for survival. It is estimated that about 50% of the population lives below the poverty level, and there are major problems with unemployment and underemployment. About 80% of the population is literate, and the average number of years of school completed is a little more than 5 ("Literacy, Total Population," n.d.).

El Salvador, like many sending nations, has a difficult time providing sufficient employment opportunities for its population, and much of the pressure to immigrate is economic. However, El Salvador also suffered through a brutal civil war in the 1980s, and many of the Salvadorans in the United States today are actually political refugees. The United States, under the administration of President Reagan, refused to grant political refugee status to Salvadorans, and many were returned to El Salvador. This federal policy resulted in high numbers of undocumented immigrants and also stimulated a sanctuary movement, led by American clergy, which helped Salvadoran immigrants, both undocumented and legal, to stay in the United States. As was the case with Dominicans, if the undocumented immigrants from El Salvador were included in official government statistics, the picture of poverty would become even more extreme.

Colombians. Colombia is somewhat more developed than most other Central and South American nations but has suffered from more than 40 years of internal turmoil, civil war, and government corruption. The nation is a major center for the production and distribution of drugs to the world in general and the United States in particular, and the drug industry and profits are complexly intertwined with domestic strife. Colombian Americans are closer to U.S. norms of education and income than other Latino groups, and recent immigrants are a mixture of less-skilled laborers and well-educated professionals seeking to further their careers. Colombians are residentially concentrated in urban areas, especially in Florida and the Northeast, and often settle in areas close to other Latino neighborhoods. Of course, the huge majority of Colombian Americans are law-abiding and not connected with the drug trade, but still they must deal with the pervasive stereotype that pictures Colombians as gang-sters and drug smugglers (not unlike the Mafia stereotype encountered by Italian Americans).

## Contemporary Hispanic-White Relations

As in previous chapters, we will use the central concepts of this text to review the status of Latinos in the United States. Where relevant, comparisons are made between the major Latino groups and the minority groups discussed in previous chapters.

## Prejudice and Discrimination

The American tradition of prejudice against Latinos was born in the 19th-century conflicts that created minority group status for Mexican Americans. The themes of the original anti-Mexican stereotypes and attitudes were consistent with the nature of the contact situation: As



#### Photo 8.6

Poverty and pollution in the Dominican Republic. This little girl plays in a destroyed boat in a polluted river that runs through her neighborhood.

> © Oriando Barria/epa/Corbis.

Dominicans. The Dominican Republic shares the Caribbean island of Hispaniola with Haiti. The island economy is still largely agricultural, although the tourist industry has grown in recent years. Unemployment and poverty are major problems, and Dominicans average less than 5 years of education ("Average Years of Schooling," n.d.). Dominican immigrants, like those from Mexico, are motivated largely by economics, and they compete for jobs with Puerto Ricans, other immigrant groups, and native-born workers with lower levels of education and jobs skills. Although Dominicans are limited in their job options by the language barrier, they are somewhat advantaged by their willingness to work for lower wages, and they are especially concentrated in the service sector, as day laborers (men) or domestics (women). Dominicans maintain strong ties with home and are a major source of income and support for the families left behind.

In terms of acculturation and integration, Dominicans are roughly similar to Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, although some studies suggest that they are possibly the most impoverished immigrant group (see, for example, Camarota, 2002). A high percentage of Dominicans are undocumented, and many spend considerable money and take considerable risks to get to the United States. If these less visible members of the community were included in the official, government-generated statistics used in exhibits presented later in this chapter, it is very likely that the portrait of poverty and low levels of education and jobs skills would be even more dramatic.

Salvadorans. El Salvador, like the Dominican Republic, is a relatively poor nation, with a high percentage of the population relying on subsistence agriculture for survival. It is estimated that about 50% of the population lives below the poverty level, and there are major problems with unemployment and underemployment. About 80% of the population is literate, and the average number of years of school completed is a little more than 5 ("Literacy, Total Population," n.d.).

El Salvador, like many sending nations, has a difficult time providing sufficient employment opportunities for its population, and much of the pressure to immigrate is economic. However, El Salvador also suffered through a brutal civil war in the 1980s, and many of the Salvadorans in the United States today are actually political refugees. The United States, under the administration of President Reagan, refused to grant political refugee status to Salvadorans, and many were returned to El Salvador. This federal policy resulted in high numbers of undocumented immigrants and also stimulated a sanctuary movement, led by American clergy, which helped Salvadoran immigrants, both undocumented and legal, to stay in the United States. As was the case with Dominicans, if the undocumented immigrants from El Salvador were included in official government statistics, the picture of poverty would become even more extreme.

Colombians. Colombia is somewhat more developed than most other Central and South American nations but has suffered from more than 40 years of internal turmoil, civil war, and government corruption. The nation is a major center for the production and distribution of drugs to the world in general and the United States in particular, and the drug industry and profits are complexly intertwined with domestic strife. Colombian Americans are closer to U.S. norms of education and income than other Latino groups, and recent immigrants are a mixture of less-skilled laborers and well-educated professionals seeking to further their careers. Colombians are residentially concentrated in urban areas, especially in Florida and the Northeast, and often settle in areas close to other Latino neighborhoods. Of course, the huge majority of Colombian Americans are law-abiding and not connected with the drug trade, but still they must deal with the pervasive stereotype that pictures Colombians as gang-sters and drug smugglers (not unlike the Mafia stereotype encountered by Italian Americans).

## **Contemporary Hispanic-White Relations**

As in previous chapters, we will use the central concepts of this text to review the status of Latinos in the United States. Where relevant, comparisons are made between the major Latino groups and the minority groups discussed in previous chapters.

## Prejudice and Discrimination

The American tradition of prejudice against Latinos was born in the 19th-century conflicts that created minority group status for Mexican Americans. The themes of the original anti-Mexican stereotypes and attitudes were consistent with the nature of the contact situation: As

## **COMPARATIVE FOCUS**

### Immigration in Europe Versus Immigration to the United States

The volume of immigration in the world today is at record levels. Almost 200 million people, about 3% of the world's population, live outside their countries of birth, and there is hardly a nation or region that has not been affected (Population Reference Bureau, 2007b). The United States has by far the highest number of foreign-born citizens, and the flow of immigrants (illegal as well as legal) from Mexico to the United States is the single largest population movement. However, the United States is only one of many destination nations, and the issues of immigration and assimilation that are being debated so fervently here are echoed in many other nations.

In particular, the nations of Western Europe—highly developed, advanced industrial economics—are prime destinations for immigrants. Like the United States, these nations have very high standards of living, and they offer myriad opportunities for economic survival, even though the price may be to live at the margins of the larger society or to take jobs scorned by the nativeborn. In addition, a powerful factor that "pulls" people to this region is that Western European nations have very low birthrates, and in some cases (e.g., Germany and Italy), their populations are projected to actually decline in coming decades (Population Reference Bureau, 2007a). The labor force shortages thus created will continue to attract immigrants to Western Europe for decades to come.

The immigration to Western Europe is varied and includes people from all walks of life, from highly educated professionals to peasant laborers. The most prominent flows include movements from Turkey to Germany, from Africa to Spain and Italy, and from many former British colonies (Jamaica, India, Nigeria, etc.) to the United Kingdom. This immigration is primarily an economic phenomenon motivated by the search for jobs and survival, but the stream also includes refugees and asylum seekers spurred by civil war, genocide, and political unrest.

In terms of numbers, the volume of immigration to Western Europe is much smaller than the flow to the United States, but its proportional impact is comparable. About 13% of the U.S. population is foreign-born, and many Western European nations (including Belgium, Germany, and Sweden) have a similar profile (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2008). Thus, it is not surprising that in both cases, immigration has become a major concern and a significant political issue. A major difference, as we saw when discussing Ireland in Chapter 2, is that Western European nations have less experience in dealing with a large influx of newcomers or managing a pluralistic society. Furthermore, many Western European nations make it difficult or impossible for immigrants to achieve citizenship or full membership in their societies.

To focus on one example, Germany has by far the largest immigrant community of any Western European nation and has been dealing with a large foreign-born population for decades. Germany began to allow large numbers of immigrants to enter as temporary workers or "guest workers" (*Gastarbeiter*) to help staff its expanding economy beginning in the 1960s. Most of these immigrants came from Turkey, and they were seen by Germans as temporary workers only, people who would return to their homeland when they were no longer needed. Thus, the host society saw no particular need to encourage immigrants to acculturate and integrate.

Contrary to this perception, many immigrants stayed and settled permanently, and their millions of descendants today speak only German and have no knowledge of or experience with their "homeland." Although acculturated, they are not integrated, and, in fact—and in stark contrast with the United States—they were denied the opportunity to become citizens until recently. A German law passed nearly a century ago reserved citizenship for ethnic Germans, regardless of place of birth. Under this policy, a recent immigrant from, say, Ukraine was eligible for citizenship if they could prove that they had German ancestors-even if they spoke no German and had no familiarity with German culture or traditions. In contrast, a Turk living in Germany was not eligible for citizenship regardless of how long they or their family had been residents. This law was changed in 1999 to permit greater flexibility in qualifying for citizenship, but still more recently, Germany has passed new laws that make it harder for foreigners to enter the country. To gain admission, immigrants may have to pass a language test and have a guaranteed job or a place in school. The immigrant community sees these new laws as a form of rejection, and there have been bitter (and sometimes violent) demonstrations in response ("Europe: The Integration Dilemma," 2007).

Clashes of this sort have been common across Western Europe in recent years, especially with the growing Muslim communities. Many Europeans see Islamic immigrants as unassimilable, too foreign or exotic to ever fit into the mainstream of their society. These conflicts have been punctuated by violence and riots in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and other places,

Across Europe, just as in the United States (and Canada), nations are wrestling with issues of inclusion and diversity: What should it mean to be German, or French, or British, or Dutch? How much diversity can be tolerated before national cohesion is threatened? What are the limits of tolerance? What is the best balance between assimilation and pluralism? Struggles over the essential meaning of national identity are increasingly common throughout the developed world.

Mexicans were conquered and subordinated, they were characterized as inferior, lazy, irresponsible, low in intelligence, and dangerously criminal (McWilliams, 1961, pp. 212–214). The prejudice and racism, supplemented with the echoes of the racist ideas and beliefs brought to the Southwest by many Anglos, helped to justify and rationalize the colonized, exploited status of the Chicanos.

These prejudices were incorporated into the dominant culture and transferred to Puerto Ricans when they began to arrive on the mainland. As we have already mentioned, this stereotype does not fit Cuban Americans. Instead, their affluence has been exaggerated and perceived as undeserved or achieved by unfair or "un-American" means, a characterization similar to the traditional stereotype of Jews but just as prejudiced as the perception of Latino inferiority.

There is some evidence that the level of Latino prejudice has been affected by the decline of explicit American racism (discussed in Chapter 3). For example, social distance scale results show a decrease in the scores of Mexicans, although their group ranking tends to remain stable. On the other hand, prejudice and racism against Latinos tend to increase during times of high immigration.

Although discrimination of all kinds, institutional as well as individual, has been common against Latino groups, it has not been as rigid or as total as the systems that controlled African American labor under slavery and segregation. However, discrimination against Latinos has not dissipated to the same extent as it has against European immigrant groups and their descendants. Because of their longer tenure in the United States and their original status as a rural labor force, Mexican Americans have probably been more victimized by the institution-alized forms of discrimination than have other Latino groups.

# Hispanic Americans



#### CHAPTER OUTLINE

Latino Identity The Economic Picture RESEARCH FOCUS Latinas: American Style The Growing Political Presence

The Borderlands

Cuban Americans

LISTEN TO OUR VOICES *"Leaving Cuba"* by Alfredo Jimenez Central and South Americans

#### Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/Critical Thinking/Internet Connections— Research Navigator™



HE GROUP LABEL *HISPANIC* OR *LATINO AMERICAN* LINKS a diverse population that mostly shares a common language heritage but otherwise has many significant differences. The language barrier in an assimilation-oriented society has been of major significance to Hispanics. For generations, schools made it difficult for Spanish-speaking children to succeed. The United States has only recently made any effort to recognize its bilingual, bicultural heritage and to allow those whose native language is not English to use it as an asset rather than a liability. Latinos include several major groups, of which Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans are the largest in the United States. Cuban Americans constitute a significant presence in southern Florida. Increasingly, immigrants and refugees from Central and South America have also established communities throughout the United States.

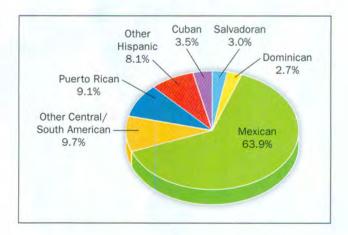
he Los Angeles Coliseum is rocking with a crowd of 92,000. Is it the USC Trojan football team playing at home? Britney Spears in a sold-out concert? No, it is Mexico and Argentina playing futbol (soccer) to a crowd with partisan fans cheering on Mexico. Although it took until 2003, AOL now offers customer support in Spanish; Latinos are expected to account for \$1 trillion in online purchases by 2007. Consequently, Microsoft MSN launched a Spanish-language personal site and Yahoo en Español publishes news from *La opinión*, the nation's largest Spanish-language newspaper, and Notimex, Mexico's leading wire service.

The governor of the state with the largest Latino presence speaks and declares Puerto Ricans and Cubans are particularly feisty because of their mixed Black and Latino "blood." What was Arnold Schwarzenegger thinking of when he made these statements in 2006? He soon apologized when they became public, but what is interesting is not so much his political misstep, but rather the fact that we have a Germanspeaking, Austrian-born man who did not immigrate until he was 20 years old became a naturalized citizen in 1983—becoming who has so assimilated that he readily and nonchalantly expresses old-fashioned American stereotypes among friends.

As recently as 1997, American Airlines was roundly criticized for the contents of its manual for pilots flying between the United States and Latin America. A section called "Surviving in Latin America" included guidelines concerning mountainous areas near some local airports but also advised that Latin American fliers like to drink alcohol before a flight and "unruly and/or intoxicated passengers are not infrequent" (Blood 2006; O'Connor 1999; Swartz 2003; UPI 1997).

More than one in eight people in the U.S. population are of Spanish or Latin American origin. Collectively this group is called *Hispanics* or *Latinos*, two terms that we use interchangeably in this book. The Census Bureau estimates that by the year 2100, Hispanics will constitute about one-third of the U.S. population (refer again to Figure 1.1 on p. 6).

Already by 2005, population data showed 41.9 million Latinos, outnumbering the 39 million African Americans. The Latino population is very diverse. Today, nearly 27 million, or two-thirds of Hispanics in the United States, are Mexican Americans, or Chicanos. The diversity of Latinos and their geographical distribution in the United States are shown in Figures 9.1 and 9.2.



#### FIGURE 9.1 Hispanic Population of the United States by Origin, 2005

Note: "Other Hispanic" includes Spanish Americans and Latinos identifying as mixed ancestry.

Source: American Community Survey 2005 of the Bureau of the Census as summarized in Pew Hispanic Center 2006, A Statistical Portrait of Hispanics at Mid-Decade. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, Table 3.

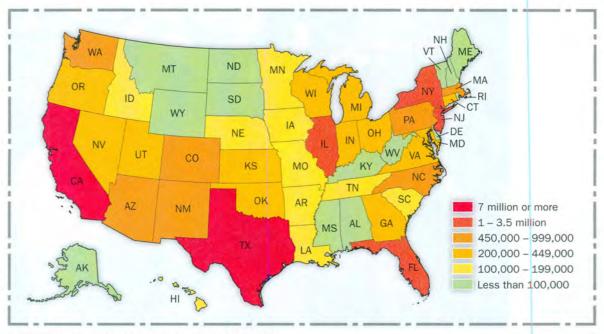


FIGURE 9.2 Where Most Hispanic Americans Lived, 2005

Source: American Community Survey 2005 of the Bureau of the Census as summarized in Pew Hispanic Center 2006, A Statistical Portrait of Hispanics at Mid-Decade. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, Table 10.

The Latino influence is everywhere. Motion pictures such as *Tortilla Soup*, *Spanglish*, *Real Women Have Curves*, *Quinceañera*, *Stand and Deliver*, *Frida*, and *My Family/Mi Familia*, to name a few, did not cater only to Hispanic audiences. MTV offers a channel, MTV Ritmo, featuring all-Latin music. The number-one radio stations in Los Angeles and Miami broadcast in Spanish. Comedian George Lopez, in his television sitcom and motion pictures, enjoys broad appeal. In their speeches, politicians address the needs and desires of Latino Americans.

Some prevailing images of Hispanic settlements in the United States are no longer accurate. Latinos do not live in rural areas. They are generally urban dwellers: 91 percent live in metropolitan areas, in contrast to 78 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. In addition, some Hispanics have moved away from their traditional areas of settlement. Many Mexican Americans have left the Southwest, and many Puerto Ricans have left New York City. In 1940, 88 percent of Puerto Ricans residing in the United States lived in New York City, but by the 2000 census the proportion had dropped to less than a third (J. Logan 2001a; Ramirez and de la Cruz 2003).

#### Latino Identity

Is there a common identity among Latinos? Is a panethnic identity emerging? **Panethnicity** is the development of solidarity between ethnic subgroups. We noted in Chapter 1 that ethnic identity is not self-evident in the United States and may lead to heated debates even among those who share the same ethnic heritage. Non-Hispanics often give a single label to the diverse group of native-born Latino Americans and immigrants. This labeling by the out-group is similar to the dominant group's way of viewing "American Indians" or "Asian Americans" as one collective group. For example, sociologist Clara Rodríquez has noted that Puerto Ricans, who are American citizens, are often mistakenly viewed as an immigrant group and lumped with all Latinos or Hispanics. She observes that, to most Anglos,

#### panethnicity

The development of solidarity between ethnic subgroups, as reflected in the terms Hispanic or Asian American.



"All Hispanics look alike. It's the tendency to see all Latinos as the same. It's an unfortunate lack of attention to U.S. history" (Rodríquez 1994, 32).

Are Hispanics or Latinos themselves developing a common identity? Indicators vary. The collective term itself is subject to debate with regional variations; for example, *Latino* is more common in the West, and *Hispanic* is used more often in the East and is the term employed by the federal government. Whatever the term, the actions of the dominant group have an impact to some degree in defining cultural identity. Latinos are brought together through language, national cable TV stations such as Univision and Telemundo, and periodicals aimed at them in both English and Spanish.

Sharp divisions remain among Hispanics on the identity issue. Only a minority, about 24 percent, prefers to use panethnic names such as *Hispanic* or *Latino*. In Miami, one can see bumper stickers proclaiming "No soy Hispano, soy Cubano": "I am not Hispanic, I am Cuban." Among U.S.-born Latinos, there is clearly a move away from using the native country as a means of identity. Among this segment of the Latino population, 46 percent say they either first use or only use *American* to describe themselves, and 29 percent use their parents' country of origin. This contrasts sharply with foreign-born Latinos, a group in which only 21 percent use *American* and 54 percent use *Mexican* or *Colombian* or similar national terms of reference (Brodie et al. 2002).

Such name issues—or language battles, as they have been called—are not inconsequential, but they do distract these groups' attention from working together for common concerns. For example, bridging differences is important in politics, where the diverse Latino or Hispanic groups meet to support candidates or legislative initiatives. When specifically asked in a 2003 survey whether Hispanics from different countries are working together to achieve common political goals or not working together politically, their own perception was evenly split between believing in panethnic terms or not. Interestingly, income and education do not seem to influence Hispanics' perceptions, but the younger generation does seem to be thinking more in panethnic terms (Brodie et al. 2002).

A very fluid issue is how successive generations of Latinos will identify themselves. Will they continue to see themselves in terms of their nationality background, such as Nicaraguan, or will they begin to converge toward a more panethnic identity?

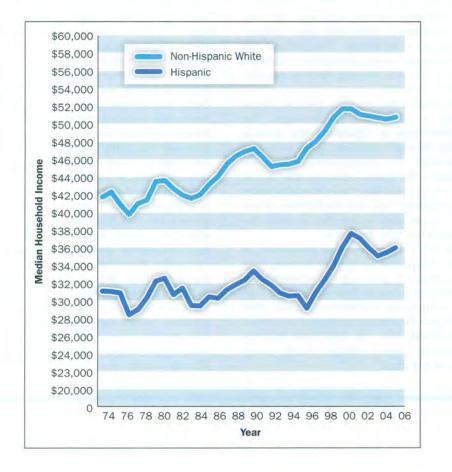
256

Class complicates the identity issue for Latinos in the United States. In Chapter 5, we introduced the term **ethclass**, which describes the merging of ethnicity and class in a person's status. For Latino households that have achieved a measure of economic security—and there is a significant and growing middle class—the issue of identity is complicated as they move economically and perhaps socially further from their roots. In "Research Focus," we examine the special challenges that face many immigrant Latinas in the United States.

#### The Economic Picture

Although there are many indicators of how well a group is doing economically in the United States, probably the best one is income. As we can see in Figure 9.3, the median household income of Latinos has gradually increased over the last twenty-five years, with some fluctuations. However, relative to non-Hispanic Whites, the income gap has remained. Generally over the recent years, the Latino household can expect to earn about 70 cents on the dollar received by its White counterpart.

Income is just part of the picture. Low wealth, total assets less debt, is characteristic of Hispanic households. Although they appear to have slightly higher levels of median wealth than African American households, Hispanic households average less than 10 cents for every dollar in wealth owned by White households. Also the trend is not encouraging. During a recent five-year period, Latino wealth increased by 14 percent



#### ethclass

The merged ethnicity and class in a person's status.

#### FIGURE 9.3 Household Income Trends, 1972–2005

Source: Bureau of the Census data in DeNavas-Walt et al. 2006, pp. 33, 36.

# Focus Research Focus Research Foc

#### LATINAS: AMERICAN STYLE

B states is difficult—so many demands and changes in one's own desires that are difficult to manage. Add to this mix being an immigrant and the challenges escalate dramatically.

For adolescent Hispanics, it is particularly challenging because of close-knit family ties. For example, a 2002 national survey of Latinos documented the emphasis on maintaining the household with a more traditional view. For example, 78 percent said it was better that children continue to live with their parents until they get married, compared to less than half of Whites and African Americans. The feelings are even stronger among foreign-born Latinos, with 91 percent wanting their unmarried children at home.

Traditions do continue that tie young Latinas to their cultural heritage. The **Quinceañera** or **Quinceañero** (among Puerto Ricans), meaning *fifteen years*, is a celebration of a young woman's fifteenth birthday. The festive occasion may be for the extended family or may resemble more of a debutante ball with the families of several Latinas joining together to mark the occasion for their daughters.

To get a more personal perspective of what is happening in the lives of young Latinas or Hispanic girls, a group of researchers interviewed at length Spanish-speaking Latinas at an urban midwestern school. They found that the Latinas are subject to harsher control both within the family and from the conformist school culture, which marks them as outsiders. The Latinas are expected to help their family succeed through child care and housekeeping chores. These demands are much greater in the United States than they would have been in their home country because here virtually all the adult family members have to work, and they often do so at odd hours.

This expectation for the young Latinas to be at home when not at school effectively prevents them from working for wages like so many teenage girls, and that makes them seem different to their school peers. Without money from jobs, they are less able to "look American." The Latinas talk about how they wear inexpensive supermarket-brand tennis shoes, which stigmatizes them not only from other high school girls but also even from their brothers, who manage to acquire more respectable footwear through their jobs. Indeed, they commented that even Mexican Americans snubbed them. Added to their household responsibilities is the greater supervision that young Latinas receive from their elders whenever they are not at home and especially at nonschool-related events.

Meanwhile their brothers are encouraged to work outside the home, which gives them greater freedom from the family and also gives them greater opportunities to practice English-language skills with coworkers and customers. This in turn may lead to networking for future employment. Participation in high school sports is also encouraged for Latino boys, and this furthers their acceptance within the high school culture. The gender structure of the family diminishes opportunities available to Latinas outside the family.

Quinceañera (or Quinceañero) Celebration of Latinas turning 15 years of age.

## Research Focus Research Focus Research



Quinceañera marks the fifteenth birthday of Latinas but also can be viewed as another step between the worlds of Latino and Anglo America. Here an Ecuadoran immigrant celebrates Quinceañera in New York City.

The Latinas described are typical of many teenage girls who are concerned with how they fit in. They want to belong, but family expectations keep them removed from the very culture into which they want to assimilate. This research and survey data remind us of the special challenges faced by many immigrant girls, and especially those who do not speak English, a situation that, at least initially, serves to isolate them from others. They struggle to overcome being stigmatized as different. One Latina said that her classmates think Latinas "travel on burros" and that "we are called Maria." At the same time that they are trying to acquire skills in school, they are also faced with moving between identifying with the culture of their family and that of the society at large.

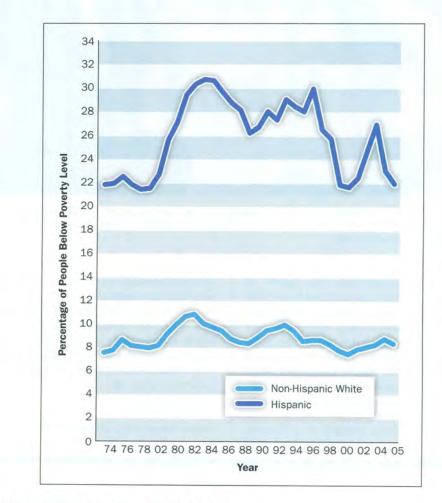
Sources: Brodie et al 2002; L. Williams et al 2002.

compared to 17 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. So not only are Latinos likely to earn much less annually, but also they have fewer financial resources to fall back on (Kochhar 2004; Pew Hispanic Center 2006a).

The trend in poverty rate reflects that of the pattern in income. At the beginning of 2006, 21.8 percent of Latinos were below the poverty level compared to 8.3 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. This meant that one out of five Latinos at the start of 2006 was in a household of two adults and two children, for example, and earned less than \$19,806. Typically over the last quarter century, the proportion of Latinos in poverty has been two or three times that of non-Hispanic Whites (see Figure 9.4).

Looking at income and poverty trends of Latino households shows how much, but also how little, has been accomplished to reduce social inequality between ethnic and racial groups. Although the income of Latinos has gradually increased over the last thirty years, so has White income. The gap between the two groups in both income and poverty level has remained relatively constant. Indeed, the income of the typical Latino household in 2005 was over \$10,000 behind the typical 1972 non-Hispanic White household.

Previously in Chapter 8, William Julius Wilson used the term *underclass* to describe the growing proportion of poor African Americans who find obtaining meaningful





work increasingly difficult. Although this also has been said of today's poor Latinos, their situation is much more difficult to predict. On one hand, as a group poor Latinos are more mobile geographically than poor African Americans, which offers some prospects for a brighter future. On the other hand, nearly half of Latinos send money abroad to help relatives, which obviously puts a greater strain on supporting themselves in the United States (Latino Coalition 2006).

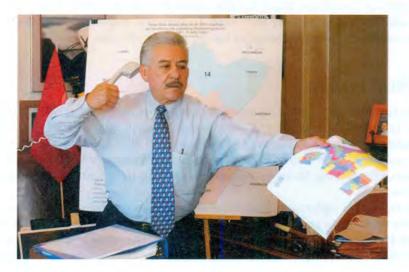
## The Growing Political Presence

In the last thirty years, the major political parties have begun to acknowledge that Latinos form a force in the election process. This recognition has come primarily through the growth of the Hispanic population and also through policies that have facilitated non-English voters.

In 1975, Congress moved toward recognizing the multilingual background of the U.S. population. Federal law now requires bilingual or even multilingual ballots in voting districts where at least 5 percent of the voting-age population or 10,000 of the population do not speak English. Even before Congress acted, the federal courts had been ordering cities such as Chicago, Miami, and New York City to provide bilingual ballots where necessary. In the November 2002 elections, some 296 counties and municipalities in 30 states issued multilingual ballots (*Migration News* 2002b).

These voting reforms did not have the impact that many of their advocates had hoped for. The turnout was poor because, although Hispanics were interested in voting, many were ineligible to vote under the U.S. Constitution because they were noncitizens. At the time of the 2004 presidential election, 41 percent of Hispanics of voting age were noncitizens compared with only 2 percent of White non-Hispanics (Holder 2006).

The potential for a greater Latino political presence is strong. Anticipating the greater turnout, political parties are advancing more Hispanic candidates. Generally, the Democrats have been more successful in garnering the Hispanic vote: Democrat challenger John Kerry garnered 53 percent of the Hispanic vote in 2004, compared with 44 percent for the Republican incumbent George W. Bush. Generally surveys show only 21 percent of Latinos saying they typically vote for a Republican candidate with 18 percent undecided and 61 percent leaning to the Democrat candidate. However, observers agree that this is not as much a pro-Democrat vote as a stand against the Republicans, who favor reducing legal immigration, limiting welfare benefits to



Latino political involvement is often frustrated by old-time politics that favor those long in power. Here former Texas State Senator Gonzalo Barrientos holds a proposed redistricting map for defining boundaries to elect state representatives that many felt would not reflect the growing presence of Hispanics in his state.



legal immigrants, and eliminating bilingual education

legal immigrants, and eliminating bilingual education. Latinos as a group are not nearly as pro-Democrat as, for example, African Americans (Latino Coalition 2006; Pearson and McCormick 2004).

Unlike the Black vote, the major political parties are more likely to see the Latino vote still in play. The 2004 Bush-Cheney ticket heavily promoted the "agenda del Presidente," while Kerry-Edwards encouraged "contribuya al Partido Democrático." Indeed, evidence shows that younger Hispanics are becoming more conservative and more likely to consider Republican candidates. All these factors among Hispanics rapidly growing population, higher proportions of voter registration, higher participation in elections, less commitment to a single political party—will increase efforts by politicians to elicit their support (Keen and Benedetto 2001 Pew Hispanic Center 2006c; Suro and Escobar 2006).

Like African Americans, many Latinos resent the fact that every four years political movers and shakers rediscover they exist. In between major elections, little effort is made to court their interest except by Latino elected officials.

## The Borderlands

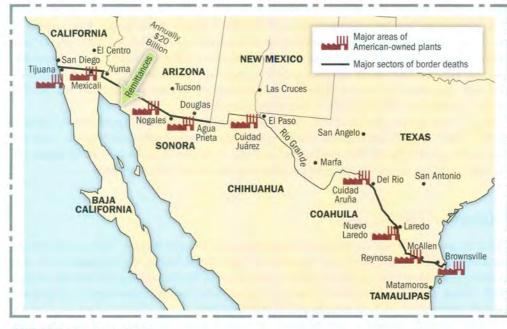
"The border is not where the U.S. stops and Mexico begins," said Mayor Betty Flores of Laredo, Texas. "It's where the U.S. blends into Mexico" (Gibbs 2001, 42). The term **borderlands** here refers to the area of a common culture along the border between Mexico and the United States. Though particularly relevant to Mexicans and Mexican Americans, the growing Mexican influence is relevant to the other Latino groups that we will discuss.

Legal and illegal emigration from Mexico to the United States, day laborers crossing the border regularly to go to jobs in the United States, the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the exchange of media across the border all make the notion of separate Mexican and U.S. cultures obsolete in the borderlands.

The GOP (the Republican Party) has literally tangled itself up in its strong position on curbing illegal immigration, which has hampered its candidates from getting support from the Latino community.

#### borderlands

The area of a common culture along the border between Mexico and the United States.



#### FIGURE 9.5 The Borderlands

In search of higher wages, undocumented Mexicans often attempt to cross the border illegally, risking their lives in the process. Maquiladoras located just south of the U.S.–Mexican border employ Mexican workers at wages far lower than those earned by U.S. workers. The Mexican workers and Mexican Americans send large amounts of money, called remittances, to assist kinfolk and communities in Mexico.

Source: Author based on Cañas 2006; Martinez 2006b; Thompson 2001.

The economic position of the borderlands is complex in terms of both businesses and workers. Very visible is the presence of **maquiladoras** on the Mexican side (Figure 9.5). Maquiladoras are foreign-owned companies that establish operations in Mexico yet are exempt from Mexican taxes and are not required to provide insurance or benefits for their workers. Pay at \$2.00 to \$2.50 an hour is considered very good by prevailing wage standards in Mexico. However, this one example of international trade soon became trumped by another aspect of globalization. As low as these hourly wages seem to people in industrial countries, multinational corporations soon found even lower wages in China. Over 40 percent of the 700,000 new maquiladora jobs created in the 1990s were eliminated by 2003 (*Migration* News 2002c, 2004).

Immigrant workers have a significant economic impact on their home country while employed in the United States. Many Mexicans, as well as other Hispanic groups we will be discussing, send some part of their earnings back across the border to family members remaining in their native country. This substantial flow of money, sometimes called **remittances** (or **migradollars**), was estimated at a minimum of \$20 billion in 2005. Most of the money is spent to pay for food, clothing, and housing, but increasingly a growing proportion is being invested to create small businesses (Cañas et al. 2006).

The closeness culturally and economically of the home country found in the borderlands is applicable to other Latino groups. We will see the continuing prominent role that economic and political events have on immigrants and their children, and even grandchildren, in the United States.

Inland from the border, **hometown clubs** have sprung up well into northern cities with large settlements of Mexicans. Hometown clubs typically are nonprofit organizations that maintain close ties to immigrants' hometowns in Mexico and other Latin

#### maquiladoras

foreign-owned companies on the Mexican side of the border with the United States.

#### remittances (or migradollars)

The monies that immigrants return to their country of origin.

#### hometown clubs

Nonprofit organizations that maintain close ties to immigrants' hometowns in Mexico and other Latin American countries.



Maquiladoras are foreignowned manufacturers located in Mexico along the United States border. Workers assemble components for export to the United States at a plant in Nueva Laredo, Mexico. American countries. Hometown clubs collect money for improvements in hospitals and schools that are beyond the means of the local people back home. The impact of hometown clubs has become so noticeable that some states in Mexico have begun programs whereby they will match funds from hometown clubs to encourage such publicspirited efforts. The work of over 1,500 hometown clubs in the United States or Mexican communities alone reflects the blurring of border distinctions within the Latino community (Korecki 2003; *Migration News* 2000).

As we have noted, the Latino or Hispanic community is made up of several nationalities. The Mexican Americans, the people of the borderlands and beyond, and the Puerto Ricans are by far the two largest and are considered separately in Chapter 10. We will continue in this chapter by considering the other Latino groups.

## **Cuban Americans**

Third in numbers only to Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans are a significant ethnic Hispanic minority in the United States. Their presence in this country has a long history, with Cuban settlements in Florida dating back to as early as 1831. These settlements tended to be small, close-knit communities organized around a single enterprise, such as a cigar-manufacturing firm.

Until recently, however, the number of Cuban Americans was very modest. The 1960 census showed that 79,000 people who had been born in Cuba lived in the United States. By 2005, more than 1.4 million people of Cuban birth or descent lived in the United States. This tremendous increase followed Fidel Castro's assumption of power after the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

#### Immigration

Cuban immigration to the United States since the 1959 revolution has been continuous, but there have been three significant influxes of large numbers of immigrants through the 1980s. First, the initial exodus of about 200,000 Cubans after Castro's assumption of power lasted about three years. Regular commercial air traffic continued despite the United States' severing of diplomatic relations with Cuba. This first wave stopped with the missile crisis of October 1962, when all legal movement between the two nations was halted.

An agreement between the United States and Cuba in 1965 produced the second wave through a program of freedom flights: specially arranged charter flights from Havana to Miami. Through this program, more than 340,000 refugees arrived between 1965 and 1973. Despite efforts to encourage these arrivals to disperse into other parts of the United States, most settled in the Miami area (M. Abrahamson 1996).

The third major migration, the 1980 Mariel boatlift, has been the most controversial. In 1980, more than 124,000 refugees fled Cuba in the "freedom flotilla." In May of that year, a few boats from Cuba began to arrive in Key West, Florida, with people seeking asylum in the United States. President Carter, reflecting the nation's hostility toward Cuba's communist government, told the new arrivals and anyone else who might be listening in Cuba that they were welcome "with open arms and an open heart." As the number of arrivals escalated, it became apparent that Castro had used the invitation as an opportunity to send prison inmates, patients from mental hospitals, and addicts. However, the majority of the refugees were neither marginal to the Cuban economy nor social deviants.

Other Cubans soon began to call the refugees of this migration **Marielitos**. The word, which implies that these refugees were undesirable, refers to Mariel, the fishing port west of Havana from which the boats departed, where Cuban authorities herded people into boats. The term *Marielitos* remains a stigma in the media and in Florida. Because of their negative reception by longer-established Cuban immigrants, as well as



#### Marielitos

People who arrived from Cuba in the third wave of Cuban immigration, most specifically those forcibly deported by way of Mariel Harbor. The term is generally reserved for refugees seen as especially undesirable.

## Voices Listen to Our Voices Listen to

t the age of eight I first realized my family was planning on leaving Cuba when my mother went to my second grade school in Havana to inform the principal that my brother and I would not be returning. I remember my teacher was not surprised that we were leaving but was surprised that we were gusanos,

literally meaning worms or political dissidents. I returned home as my family waited to receive word that we were allowed to leave.

We waited about a week when a policeman knocked at our door in the middle of the night on May 17, 1980, and handed my father a document granting permission to leave Cuba. Within hours we had to get to the processing center, so my parents woke us up and prepared my grandmother who was in a wheelchair. At the center, the Cuban government confiscated our passports, searched us keeping all valuables including my parents' wedding rings. From there it was to Mariel Port three hours away by a special bus.

The trip on the bus was tough for an eight year old as people along the entire route beat on our bus with bats, sticks, stones, eggs, and

### LEAVING CUBA



Alfredo Jimenez

the United States and Spain.

Days of waiting and we were finally able to board an overcrowded boat headed for Florida. Already filled to the brim, the boat in the middle of the night rescued 12 people from another boat that was sinking. After twelve hours, we arrived in Key West to be greeted by waving American flags. Soon we headed on to Tampa to live with an aunt and her family—she had come to America soon after Fidel Castro assumed power.

tomatoes. Once at the Port, my

brother and I managed to get

away from the adults to play with other children at the beach

where I remember playing with

small crabs in the sand. My par-

ents got very upset when our

pant legs got wet. They had written on the inside of our pant legs

the names, addresses, and phone

The entire trip was an experience that my family values very much to this day. As young as my brother and I were, we didn't appreciate how difficult it was for my parents to leave everything behind.

Source: Jiminez 2005.

the group's modest skills and lack of formal education, this group had a great deal of difficulty in adjusting to their new life in the United States.

Now a Chicago real estate broker, Alfredo Jimenez tells in "Listen to Our Voices" of the experience he had as a young child being taken by his family and leaving everything behind in Cuba to go to the United States.

The difficult transition for many members of this freedom flotilla is linked with other factors as well. Unlike the earlier waves, they grew up in a country bombarded with anti-American images. Despite these problems, their eventual acceptance by the Hispanic community has been impressive, and many members of this third significant wave have found employment. Most have applied for permanent resident status. Government assistance to these immigrants was limited, but help from some groups of Cuban Americans in the Miami area was substantial. However, for a small core group, adjustment was impossible. The legal status of a few of these detainees (i.e., arrivals who were held by the

#### color gradient

The placement of people on a continuum from light to dark skin color rather than in distinct racial groupings by skin color.

## **Central and South Americans**

The immigrants who have come from Central and South America are a diverse population that has not been closely studied. Indeed, most government statistics treat its members collectively as "other" and rarely differentiate between them by nationality. Yet people from Chile and Costa Rica have little in common other than their hemisphere of origin and the Spanish language, if that. Still others may be indigenous people, especially in Guatemala and Belize, and have a social identity apart from any national allegiance. Also not all Central and South Americans even have Spanish as their native tongue; for example, immigrants from Brazil speak Portuguese, immigrants from French Guyana speak French, and those from Suriname speak Dutch.

Many of the nations of Central and South America have a complex system of placing people into myriad racial groups. African slaves were brought to almost all of these countries, and these people of African descent, in varying degrees, have intermarried with each other or with indigenous peoples, as well as with the European colonists. Rather than placing people in two or three distinct racial groupings, these societies describe skin color in a continuum from light to dark in what is called a color gradient. A **color gradient** is the placement of people along a continuum from light to dark skin color rather than in distinct racial groupings by skin color. The presence of color gradients is yet another reminder of the social construction of race. Terms such as *mestizo Hondurans, mulatto Colombians*, or *African Panamanians* reflect this continuum of a color gradient.

Added to language diversity and the color gradient are social class distinctions, religious differences, urban-versus-rural backgrounds, and differences in dialect even among those speaking the same language. We can understand historians Ann Orlov and Reed Ueda's (1980) conclusion that "social relations among Central and South American ethnic groups in the United States defy generalization" (p. 212). Central and South Americans do not form, nor should they be expected to form, a cohesive group, nor do they naturally form coalitions with Cuban Americans, Mexican Americans, or Puerto Ricans.

#### Immigration

Immigration from the various Central and South American nations has been sporadic, influenced by both our immigration laws and social forces operating in the home country. Perceived economic opportunities escalated the northward movement in the 1960s. By 1970, Panamanians and Hondurans represented the largest national groupings, most



The civil unrest that has occurred in some Latin American countries, such as El Salvador, spurred immigration to the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. of them being identified in the census as "nonwhite." Immigration is often through Mexico, which may serve as a brief stop along the way or represent a point of settlement for six months to three years or even longer (López 2004).

Since the mid-1970s, increasing numbers of Central and South Americans have fled unrest. Although Latinos as a whole are a fast-growing minority, Central and South Americans increased in numbers even faster than Mexicans or any other group in the 1980s. In particular, from about 1978, war and economic chaos in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala prompted many to seek refuge in the United States. The impact of the turmoil cannot be exaggerated. It is estimated that anywhere from 13 percent in Guatemala to 32 percent in El Salvador of the total population left the country. Not at all a homogeneous group, they range from Guatemalan Indian peasants to wealthy Nicaraguan exiles. These latest arrivals probably had some economic motivation for migration, but this concern was overshadowed or at least matched by their fear of being killed or hurt if they remained in their home country (Camarillo 1993; López 2004).

The immigrants who fled violence and poverty often have difficulty in adjusting initially because they received little preparation for their movement to a foreign culture. Mario fled to the United States from Nicaragua when he was 16. As he writes, the initial years were trying:

At first it was difficult to adjust. People are very materialistic in the U.S. I was starting from zero. I had nothing. They made fun of my clothes. They treated me differently. They pushed me out of their circle. Luckily, I met a friend from school back home who had been in the U.S. eight years. He took care of me. (Cerar 1995, 57)

Eventually Mario felt comfortable enough to help immigrants and to serve as a tutor at the local community college. His experience has been played out before in the United States and undoubtedly will be again many times.

#### The Present Picture

Two issues have clouded the recent settlement of Central and South Americans. First, many of the arrivals are illegal immigrants. Among those uncovered as undocumented workers, citizens from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia are outnumbered only by Mexican nationals. Second, significant numbers of highly trained and skilled people have left these countries, which are in great need of professional workers. We noted in Chapter 4 how often immigration produces a **brain drain:** immigration to the United States of skilled workers, professionals, and technicians.

As a group, Central and South Americans experience high unemployment levels compared with Whites, yet they are better educated than most Hispanics, as shown in Table 9.1. This reflects the plight that often faces recent immigrants. Upon relocating to a new country, they initially experience downward mobility in terms of occupational status.

The challenges to immigrants from Latin America are reflected in the experience of Colombians, numbering close to a half million in the United States. The initial arrivals from this South American nation after World War I were educated middle-class people who quickly assimilated to life in the United States. Rural unrest in Colombia in the 1980s triggered large-scale movement to the United States, where the Colombian immigrants had to adapt to a new culture and to urban life. The adaptation of this later group has been much more difficult. Some have found success through catering to other Colombians. For example, enterprising immigrants have opened bodegas (grocery stores) to supply traditional, familiar foodstuffs. Similarly, Colombians have established restaurants, travel agencies, and real estate firms that serve other Colombians. However, many find themselves obliged to take menial jobs and to combine the income of several family members to meet the high cost of urban life. Colombians of mixed African descent face racial as well as ethnic and language barriers (Guzmán 2001).

What is likely to be the future of Central and South Americans in the United States? Although much will depend on future immigration, they could assimilate over the course of

## **2** ASK Yourself

What have been the different reasons behind immigration from Latin America?

#### brain drain

Immigration to the United States of skilled workers, professionals, and technicians who are desperately needed by their home countries. Latinos rarely appear on television in central roles, much less on successful television programs. Although animated, *Dora the Explorer* on Nickelodeon is an exception to this rule.



generations. One alternative is that they will become trapped with Mexican Americans as a segment of the dual labor market of the urban areas where they have taken residence. A more encouraging possibility is that they will retain an independent identity, like the Cubans, while also establishing an economic base. For example, nearly 600,000 Dominicans (from the Dominican Republic) settled in the New York City area, where they make up a significant 7 percent of the population. In some neighborhoods, such as Washington Heights, one can easily engage in business, converse, and eat just as if one were in the Dominican Republic. People continue to remain attentive to events in Dominican politics, which often command greater attention than events in the United States. However, within their local neighborhoods, Dominicans here are focused on improving employment opportunities and public safety (J. Logan 2001a; Pessar 1995; Suro 1998).

## Conclusion

he signals are mixed. Many movies and television programs and much music have a Hispanic flavor. Candidates for political office seek Latino votes and sometimes even speak Spanish to do so. Yet the poverty rate of Latino families reported in 2006 was more than 22 percent, compared with less than 8 percent for White Americans.

This mixture of positive and negative trends is visible in other areas. Ballots are printed in Spanish and other languages. Many Latinos feel that to be bilingual is not to be less a part of the United States. Espousing pluralism rather than assimilation is not un-American.

The contrast of images and substance will be evident again in Chapter 10. "In World War II, more Latinos won Medals of Honor than any other ethnic group," said Democratic Representative Matthew Martinez, a former

U.S. Marine who represented part of Los Angeles. "How much blood do you have to spill before you prove you are a part of something?" Much more recently, we might not be surprised to know that many of the soldiers in Iraq are Hispanic. Perhaps a bit surprising to the general public would be to learn that at least twenty-two Mexican citizens resident in the United States died in the military during the first two years of the Iraq War for their adopted country. Typically Congress passes a resolution making these fallen soldiers citizens after their death. Under a new rule, families of the deceased can now use the deceased as a sponsor for their own residency papers (P. Jonsson 2006; McKinley 2005; Whitman 1987, 49). Still a contrasting image is offered by the refrain "Si usted no habla inglés puede quedarse rezagado" ("If you don't speak English, you might be left behind").

borderlands 262 brain drain 269 color gradient 268 dry foot, wet foot 266

## **Key Terms**

ethclass 257 hometown clubs 263 maquiladoras 263 Marielitos 264

panethnicity 255 Quinceañera (or Quinceañero) 258 remittances (or migradollars) 263

## **Review Questions**

- 1. What different factors seem to unite and to divide the Latino community in the United States?
- 2. How do Hispanics view themselves as a group? How are they viewed by others?
- **3.** Identify the factors that serve to contribute and to limit to the political power of Latinos as a group in the United States.
- **4.** To what extent has the Cuban migration been positive, and to what degree do significant challenges remain?
- 5. How have Central and South Americans contributed to the diversity of the Hispanic peoples in the United States?

## **Critical Thinking**

- 1. Language and culture are almost inseparable. How do you imagine your life would change if you were not permitted to speak your native language? Or how has it been affected if you have been expected to speak some other language?
- **2.** How have you witnessed the presence of a different culture in the United States? At what times have you found it to be interesting and intriguing? Are there times you felt threatened by it or felt its presence to be unfair?
- **3.** Why do you think the borderlands of the U.S.–Mexico border region have been the subject of such close scrutiny, whereas there is little attention to similar areas along the U.S.–Canada border?

## Internet Connections—Research Navigator™

To access the full resources of Research Navigator<sup>™</sup>, please find the access code printed on the inside cover of *OneSearch with Research Navigator*<sup>™</sup>: *Sociology*. You may have received this booklet if your instructor recommended this guide be packaged with new textbooks. (If your book did not come with this printed guide, you can purchase one through your college bookstore.) Visit our Research Navigator<sup>™</sup> site at www.ResearchNavigator.com. Once at this site, click on REGISTER under New Users and enter your access code to create a personal Login Name and Password. (When revisiting the site, use the same Login Name and Password.) Browse the features of the Research Navigator<sup>™</sup> Web site and search the databases of academic journals, newspapers, magazines, and Web links.

For further information relevant to Chapter 9, you may wish to use such keywords as "Maquiladoras," "Salvadoran Americans," and "Marielitos," and the search engine will supply relevant and recent scholarly and popular press publications. Use the *New York Times* Search-by-Subject Archive to find recent news articles related to sociology and the Link Library feature to locate relevant Web links organized by the key terms associated with this chapter.

# Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### Mexican Americans

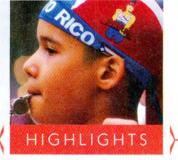
### Puerto Ricans

LISTEN TO OUR VOICES "¡Viva Vieques!" by Martín St. Espada The Contemporary Picture of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans

RESEARCH FOCUS Assimilation May Be Hazardous to Your Health

#### Conclusion

Key Terms/Review Questions/Critical Thinking/Internet Connections— Research Navigator™



HE HISTORY OF MEXICAN AMERICANS IS CLOSELY TIED TO immigration, which has been encouraged (the *bracero* program) when Mexican labor is in demand or discouraged (repatriation and Operation Wetback) when Mexican workers are unwanted. The Puerto Rican people are divided between those who live in the island commonwealth and those who live on the mainland. Puerto Ricans who migrate to the mainland most often come in search of better jobs and housing. Both Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, as groups, have lower incomes, less formal education, and greater health problems than White Americans. Both the family and religion are sources of strength for the typical Puerto Rican or Mexican American. itizenship is the basic requirement for receiving one's legal rights and privileges in the United States. However, for both Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, citizenship has been an ambiguous concept at best. Mexican Americans (or Chicanos) have a long history in the United States, stretching back before the nation was even formed to the early days of European exploration. Santa Fe, New Mexico, was founded more than a decade before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. The Mexican American people trace their ancestry to the merging of Spanish settlers with the Native Americans of Central America and Mexico. This ancestry reaches back to the brilliant Mayan and Aztec civilizations, which attained their height about C.E. 700 and 1500, respectively. However, roots in the land do not guarantee a group dominance over it. Over several centuries, the Spaniards conquered the land and merged with the Native Americans to form the Mexican people. In 1821, Mexico obtained its independence, but this independence was short-lived, for domination from the north began less than a generation later (Meier and Rivera 1972).

Today, Mexican Americans are creating their own destiny in the United States while functioning in a society that is often concerned about immigration both legal and illegal. In the eyes of some, including a few in positions of authority, to be Mexican American is to be suspected of being in the country illegally or, at least, of knowingly harboring illegal aliens.

For no other minority group in the United States is citizenship so ambiguous as it is for Puerto Ricans. Even Native Americans, who are subject to some unique laws and are exempt from others because of past treaties, have a future firmly dominated by the United States. This description does not necessarily fit Puerto Ricans. Their island home is the last major U.S. colonial territory and, for that matter, one of the few colonial areas remaining in the world. Besides assessing the situation of Puerto Ricans on the mainland, we will also need to consider the relationship of the United States to Puerto Rico.



The Roman Catholic Church has a long history among Mexicans and Mexican Americans. The Mission San Xavier del Bac in Arizona was founded in 1700.

## **Mexican Americans**

Wars play a prominent part in any nation's history. The United States was created as a result of the colonies' war with England to win their independence. In the 1800s, the United States acquired significant neighboring territory in two different wars. The legacy of these wars and the annexation that resulted were to create the two largest Hispanic minorities in the United States: Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans.

A large number of Mexicans became aliens in the United States without ever crossing any border. These people first became Mexican Americans with the conclusion of the Mexican–American War. This two-year war culminated with a U.S. occupation of eleven months. Today Mexicans visit the Museum of Interventions in Mexico City, which outlines the war and how Mexico permanently gave up half its country. The war is still spoken of today as "the Mutilation" (T. Weiner 2004).

In the war-ending Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed February 2, 1848, Mexico acknowledged the annexation of Texas by the United States and ceded California and most of Arizona and New Mexico to the United States for \$15 million. In exchange, the United States granted citizenship to the 75,000 Mexican nationals who remained on the annexed land after one year. With citizenship, the United States was to guarantee religious freedom, property rights, and cultural integrity—that is, the right to continue Mexican and Spanish cultural traditions and to use the Spanish language.

The beginnings of the Mexican experience in the United States were as varied as the people themselves. Some Mexican Americans were affluent with large land holdings. Others were poor peasants barely able to survive. Along such rivers as the Rio Grande, commercial towns grew up around the increasing river traffic. In New Mexico and Arizona, many Mexican American people welcomed the protection that the U.S. government offered against several Native American tribes. In California, life was quickly dominated by the gold miners, and Anglos controlled the newfound wealth. One generalization can be made about the many segments of the Mexican American population in the nineteenth century: They were regarded as a conquered people. In fact, even before the war, many Whites who traveled into the West were already prejudiced against people of mixed blood (in this instance, against Mexicans). Whenever Mexican American and Anglo interests conflicted, Anglo interests won.

A pattern of second-class treatment for Mexican Americans emerged well before the twentieth century. Gradually, the Anglo system of property ownership replaced the Native American and Hispanic systems. Mexican Americans who inherited land proved no match for Anglo lawyers. Court battles provided no protection for poor Spanish-speaking landowners. Unscrupulous lawyers occasionally defended Mexican Americans successfully, only to demand half the land as their fee. Anglo cattle ranchers gradually pushed out Mexican American ranchers. By 1892, the federal government was granting grazing privileges on public grasslands and forests to anyone except Mexican Americans. Effectively, the people who were now Mexican Americans had become outsiders in their own homeland. The ground was laid for the social structure of the Southwest in the twentieth century, an area of growing productivity in which minority groups have increased in size but remain largely subordinate.

#### The Immigrant Experience

Nowhere else in the world do two countries with such different standards of living and wage scales share such an open border. Immigration from Mexico is unique in several respects. First, it has been a continuous large-scale movement for most of the last hundred years. The United States did not restrict immigration from Mexico through legislation until 1965. Second, the proximity of Mexico encourages past immigrants to maintain strong cultural and language ties with the homeland through friends and relatives.



Return visits to the old country are only one- or two-day bus rides for Mexican Americans, not once-in-a-lifetime voyages, as they were for most European immigrants. The third point of uniqueness is the aura of illegality that has surrounded Mexican migrants. Throughout the twentieth century, the suspicion in which Anglos have held Mexican Americans has contributed to mutual distrust between the two groups.

The years before World War I brought large numbers of Mexicans into the expanding agricultural industry of the Southwest. The Mexican revolution of 1909–1922 thrust refugees into the United States, and World War I curtailed the flow of people from Europe, leaving the labor market open to the Mexican Americans. After the war, continued political turmoil in Mexico and more prosperity in the Southwest brought still more Mexicans across the border.

Simultaneously, corporations in the United States, led by agribusiness, invested in Mexico in such a way as to maximize their profits but minimize the amount of money remaining in Mexico to provide needed employment. Conflict theorists view this investment as part of the continuing process in which American businesses, with the support and cooperation of affluent Mexicans, have used Mexican people when it has been in corporate leaders' best interests. The Mexican workers are used either as cheap laborers in their own country by their fellow Mexicans and by Americans or as undocumented workers here who are dismissed when they are no longer judged to be useful (Guerin-Gonzales 1994).

Beginning in the 1930s, the United States embarked on a series of measures aimed specifically at Mexicans. The Depression brought pressure on local governments to care for the growing number of unemployed and impoverished. Government officials developed a quick way to reduce welfare rolls and eliminate people seeking jobs: Ship Mexicans back to Mexico. This program of deporting Mexicans in the 1930s was called repatriation. As officially stated, the program was constitutional because only illegal aliens were to be **repatriated.** Actually, it was much more complex. Border records were incomplete because, before 1930, the United States had shown little interest in whether Mexicans entered with all the proper credentials. Also, many Mexicans who could be classified as illegal aliens had resided in the United States for decades. Because they had children who were citizens by birth, they could not legally be deported. The legal process of fighting a deportation order was overwhelming, however, especially for a poor Spanish-speaking family. The Anglo community largely ignored this outrage against the civil rights of those deported and did not show interest in helping repatriates to ease the transition (Meier and Rivera 1972).

When the Depression ended, Mexican laborers again became attractive to industry. In 1942, when World War II was depleting the labor pool, the United States and Mexico agreed to a program allowing migration across the border by contracted laborers, or **braceros**. Within a year of the initiation of the bracero program, more than 80,000 Mexican nationals had been brought in; they made up one-eleventh of the farm workers on the Pacific Coast. The program continued with some interruptions until 1964. It was devised to recruit labor from poor Mexican areas for U.S. farms. In a program that was supposed to be supervised jointly by Mexico and the United States, minimum standards were to be maintained for the transportation, housing, wages, and health care of the braceros. Ironically, these safeguards placed the braceros in a better economic situation than Mexican Americans, who often worked alongside the protected Mexican nationals. The Mexicans were still regarded as a positive presence by Anglos only when useful, and the Mexican American people were merely tolerated.

Like many policies of the past relating to disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups, the bracero program lives on. After decades of protests, the Mexican government finally issued checks of \$3,500 to former braceros and their descendants. The payments were to resolve disputes over what happened to the money the U.S. government gave to the Mexican government to assist in resettlement. To say this has been regarded as



What role does economics play in permitting immigration from Mexico?

#### repatriation

The 1930s program of deporting Mexicans.

#### bracero

Contracted Mexican laborers brought to the United States during World War II. too little, much too late is an understatement (Associated Press 2005; Galarza 1964; Stoddard 1973).

Another crackdown on illegal aliens was to be the third step in dealing with the perceived Mexican problem. Alternately called Operation Wetback and Special Force Operation, it was fully inaugurated by 1954. The term wetbacks, or **mojados**, the derisive slang for Mexicans who enter illegally, refers to those who secretly swim across the Rio Grande. Like other roundups, this effort failed to stop the illegal flow of workers. For several years, some Mexicans were brought in under the bracero program while other Mexicans were being deported. With the end of the bracero program in 1964 and stricter immigration quotas for Mexicans, illegal border crossings increased because legal crossings became more difficult (W. Gordon 1975; Stoddard 1973, 1976a, 1976b).

More dramatic than the negative influence that continued immigration has had on employment conditions in the Southwest is the effect on the Mexican and Mexican American people themselves. Routinely, the rights of Mexicans, even the rights to which they are entitled as illegal aliens, are ignored. Of the illegal immigrants deported, few have been expelled through formal proceedings. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) has repeatedly expressed concern over the government's handling of illegal aliens.

Against this backdrop of legal maneuvers is the tie that the Mexican people have to the land both in today's Mexico and in the parts of the United States that formerly belonged to Mexico. Assimilation may be the key word in the history of many immigrant groups, but for Mexican Americans the key term is La Raza. La Raza literally means "the people," but among contemporary Mexican Americans the term connotes pride in a pluralistic Spanish, Native American, and Mexican heritage. Mexican Americans cherish their legacy and, as we shall see, strive to regain some of the economic and social glory that once was theirs.

Despite passage of various measures designed to prevent illegal immigration, neither the immigration nor the apprehension of illegal aliens is likely to end. Mexican Americans will continue to be more closely scrutinized by law enforcement officials because their Mexican descent makes them more suspect as potential illegal aliens. The Mexican American community is another group subject to racial profiling that renders, in the eyes of many, their presence in the United States suspect (Aguirre 2004).

In the United States, Mexican Americans have mixed feelings toward the illegal Mexican immigrants. Many are their kin, and Mexican Americans realize that entry into the United States brings Mexicans better economic opportunities. However,



#### mojados

"Wetbacks"; derisive slang for Mexicans who enter illegally, supposedly by swimming the Rio Grande.

#### La Raza

"The People"—a term referring to the rich heritage of Mexican Americans and therefore used to denote a sense of pride among Mexican Americans today.

Mexican migrants harvest strawberries in California.





#### culture of poverty

A way of life that involves no future planning, no enduring commitment to marriage, and no work ethic; this culture follows the poor even when they move out of the slums or the barrio. numerous deportations only perpetuate the Anglo stereotype of Mexican and Mexican American alike as surplus labor. Mexican Americans, largely the product of past immigration, find that the continued controversy over illegal immigration places them in the ambivalent role of citizen and relative. Mexican American organizations opposing illegal immigration must confront people to whom they are closely linked by culture and kinship, and they must cooperate with government agencies they deeply distrust.

#### The Economic Picture

As shown in Table 10.1, both Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans have higher unemployment rates, higher rates of poverty, and significantly lower incomes than White Americans. Six percent of all managerial and professional positions were held by Latinos. When considering their economic situation, two topics deserve special attention: the debate over what has been called the culture of poverty and the effort to improve the status of migrant workers (Bureau of the Census 2005a).

**The Culture of Poverty** Like the African American families described in Chapter 8, Mexican American families are labeled as having traits that, in fact, describe poor families rather than specifically Mexican American families. Indeed, as long ago as 1980, a report of the Commission on Civil Rights (1980, 8) stated that the two most prevalent stereotypical themes appearing in works on Hispanics showed them as exclusively poor and prone to commit violence.

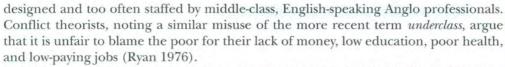
Social scientists have also relied excessively on the traits of the poor to describe an entire subordinate group such as Mexican Americans. Anthropologist Oscar Lewis (1959, 1965, 1966), in several publications based on research conducted among Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, identified the **culture of poverty**. According to its theorists, the culture of poverty embraces a deviant way of life that involves no future planning, no enduring commitment to marriage, and absence of the work ethic. This culture supposedly follows the poor, even when they move out of the slums or the barrio.

The culture-of-poverty view is another way of blaming the victim: The affluent are not responsible for social inequality, nor are the policy makers; it is the poor who are to blame for their own problems. This stance allows government and society to attribute the failure of antipoverty and welfare programs to Mexican Americans and other poor people rather than to the programs themselves. These are programs

_	Total Non- Hispanic White	Total Hispanic	Mexican Americans	Puerto Ricans
Percentage completing college, 25 years and over	28.1	10.6	6.9	13.0
Percentage unemployed	3.4	6.8	7.0	8.1
Percentage of families with a single parent	17.4	32.1	30.0	43.2
Percentage living below poverty level	7.7	22.8	24.1	25.8
Median family income	\$54,906	\$33.077	\$32,345	\$31.312

#### TABLE 10.1

Selected Social and Economic Characteristics of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, 2000



Lewis's hypothesis about the culture of poverty came to be used indiscriminately to explain continued poverty. Critics argue that Lewis sought out exotic, pathological behavior, ignoring the fact that even among the poor, most people live fairly conventionally and strive to achieve goals similar to those of the middle class. A second criticism challenges the use of the term *culture of poverty* to describe an entire ethnic group. Because Lewis's data were on poor people, social scientists have increasingly stressed that his conclusions may be correct as far as the data permit, but the data cannot be generalized to all Latinos. His sample was not a representative cross section drawn from different economic and educational levels (Gans 1995; Valentine 1968).

More recent social science research, unlike Lewis's, research does sample Mexican American families across a broad range of socioeconomic levels. This research shows that when Anglo and Mexican American families of the same social class are compared, they differ little in family organization and attitudes toward child rearing. In addition, comparisons of work ethics find no significant differences between Mexican Americans and Anglos. Poverty is present among Mexican Americans; there is no doubt about that. However, that does not mean there is a culture of poverty or a permanent underclass. Institutions such as the family and the church seem viable, but the schools are in despair, and the picture on businesses is mixed. However, to question the label *culture of poverty* does not deny the poor life chances facing many Mexican Americans (Aponte 1991; Moore and Pinderhughes 1993; Winkler 1990).

**Chávez and the Farm Laborers** The best-known Hispanic labor leader for economic empowerment was César Chávez, the Mexican American who crusaded to organize migrant farm workers. Efforts to organize agricultural laborers date back to the turn of the twentieth century, but Chávez was the first to enjoy any success. These laborers had never won collective bargaining rights, partly because their mobility made it difficult for them to organize into a unified group.

In 1962, Chávez, then 35 years old, formed the National Farm Workers Association, later to become the United Farm Workers (UFW). Organizing migrant farm workers was not easy, for they had no savings to pay for organizing or to live on while striking. Growers could rely on an almost limitless supply of Mexican laborers to replace the Mexican Americans and Filipinos who struck for higher wages and better working conditions.

Chávez's first success was the grape boycott launched in 1965, which carried the struggle into the kitchens of families throughout the country. The UFW launched the boycott with the aim of damaging growers economically until they accepted the union and improved working conditions. It took five years for the grape growers to sign three-year contracts with Chávez's union, which had affiliated with the AFL-CIO. This victory signaled a new era in labor relations and made Chávez a national folk hero (Levy 1975).

Despite their success, Chávez and the UFW were plagued with continual opposition by agribusiness and many lawmakers. This was about the time the UFW was also trying to heighten public consciousness of the pesticides used in the fields. Research into the long-term effects of pesticides had only begun. Although Chávez's 1988 fast to bring attention to this issue was widely publicized, his efforts did not gain the support he had hoped for.

Chávez had difficulty fulfilling his objectives. By 1993, union membership had dwindled from a high of 80,000 in 1970 to 21,000 (it stood at 27,000 in 2004). Nevertheless, what he and the UFW accomplished was significant. First, they succeeded in making federal and state governments more aware of the exploitation of migrant laborers. Second, the migrant workers, or at least those organized in California, developed a sense of their own power and worth that will make it extremely difficult for growers to



César Chávez in 1990.



Is it more likely for you to see members of racial and ethnic minorities doing backbreaking work for lower wages?

## FARM WORKERS' SANITATION FACILITIES ...



abuse them in the future as they had in the past. Third, working conditions improved. California agricultural workers were paid an average of less than \$2 an hour in the mid-1960s. By 1987, they were being paid an average of about \$5.85 an hour (Mandelbaum 2000; Pawel 2006; Sanchez 1998; Triplett 2004).

Migrant workers still face a very harsh life. An ongoing study of agricultural workers found they are much more likely to suffer from high blood pressure, dental disease, anemia, and poor nutrition, which is ironic because they are harvesting the nation's food. About 70 percent of the workers lack health insurance, and most make less than \$10,000 a year, which makes obtaining health care very difficult. Women have far better access to medical treatment because of special maternal and child health services, but a third of the men surveyed said they had never been to a physician or a clinic (Rainey 2000).

César Chávez died in 1993. Although his legacy is clear, many young people, when they hear mention of Chávez, are more likely to think of professional boxer Julio Cesar Chavez. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the primary challenge came from efforts to permit more foreign workers, primarily from Mexico and Central America, to enter the United States temporarily at even lower wages. About threequarters of all farm workers are Mexican or Mexican American. The problems of migrant farm workers are inextricably tied to the lives of both Latinos and Latin Americans (S. Greenhouse 2001; Triplett 2004).

#### Political Organizations

As noted in Chapter 9, Latinos are becoming more involved in party politics in the United States. Though tending to support Democratic candidates (with the exception of Cuban Americans, who typically back Republicans), Latinos are showing a willingness to be more independent voters. As one might expect, given their growing numbers and greater voting power, more Latinos are successfully seeking elective office. This has not always been the case. Politically oriented Mexican Americans such as Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales in Denver turned to grassroots community organizing. Frustrated by the lack of responsiveness of established politicians, Mexican Americans for a brief period created their own independent party in Texas. La Raza Unida (LRU)

Recently, farm workers have protested their working conditions and the pesticide use that may threaten their lives.

Source: © Gary Huck/UE, Huck/Konopacki Labor Cartoons was a third party supporting candidates who offered alternatives to the Democratic and Republican parties (Hero 1995; Rosales 1996).

The social protests that characterized much of the political activity in the United States of the mid-1960s touched the Mexican American community as well. In southern California in 1966, young Chicanos in college were attracted to the ideology of **Chicanismo** (or *Chicanozaje*) and joined what is popularly called the Chicano movement. Like Black Power, Chicanismo has taken on a variety of meanings, but all definitions stress a positive self-image and place little reliance on conventional forms of political activity. Followers of Chicanismo, unlike the more assimilation-oriented older generations, have been less likely to accept the standard claim that the United States is equally just to all.

Besides a positive self-image, Chicanismo and the movement of La Raza include renewed awareness of the plight of Chicanos at the hands of Anglos. Mexican Americans are a colonial minority, as Joan Moore (1970) wrote, because their relationship with Anglos was originally involuntary. Mexican culture in the United States has been either transformed or destroyed by Anglos, and the Mexican American people themselves have been victims of racism. The colonial model points out the ways in which societal institutions have failed Mexican Americans and perpetuated their problems. Militant Mexican Americans refer to assimilationists, who they say would sell out to the White people, as *vendidos*, or traitors. The ultimate insult is the term *Malinche*, the name of the Mexican American woman who became the mistress of Spanish conqueror Cortés. Many in the Chicano movement believe that if one does not work actively in the struggle, one is working against it (Rosales 1996; see also Barrera et al. 1972; Moore and Pachon 1985).

Perhaps as well as any recent Mexican American, Reies Lopéz Tijerina captures the spirit of Chicanismo. Born in a cotton field worked by migrant farmers, Tijerina became a Pentecostal preacher and in the late 1950s took an interest in old Spanish land grants. From research in Mexico, Spain, and the Southwest, he concluded that the Mexican Americans—and, more specifically, the Hispanos—had lost significant tracts of land through quasi-legal and other questionable practices. In 1963, he formed the Atlanza Federal de Mercedes (Federal Alliance of Land Grants), whose purpose is to recover the lost land. To publicize his purpose when few Anglos would pay attention, he seized part of the Kit Carson National Forest in New Mexico. Tijerina spent the next few years either in jail or awaiting trial. Tijerina's quest for restoration of land rights has been accompanied by violence, even though he advocates civil disobedience. However, the violence led him to be criticized by some Hispanics as well as Anglos (Nabokov 1970; Rosales 1996).

Thirty years later, Tijerina's arguments, which had seemed outrageous to most, were beginning to be endorsed by politicians. In 1997, Republican members of Congress introduced the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty Claims Act to review Latino land claims especially as they relate to government-held forestland. Clearly, the Republicans were trying to garner support from Hispanic voters, but most important, this action showed that the goals of Tijerina and his followers are finally being considered seriously.

Organized in 1967, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) has emerged as a potent force to protect Mexican Americans' constitutional rights. Although it does not endorse candidates, it has made itself felt in the political arena, much as the NAACP has for African Americans. On the education side, it has addressed segregation, biased testing, inequities in school financing, and failure to promote bilingualism. MALDEF has been involved in litigation concerning employment practices, immigration reform, and voting rights. It has emerged as the primary civil rights group for Mexican Americans and other Latinos (Vigil 1990).

The late 1990s saw the Mexican community in the United States faced with a new political challenge. Beginning in 1998, Mexicans in the United States could acquire rights as Mexican nationals under Mexico's new dual nationality law. Their children, even if U.S. born, are also eligible for Mexican nationality. The United States does not prohibit dual nationality, and it is estimated that anywhere from 5 to 10 million Mexican Americans are

#### Chicanismo

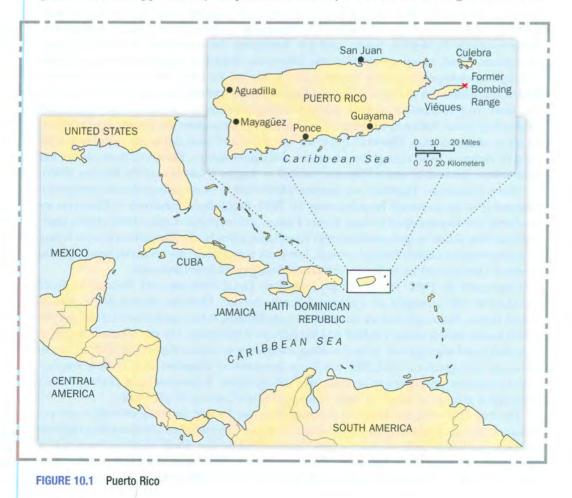
An ideology emphasizing pride and positive identity among Mexican Americans. eligible for such dual nationality. Although many dual-nationality people will not be allowed to vote in Mexico's elections, this measure is likely to further their interest in political life south of the border. As we will now see with Puerto Rico, Latinos in the United States find political issues of importance outside the fifty states (*Migration News* 1998).

### **Puerto Ricans**

Puerto Ricans' current association with the United States, like that of the Mexican people, began as the result of the outcome of a war. The island of Borinquén, subsequently called Puerto Rico, was claimed by Spain in 1493. The native inhabitants, the Taino Indians, were significantly reduced in number by conquest, slavery, and genocide. Although for generations the legacy of the Taíno was largely thought to be archaeological in nature, recent DNA tests revealed that more than 60 percent of Puerto Ricans today have a Taíno ancestor (Cockburn 2003, 41).

After Puerto Rico had been ruled by Spain for four centuries, the island was seized by the United States in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. Spain relinquished control of it in the Treaty of Paris. The value of Puerto Rico for the United States, as it had been for Spain, was mainly its strategic location, which was advantageous for maritime trade (Figure 10.1).

The beginnings of rule by the United States quickly destroyed any hope that Puerto Ricans—or Boricua, as Puerto Ricans call themselves—had for self-rule. All power was given to officials appointed by the president, and any act of the island's legislature could









New York City has hosted a large Puerto Rican community for three generations.

be overruled by Congress. Even the spelling was changed briefly to Porto Rico to suit North American pronunciation. English, previously unknown on the island, became the only language permitted in the school systems. The people were colonized—first politically, then culturally, and finally economically (Aran et al. 1973; Christopulos 1974).

Citizenship was extended to Puerto Ricans by the Jones Act of 1917, but Puerto Rico remained a colony. This political dependence altered in 1948, when Puerto Rico elected its own governor and became a commonwealth. This status, officially Estado Libre Asociado, or Associated Free State, extends to Puerto Rico and its people privileges and rights different from those of people on the mainland. Although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens and elect their own governor, they may not vote in presidential elections and have no voting representation in Congress. They are subject to military service, Selective Service registration, and all federal laws. Puerto Ricans have a home-land that is and at the same time is not a part of the United States.

#### The Bridge Between the Island and the Mainland

Despite their citizenship, Puerto Ricans are occasionally challenged by immigration officials. Because other Latin Americans attempt to enter the country posing as Puerto Ricans, Puerto Ricans find their papers scrutinized more closely than do other U.S. citizens.

Puerto Ricans came to the mainland in small numbers in the first half of the century, often encouraged by farm labor contracts similar to those extended to Mexican braceros. During World War II, the government recruited hundreds of Puerto Ricans to work on the railroads, in food manufacturing plants, and in copper mines on the mainland. But migration has been largely a post–World War II phenomenon. The 1940 census showed fewer than 70,000 on the mainland. In 2005, there were more than 3.8 million Puerto Ricans on the mainland and 3.9 million residents on the island.

Among the factors that have contributed to migration are the economic pull away from the underdeveloped and overpopulated island, the absence of legal restrictions against travel, and the growth of cheap air transportation. As the migration continues, the mainland offers the added attraction of a large Puerto Rican community in New York City, which makes adjustment easier for new arrivals.

New York City still has a formidable population of Puerto Ricans, but significant changes have taken place. First, Puerto Ricans no longer dominate the Latino scene in New York City, making up only a little more than a third of the city's Hispanic population.



#### Neoricans

Puerto Ricans who return to the island to settle after living on the mainland of the United States (also Nuyoricans). Second, Puerto Ricans are now more dispersed throughout the mainland's cities, with sizable numbers in New Jersey, Illinois, Florida, California, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. The Puerto Ricans who have moved out of the large ethnic communities in cities such as New York City, Chicago, and Philadelphia are as a group more familiar with U.S. culture and the English language. This movement from the major settlements also has been hastened by the loss of manufacturing jobs in these cities, a loss that hits Puerto Rican men especially hard (Logan 2001a; Navarro 2000).

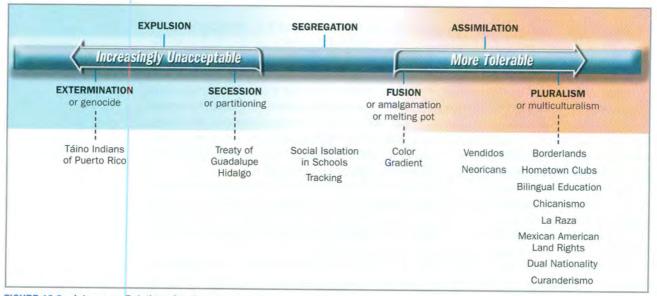
As the U.S. economy underwent recession in the 1970s and 1980s, unemployment among mainland Puerto Ricans, always high, increased dramatically. This increase shows in migration. In the 1950s, half of the Latino arrivals were Puerto Rican. By the 1970s, they accounted for only 3 percent. Indeed, in some years of the 1980s, more Puerto Ricans went from mainland to the island than the other way around.

Puerto Ricans returning to the island have become a significant force. Indeed, they have come to be given the name **Neoricans** (or *Nuyoricans*), a term the islanders also use for Puerto Ricans in New York. Longtime islanders direct a modest amount of hostility toward these Neoricans. They usually return from the mainland with more formal schooling, more money, and a better command of English than native Puerto Ricans have. Not too surprisingly, Neoricans compete very well with islanders for jobs and land.

The ethnic mix of the nation's largest city has gotten even more complex over the last ten years as Mexican and Mexican American arrivals in New York City have far outpaced any growth among Puerto Ricans. New York City is now following the pattern of other cities such as Miami, where the Latino identity is not defined by a single group (Kugel 2004; Muschkin 1993).

#### The Island of Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico, located about a thousand miles from Miami, has never been the same since Columbus discovered it in 1493. The original inhabitants of the island were wiped out in a couple of generations by disease, tribal warfare, hard labor, unsuccessful rebellions against the Spanish, and fusion with their conquerors. These social processes are highlighted in the intergroup relations continuum that summarizes the experience of Latinos in the United States (Figure10.2).





Among the institutions imported to Puerto Rico by Spain was slavery. Although slavery in Puerto Rico was not as harsh as in the southern United States, the legacy of the transfer of Africans is present in the appearance of Puerto Ricans today, many of whom are seen by people on the mainland as Black.

The commonwealth period that began in 1948 has been a significant one for Puerto Rico. Change has been dramatic, although whether it has all been progress is debatable. On the positive side, Spanish has been reintroduced as the language of classroom instruction, but the study of English is also required. The popularity in the 1980s of music groups such as Menudo shows that Puerto Rican young people want to maintain ties with their ethnicity. Such success is a challenge because Puerto Rican music is almost never aired on non-Hispanic radio stations. The Puerto Rican people have had a vibrant and distinctive cultural tradition, as seen clearly in their folk heroes, holidays, sports, and contemporary literature and drama. Dominance by the culture of the United States makes it difficult to maintain their culture on the mainland and even on the island itself.

Puerto Rico and its people reflect a phenomenon called **neocolonialism**, which refers to continuing dependence of former colonies on foreign countries. Initially, this term was introduced to refer to African nations that, even after gaining their political independence from Great Britain, France, and other European nations, continued to find their destiny in the hands of the former colonial powers. Although most Puerto Ricans today are staunchly proud of their American citizenship, they also want to have their own national identity, independent of the United States. This has not been and continues not to be easy.

From 1902, English was the official language of the island, but Spanish was the language of the people, reaffirming the island's cultural identity independent of the United States. In 1992, however, Puerto Rico also established Spanish as an official language.

In reality, the language issue is related more to ideology than to substance. Although English is once again required in primary and secondary schools, textbooks may be written in English while the classes are conducted in Spanish. Indeed, Spanish remains the language of the island; only 8 percent of the islanders speak only English, and among Spanish-speaking adults about one-third speak it "well" or "very well" (Bureau of the Census 2004c).



#### neocolonialism

Continuing dependence of former colonies on foreign countries.

**Issues of Statehood and Self-Rule** Puerto Ricans have periodically argued and fought for independence for most of the 500 years since Columbus landed. They continued to do so in the 1990s. The contemporary commonwealth arrangement is popular with many Puerto Ricans, but others prefer statehood, whereas some call for complete independence from the United States. In Table 10.2 we summarize the advantages and disadvantages of the current status as a territory or commonwealth and the alternatives of statehood and independence.

## TABLE 10.2Puerto Rico's Future

Pros	Cons	
<ul> <li>Island is under U.S. protection.</li> <li>Islanders enjoy U.S. citizenship with a distinct national identity.</li> <li>Residents don't pay federal income taxes (they do pay into Social Security, Medicare, and 32% to island tax collectors).</li> <li>United States provides federal funds in the sum of \$22 billion annually and has other tax advantages.</li> <li>Island would retain representation in the Miss Universe Pageant and Olympic Games.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>United States has ultimate authority over island matters.</li> <li>Residents cannot vote for president.</li> <li>Residents who work for any company/organization that is funded by the United States must pay federa income taxes.</li> <li>Although Puerto Rico has a higher standard of living compared to other Caribbean islands, it has half the per capita income of the poorest U.S. States.</li> <li>Island cannot enter into free trade agreements.</li> </ul>	
STATEHOOD		
Pros	Cons	
<ul> <li>Permanent and guaranteed U.S. citizenship and an end to U.S. colonial rule over the island.</li> <li>The island would receive federal money to build the infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Possibility of English-only requirements (loss of cultural/national identity).</li> <li>An increased standard of living could result in greater economic deterioration due to the current muddled economic situation.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>The island would be able to enjoy an open market trade with U.S. allies.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Businesses that take advantage of certain tax benefits could pull out of island and future</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>The island would acquire six seats in the House of Representatives and two seats in the Senate enabling the island to have more political clout and the right to vote in presidential elections.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>businesses might not consider working there.</li> <li>Island would lose representation in the Miss Universe Pageant and Olympic Games.</li> </ul>	
INDEPENDENCE		
Pros	Cons	
<ul> <li>Island would retain language and culture.</li> <li>Island would be able to participate in the global economy.</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Lose U.S. citizenship.</li><li>Lose U.S. protection.</li></ul>	
<ul> <li>End U.S. colonial rule over the island.</li> </ul>	Lose federal funds.	

Sources: Author based on Let Puerto Rico Decide 2005; President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status 2005; C. Williams 2006a.





The possible use of Vieques as a military bombing site is strongly opposed by most Puerto Ricans both in Puerto Rico and on the mainland. *Source*: Steve Benson. Reprinted by permission of United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

The arguments for continuation of commonwealth status include both the serious and the trivial. Among some island residents, the idea of statehood invokes the fear of higher taxes and an erosion of their cultural heritage. Some even fear the end of separate Puerto Rican participation in the Olympics and the Miss Universe pageant. On the other hand, although independence may be attractive, commonwealth supporters argue that it includes too many unknown costs, so they embrace the status quo. Others view statehood as a key to increased economic development and expansion for tourism.

Proponents of independence have a long, vocal history of insisting on the need for Puerto Rico to regain its cultural and political autonomy. Some of the supporters of independence have even been militant. In 1950, nationalists attempted to assassinate President Truman, killing a White House guard in the process. Four years later, another band of nationalists opened fire in the gallery of the U.S. House of Representatives, wounding five members of Congress. Beginning in 1974, a group calling itself the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN, for Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional) took responsibility for more than 100 explosions that continued through 1987. The FALN is not alone; at least four other militant groups advocating independence were identified as having been at work in the 1980s. The island itself is occasionally beset by violent demonstrations, often reacting to U.S. military installations there—a symbol of U.S. control (Bosque-Pérez and Colon Morera 2006).

The use for more than sixty years of a portion of Puerto Rico as a bombing target by the military had been to many an obvious example of colonial oppression. Protests for years focused on the bombing practice runs over Vieques, an island located six miles off its southeastern coast (see Figure 10.1). Residents were evicted with little compensation. Long after this exodus, residents of remaining areas of Vieques objected to continued bombing. The death of a civilian hit by a misguided bomb in 1999 launched a series of marches, sit-ins, blockades, and other acts of civil disobedience reminiscent of the civil rights era (Ayala and Carro-Figueroa 2006; Colón Morera and Santana 2006).

The federal government ended the bombing in 2003, but islanders continue to be upset that more has not been done sooner to clean up the leftover bombs. In "Listen to Our Voices," poet and professor Martín St. Espada questioned the continued bombing and urged people on the mainland to join Puerto Ricans on the island in calling for an immediate halt to the military exercises (Quintanilla 2006).



ore than eighty years ago, Puerto Rican poet and political leader Jose de Diego wrote, "Puerto Ricans do not know how to say no." And yet, he pointed out, "The no of the oppressed has been the word, the genesis, of the liberation of peoples." De Diego warned: "We must learn to say no."



Martín St. Espada

Today, the people of Puerto Rico say no; the people of Vieques say no; the Puerto Rican community in the U.S. says no. We say no to the Navy, no to the bombing of Vieques. The admirals and apologists of the Navy say they cannot find anywhere else in the world to play their war games. Still we say no. They say they will use dummy bombs. Still we say no. They promise a referendum some day. Still we say no. The word no is the same in English and Spanish. Since translation is not the problem, we must assume they cannot hear us. So we must say it louder: *No.* 

Vieques is an offshore island municipality of Puerto Rico. It is controlled, like the rest of Puerto Rico, by the United States. More than 9,300 people live in Viéques. Yet since 1941, the U.S. Navy has occupied two-thirds of this inhabited island for war games and live-ammunition target practice. According to journalist Juan Gonzalez, "Practice at the range goes on for as many as 200 days a year. Combat planes bomb and strafe the island. Destroyers bomb it from the sea... Maneuvers have included, on occasion, practice with depleted uranium shells, napalm, and cluster bombs."

Federal tax dollars go directly to the military budget, and thus

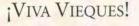
to support the Navy presence in Vieques. We share a responsibility to the people of Vieques to protest the injustice our dollars make possible. Keep in mind, too, that Puerto Rico lacks a voting representative in Congress. Given the absence of democratic representation for the people of Puerto Rico, the people of the United States must speak for them.

We Puerto Ricans must keep saying no. And by saying no, we say yes. As Eduardo Galeano has written, "By saying no to the devastating empire of greed whose center lies in North America, we are saying yes to another possible America... In saying no to a peace without dignity, we are saying yes to the sacred right of rebellion against injustice."

Source: "¡Viva Vieques!" by Martín St. Espada, The Progressive, July 2000, vol. 64, pp. 27–29. Copyright © 2000 by The Progressive. Reprinted by permission of The Progressive, 409 E. Main Street, Madison, WI 53703. www.progressive.org.

The issue of Puerto Rico's political destiny is in part ideological. Independence is the easiest way for the island to retain and strengthen its cultural and political identity. Some nationalists express the desire that an autonomous Puerto Rico develop close political ties with communist Cuba. The crucial arguments for and against independence probably are economic. An independent Puerto Rico would no longer be required to use U.S. shipping lines, which are more expensive than those of foreign competitors. However, an independent Puerto Rico might be faced by a tariff wall when trading with its largest current customer, the mainland United States. Also, Puerto Rican migration to the mainland could be restricted.

Puerto Rico's future status most recently faced a vote in 1998. In the latest nonbinding referendum, 50 percent favored continuing commonwealth status, and 47 percent backed statehood. Less than 3 percent favored independence. Interestingly, a



1998 survey of people on the mainland found the population evenly split, with a third favoring each option. Given the lack of overwhelming feelings for statehood on the island, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient support in Congress to move toward statehood. Yet with half the island population expressing a preference for a change, it is clear that discontent with the current arrangement prevails and remains a "colonial dilemma" (Navarro 1998; Saad 1998).

The Social Construction of Race The most significant difference between the meaning of race in Puerto Rico and on the mainland is that Puerto Rico, like so many other Caribbean societies, has a **color gradient**. The phrase *color gradient* describes distinctions based on skin color made on a continuum rather than by sharp categorical separations. The presence of a color gradient reflects past fusion between different groups (see Figure 10.2). Rather than being either "black" or "white," people are judged in such societies as "lighter" or "darker" than others. Rather than seeing people as either black or white in skin color, Puerto Ricans perceive people as ranging from pale white to very black. Puerto Ricans are more sensitive to degrees of difference and make less effort to pigeonhole a person into one of two categories.

The presence of a color gradient rather than two or three racial categories does not necessarily mean that prejudice is less. Generally, however, societies with a color gradient permit more flexibility, and therefore, are less likely to impose specific sanctions against a group of people based on skin color alone. Puerto Rico has not suffered interracial conflict or violence; its people are conscious of different racial heritages. Studies disagree on the amount of prejudice in Puerto Rico, but all concur that race is not as clear-cut an issue on the island as it is on the mainland.

Racial identification in Puerto Rico depends a great deal on the attitude of the individual making the judgment. If one thinks highly of a person, he or she may be seen as a member of a more acceptable racial group. A variety of terms is used in the color gradient to describe people racially: *Blanco* (white), *trigueño* (bronze- or wheat-colored), *moreno* (dark-skinned), and *negro* (black) are a few of these. Factors such as social class and social position determine race, but on the mainland race is more likely to determine social class. This situation may puzzle people from the mainland, but racial etiquette on the mainland may be just as difficult for Puerto Ricans to comprehend and accept. Puerto Ricans arriving in the United States may find a new identity thrust on them by the dominant society (Landale and Oropesa 2002; Rodríguez 1997, 2000).

#### The Island Economy

The United States' role in Puerto Rico has produced an overall economy that, though strong by Caribbean standards, remains well below that of the poorest areas of the United States. For many years, the federal government exempted U.S. industries locating in Puerto Rico from taxes on profits for at least ten years. In addition, the federal government's program of enterprise zones, which grants tax incentives to promote private investment in inner cities, has been extended to Puerto Rico. Unquestionably, Puerto Rico has become attractive to mainland-based corporations. Skeptics point out that, as a result, the island's agriculture has been largely ignored. Furthermore, the economic benefits to the island are limited. Businesses have spent the profits gained on Puerto Rico back on the mainland.

Puerto Rico's economy is in severe trouble compared with that of the mainland. Its unemployment rate has been about three times that of the mainland. In addition, the per capita income is less than half that of Mississippi, the poorest state. Efforts to raise the wages of Puerto Rican workers only make the island less attractive to labor- intensive businesses, that is, those employing larger numbers of unskilled people. Capital-intensive companies, such as the petrochemical industries, have found Puerto Rico attractive, but they have not created jobs for the semiskilled. A growing problem is that Puerto Rico is

#### color gradient

The placement of people on a continuum from light to dark skin color rather than in distinct racial groupings by skin color.



Have you ever been a tourist in an area where it seemed most local people were relatively poor?

#### world systems theory

A view of the global economic system as divided between nations that control wealth and those that provide natural resources and labor. emerging as a major gateway to the United States for illegal drugs from South America, which has led the island to experience waves of violence and the social ills associated with the drug trade (Castañeda 1996; Hemlock 1996; Navarro 1995).

Puerto Rico is an example of the world systems theory initially presented in Chapter 1. **World systems theory** is the view of the global economic system as divided between certain industrialized nations that control wealth and developing countries that are controlled and exploited. Although Puerto Rico may be well off compared with many other Caribbean nations, it clearly is at the mercy of economic forces in the United States and, to a much lesser extent, other industrial nations. Puerto Rico continues to struggle with the advantages of citizenship and the detriment of playing a peripheral role in the economy of the United States.

Another major factor in Puerto Rico's economy is tourism. Government subsidies have encouraged the construction of luxury hotels. After U.S. citizens' travel to Cuba was cut off in 1962, tourists discovered Puerto Rico's beaches and warm climate. Critics complain that the major economic beneficiaries of tourism are not local but are primarily investors from the mainland and that high prices prevent the less affluent from visiting, thus unnecessarily restricting tourism. As has been true of other aspects of the island's economic development, the tourist boom has had little positive effect on most Puerto Ricans.

Puerto Rico continues to face new challenges. First, with congressional approval in 1994 of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexico, Canada, and the United States became integrated into a single economic market. The reduction of trade barriers with Mexico, coupled with that nation's lower wages, may combine to undercut Puerto Rico's commonwealth advantage. Second, many more island nations now offer sun-seeking tourists from the mainland alternative destinations to Puerto Rico. In addition, cruise ships present another attractive option for tourists. Given the economic problems of the island, it is not surprising that many Puerto Ricans migrate to the mainland (Rivera-Batiz and Santiago 1996; Rohter 1993).

For years, migration to the mainland has served as a safety valve for Puerto Rico's population, which has grown annually at a rate 50 percent faster than that of the rest of the United States. Typically, migrants from Puerto Rico represent a broad range of occupations. There are seasonal fluctuations as Puerto Rican farm workers leave the island in search of seasonal employment. Puerto Ricans, particularly agricultural workers, earn higher wages on the mainland, yet a significant proportion returns despite the higher wages (Meléndez 1994).

## The Contemporary Picture of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans

We will now consider the major social institutions of education, the family, health care, and religion, noting the similarities in their organization between Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans.

#### Education

Both Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, as groups, have experienced gains in formal schooling but still lag behind White Americans in many standards of educational attainment. As is apparent in Table 10.1, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans lag well behind other Latinos and even further behind Anglos. Although bilingual education is still endorsed in the United States, the implementation of effective, high-quality programs has been difficult, as Chapter 9 showed. In addition, attacks on the funding of bilingual education has continued into the present.

Latinos, including Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, have become increasingly isolated from non-Latinos. In 1968, 55 percent of all Hispanics attended predominantly





minority schools: that is, schools where at least half of the students were members of minorities. Just a little over three decades later, this had increased to 76 percent. During the 2000–2001 school year, the typical Latino student was in a school that was 54 percent Hispanic. Over a third of Latinos were in schools that were at least 90 percent non-White. Furthermore, as we noted in Chapter 1, the separation continues, with the highest patterns of residential segregation occurring in the cities with the largest number of Hispanics (Frankenburg et al. 2003; Orfield 2002).

Three factors explain this increasing social isolation of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans from other students in school. First, Latinos are increasingly concentrated in the largest cities, where minorities dominate. Second, the numbers of Latinos have increased dramatically since the 1970s, when efforts to desegregate schools began to lose momentum. Third, schools once desegregated have become resegregated as the numbers of school-aged Mexican Americans in an area have increased and as the determination to maintain balances in schools has lessened.

Even where Anglos and Latinos live in the same school district, the problem of social isolation in the classroom is often furthered through tracking. **Tracking** is the practice of placing students in specific classes or curriculum groups on the basis of test scores and other criteria. Tracking begins very early in the classroom, often in reading groups during first grade. These tracks may reinforce the disadvantages of Hispanic children from less affluent families and non-English-speaking households that have not been exposed to English reading materials in their homes during early childhood (Rodríguez 1989; Schaefer 2007).

Students see few teachers and administrators like themselves because few Latino university students have been prepared to serve as teachers and administrators. In 2000, only 51 percent of Mexican Americans and 64 percent of Puerto Ricans aged 25 or over had completed high school, compared with 88 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans who do choose to continue their education beyond high school are more likely to select a technical school or community college to acquire work-related skills (Therrien and Ramirez 2001).

Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans are underrepresented in higher education in all roles. Recent reports have documented the absence of Hispanics among college teachers and administrators: Less than 6 percent of all college teachers were Latino in 2002. The situation is similar in this respect to that of Blacks; however, there are no Latino counterparts to historic Black colleges, such as Tuskegee Institute, to provide a source of leaders (Bureau of the Census 2005a, 402). Latino college students look for the same social experiences as do non-Hispanics. Fraternities and sororities oriented to attracting Hispanics have experienced tremendous increases in the last decade. Here are hotstepping members of Lambda Upsilon Lambda at Rutgers-Newark.

#### tracking

The practice of placing students in specific curriculum groups on the basis of test scores and other criteria. Motivation does not appear to be the barrier to school achievement, at least among Mexican immigrants. A Harvard University study of the attitudes of Mexican immigrant adolescents showed that 84 percent felt that school was the most important thing, compared with 40 percent of White teenagers. Again, 68 percent of immigrant children felt that doing their homework was more important than helping a friend, compared with only 20 percent of White adolescents who held the same priorities. However, there is evidence that as these children assimilate, they begin to take on the prevailing White views. The same survey showed second-generation Mexican Americans still giving education a higher priority but not as high as their immigrant counterparts. We will consider shortly how assimilation has a similar effect on health (Crosnoe 2005; Woo 1996).

With respect to higher education, Latinos face challenges similar to those that Black students meet on predominantly White campuses. Given the social isolation of Latino high schools, Mexican Americans are likely to have to adjust for the first time to an educational environment almost totally populated by Anglos. They may experience racism for the first time, just as they are trying to adjust to a heavier academic load.

#### Family Life

The most important organization or social institution among Latinos, or for that matter any group, is the family. The structure of the Mexican American family differs little from that of all families in the United States, a statement remarkable in itself, given the impoverishment of a significant number of Mexican Americans.

Latino households are described as laudably more familistic than others in the United States. **Familism** means pride and closeness in the family, which results in family obligation and loyalty coming before individual needs. The family is the primary source of both social interaction and caregiving.

Familism has been viewed as both a positive and a negative influence on individual Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. It may have the negative effect of discouraging youths with a bright future from taking advantage of opportunities that would separate them from their family. Familism is generally regarded as good, however, because an extended family provides emotional strength in times of crisis. Close family ties maintain the mental and social well-being of the elderly. Most Latinos, therefore, see the intact, extended family as a norm and as a nurturing unit that provides support throughout a person's lifetime. The many significant aspects of familism include the importance of *campadrazgo* (the godparent-godchild relationship), the benefits of the financial dependency of kin, the availability of relatives as a source of advice, and the active involvement of the elderly in the family.

This traditional value of familism, whether judged good or bad, is expected to decline in importance with urbanization, industrialization, and the acquisition of middle-class status. It will also mean taking on some practices more common in the United States, such as divorce. Characteristics that marked differences between Latino and Anglo family life were sharper in the past. Even among past generations, the differences were of degree, not of kind; that is, Hispanic families tended to exhibit some traits more than Anglos, not different traits altogether. A comparison between similar Anglo and Mexican American families in San Diego found no significant differences in family life between the two groups. In short, the Mexican American and Puerto Rican families display all the variety of American families in general, while also suffering higher levels of poverty (Alárcon 1995; Kanellos 1994; Landale and Ogena 1995; Vega et al. 1986; Zambrana 1995).

#### Health Care

Earlier, in Chapter 5, we introduced the concept of **life chances**, which are people's opportunities to provide themselves with material goods, positive living conditions, and favorable life experiences. We have consistently seen Latino groups as having more limited life chances. Perhaps in no other area does this apply so much as in the health care system.

#### familism

Pride and closeness in the family that result in placing family obligation and loyalty before individual needs.

#### life chances

People's opportunities to provide themselves with material goods, positive living conditions, and favorable life experiences.



## 293

## Focus Research Focus Research

### Assimilation May Be Hazardous to Your Health

mmigrants come to the United States seeking a better life, but the transition can be very difficult. We are familiar with the problems new arrivals experience in finding good jobs, but we may be less aware of how pervasive the challenges are.

Researchers continuously show that immigrants often encounter health problems as they leave behind old health networks and confront the private pay system of medical care in the United States. The outcome is that the health of immigrants often deteriorates. Interestingly, this occurs with Puerto Ricans, who are citizens upon arrival and obviously do not experience as much culture shock as other new arrivals. Scholars Nancy Landale, R. S. Orapesa, and Bridget Gorman looked at the implications for infant mortality of migration from Puerto Rico to the United States. Their analysis showed that children of migrants have lower rates of infant mortality than do children of mainlandborn Puerto Rican women. This means that babies of Puerto Rican mothers who are born in the United States are more likely to die than those of mothers who migrated from Puerto Rico.

Why does this happen? Immigrants generally are still under the protection of their fellow travelers. They are still networked with other immigrants, who assist them in adapting to life in the United States. However, as life in a new country continues, these important social networks break down as people learn to navigate the new social system—in this example, the health care system. The researchers do note that Puerto Ricans in the United States, regardless of recency of arrival, still experience better health than those in Puerto Rico. Of course, this finding only further indicates the colonial relationship of Puerto Rico to the United States.

Source: Landale et al. 2000; also see Lara et al. 2005.

Hispanics as a group are locked out of the health care system more often than any other racial or ethnic group. A third had no health insurance (or other coverage such as Medicaid) for all of 2005, compared with 11.2 percent of White non-Hispanics and 19.3 percent of Blacks. Predictably, the uninsured are less likely to have a regular source of medical care. This means that they wait for a crisis before seeking care. Fewer are immunized, and rates of preventable diseases such as lead poisoning are higher. No coverage is increasing, a circumstance that may reflect a further breakdown in health care delivery or may be a result of continuing immigration (DeNavas-Walt et. al. 2006:22).

The health care problem facing Mexican Americans and other Hispanic groups is complicated by the lack of Hispanic health professionals. Hispanics accounted for 5 percent or less of dentists and physicians, yet they are about 15 percent of the population. Obviously, one does not need to be administered health care by someone in one's own ethnic group, but the paucity of Hispanic professionals increases the likelihood that the group will be underserved (Bureau of the Census 2005a).

Given the high proportion of uninsured people and the low number of Latino health care personnel, it is not surprising to learn of the poor status of Latinos' health care as a group. Interestingly, once they settle in the United States, immigrants from Latin America may well experience a decline in their health care. The "Research Focus" considers the impact that immigration may have on a family's health.

Some Mexican Americans and many other Latinos have cultural beliefs that make them less likely to use the medical system. They may interpret their illnesses according



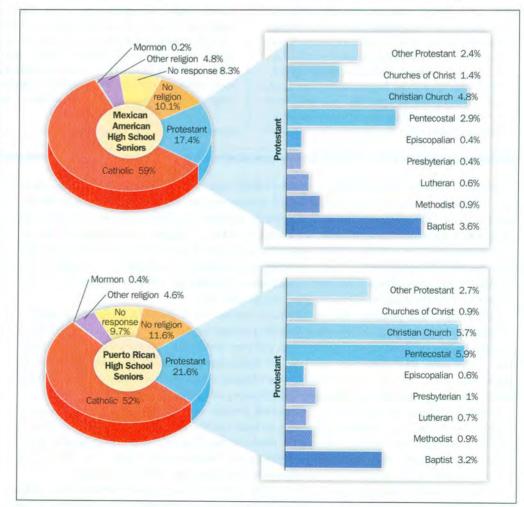
#### **curanderismo** Hispanic folk medicine.

to folk practices or **curanderismo**: Latino folk medicine, a form of holistic health care and healing. This orientation influences how one approaches health care and even how one defines illness. Most Hispanics probably use folk healers, or *curanderos*, infrequently, but perhaps 20 percent rely on home remedies. Although these are not necessarily without value, especially if a dual system of folk and establishment medicine is followed, reliance on natural beliefs may be counterproductive. Another aspect of folk beliefs is the identification of folk-defined illnesses such as *susto* (or fright sickness) and *atague* (or fighting attack). Although these complaints, alien by these names to Anglos, often have biological bases, they must be dealt with carefully by sensitive medical professionals who can diagnose and treat illnesses accurately (Belliard and Ramírez-Johnson 2005; Dansie 2004; Lara et al. 2005).

#### Religion

The most important formal organization in the Hispanic community is the church. Most Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans express a religious preference for the Catholic Church. In 2004, about 63 percent of Hispanics were Catholic. In Figure 10.3, we examine a more detailed background done ten years earlier that shows specific religious affiliations indicated by Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans (Winseman 2004b).

The Roman Catholic Church took an assimilationist role in the past, whether with Hispanic Catholics or with other minority Catholics. The church has only sporadically



#### FIGURE 10.3 Religious Preferences

Using national data, we see that the majority of both Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans expressed a preference for the Roman Catholic Church.

Source: One Nation Under God by Barry A. Kosmin and Seymour P. Lachman. Copyright © 1993 by Barry A. Kosmin and Seymour P. Lachman. Used by permission of Harmony Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

295

involved itself in the Chicano movement, and rarely in the past did the upper levels of the church hierarchy support Chicanismo. For example, only with some prodding did the Roman Catholic Church support the United Farm Workers, a group whose membership was predominantly Catholic.

Recently the Roman Catholic Church has become more community oriented, seeking to identify Latino, or at least Spanish-speaking, clergy and staff to serve Latino parishes. The lack of Spanish-speaking priests has been complicated by a smaller proportion of a declining number training for the priesthood who speak Spanish (Ramirez 2000; Rosales 1996).

Not only is the Catholic Church important to Hispanics, but Hispanics also play a significant role for the church. The population growth of Mexican Americans and other Hispanics has been responsible for the Catholic Church's continued growth in recent years, whereas mainstream Protestant faiths have declined in size. Hispanics account for more than a third of Catholics in the United States. The church is trying to adjust to Hispanics' more expressive manifestation of religious faith, with frequent reliance on their own patron saints and the presence of special altars in their homes. Catholic churches in some parts of the United States are even starting to accommodate observances of the Mexican Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Such practices are a tradition from rural Mexico, where religion was followed without trained clergy. Yet even today in the United States, Hispanics continue to be underrepresented among priests, with only 4.4 percent nationwide being Hispanic (O'Connor 1998).

Although Latinos are predominantly Catholic, their membership in Protestant and other Christian faiths is growing. According to a national survey of the University of Notre Dame, first-generation Latinos are 74 percent Catholic, but by the third generation only 62 percent are Catholic (Watanabe and Enriquez 2005).

**Pentecostalism**, a type of evangelical Christianity, is growing in Latin America and is clearly making a significant impact on Latinos in the United States. Adherents to Pentecostal faiths hold beliefs similar to those of the evangelicals but also believe in the infusion of the Holy Spirit into services and in religious experiences such as faith healing. Pentecostalism and similar faiths are attractive to many because they offer followers the opportunity to express their religious fervor openly. Furthermore, many of the churches are small and, therefore, offer a sense of community, often with Spanish-speaking leadership. Gradually, the more established faiths are recognizing the desirability of offering Latino parishioners a greater sense of belonging (Hunt 1999).

#### Pentecostalism

A religion similar in many respects to evangelical faiths that believes in the infusion of the Holy Spirit into services and in religious experiences such as faith healing.

## Conclusion

avid Gomez (1971) described Mexican Americans as "strangers in their own land." Puerto Ricans, on the other hand, are still debating what should be the political destiny of their island nation. All of this makes nationality a very real part of the destiny of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. Can they also preserve their cultures along with a sense of national fervor, or will these be a casualty of assimilation?

As we have seen, even when we concentrate on just Mexican Americans or Puerto Ricans out of the larger collective group of Hispanics or Latinos, diversity remains. As shown in Table 10.3, large concentrations of Latinos live in a number of our largest U.S. cities.

Mexican Americans are divided among the Hispanos and the descendants of earlier Mexican immigrants and the more recent arrivals from Mexico. Puerto Ricans can be divided by virtue of residency and the extent to which they identify with the island culture. For many Puerto Ricans, the identity dilemma is never truly resolved: "No soy de aquí ni de allá," "I am not from here nor from there" (Comas-Díaz et al. 1998).

City	Number of Latinos	Proportion of City's Population
New York City	2,221,906	27.9%
Los Angeles	1,824,373	48.9
Houston	820,510	42.3
Chicago	778,234	28.8
San Antonio	735,456	61.2
Phoenix	575,436	41.8
Dallas	482,024	42.1
El Paso	431,875	76.6
San Diego	312,767	25.9
San Jose	279,420	31.5
Santa Ana	257,097	76.1
Miami	243,874	67.4

Economic change is also apparent. Poverty and unemployment rates are high, and new arrivals from Mexico and Puerto Rico are particularly likely to enter the lower class, or working class at best, upon arrival. However, there is a growing middle class within the Hispanic community.

Mexican culture is alive and well in the Mexican American community. Some cultural practices that have become more popular here than in Mexico are being imported back to Mexico, with their distinctive Mexican American flavor. All this is occurring in the midst of a reluctance to expand bilingual education and a popular move to make English the official language. In 1998, Puerto Rico observed its 500th anniversary as a colony: four centuries under Spain and another century under the United States. Its dual status as a colony and as a developing nation has been the defining issue for Puerto Ricans, even those who have migrated to the mainland (Perusse 1990).

bracero 276 Chicanismo 281 color gradient 289 culture of poverty 278 curanderismo 294 familism 292 La Raza 277 life chances 292 mojados 277 neocolonialism 285

Neoricans 284 Pentecostalism 295 repatriation 276 tracking 291 world systems theory 290

## **Review Questions**

**Key Terms** 

- 1. In what respects has Mexico been viewed as both a source of workers and as a place to leave unwanted laborers?
- 2. In what respects are Hispanic families similar to and different from Anglo households?

# Week 10:

## **HAWKINS:**

Ethnic Festivals, Cultural Tourism and Pan-Ethnicity

# CHAPTER 18

# Ethnic Festivals, Cultural Tourism, and Pan-Ethnicity

Michael Hawkins

This chapter addresses the performance of ethnicity on the urban landscape in the form of ethnic festivals and parades, particularly in the context of the post-1965 West Indian immigrant communities of New York as they adapt and reinvent themselves in twentyfirst-century America. In the context of globalization and increasing mobility of populations, immigration is often seen as a counterpoint to the expansion of global tourism, and this chapter also focuses on the consumption of ethnicity as a product by the tourism industry. In order to gain a sense of the ethnic experience that festivals offer, the reader should imagine him- or herself as a tourist in an unfamiliar American city who gazes upon the following scene.

Visitors enter the festival grounds and are immediately enveloped by the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of faraway places. The pungent odors of Vietnamese fish sauce and spicy South Asian curries mingle with the aromas of sauerkraut and grilled Polish sausage. Filipino or Mexican empanadas and Jamaican jerked chicken compete with crawfish gumbo and Swedish meatballs for the visitors' attention. The pulsing Afro-Caribbean sounds of soca, reggae, and cumbia are juxtaposed with the lilt of Irish fiddles and intertwined voices singing African American spirituals. The intricate movements of elaborately costumed Cambodian court dancers contrast with brawny men in kilts tossing large rocks and Texas–Czech polka dancing. Visitors admire Hmong embroidery and the bright patterns of handwoven Maya textiles from Guatemala interspersed with stalls selling "Kiss me I'm Italian" T-shirts and lederhosen. Native Americans from both the United States and Chiapas, Mexico man tables strewn with political posters and pamphlets seeking redress for injustices past and present next to a representative of the Northern Irish Aid Committee (NORAID) urging visitors to support political prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

## Festivals, Boundaries, and Place

This composite snapshot of a multiethnic festival is repeated many times over in virtually every major city in North America and many smaller communities as well. The festival grounds provide public space for the performance of ethnic identity and have been designated as ethnic space for the duration of the festival. Settings for ethnic festivals can vary in geographical scale from large public parks, convention centers, and fairgrounds to church basements and school cafeterias. The sights, sounds, smells, and tastes the visitors experience impart what geographers call a "sense of place" to this public space. It is human experience that transforms the rather abstract concept of space into a place.<sup>2</sup> The festival organizers in this case have consciously created a multiethnic sense of place by displaying a diverse array of ethnic markers—dance, music, food, and crafts—which signify that this place is special, or outside the mainstream of the dominant national culture. The connection between identity and place becomes even more concrete and territorial when individual ethnic groups stage festivals in the context of their own urban ethnic neighborhoods, rural ethnic islands, or large regional entities in North America called ethnic homelands.

Performances of ethnic identity delineate physical space, whether it be the temporary "festival space" of a large urban park or the territorial boundaries of an ethnic neighborhood. Festivals are also a highly visible public means of reinforcing, reviving, and even inventing ethnic identity by drawing cultural boundaries between "Us" and the "Other."<sup>3</sup> Although "Kiss me I'm Italian" T-shirts on sale at our hypothetical festival may seem to be contrived and blatantly commercial markers of ethnic difference compared to traditional handmade Guatemalan textiles, the contrast illustrates the range and fluidity of cultural behaviors used to represent ethnic identities. T-shirts are no less symbolic of contemporary Italian American and other older, mostly European group identity than the presumably authentic handicrafts of more recent immigrant groups. Descendants of European immigrants that arrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tend to express their ethnic identities sporadically and individually as a form of "symbolic ethnicity" rather than living the culture of the homeland, or now moribund ethnic neighborhood, as taken for granted everyday practice.<sup>4</sup> Attending and participating in festivals is as likely to be a leisure activity as an expression of symbolic identity for these older immigrant groups.

#### PERFORMANCE OF IDENTITY

New immigrant groups, such as those arriving after the 1965 Immigration Reform Act, are far more likely to maintain direct connections with their homelands and cling to cultural practices of the old country in everyday life rather than utilize them as an occasional symbolic gesture. For example, South Asians serving food to the public at ethnic festivals are only replicating a practice they continue at home, whereas European Americans may consume their ethnic foods only at festivals, or perhaps on special occasions at home. For recent immigrants with an "in between" or "transnational identity," festivals function to increase the visibility of these often unfamiliar groups to outsiders as well as reinforce a sense of group identity. Another frequent expression of transnationality on display at ethnic festivals can be found in the political activities evident in the introductory paragraphs. The Irish American soliciting donations for NORAID addresses his message mainly toward fellow ethnics and appeals to a latent and symbolic sense of transnational identity common in older immigrant groups. It is an attempt to

transform nostalgia for the "Old Sod" into support for a political cause that most Irish Americans only vaguely understand. The Native Americans from Chiapas, however, direct their appeal toward festival attendees from outside their own group in order to gain visibility and support from a wider public. Visibility provided by participating in ethnic and folk festivals is especially important to new immigrant groups who lack the political connections and public recognition achieved by previous immigrants. Furthermore, their cultural traditions are considered more exotic and often more desirable than those of more familiar immigrant groups.

#### ETHNICITY AND CONSUMPTION

Markers of ethnicity on display at festivals function in symbolic and transnational ways to reinforce group solidarity and differentiate one group from another, but they are also products to be consumed by the public. Ethnicity is a marketable commodity or product, and festivals provide a marketplace where ethnicity is packaged, sold, and consumed by insiders and outsiders alike. Listening to world or ethnic music, dining at ethnic restaurants, visiting heritage sites, and attending an ethnic or folk festival are examples of "commodification of culture" (Fig. 18.1). Ethnic foods, of course, are quite literally



Figure 18.1. Ethnic foods are a popular commodity on display at festivals. This typical Jamaican menu offers a taste of home for West Indians and a taste of the exotic for tourists. Source: Staceyjoy Elkin.

consumed at festivals, but cultural commodities of all kinds have become increasingly important as consumption patterns in the United States and other post-industrial countries have moved from standardized mass-produced goods to goods and services tailored to specific lifestyles and tastes. In the last three decades the United States has also moved from an assimilationist to a multicultural view of immigrant groups, and consumers increasingly embrace cultural goods that not only evoke re-identification with their own ethnicity, but display their interest in the culture of others as well. Ethnic products, especially those of indigenous or non-Western groups, have become more sought after in post-industrial countries as culture on a global scale is perceived as becoming more homogeneous and "westernized" because of rapid advances in mass media, transnational corporate marketing, and communications technology. Difference sells and the more exotic the cultural product the better. As one observer noted, "In an age that celebrates diversity and multiculturalism, it has become almost a civic duty to have an ethnicity as well as to appreciate that of others."<sup>5</sup>

# Ethnic Festivals and Cultural Tourism

Culture and commerce are especially intertwined in the emerging sector of the travel and tourism industry called "cultural tourism." The tourism industry plays a major role in the commodification of culture worldwide as tourists seek out ethnic difference from the most remote corners of the globe to urban areas and small towns closer to home. Tourism is one of the world's most important economic activities, and cultural tourism is among the most rapidly growing segments of the industry.<sup>6</sup>

The impacts of tourism extend beyond the commercial aspect of ethnic festivals. The fact that tourists show an interest in ethnic culture may serve as an impetus toward the revitalization of ethnic identity, or ethnic re-identification. In response to the economic lure of tourism and the desire for increased visibility to outsiders, previously marginalized groups may reconstruct their identities, often by merging with other groups under a common "pan-ethnic" identity. Pan-ethnic identities require a common interest, often political or economic, and a system of cultural symbols that are selected or invented to serve as a "cultural umbrella" for the varied groups united under a pan-ethnic label.<sup>7</sup> Pan-ethnicities are sometimes so fluid and tenuous that festivals may become the primary symbol of common identity. Transnational links may also stimulate tourism as members of diasporic communities often view festivals as an opportunity to reconnect with their ethnic roots and with family and friends who have immigrated.

#### TOURISM AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

The field of cultural tourism is as diverse and fluid as are the meanings and implications of the word *culture* itself. In the past, culture with a capital "C," or high culture, was viewed as the exclusive property of the Eurocentric elite and demarcated class boundaries. In a more democratized form, concert music and theater festivals, art exhibitions, and museums are certainly still components of cultural tourism. As the Industrial Revolution

progressed in Europe and North America in the late nineteenth century, mass or popular culture arose as counterpoint to high culture. America's elite feared that as rural folk culture receded before the onslaught of urbanization and the first great wave of immigration from Europe, "traditional" American values would be corrupted by foreign ideas and beliefs like socialism and Catholicism. An idealized version of national identity arose in the form of material remnants, reminders, and reconstructions of the past. Henry Ford's Greenfield Village, John D. Rockefeller's Colonial Williamsburg, and plantation tours in the South have remained popular "historical tourism" destinations since the 1930s and until recently emphasized Anglo-American history and culture while excluding the contributions of Native Americans, immigrants, and African Americans.

In the 1960s and 1970s, previously marginalized ethnic groups demanded that their histories be portrayed as well. The rise of the Civil Rights Movement, the American Indian Movement (AIM), and the Hispanic Raza Unida Party in the United States coincided with the Immigration Reform Act in 1965 and expanded the scope of cultural tourism to include groups beyond the American mainstream. African Americans, inspired by Alex Haley's fictionalized book *Roots* and television version of his family's sojourn from Africa as slaves to North America and eventual freedom, joined Irish Americans in pilgrimages to their respective ancestral homelands in a type of cultural tourism called "roots tourism." By the late 1970s historic sites and living history exhibits like Williamsburg were offering predominately white tourists interpretations of the past that included portrayals of enslaved African Americans. Historical tourism has become "heritage tourism," which implies that each group inherits and celebrates its own version of the past. History purports to be a set of unalterable facts, whereas heritage, like ethnic identity, is malleable and fluid. Heritage tourism is more about interpretation than authenticity.

With the passage of the Ethnic Heritage Act in 1974, multiculturalism and the celebration of ethnicity received official government sanction and funding, and ethnic festivals became an increasingly popular form of heritage tourism. Older, established ethnic festivals staged mostly in the interest of community or neighborhood solidarity have turned outward, adapting themselves toward a wider audience. Festivals in both small towns and urban areas are vigorously promoted by state and local tourist agencies and supported by corporate sponsors, local businesses, and non-profit "grass roots" organizations. New festivals and new markers of ethnicity are being invented and revised. Ethnicity as a public performance, like culture itself, is not static, but constantly changing.

#### TOURISM AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

An often quoted survey by the Travel Industry Association of America reported that in 2000 two-thirds of adult American tourists (92.7 million) included a cultural event in their itinerary, and that 20 percent of those travelers attended a heritage or ethnic festival. Moreover, these tourists are demographically older, more affluent, and better educated than average.<sup>8</sup> Cultural tourism therefore represents a significant source of income in a world in which cities and regions compete for increasingly mobile intellectual and

economic resources. Ethnic diversity not only represents economic capital in the form of tourist dollars, but also enhances the unique place image of a city or region, providing a form of "cultural capital." For example, the official Chicago–Cook County government website meant to promote the region to potential businesses, residents, and tourists cites the fact that the area "has one of the country's most ethnically diverse populations with more than 100 represented" as the first item under its "quality of life" category.<sup>9</sup> While quality of life through ethnic diversity may seem to be an elusive and intangible form of cultural capital, it is made tangible by the wide array of ethnic festivals Chicago offers.

Other Midwestern cities lacking Chicago's long-held reputation for ethnic diversity have sought to broaden their touristic appeal and to project a more cosmopolitan image than is usually associated with the region. Milwaukee, for example, long known as the "most German city in America," is now christened by its boosters as "the city of festivals."<sup>10</sup> In addition to the long-established Festa Italiana, Polish Fest, German Fest, and Irish Fest, the city's Henry Maier Festival Park now hosts the Asian Moon Festival, a Native American festival called Indian Summer, the African World Festival, the Arab World Fest, and somewhat surprisingly, the Cajun Fest.

#### TOURISM AND THE (RE)CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNICITY

Much of the early scholarly literature on tourism emphasized the negative impact of the industry on local culture and identity.<sup>11</sup> A more balanced view has emerged since the 1980s, and one of the most cited case studies concerns the Cajun cultural revival in South Louisiana and the role of festivals and tourism in encouraging ethnic re-identification. Cajuns are the descendants of French-speaking exiles from Acadia in Nova Scotia who found refuge in Louisiana over two hundred years ago. By the 1960s the Cajun French dialect, long the primary marker of ethnic difference, was in decline, and Cajun culture had lost much of its distinctive character. Not only had Cajun identity become largely symbolic, but young people especially made an effort to distance themselves from their heritage. A number of factors in the mid-1970s sparked a revival of interest among Cajuns in their own culture including the commodification of their culture through tourism and the growth of national and local festivals showcasing Cajun music and food. The national resurgence of interest in regional folkways and the acclaimed performance of old-time Cajun fiddler Dewey Balfa at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964 brought Cajun culture to national attention, and Balfa's tours of France and Canada in the 1970s initiated a growing stream of foreign Francophone tourists from France, Belgium, and Canada, who in a form of reverse roots tourism sought to reestablish transnational links with their kin in Louisiana.<sup>12</sup>

State and local governments, small businesses, individual entrepreneurs, and local organizations in South Louisiana saw an opportunity to both capitalize on and promote their own culture. The number of festivals specifically showcasing Cajun dance, music, and food in the region now officially called Acadiana grew from 36 in 1977 to 240 in 1998.<sup>13</sup> Cajuns responded to the commodification of their culture as a touristic

and mass consumer product with a renewed appreciation of their own heritage. The Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation and Tourism now vigorously promotes cultural tourism in the United States and abroad, and in 1999 sponsored a year-long celebration of the 300th anniversary of the state called FrancoFête. Attracting French-speaking tourists was, of course, the primary goal of FrancoFête, but it also strengthened transnational connections between Louisiana and the country of origin, and simultaneously extended the umbrella of pan-ethnicity to include Louisianians of Afro-French and white Creole heritage, Francophone Louisiana Indians, and the French Caribbean.

### West Indian Carnival: A Moveable Feast

The West Indian Carnival in New York City is an example of an urban ethnic festival in which ethnic boundaries are spatially and symbolically negotiated, and ethnic identities have been invented and redefined. The carnival is actually a cluster of events taking place in Brooklyn before Labor Day and culminating in New York's largest parade, attracting over three million spectators and participants, and thus exceeding attendance figures for the better-known St. Patrick's Day Parade. The *Lonely Planet* and *Frommer's* guidebooks for New York City describe the Brooklyn Carnival respectively as the biggest event and "best" parade in the city.<sup>14</sup> Despite a history of friction between public authorities and parade organizers and participants which parallels its origins in Trinidad, the West Indian Carnival is now embraced and promoted by state and city officials. Nevertheless, the sheer size of the festival, the anti-authoritarian nature of carnival celebrations in general, and the fact that the event reflects social tensions within the city and among various ethnic groups, cause public officials to exercise as much control as possible.

The term West Indian is commonly used to refer to the inhabitants of the Englishspeaking Caribbean including the "big" islands of Jamaica and Trinidad, the string of small islands composing the Lesser Antilles, Guyana on the South American mainland, and the Caribbean coast of Central America from Panama to Belize. West Indians in the context of the Caribbean identify themselves first as Jamaican, Trinidadian, or St. Lucian, for example. As a result, an attempt sponsored by the British government to unite the islands as the West Indies Federation from 1958 to 1962 foundered on interisland rivalry, especially between the larger islands of Jamaica and Trinidad. As immigrants from the British Caribbean began to arrive in New York in the early twentieth century, they began to identify themselves to outsiders as West Indian, thus assuming a wider pan-ethnic identity. The process of forming a larger collective identity accelerated as the second wave of migration after 1965 swelled the numbers of West Indians in the city. This pan-ethnic identity served to distinguish people from the Anglophone Caribbean from the city's much larger African-American community, to reinforce ethnic boundaries between themselves and immigrants from the Hispanic Caribbean, and to increase their visibility and political power.

As a marker of ethnic identity the celebration of carnival itself embodies many strands of diffusion, migration, and cultural synthesis. Pre-Lenten festivals marked by a period of suspension of the normal rules of behavior in society before Ash Wednesday initiates the somber fasting of Lent were once common throughout Europe until the Protestant Reformation. Carnival celebrations, however, survived and flourished in Catholic Europe where they were characterized by elaborate costume balls or masquerades staged by the wealthy, and spontaneous and often rowdy street processions conducted by the lower classes. The upper classes were openly mocked and satirized in the course of these unruly street processions, and in response civil authorities sometimes felt compelled to crack down on the proceedings. Carnival diffused to the Spanish, French, and Portuguese colonies in the New World, and continues to be celebrated, most famously in the form of Mardi Gras in Louisiana and *carnaval* in Brazil. In New Orleans and Rio de Janeiro the carnival season has taken on meaning far beyond that of a prelude to Lent and is now closely linked to the place image and identity of the two cities; needless to say, carnival has also become the premier tourist event of the year in both cities.

#### ORIGINS OF THE WEST INDIAN CARNIVAL

Although the celebration of carnival is now arguably the most important pan-ethnic marker of identity for the large and diverse West Indian diaspora communities in the United States, Canada, and Britain, the festival is indigenous to only one major island in the English-speaking Caribbean-Trinidad. The island is truly the "melting pot" of the Caribbean, and the celebration of carnival served as an arena where ethnic and class identities were defined and negotiated. Carnival in Trinidad evolved in much the same way as Mardi Gras in New Orleans in that both were essentially a fusion of French Catholic and African traditions and were regarded by British and American authorities as unruly and perhaps subversive public displays. Trinidad was a sparsely settled backwater of the Spanish empire until a large influx of French planters, free people of color, and slaves arrived in the late eighteenth century at the invitation of the Spanish crown. Like the American purchase of Louisiana in 1803, when Trinidad became a British possession in 1797, the new rulers inherited a colony with a largely French-speaking Creole and African population. British officials, merchants, planters, slaves, and freedmen arrived with British rule, and after the abolition of slavery in 1838, Hindu and Muslim indentured workers from South Asia were added to the existing mix. As the most Catholic of important British possessions in the Caribbean, carnival celebrations in Trinidad continued under the disapproving eyes of colonial officials, and a synthesis of African and European traditions emerged as distinctly Trinidadian cultural forms which later became the basis of the West Indian Carnival in New York. Trinidadian Carnival, like its counterpart in New York, emerged as a multivocal expression of evolving ethnic and class identities, as well as a highly visible forum where public discontent with the dominant culture could be articulated.

The elaborate masked balls and open houses held by the wealthy French Creole elite during carnival did not unduly concern the authorities, but the first British governor quickly imposed strict limitations on the celebration of carnival by free people of color and slaves. In accordance with the generally more restrictive slave codes imposed in all Anglo-American colonies, the use of drums was forbidden because of the possibility that they might be used by rebellious slaves as a form of communication. Slaves were allowed to dance during carnival season only at designated times and places. Free people of color were subjected to a curfew and were required to obtain a special permit to hold balls after 8:00 PM. Attempts to regulate carnival, especially as it was celebrated by the lower classes, continued after the full emancipation of slaves in 1838. In 1849 an ordinance was passed restricting carnival to two days and prohibiting blacks from wearing masks. Beginning in 1868, censorship was imposed on the lyrics of carnival songs that officials considered to be obscene or inflammatory. The kaiso and lavway song forms were predecessors to the calypsos that are so closely identified with both the Trinidadian and New York carnivals, and were, like the calypso, by their very nature often lewd and anti-authoritarian.<sup>15</sup>

#### CARNIVAL AND TRINIDADIAN IDENTITY

British officials continued to impose regulations, curfews, and censorship right up to the end of the colonial era in 1962. These attempts at social control met with resistance, especially from the growing working-class population in the capital, Port of Spain, and serious clashes between revelers and police occurred in 1858, 1881, and 1883. Even as the celebration of carnival was co-opted or "improved" by the urban middle class in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the festival still served as an outlet for protest against colonial political and social policies. Clubs, called social unions, based on ethnicity, class, immigrant groups, or profession served the same purpose as krewes in New Orleans, that is, to institutionalize carnival and make it respectable. Social unions in Trinidad, however, encompassed a much broader cross section of society than the largely Anglo-American krewes of New Orleans. They organized the "fancy" masquerade, or mas' band, competitions where social union members dressed in elaborate costumes paraded through the main streets of Port of Spain during carnival accompanied by a lead singer called a chantwell. The chantwells carried on the tradition of social commentary by composing and performing topical songs written especially for the carnival season processions.

By the early 1900s, calypsos, as they were now called, had assumed an importance beyond that of a mere accompaniment to the mas' band parades. Calypsonians dueled with each other under tents sponsored by the social unions and attended by audiences that cut across class, color, and language boundaries. Early calypsos were sung in French patois, in part to circumvent the British censors. In the 1920s and 1930s as audiences grew more diverse, and English-language education became available to the working classes, English Creole lyrics began to supplant French patois as the lingua franca of carnival. This shift toward a creolized form of Trinidadian English mirrored the emergence of a distinctly Trinidadian identity—a synthesis, like carnival, of French Creole, Caribbean English, and, to a lesser extent, East Indian elements—and made the festival more accessible to foreign tourists who in the 1930s became a noticeable presence at the calypso tents and mas' band processions. In spite of the language shift in lyrics, calypsonians continued to defy the censors. For example, the following verses by calypsonian Atilla question the competence of a local colonial magistrate: Kenneth Vincent Brown, You always doing something that's wrong; West Indian papers all freely state That you are no good as a magistrate, For you always cause dissatisfaction With your rotten jurisdiction.<sup>16</sup>

This excerpt from a calypso by Lord Protector, on the other hand, amounts to a sweeping indictment of British colonialism:

We are ruled with the iron hand. Britain boasts of democracy, brotherly love, and fraternity, But British colonists have been ruled in perpetual misery.<sup>17</sup>

Not all calypso lyrics were so blatantly anti-authoritarian. Calypsonians commented on current events ranging from local scandals to the invasion of Ethiopia by Mussolini, gender relations, and changing economic and social conditions as Trinidad became an important petroleum-producing and refining center in the early twentieth century.

#### **REVIVAL OF AFRO-CREOLE ROOTS**

The third element of Trinidadian carnival transferred to New York and other centers of the West Indian diaspora, the steel drum or "pan," emerged somewhat later than mas' band processions and the calypso. However, it is rooted in the older traditions of rural laborers who migrated to Port of Spain as the island's economy shifted from plantation agriculture to a growing industrial base. These marginalized and often unemployed workers were largely of African descent and were crowded into hastily built quarters called barrack yards. Physically and socially isolated from the more respectable mas' band and calypso forms of carnival celebrations, this new urban proletariat reintroduced older African-derived customs to the back streets of Port of Spain. The tradition of torchlight processions accompanied by drumming called *camboulay*, originally meant to control the annual burning of the cane fields (cannes brulées in French), evolved into a pre-dawn carnival celebration that revived many of the rowdier aspects of the festival.<sup>18</sup> J'ouvert, meaning "break of day," as these processions were called, revived many of the Africanized traditions of carnival that had been suppressed in order to make the festival more palatable to the authorities and the middle class. The colonial government reissued its ban on drums, hoping to curb J'ouvert and keep the inhabitants of the barrack yards in their place. Revelers responded by forming "tamboo bamboo" bands that substituted varying lengths and widths of bamboo for drums to produce percussive sounds of various tones. The lengths of bamboo also proved useful when bands from rival barrack yards met in the back streets and alleys to reenact the calinda—an African-derived form of stick fighting also forbidden by law.

By the 1930s pots, garbage can lids, brake drums, and biscuit tins had been added to the repertoire of the tamboo bamboo bands, and the raucous clank of metal on metal began to replace bamboo in these illegal, early morning processions. *Jouvert* reached its final stage as an expression of the "re-Africanization" of carnival by the Trinidadian lower classes in the adaptation of discarded oil drums as musical instruments just before World War II. The concave head of the oil drum was carefully hammered and dented to produce a variety of pitches, and the drum itself could be cut to various lengths to produce different octaves. Unlike most other percussion instruments, this tuning allows the steel drum bands, or pans as they are called, to play a full range of melody and harmony parts and thus to play popular calypso tunes to accompany the fancy masquerade processions. In spite of the official ban imposed on outdoor carnival celebrations in 1942 because of the war, the new steel drum bands defiantly took to the streets and clashed with the police in the lower-class neighborhood of Lavantille. At first, middle-class Trinidadians remained aloof from the illegal and "rude" celebrations of J'ouvert. After the war, as steel bands proliferated, aided by the thousands of discarded oil drums left by the U.S. military, the unique sound and range of musical possibilities provided by steel drum bands were realized. Full acceptance of the steel band and J'ouvert as an essential element of both carnival and an emerging Trinidadian national identity was signaled by a 1951 government-supported London tour by the Trinidad All Stars Percussion Orchestra.

#### CARNIVAL AS COMMODITY

Celebration of carnival helped forge a sense of national identity by providing a common symbol for Trinidad's disparate class and ethnic groups. However, by the 1950s, calypso and steel band music had been commodified and diffused well beyond the island by the international recording industry. When markers of ethnic identity become cultural products, their symbolic meaning is altered. For example, the wellknown calypso "Rum and Coca Cola" was first sung by Lord Invader at the 1943 carnival as a social commentary on the changes wrought by the presence of large numbers of American servicemen stationed at two large bases in Trinidad during World War II. The lyrics complain that Trinidadian women preferred to go out with free-spending soldiers and sailors rather than their own countrymen, but the text can also be read as a reaction to the growing influence of American economic power and cultural hegemony.

They bought rum and Coca Cola, way down Point Cumana; Both mother and daughter working for the Yankee dollar.<sup>19</sup>

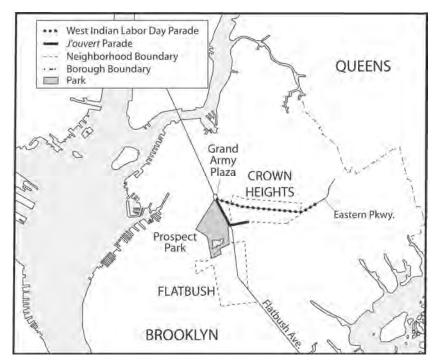
Ironically, the song was picked up by American servicemen who had largely replaced prewar tourists at the calypso tents and was sold by an enterprising USO entertainer to Decca Records as his own composition.<sup>20</sup> The Andrews Sisters, the most popular female swing group at the time, recorded "Rum and Coca Cola" for Decca in 1945, and it shot to the top of the charts.

In the Trinidadian context, calypso music and steel bands were intimately linked with carnival and symbolized national identity and resistance to authority. For Americans who were exposed to these forms through the lens of popular culture, they brought to mind images of a generic tropical paradise inhabited by simple, carefree, and "sensual" people. The postwar boom in up-market Caribbean tourism and the continuing popularity of calypso throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, especially as performed by Jamaican-American Harry Belafonte in a highly polished style for American audiences, ensured that elements of Trinidadian carnival plucked from their original context were a fixture in every posh tourist resort in the English-speaking Caribbean from Jamaica to Barbados. Although some Trinidadians resented this appropriation of their own markers of identity by the tourism industry and mass popular culture, in the eyes of many Americans calypso, steel bands, and elements of the fancy masquerade had acquired a wider, pan-ethnic meaning.<sup>21</sup>

# All of We Is One

It is Labor Day in Brooklyn, New York. Between 2 and 3 million people line Eastern Parkway, the wide boulevard that bisects the mixed West Indian, Haitian, and Hassidic Jewish neighborhood of Crown Heights (Map 18.1). The crowd is so packed along the two-mile parade route that it spills over into the side streets resembling a huge open-air market lined with stalls where jerked chicken and pork sizzle on grills and the pungent smell of roti and curried goat permeates the air. People of all ages and colors, but predominantly of African descent, dance and shout their approval behind metal barriers to the cacophony of sound emanating from the parkway. Tractors drawing floats decorated with banners, flags, corporate logos, and scantily clad gyrating dancers, or more modestly dressed West Indian beauty queens, alternate with bands of masqueraders on foot dressed in elaborate sequined and plumed costumes accompanied by steel bands playing the latest "road march" calypso from Trinidad (Fig. 18.2). They are followed by more numerous processions of groups sporting T-shirts emblazoned with their national colors, waving their national flags, and accompanied by sound trucks blasting Jamaican reggae and dance hall music, Haitian konpa, or Trinidadian soca music. Interspersed throughout the parade are individuals dressed as "ole mas" stock characters—"jab jab" the devil, "moko jumbie" stilt walkers, and "bad behaviour" sailor—all drawn directly from the traditional Afro-Creole carnival in Trinidad (Fig. 18.3).

This portrayal of the West Indian Carnival Labor Day Parade echoes the vignette of an urban multiethnic festival presented at the beginning of the chapter, but there are a number of important differences. First, the multiethnic festival is a composite that is replicated in many cities and towns across the country, whereas the West Indian parade takes place in a specific geographical and temporal context. The transferal of carnival to New York required a number of adaptations just as the disparate traditions of carnival were adapted to the Trinidadian context. Second, multiethnic festivals are institutionalized in that they are usually conceived and coordinated by a single entity, whether it be a governmental agency or a nonprofit institution. The West Indian parade, on the other hand, originated as an organic or grassroots festival, which implies that relations with the authorities and other ethnic groups, as they were in Trinidad, are in a constant state of negotiation and sometimes confrontation. Third, although both festivals include a diverse array of ethnic groups, the New York carnival draws together a num-



Map 18.1. The Labor Day West Indian Parade Route in Brooklyn, New York.

ber of different groups under an overarching pan-ethnic identity. The core markers of Trinidadian identity that we have examined in some depth have remained central to the parade, but in the ongoing process of identity formation others have been added. Finally, multiethnic festivals are designed to appeal primarily to cultural tourists from mainstream society who seek out experiences of the exotic "Other" as a form of cultural capital. Although the Brooklyn Carnival has since the 1990s increasingly attracted tourists from outside the pan-ethnic group, it has traditionally been a destination for members of the transnational West Indian diaspora.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The first wave of West Indian immigration to New York occurred in the early 1900s. Settlement was spatially concentrated in Harlem, and included both working-class and welleducated middle-class immigrants. By 1925 there were approximately 35,000 "foreign-born Negroes" in Harlem most of whom were from the British Caribbean.<sup>22</sup> West Indians participated fully in the Harlem Renaissance. Jamaican poet Claude Mackay and pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey rubbed shoulders with W. E. B. Dubois, Langston Hughes, and other African American luminaries of the period. Nevertheless, West Indians were uncomfortable with the racial order in America with its overt prejudice



Figure 18.2. These "fancy" masquerade costumes are fabricated in traditional Trinidadian style in mas' camps scattered throughout storefronts and warehouses in Brooklyn. Source: Staceyjoy Elkin.



Figure 18.3. Stilt walkers, or moko jumbies, are Trinidadian carnival characters descended from West African prototypes and transferred to Brooklyn. Source: Staceyjoy Elkin.

and "one drop rule" (any degree of African descent) of racial discrimination. They also felt a certain amount of underlying prejudice from African Americans and took refuge in their own social clubs organized primarily by island of origin.

In the 1920s the first indoor costume balls were held by Trinidadians in Harlem, many of them organized by social clubs. The respectable pre-Lenten costume balls held in rented ballrooms paralleled the activities of the middle-class social unions in Trinidad. New York had become a center for the West Indian recording industry by the 1910s, and calypsonians traveled regularly back and forth from Trinidad for recording sessions, in part to avoid colonial government censors in Trinidad. At an early date Caribbean music and musicians established transnational links which continue to today. Calypso competitions were held in Harlem ballrooms in imitation of the calypso tent competitions in Port of Spain. The first informal street processions began in the 1930s, and in 1947 a permit was obtained by a Trinidadian woman, Jessie Wardell, to hold a street parade on Lennox Avenue in Harlem. An important adaptation was made at this juncture in the context of New York winters; carnival was rescheduled to Labor Day instead of the traditional pre-Lenten moveable date in late February or March. More formalized and elaborate mas' bands were organized for the Lennox Avenue parade; and following the public acceptance of steel bands in Trinidad, this third ingredient of carnival and marker of Trinidadian culture was introduced to New York in the 1950s.<sup>23</sup>

Although other West Indians had by the 1960s joined in carnival celebrations in Harlem, participating in mas' bands and steel bands—calypso had already been widely adopted as a form of popular culture throughout the Caribbean and beyond—carnival in New York was still an essentially Trinidadian affair. In 1965 changes in the flow of migration at the global, national, and regional scales combined to transform carnival in New York into an event that transcended its status as a local ethnic festival, albeit with strong transnational ties. Legislation passed in 1924 had slowed immigration from the Caribbean to no more than a steady trickle, but with the 1965 Immigration Reform Act global immigration patterns changed radically and the flow from the West Indies soared. Partially because of ties with the existing West Indian community, their primary destination was New York. Eighty percent of the 300,000 West Indian immigrants who lived in New York in 1980 arrived after 1965.<sup>24</sup> Although Harlem continued to receive a share of these new arrivals, many of them settled in other parts of the city as middleclass whites migrated to the suburbs. Carnival followed the demographic trend to the new locational context of Brooklyn.

New York now supports the largest West Indian city in the world. According to the 2000 census, in Brooklyn alone 11.5 percent (310,416) of the population is of West Indian descent. All of the English-speaking islands and mainland areas of the Caribbean Basin as well as Haitians are represented in the West Indian population, but Jamaicans (27%), Haitians (23.5%), Trinidadians (14.7%), and Guyanese (12%) form the largest groups in that order. The large number of foreign-born in the borough, 37.8 percent of the population, insures that there are strong transnational links. Brooklyn's population is extremely diverse with many different ethnic groups, including large numbers of African Americans, interspersed throughout the borough, but the most recognizable West Indian and Haitian neighborhoods are concentrated in Flatbush and Crown Heights (Map 18.1). Men playing dominos, Caribbean-style shops and restau-

rants, music blaring from the many record stores that line streets like Nostrand Avenue or Fulton Avenue evoke a sense of place that any West Indian would recognize as reminiscent of home.

#### CONFRONTATION AND NEGOTIATION

The term *bacchanal* is used in both Trinidad and New York as a synonym for the more unruly aspects of carnival. We have seen that in Trinidad the celebration of carnival was often the occasion for confrontations between revelers and the authorities or between rival groups. There are conflicting reports of incidents that occurred at carnival time in Harlem before its change of venue to Brooklyn. A "brawl" at the carnival parade was reported in 1961 by the *New York Amsterdam News*.<sup>25</sup> Another source reports that "hoodlums," presumably African Americans, pelted masqueraders with rocks and bottles in 1964, and as a result the city withdrew permission to parade on Lennox Avenue.<sup>26</sup> What is certain is that in the wake of the Watts Riot of 1964 in Los Angeles, Harlem erupted into violence reflecting the climate of racial tension in the country as a whole. The police suspended the right to free assembly, and the 1965 carnival parade was cancelled.

Small informal block parties were held in Brooklyn in the late 1960s, but in view of the suspicion between the police and blacks in general, an organization was needed to act as an intermediary between the authorities and carnival revelers. Rufus Gorin, a Trinidadian costume maker who had been active in organizing the Harlem parades, formed the United West Indian Day Development Association and obtained a permit from the city to hold a small parade in Brooklyn in 1967. Fifty thousand people showed up. The name of the organization indicates a conscious sense of pan-ethnic identity developing among West Indians in New York, perhaps as a way of differentiating themselves from African Americans in light of the ongoing tension between blacks and the authorities. In 1971 another Trinidadian, Carlos Lezama, petitioned for a permit to parade on the Olmstead-designed Eastern Parkway through Crown Heights. He changed the name of the organization to the West Indian American Day Carnival Association (WIADCA). Again the use of the term "West Indian American" indicates a desire to legitimize the organization in the eyes of the dominant culture. In spite of reports of disturbances and occasional muggings, attendance at the parade mushroomed during the 1970s. By 1977 police estimated the size of the crowd at 500,000 to 700,000, and the police contingent in full riot gear detailed to patrol the route exceeded 1,500.27 Many of the spectators resented the presence of so many police in battle array, especially in a city that was strapped for cash and cutting back on social services. In the late 1970s there were literally hundreds of scuffles and minor confrontations between police and spectators. Calypsonian Mighty Sparrow commented in his song "One More Jam Mr Police Officer":

People want to jump up, People want to wail; We come here to mash up, We not in jail.<sup>28</sup> In 1980 the authorities imposed a number of regulations on the carnival celebrations in a manner that many considered to be reminiscent of the British colonial authorities. The parade would end promptly at 6:00 PM rather than 11:00 PM. Afterwards the parkway would be cleared by a mounted police force. Large sound systems were banned from the nearby streets, mas' bands were required to hire marshals to prevent spectators from "jumping up," that is, from crossing the barrier to dance with the participants, and vendors were required to register with the WIADCA.<sup>29</sup> The WIADCA was widely criticized for acquiescing to police regulations, even though the size of the crowd in 2004 was estimated at 3.5 million and there have been few serious incidents in the last five years.

#### PAN-ETHNICITY

The Brooklyn West Indian Carnival is still recognizably Trinidadian in form, and the WIADCA's leadership which exercises loose control over the proceedings remains predominantly Trinidadian. The parade and constellation of events that surround it have diversified to an extent that would be unthinkable in Trinidad. There are mas' bands, floats, and sound trucks sponsored by island nations with no past tradition of carnival whatsoever. Events surrounding the parade include Jamaican beauty queen contests, reggae, dub, and dance hall concerts. Barbadian spooge bands compete with Martiniquais zouk groups, Caribbean East Indian chutney soca, and Haitian konpa bands for attention.

The most striking and recent addition to this pan-ethnic umbrella is the inclusion of Haitians and small numbers of immigrants from Martinique and Guadeloupe. One of the criteria for constructing a pan-ethnic identity is a symbol of common identity. If West Indian refers to the English-speaking Caribbean, then how do Haitians fit into the group? The answer lies in the roots of the festival itself as Trinidad and Haiti share a common carnival heritage. This is a heritage that was fluid and malleable enough for Trinidadians to make it serve as a national symbol in their struggle against British colonialism and then to adapt it to embrace Anglophone West Indians in New York. Haitians too can look to a partly imagined past and find a commonality with Trinidadian and, by extension, West Indian carnival. Trinidadian French Creoles lost their language, but they still had carnival as a symbol of their identity. Haitians in New York will eventually lose their Creole French, but they will help to reinvent carnival to fit their need for a new symbol of identity.

In 1999, an example of reinventing part of the heritage of carnival as a reaction to pan-ethnicity finally caught the attention of the media and is now the only carnival event to be televised—*camboulay* or *J'ouvert*. Carnival had become so diverse and the amplified sound so overwhelming that the once arresting sound of the steel bands was drowned out. Throughout the 1980s the number of steel bands in the parade rapidly dwindled. Many of the traditional ole mas' characters were also disappearing from the procession. Some Trinidadians felt that they were losing part of their own identity in the cause of constructing a new pan-ethnicity.<sup>30</sup> They reached into their past to revive the Afro-Creole custom of *J'ouvert* which originally spawned the steel band in Trinidad.

Sometime in the early 1990s a few steel drum players gathered in the pre-dawn hours to march down Flatbush Avenue on Monday morning before the parade. They attracted the attention of passersby who spontaneously joined in. These impromptu processions were repeated with more steel bands and were soon augmented by costumed characters of the ole' mas tradition. These characters from the earliest incarnation of carnival dress as goblins and devils, throw mud on each other and bystanders, and act out slapstick and often bawdy satires for the onlookers. *J'ouvert* now attracts over 200,000 spectators and revives an older pan-African sense of identity.<sup>31</sup>

### Conclusion

Tourism and migration are parallel forms of mobility that intersect in the performance of identity through ethnic festivals. The hypothetical multicultural festival we glimpsed at the beginning of the chapter showcasing an array of ethnic identities was intentionally performed as a commodity for tourist consumption. The markers of ethnic identity were displayed as if on a stage for tourists to gaze upon. These symbols of difference are intended to make us step outside the boundaries of mainstream twenty-firstcentury American life and sample a taste of the exotic "Other."

The festival series staged by the city of Milwaukee serves to bolster the identity or place image of the city as a diverse, tolerant, and sophisticated outpost of civilization in the heartland. The product being offered here is not ethnic identity but the city itself. The type of mobility in question is the mobility of economic and intellectual capital. In order to compete, Milwaukee must achieve distinctiveness in the global market and offers up a menu of old and new ethnic identities on display. The city has even gone to the lengths of staging a festival for an ethnic group it essentially lacks—the Cajun Fest. There were exactly 138 people who claimed Cajun ancestry in the Milwaukee metropolitan area in 2000.

South Louisiana, on the other hand, is an example of a region that stumbled on the economic value of its symbolic capital in the form of ethnic distinctiveness as if by accident after fifty years of assimilationist policy. The state did its utmost to erase markers of Cajun ethnicity until it was realized that outsiders, especially those who shared a similar heritage, were eager to consume "Cajunness" as a commodity. The state responded by repealing legislation that hindered the use of French in 1968, finally establishing a state tourism office in 1977, and launching a series of vigorous promotional campaigns. The realization that Cajun identity was a valuable touristic commodity led to two beneficial results: Cajun ethnic reidentification and reestablishment of transnational ties after nearly three hundred years.

Of the festivals we have discussed in this chapter the West Indian Carnival stands out as the only traditional seasonal festival. First, it demonstrates the use of ethnic and racial markers as well as space as instruments of defiance in the struggle against colonialism in the Caribbean. While continuing to function as a source of ethnic identity in postcolonial Trinidad, the carnival tradition became popularized throughout the Englishspeaking Caribbean as a tourist commodity. Much like the colonial period, however, the use of public space to assert ethnic identity, and thus the periodic construction of "spaces of difference," in New York was contested by the dominant authorities. Although carnival diffused to New York as a marker of Trinidadian identity, the post-1965 immigration of West Indians resulted in a transformed carnival becoming pan-ethnic in nature. In response to a perceived loss of ethnic identity, ethnic Trinidadians reinvented older Afro-Caribbean carnival traditions. Such a response is an expression of fluid or flexible ethnic identity formation in the changing post-1965 global context.

### Notes

1. Data for this composite sketch were gathered from a number of ethnic festival websites and the author's fieldwork. For examples, see Lowell Folk Festival, "Schedule," *Lowell Folk Festival 2004*, <www.lowellfolkfestival.org/schedules.htm> (15 August 2004); and Ethnic Enrichment Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, "Ethnic Enrichment Festival," <www.eeckc.org/ events/festival.html> (15 August 2004).

2. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

3. Frederik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Frederik Barth (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), 1–15.

4. Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups in America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2, no. 3 (January 1979): 1–20.

5. Robert Wood, "Tourist Ethnicity: A Brief Itinerary," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 2 (1998): 230.

6. Melanie K. Smith, Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies (London: Routledge, 2003).

7. Laurie Kay Summers, "Inventing Latinismo: The Creation of Hispanic Panethnicity in the United States," *Journal of American Folklore* 104, no. 411 (1991): 35.

8. Americans for the Arts, "Issues," <www.americansforthearts.org/issues/otherinterests/ other\_article.asp?id=350> (7 December 2004).

9. Sydney Salvadori, "Quality of Life." *Living in Cook County*, 2001, <www.chicago-cook.org/b2k/living/index.html> (7 December 2004).

10. See, for example, About, Inc., "Milwaukee City of Festivals," *About Milwaukee, Wisconsin*, 2005, <milwaukee.about.com/b/a /087923.htm> (13 February 2005); and Key Milwaukee, "Welcome to Milwaukee," *Key Milwaukee Magazine*, 2005, <www.keymilwaukee.com/about. html> (13 February 2005).

11. Malcolm Crick, "Representations of International Tourism in the Social Sciences: Sun, Sex, Sights, Savings, and Servility," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989): 307–344.

12. Marjorie Esman, "Tourism as Ethnic Preservation: The Cajuns of Louisiana," Annals of Tourism Research 11 (1984): 451–467.

13. Carl L. Bankston III and Jacques Henry, "Spectacles of Ethnicity: Festivals and the Commodification of Ethnic Culture among Louisiana Cajuns," *Sociological Spectrum* 20 (2000): 377–400.

14. Frommer's, "Frommer's Favorite Experiences," *Frommer's New York City 2004*, <www.frommers.com/destinations/newyorkcity/0021026218.html> (21 October 2004); and Lonely Planet, "New York City," *Lonely Planet World Guide*, <www.lonelyplanet.com/ destinations/north\_america/new\_york\_city/facts.htm#event> (21 October 2004).

15. Donald R. Hill, *Calypso Calaloo: Early Carnival Music in Trinidad* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 194–195.

16. Atilla, quoted in Hill, Calypso Calaloo, 194.

17. Lord Protector, quoted in Peter Manuel, Kenneth Bilby, and Michael Largey, *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 189.

18. Manuel, Bilby, and Largey, Caribbean Currents, 186.

19. Manuel, Bilby, and Largey, Caribbean Currents, 191.

20. Hill, Calypso Calaloo, 235.

21. Manuel, Bilby, and Largey, Caribbean Currents, 191.

22. W. A. Domino, "The Tropics in New York," *The Survey Graphic Harlem Number, 1925*, (27 February 2005).

23. Rachel Buff, *Immigration and the Political Economy of Home: West Indian Brooklyn and American Indian Minneapolis*, 1945–1992 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Donald R. Hill, "A History of West Indian Carnival in New York City to 1978," *New York Folk-lore* 20, nos.1–2 (1994); and Remco van Capelleveen, "The Caribbeanization of New York City: West Indian Carnival in Brooklyn," in *Feasts and Celebrations*, ed. Ramon Gutierrez and Genevieve Fabre (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 159–172.

24. Van Capelleveen, "Caribbeanization of New York," 160.

25. Buff, Immigration, 102.

26. Hill, "A History of West Indian Carnival," 49.

27. Hill, "A History of West Indian Carnival," 63-64.

28. Buff, Immigration, 106.

29. Buff, Immigration, 105-106.

30. Ray Allen, "J'Ouvert! Steel Pan and Ole Mas' Traditions in Brooklyn Carnival," City Lore 1999, <www.citylore.org/pdf/jouvert.pdf> (25 February 2005).

31. Buff, Immigration, 112–113.