

Affirmative Action



America's Border Fence



American Indians



Bilingual Education



Changing U.S. Electorate



Race and Politics



AND MORE...



ISSUES IN RACE AND ETHNICITY

SELECTIONS FROM CQ RESEARCHER

FIFTH EDITION

Issues in Race and Ethnicity



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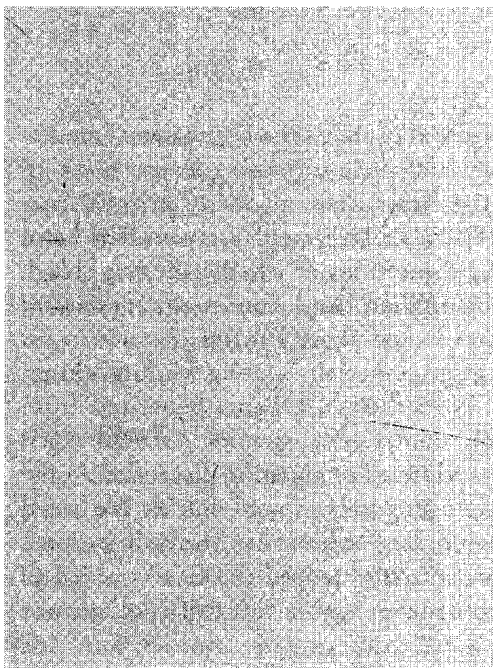
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Issues in Race and Ethnicity



Annotated Contents

The 12 *CQ Researcher* reports reprinted in this book have been reproduced essentially as they appeared when first published. In the few cases in which important new developments have since occurred, updates are provided in the overviews highlighting the principal issues examined.

RACE

Hate Groups

National crises create opportunities for extremists. Today the global economic crisis wreaking havoc on millions of American households is hitting while the first black president is in the White House and the national debate over illegal immigration remains unresolved. Already, some far-right extremists are proclaiming that their moment is arriving. Indeed, an annual tally by the Southern Poverty Law Center shows 926 hate groups operating in 2008, a 50 percent increase over the number in 2000. And the Department of Homeland Security concludes that conditions may favor far-right recruitment. But a mix of conservatives and liberal free-speech activists warn that despite concerns about extremism, the administration of Barack Obama should not be intruding on constitutionally protected political debate. Some extremism-monitoring groups say Obama's election showed far-right power is waning, not strengthening. But that equation may change if the economic crisis deepens, experts caution.

Affirmative Action

Since the 1970s, affirmative action has played a key role in helping minorities get ahead. But many Americans say school and job candidates should be chosen on merit, not race. Big states, including California and Texas, are still struggling to reconcile restrictions on the use of race in college admissions designed to promote diversity. Progress toward that goal has been slowed by a major obstacle: Affirmative action hasn't lessened the stunning racial disparities in academic performance plaguing elementary and high school education. The Supreme Court, in its 2009 decision in *Ricci, et al.*, ruled in favor of white firefighters in New Haven, Conn., who claimed unlawful discrimination after competency test results determining promotions were thrown out. Critics of affirmative action are working in states like Arizona and Utah to repeat Nebraska's voters' success in backing a ban, while proponents find solace in their defeat of such a ban in Colorado. For its part, the Obama administration has taken a more muscular approach to affirmative action with the appointments of both Justices Sotomayor and Kagan and the naming of Russlynn Ali, the new, assertive chief of civil rights at the Education Department.

Changing U.S. Electorate

Demographics played nearly as large a role in the 2008 presidential race as health care, war and the economy. The Democratic field came down to an African-American man dominating voting among blacks, the young and highly educated voters and a white woman winning older voters, Hispanics and the white working class. The election of President Obama brought about a realignment, with Latino voters representing the biggest shift to the Democrats. But with this shift has come a counter-reaction from the right in the form of the Tea Party movement. Despite the heated rhetoric, it remains to be seen whether or not the diffuse nature of the movement will have a lasting impact on the electorate.

Race and Politics

The once unthinkable happened in November 2008: A black man won the presidency. When freshman Illinois senator Barack Obama was born in 1961, African-Americans couldn't vote in parts of the United States.

As Obama prepared to accept the Democratic nomination in August 2008, he was running slightly ahead of his presumptive Republican opponent, Arizona senator John McCain, a 71-year-old Vietnam War hero. First dogged by questions of whether he was "black enough," Obama then faced doubts about whether racial prejudice would prove a major obstacle to his historic campaign, especially among white working-class voters. Nonetheless, Obama benefited from changes in the country's demographic makeup, which is growing less white as immigration diversifies. At the same time, younger voters showed notably less racial prejudice than older generations. Meanwhile, some top Republicans acknowledged the GOP needed to appeal to a broader range of voters if McCain was to win.

Reparations Movement

After the Civil War, efforts to compensate former slaves were blocked. Now calls are getting louder for payments to the ancestors of slaves to help the nation come to terms with a gross historical injustice. But opponents worry that reparations would only widen the divide between the races. Meanwhile, survivors of the Nazi Holocaust have had considerable success in obtaining restitution from governments and corporations linked to Hitler's "final solution." Seeking reparations is not about money, they say, but about winning justice for the victims. But some Jewish Americans argue that the reparations movement has turned a historical tragedy into a quest for money. Other mistreated groups recently have picked up the call for reparations, including World War II "comfort women" and Australian Aborigines.

Racial Diversity in Public Schools

Fifty years after the Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation in public schools, a 2007 ruling raised doubts about how far local school boards can go to integrate classrooms. The Court's 5-4 ruling in cases from Seattle and Louisville bars school districts from using race as a factor in individual pupil assignments. Like many other school districts, the two school systems used racial classifications to promote diversity in the face of segregated housing patterns. But parents argued the plans improperly denied their children their school of choice because

of race. Dissenting justices said the ruling was a setback for racial equality. In a pivotal concurrence, however, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy said schools still have some leeway to pursue racial diversity. Meanwhile, some experts argue that socioeconomic integration — bringing low-income and middle-class students together — is a more effective way to pursue educational equity.

Hate Speech

When Don Imus labeled the Rutgers University women's basketball team “nappy-headed hos” in April 2007, it first looked to be just one more insult hurled in his long career. Imus was penalized initially with a two-week suspension. But when the incident appeared on the Internet site youtube.com, organizations ranging from the National Association of Black Journalists to the liberal media watchdog group Media Matters for America urged a tougher stance against racial stereotyping on public airwaves. Advertisers began pulling their sponsorship from Imus' show, and both networks that carried it — CBS Radio and MSNBC TV — fired him. The outcome was hailed by some as a long-needed response to an increasingly uncivil culture in which shock jocks, comedians, rappers and other media figures traffic in name-calling, racism and misogyny. However, other analysts say silencing Imus was unfair and could begin a purge of outspoken conservative radio hosts, including political commentators like Rush Limbaugh.

ETHNICITY AND IMMIGRATION

America's Border Fence

America rushed to build 670 miles of fencing along the U.S.-Mexican border by the end of 2008. The fence — or wall, as critics along the border call it — was to include 370 miles of fencing intended to stop illegal immigrants on foot and 300 miles of vehicle barriers. To speed construction, the Bush administration used unprecedented authority granted by Congress to waive environmental-, historic- and cultural-protection laws. No one claims that building physical barriers along roughly a third of America's 2,000-mile southern border will stem illegal immigration by itself, but supporters believe it is an

essential first step in “securing the border,” providing a critical line of defense against illegal migration, drug smugglers and even terrorists. Opponents see it as a multi-billion-dollar waste that will only shift illegal immigrants toward more dangerous and difficult routes into the country, while doing environmental, cultural and economic damage.

Census Controversy

The 2010 census sparked bitter partisanship. Some conservative Republicans, for example, criticized the census as an unconstitutional intrusion on privacy; others warned that census participation is important for maintaining GOP power, since the count is used to apportion congressional seats and allocate federal money to cities and states. Liberal Democrats were more supportive of census procedures, which for the first time counted same-sex couples. To raise response rates, the Census Bureau sent every household the same brief 10-question form and dropped use of the “long form” — a lengthy questionnaire seeking data on housing, transportation, education and income. The long form has been replaced by a separate, ongoing monthly survey that will provide timelier data, but from a smaller sample of households. Researchers generally hail the change but say it will cause some problems, at least initially.

Bilingual Education vs. English Immersion

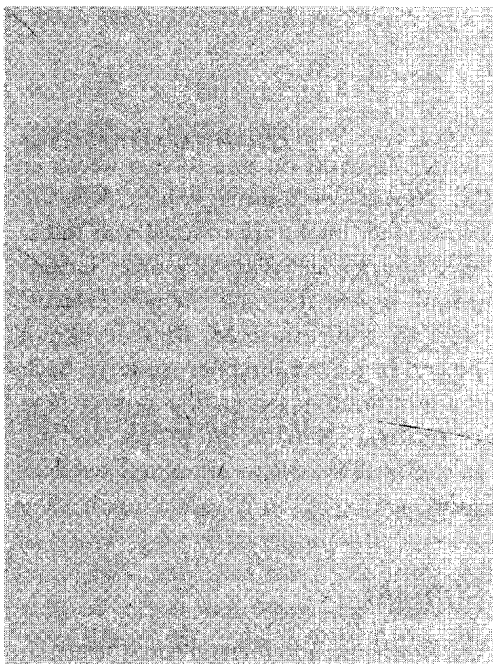
More than 5 million public school students have limited English proficiency, and the number is growing. Most English learners enter school behind fluent English speakers, and many never catch up either in language or other academic areas. In the 1960s and '70s, the federal government supported bilingual education: teaching English learners in both their native language and in English. A backlash developed in the 1980s and '90s among critics who attacked bilingual education as academically ineffective and politically divisive. They favored instead some form of “English immersion.” Educators and policy makers continue to wage bitter debates on the issue, with each of the opposing camps claiming that research studies support its position. Some experts say the debate should focus instead on providing more resources, including more and better-trained teachers.

American Indians

Winds of change are blowing through Indian Country, improving prospects for many of the nation's 4.4 million Native Americans. The number of tribes managing their own affairs has increased dramatically, and an urban Indian middle class is quietly taking root. The booming revenues of many Indian-owned casinos seem the ultimate proof that Indians are overcoming a history of mistreatment, poverty and exclusion. With the *Carcieri* case in 2009, Indian casino expansion hit a roadblock. The federal government could no longer take the land of a recently recognized tribe (post 1934) into trust and exempt it from state gambling laws and taxes. With the economic stimulus package, American Indians have seen a new infusion of federal funds under the Obama administration, much of it focused on health services. But pressing issues persist. Tribal nations are trying to combat violence against women and high rates of gang activity and suicide in their schools.

Immigration Debate

The number of illegal immigrants in the country has topped 12 million, making immigration once again a central topic of debate. Moreover, with undocumented workers spreading far beyond traditional "gatekeeper" states such as California and Texas, complaints about illegal immigrants have become a daily staple of talk radio. Debate about tougher enforcement policies, a dominant theme of the 2008 presidential campaign, has become ever more contentious in the wake of Arizona's Republican Gov. Jan Brewer signing the nation's toughest immigration enforcement law in April 2010. While Congress deliberates removing "birthright citizenship" (favored by Republicans) from the 14th Amendment or the Development, Relief and Education of Alien Minors (DREAM) Act (favored by Democrats), states like South Carolina and Michigan are pushing for state immigration bills.



Preface

As minority populations continue to grow, and concerns about U.S. border security and immigration intensify, issues in race and ethnicity resonate ever more profoundly with Americans. These topics confound even well-informed citizens and often lead to cultural and political conflicts, because they raise the most formidable public policy questions: Should school systems promote racial diversity in individual schools? Should employers be penalized for hiring illegal immigrants? Should the United States pay reparations to African American descendants of slaves? Could the election of a black president and the nation's economic crisis spark a resurgence of far-right political activity or violence? To promote change and hopefully reach viable resolution, scholars, students, and policymakers must strive to understand the context and content of these issues, as well as how these debates play out in the public sphere.

With the view that only an objective examination that synthesizes all competing viewpoints can lead to sound analysis, this fifth edition of *Issues in Race and Ethnicity* provides comprehensive and unbiased coverage of today's most pressing policy problems. It enables instructors to fairly and comprehensively uncover opposing sides of each issue and illustrate just how significantly these issues impact citizens and the government they elect. This book is a compilation of twelve recent reports from *CQ Researcher*, a weekly policy backgrounder that brings into focus key issues on the public agenda. *CQ Researcher* fully explains complex concepts in plain English. Each article chronicles and analyzes past legislative and judicial action as well as current and possible future maneuvering. Each

report addresses how issues affect all levels of government—local, state and federal—and also the lives and futures of citizens. *Issues in Race and Ethnicity* is designed to promote in-depth discussion, facilitate further research and help readers think critically and formulate their own positions on these crucial issues.

This collection is organized into two sections: “Race” and “Ethnicity and Immigration.” Each section spans a range of important public policy concerns. These pieces were chosen to expose students to a wide range of issues, from affirmative action to illegal immigration. Three of the twelve reports are new, and six reports, “Affirmative Action,” “Changing U.S. Electorate,” “Racial Diversity in Public Schools,” “Hate Speech,” “Immigration Debate” and “American Indians,” have been updated. We are gratified to know that *Issues in Race and Ethnicity* has found a following in a wide range of departments in political science and sociology.

CQ RESEARCHER

CQ Researcher was founded in 1923 as *Editorial Research Reports* and was sold primarily to newspapers as a research tool. The magazine was renamed and redesigned in 1991 as *CQ Researcher*. Today, students are its primary audience. While still used by hundreds of journalists and newspapers, many of which reprint portions of the reports, *Researcher’s* main subscribers are now high school, college and public libraries. In 2002, *Researcher* won the American Bar Association’s coveted Silver Gavel Award for magazine excellence for a series of nine reports on civil liberties and other legal issues.

Researcher staff writers — all highly experienced journalists — sometimes compare the experience of writing a *Researcher* report to drafting a college term paper. Indeed, there are many similarities. Each report is as long as many term papers — about 11,000 words — and is written by one person without any significant outside help. One of the key differences is that the writers interview leading experts, scholars and government officials for each issue.

Like students, staff writers begin the creative process by choosing a topic. Working with *Researcher’s* editors, the writer identifies a controversial subject that has

important public policy implications. After a topic is selected, the writer embarks on one to two weeks of intense research. Newspaper and magazine articles are clipped or downloaded, books are ordered and information is gathered from a wide variety of sources, including interest groups, universities and the government. Once the writers are well informed, they develop a detailed outline and begin the interview process. Each report requires a minimum of ten to fifteen interviews with academics, officials, lobbyists and people working in the field. Only after all interviews are completed does the writing begin.

CHAPTER FORMAT

Each issue of *CQ Researcher*, and therefore each selection in this book, is structured in the same way. A selection begins with an introductory overview, which is briefly explored in greater detail in the rest of the report.

The second section chronicles the most important and current debates in the field. It is structured around a number of key issues questions, such as “Is the federal government neglecting Native Americans?” and “Is bilingual education effective for English-language learners?” This section is the core of each selection. The questions raised are often highly controversial and usually the object of much argument among scholars and practitioners. Hence, the answers provided are never conclusive, but rather detail the range of opinion within the field.

Following these issue questions is the “Background” section, which provides a history of the issue being examined. This retrospective includes important legislative and executive actions and court decisions to inform readers on how current policy evolved.

Next, the “Current Situation” section examines important contemporary policy issues, legislation under consideration and action being taken. Each selection ends with an “Outlook” section that gives a sense of what new regulations, court rulings and possible policy initiatives might be put into place in the next five to ten years.

Each report contains features that augment the main text: sidebars that examine issues related to the topic, a pro/con debate by two outside experts, a chronology of key dates and events and an annotated bibliography that details the major sources used by the writer.

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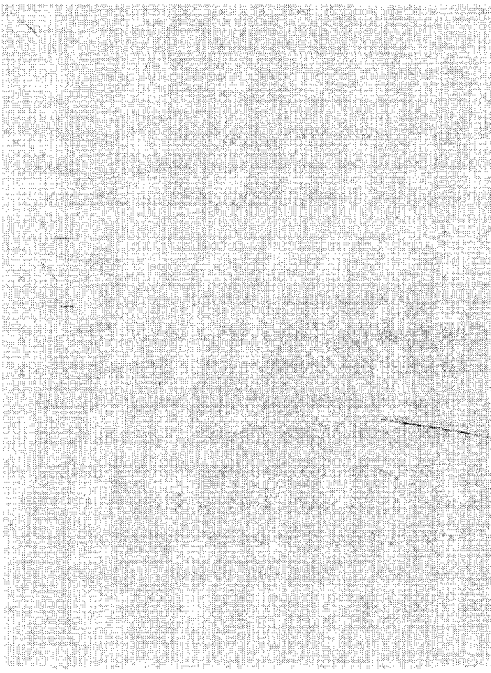
We wish to thank many people for helping to make this collection a reality. Tom Colin, managing editor of *CQ Researcher*, gave us his enthusiastic support and cooperation as we developed this edition. He and his talented staff of editors and writers have amassed a first-class collection of *Researcher* articles, and we are fortunate to have access to this rich cache. We also thankfully

acknowledge the advice and feedback from current readers and are gratified by their satisfaction with the book.

Some readers may be learning about *CQ Researcher* for the first time. We expect that many readers will want regular access to this excellent weekly research tool. For subscription information or a no-obligation free trial of *Researcher*, please contact CQ Press at www.cqpress.com or toll-free at 1-866-4CQ-PRESS (1-866-427-7737).

We hope that you will be pleased by the fifth edition of *Issues in Race and Ethnicity*. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future editions. Please direct comments to Charisse Kiino, Editorial Director, College Publishing Group, CQ Press, 2300 N Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20037; or send e-mail to ckiino@cqpress.com.

—The Editors of *CQ Press*



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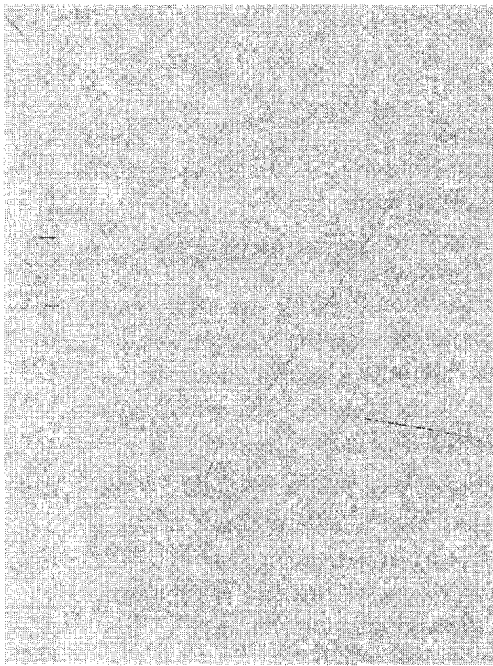
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Issues in Race and Ethnicity



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