

& ETHNIC RELATIONS

AMERICAN AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

MARTIN N. MARGER

RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS

American and Global Perspectives

MARTIN N. MARGER
Michigan State University

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PREFACE

RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS: American and Global Perspectives is intended to explore race and ethnic relations in a global context, while covering extensively groups and issues in the United States. The need for such a comparative approach seems especially critical today in light of the increasing ethnic diversity of most contemporary societies as well as the prominence of ethnic conflicts in virtually all world regions. Indeed, with the end of the Cold War, the new world order seems one in which ethnic nationalism has become the major source of inter- and intrasocietal conflict. Though usually uninformed about complexities, most Americans have become at least vaguely aware of ethnic conflict in societies as distant and exotic as Rwanda and Bosnia, as well as those closer geographically and culturally, such as Canada and Northern Ireland. Instances of emergent ethnic harmony—the diminishment of racial strife in South Africa and the decline of ethnic prejudice and discrimination in the United States and other advanced industrial societies, for example—demonstrate that ethnic relations are not irreversibly discordant. But persistent economic, political, and social inequalities in all multiethnic societies continue to generate disputes of varied form and intensity that will engage the attention of policy makers, scholars, and citizens well into the twenty-first century.

Curiously, American social scientists have not always kept pace in adapting to the global context of race and ethnic relations. Some continue to focus almost exclusively on

the United States, paying only incidental attention to ethnic patterns and events in other societies. In line with this view, texts in the field of race and ethnic relations have ordinarily provided no more than cursory coverage to ethnic issues outside the American sphere—if at all. Students, therefore, often continue to think of racial and ethnic, or minority, issues as uniquely American phenomena.

Many other social scientists, however, have come to see the utility and relevance of a more cross-national approach to the study of race and ethnicity. Such an approach distinguished *Race and Ethnic Relations* from other texts in the field when it was first published in 1985. Its objective was to provide readers with a comparative perspective without sacrificing a strong American component. That objective was retained in subsequent editions and remains unchanged in this, the seventh, edition. The book's overriding theme is the global nature of ethnicity and the prevalence of ethnic conflict in the modern world.

At the same time that an international perspective on race and ethnicity seems more compelling than ever, a close and careful analysis of American ethnic relations is surely imperative. For better or worse, the United States, the most diverse of multiethnic societies, more often than not is a global pacesetter in ethnic relations. More important, most readers of *Race and Ethnic Relations* continue to be American students, who require a solid understanding of their own society, which subsequently can be used as a comparative frame of reference. *Race and Ethnic Relations*, therefore, provides thorough coverage of America's major ethnic groups and issues. My own teaching experience has confirmed, however, that American students commonly acquire a broader and richer comprehension of ethnic relations and issues in the United States when these are presented in a global context and can be viewed from a comparative perspective.

The number of American college and university courses with ethnic content has grown enormously in recent years. This, I believe, is a reflection of the pressing problems and commanding issues of race and ethnicity in the United States and the growing awareness of ethnic divisions and inequalities in an increasingly diverse society. The content of *Race and Ethnic Relations* is comprehensive and thus appropriate for a variety of courses that may be differently titled and structured (for example, "ethnic stratification," "multiculturalism," "minority relations") but that all deal in some fashion with ethnic issues.

The theoretical and conceptual thrust of this edition will be familiar to past readers: a power-conflict perspective, emphasizing the power dynamics among ethnic groups. Race and ethnic relations are seen as manifestations of stratification and of the competition and conflict that develop over societal rewards—power, wealth, and prestige. In accord with this perspective, I have emphasized the structural, or macrolevel, patterns of race and ethnic relations rather than the social-psychological patterns, though the latter are interspersed throughout.

The intent of the chapters that make up Part I, THE NATURE OF ETHNIC RELATIONS, is to introduce the principal terms, concepts, and theories of the field of race and ethnic relations. These chapters are designed to serve as an analytic framework within which U.S. racial and ethnic groups, as well as those of other multiethnic societies, can be systematically examined. Although illustrations of ideas and concepts and applications of theory are related primarily to the United States, whenever appropriate they are presented in an international context.

Part II, ETHNICITY IN THE UNITED STATES, focuses on American society, examining the formation of its ethnic system and its major racial and ethnic populations. Chapter 5 traces the development of the American ethnic configuration and hierarchy, and is followed in Chapters 6 through 11 by descriptions and analyses of Native Americans, Euro-Americans—specifically Italian Americans and Jewish Americans—African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans. These are presented within the framework of theories and concepts introduced in Part I. Chapter 12 is intended to present what I believe are the major ongoing issues of race and ethnic relations in the United States: the persistent gap between Euro-Americans and racial-ethnic groups, policies designed to address that gap (in particular, affirmative action), and large-scale immigration.

Part III, ETHNIC RELATIONS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE, examines several societies that stand as intriguing comparisons to the United States. Chapter 13 deals with South Africa, not long ago the most rigidly racist society on the globe. Today South Africa is in the midst of a radical transformation and serves as an important case for students of contemporary ethnic relations, illustrating how oppressive systems of ethnic inequality are capable of fundamental change in a surprisingly brief time with a minimum of violence. Brazil, examined in Chapter 14, is ideally suited to a comparison with the United States, given its past history of slavery and its multiracial composition. Canada, the focus of Chapter 15, is often seen as a northern replica of the United States, but in its ethnic ideology and policies, students will find that it stands in sharp contrast to American society. In a number of ways, Canada may represent a future model for multiethnic societies. Chapter 16 examines Northern Ireland, a society that has been plagued by a corrosive ethnic conflict for generations, but particularly during the past forty years. Students will find it a riveting case, given that the groups in conflict are racially indistinguishable and culturally closer than is usually assumed. Chapter 17 explores the global nature of contemporary ethnic conflict, focusing heavily on the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the resultant ethnic wars that were waged throughout the 1990s. If South Africa serves as an example of ethnic conflict reduction, the

former Yugoslavia informs students of ethnic relations of how in the modern world multiethnic societies can disintegrate while creating, in the process, a monstrous scene of torture chambers and killing fields.

Studying the ethnic composition and dynamics of these societies enables students not only to explore unfamiliar social terrains, but also to reach a more informed understanding of the structure and social forces of their own society and, to some extent, even their own discrete social worlds. Students will surely recognize differences between the United States and these multiethnic societies, but they will also observe patterns that seem intrinsically common to all.

Instructors may want to cover all of these cases or may choose to focus on only one or two. All lend themselves to easy comparison with the United States and comparative points are drawn throughout each chapter. No prior familiarity with any of these societies is assumed on the part of either instructors or students.

NEW TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

As in previous editions of *Race and Ethnic Relations*, all statistical material has been updated, using the latest figures from the U.S. Census Bureau as well as other data gathering organizations. The empirical and theoretical literature in the field of race and ethnic relations continues to be produced in vast quantity and many new or recent works are cited.

No major modifications have been made to the chapters that comprise Part I, which serve as the book's theoretical framework. One notable change, however, is the deletion of the lengthy section of Chapter 2 that dealt with various dimensions and theories of social stratification; the result, I believe, is a more succinct and direct analysis of ethnic stratification.

Since publication of the sixth edition, two ongoing trends that bear directly on the study of race and ethnic relations have become more apparent in the United States.

First, the reshaping of the society's ethnic configuration through immigration has continued unabated. Immigration occurs at a pace unequaled since the early part of the twentieth century and, most important, the racial and cultural origins of immigrants continue to be varied, making for an expansion of American ethnic diversity. This, in turn, has created increasing diversity within the broad Asian American and Hispanic American panethnic categories, but also among the African American and even Euro-American populations. The issues relevant to this movement are discussed within each of the chapters of Part II. Also, Chapter 5 contains an expanded section on the growing Arab American population.

A second, more gradual trend is the blurring of racial-ethnic identities and sentiments as a result of rising levels of intermarriage. The traditional classification scheme of racial and ethnic groups in the United States, as a result, has come under more scrutiny and its relevance is increasingly questioned. It now seems apparent that the commonplace racial-ethnic categories are losing analytic significance, though they obviously remain of paramount importance as the building blocks of ethnic stratification. Within the chapters comprising Part II, this trend and its potential consequences are addressed, particularly in Chapters 5, 7, and 12.

As in the past, the societies examined in Part III continue to be compelling and apposite comparative cases. Although the fundamental features of ethnic relations in South Africa, Brazil, Canada, Northern Ireland, and the former Yugoslavia have not changed radically since publication of the sixth edition, each society continues to evolve in the direction of either greater harmony or more intense conflict. These movements are described in each chapter.

An added feature to the seventh edition is a glossary of key terms and concepts, all of which are highlighted in the text.

ANCILLARIES

Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives, seventh edition, is accompanied by an array of supplements prepared to create the best learning environment inside as well as outside of the classroom for both the instructor and the student. All of the continuing supplements for Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives, seventh edition, have been thoroughly revised and updated. I invite you to take full advantage of the teaching and learning tools available to you.

Instructor's Manual with Test Bank

This supplement offers the instructor brief chapter outlines, key terms and names, lecture ideas, questions for discussion, Internet activities, InfoTrac® activities, student activities, and additional resources for the Instructor. The Test Bank consists of 25-30 multiple choice questions, with answers, and 10 essay/discussion questions for each chapter, all with page references to the text.

CNN Today Race and Ethnic Relations Video Series, Volumes II and III

Launch your lectures with riveting footage from CNN, the world's leading 24-hour global news television network. Organized by topics covered in a

typical course, these videos are divided into short segments—perfect for introducing key concepts in contexts relevant to students' lives. High-interest clips are followed by questions designed to spark class discussion.

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Companion Website for Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives, Seventh Edition

The book's companion website includes chapter-specific resources for instructors and students. For instructors, the site offers a password-protected instructor's manual, opposing viewpoints resource center, and more. For students, there is a multitude of text-specific study aids, including the following:

- Learning objectives
- Sample essay questions
- Web links
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