



SOURCES

Notable Selections
in Race and Ethnicity

ADALBERTO AGUIRRE, JR. * DAVID V. BAKER

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Edited by

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The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc.

**This book is dedicated to the loving memory of a father
and a brother,
Adalberto Aguirre, Sr.
Forrest S. Baker, Jr.**

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SOURCES

Notable Selections in *Race and Ethnicity*



About the Editors

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Preface

Although the study of racial and ethnic groups and relations has long been integral to the social sciences, in the United States this field has witnessed revived and renewed attention in recent years. It is a dynamic, challenging, and changing field that captures the attention and passion of sociologists, educators, political scientists, psychologists, policymakers, and social commentators. However, this is not a field of study remote from our everyday experiences. Issues related to race and ethnic relations confront all of us personally and are everywhere a topic of concern in our society.

This book, *Sources: Notable Selections in Race and Ethnicity*, is an introductory-level college text anthology that contains 39 carefully edited selections that have shaped the study of race and ethnicity and our contemporary understanding of it. Included here are the works of a wide range of distinguished observers, past and present, and each selection contains essential ideas or has served as a touchstone for other scholars. These selections offer findings from a variety of disciplines and are well suited to courses that attempt to examine in some depth topics related to race and ethnicity. Each selection is preceded by a headnote that establishes the relevance of the selection. There is also a volume introduction (see p. xi), which contains some provocative recommendations for studying racial and ethnic relations in the United States.

The selections are organized topically around the major areas of study in race and ethnic relations in the social sciences: the selections in Part 1 introduce the basic concepts; Part 2, theoretical orientations to the study of race and ethnicity in the United States; Part 3, race and ethnicity in American institutions; Part 4, race and ethnicity in popular culture; and Part 5, the future of race and ethnic relations in the United States.

A word to the instructor An *Instructor's Manual With Test Questions* (multiple-choice and essay) is available through the publisher for the instructor using *Sources* in the classroom.

We welcome your comments and observations about the selections in this volume and encourage you to write to us with suggestions for other selections to include or changes to consider. Please send your remarks to us in care of SOURCES, The Dushkin Publishing Group, Sluice Dock, Guilford, CT 06437.

Adalberto Aguirre, Jr.
David V. Baker

Introduction: Studying Race and Ethnic Relations

Adalberto Aguirre, Jr., and David V. Baker

Many people assume that inequality does not exist in the United States. Others believe that if inequality does exist, then it is rooted in individual shortcomings. This view suggests that it is easier to blame the victims of bias for their unequal status than to acknowledge the existence of social processes in society that promote and maintain inequality. Given this kind of thinking, it is not surprising that discussions of inequality in the United States are usually both technical and passionate. Such discussions become technical when distinctions begin to be made between *equality* and *equal rights*. They become passionate when the topic of *victims* and *victimizers* is introduced into the discussion.

We think that inequality is the foundation upon which equality is promoted in U.S. society. Implicit in this premise is the idea that equality is a relative measure of one's quality of life. That is, to be equal someone has to be unequal. Secondly, equality is a comparative social activity. That is, one compares oneself with others to evaluate one's level of equality. Interestingly, status characteristics, such as sex, race, or ethnicity, are crucial determinants in shaping social perceptions for equality and inequality. The collection of selections in this book will provide the reader with a variety of notable examples illustrating the social context in which status characteristics shape perceptions of equality and inequality.

The Sociological Context for the Study of Inequality

In this book we also look at the patterns and contexts of structured social inequality for racial and ethnic groups. *Social inequality* is both the means and ends of social stratification. Social stratification establishes a graded hierarchy of superior and inferior ranks in society. The resources and opportunities available in society are distributed according to a person's placement in the social hierarchy. For example, those at the top of the social hierarchy have access to a larger share of social opportunity and resources than those near the bottom of the social hierarchy. The resources that are valued in a society are usually those

things that count in any society—namely, material wealth, social status or social prestige, and political power.

The dynamics of a stratified social system are rooted in a disproportionate distribution of valued resources and results in two culturally distinct groups of people: a culturally dominant group and a culturally subordinate group. The dominant group maintains its social position by controlling the production of valued resources, which they are able to do because of their better access to a larger share of opportunities and resources. For example, by means of property ownership, the dominant group can decide who will have access to valued resources—jobs, home mortgages, etc. In contrast, members of the subordinate group are unable to improve their rank within the social hierarchy because they lack access to the necessary resources.

Structured Social Inequality

The term *structured social inequality* defines a social arrangement patterned socially and historically, which is rooted in an ideological framework that legitimatizes and justifies the subordination of particular groups of people. In other words, social inequality is *institutionalized*. For example, one can find a record of consistent patterns of institutionalized discrimination in U.S. society that reflect a racial ideology that has resulted in members of particular racial and ethnic groups being systematically denied full and equal participation in major social institutions—education, employment, politics, etc. The discrimination and segregation experienced by African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans in the U.S. educational system have resulted in a pattern of limited occupational and economic growth for each group. Thus, the dynamics of discrimination and segregation have confined the African American, Hispanic, and Native American populations to a subordinate position in U.S. society. Yet participation in these institutions is essential for social mobility—the transition from one social position to another in the stratified system. In a sense, the subordinate position of racial and ethnic groups in U.S. society amounts to a caste system. The structured social relationship of racial and ethnic groups to U.S. society is characterized by closure and rigidity of rank, and institutionalization and acceptance of rigid ranks. Several selections in this book illustrate the extent to which racial and ethnic stratification in the United States is institutionalized.

Structured Discrimination

Racial and ethnic groups in U.S. society are victims of *structured discrimination*. Where social inequality reflects the procedural nature of unequal access to resources in society, structured discrimination identifies the existence of racial and ethnic prejudice. Together, social inequality and structural discrimination define the sociocultural relationship of racial and ethnic groups to society. For example, the limited access of racial and ethnic groups to valued resources constrains their ability to alter their social position in society. Secondly, since

their social position is a subordinate one, racial and ethnic minorities are unable to promote their interests as either a group of individuals or as a class of individuals. As a result, racial and ethnic groups are ignored by social institutions that control access to valued resources because the groups do not possess the required resources for legitimate participation within those social institutions. In the end, racial and ethnic minorities become the victims of racial ideologies that serve as the basis for an unequal distribution of and access to valued resources. Thus, another purpose of this book is to examine the context of structured discrimination for racial and ethnic groups in U.S. society.

Racial and Ethnic Oppression

The intersection between racial ideology, racial prejudice, and structured racial inequality is *racial oppression*. Racial oppression is the cumulative product of discriminatory acts built into social structures and legitimated or sanctioned by cultural beliefs and legal codes. Racial oppression takes on two dimensions: a *structural* dimension, in which the structural arrangements of social institutions act to physically control members of a perceived inferior group through discriminatory actions; and a *sociocultural* dimension, by which the cultural (prejudicial) beliefs and the statutory (legal) requirements act to legitimate or sanction these physical controls of subordinate groups. A purpose of this book is to provide observations regarding the existence of racial oppression.

The Persistence of Inequality

Racism and its racist ideologies remain pervasive in contemporary society because they are deeply ingrained in U.S. culture. One social critic notes that "racial ideologies become embodied in the thought of future generations who have no conception of the exact context in which they originated, and are thus transformed into broad-based racial prejudice even among people whose interests are not served by it."¹

Another social critic adds to this viewpoint by arguing that racial prejudice has become part of our cultural heritage and that "as such both exploiter and exploited for the most part are born heirs to it."²

Still another critic noted that racism in American society remains pervasive because "new civil rights laws have failed to diminish the violence of poverty, to reallocate resources, to redistribute wealth and income and to penetrate the corporate boardrooms and federal bureaucracies."³

These observations reinforce the idea that racial prejudice and the ideology of racism in contemporary American society are irrational, ingrained racial folklore at work.

Despite the intention of the framers of the Constitution to ensure equal rights to every person, social differences between persons developed during the historical maturation of the United States. These social differences matured as forms of social, political, educational, and economic inequality. The persistence of racial and ethnic inequality in a society committed to individual rights

is, therefore, a direct challenge to the historical romanticism surrounding the arrival of immigrants to the United States seeking freedom and opportunity. Race and ethnicity have played a significant historical role in determining the individual rights of certain racial and ethnic immigrant groups in U.S. society. To borrow an observation from C. Wright Mills in *The Sociological Imagination*: the study of racial and ethnic inequality in the United States is the sociologist's quest for an introspective understanding of equality in American society. Thus, we have selected the contributions in this text in hopes of enlightening our readers to this theme. We have selected critical and important discussions on race and ethnic inequality that uncover the social consequences of structured inequality.

Organization of the Book

In our shared teaching experience, we have come to see that a preponderance of American college students presumes that the aims of the civil rights campaigns of the 1960s alleviated the gross social inequities suffered by racial and ethnic minorities in U.S. society. Many students believe that members of racial and ethnic minority groups are no longer systematically denied equal participation in the major social institutions of U.S. society. We think this misconception has been encouraged, in part, by the continued debate regarding the liabilities of affirmative action programs and whether majority White group members are the *new* victims of "reverse discrimination." Our purpose in this book, then, is to introduce students to some of the notable discourse regarding consistent patterns of institutionalized discrimination and forms of racial ideology in U.S. society. The selections in Part 1 introduce students to some basic sociological ideas underlying race and ethnic relations in the United States; namely, race, ethnicity, prejudice, discrimination, and racism. Discussions in Part 2 concern theoretical orientations to the study of race and ethnic relations in the United States. Part 3 focuses on the institutional consequences of race and ethnic inequality in our society. Part 4 examines racial and ethnic images in popular culture. And Part 5 involves arguments centering on the future of race and ethnic relations in United States society.

Notes

1. M. Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest* (Notre Dame, IL: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 198.
2. O. Cox, *Caste, Class and Race* (London, England: Modern Reader, 1948).
3. L. Litwark, "Professor Seeks Revolution of Values." *The University of California Clip Sheet* (May 1987), p. 21.

Contents

Preface *i*

Introduction: *Studying Race and Ethnic Relations xi*

PART ONE *Basic Concepts 1*

CHAPTER 1 Race and Ethnicity 3

1.1 MICHAEL OMI AND HOWARD WINANT, from *Racial Formations in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s* 3

“When European explorers in the New World ‘discovered’ people who looked different than themselves, these ‘natives’ challenged then existing conceptions of the origins of the human species, and raised disturbing questions as to whether *all* could be considered in the same ‘family of man.’ ”

1.2 BETH B. HESS, ELIZABETH W. MARKSON, AND PETER J. STEIN, from “Racial and Ethnic Minorities: An Overview,” in Beth B. Hess, Elizabeth W. Markson, and Peter J. Stein, *Sociology* 14

“Self-determination and economic self-sufficiency cannot be achieved easily when the most basic needs, such as adequate education, housing, and health care, have not yet been met.”

1.3 JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN, from “Ethnicity in American Life: The Historical Perspective,” in John Hope Franklin, ed., *Race and History: Selected Essays, 1938–1988* 24

“If the principle of ethnic exclusiveness was propounded so early and so successfully in the history of the United States, it is not surprising that it would, in time, become the basis for questioning the ethnic backgrounds of large numbers of prospective Americans, even Europeans.”

*Notable
Selections in
Race and
Ethnicity*

- 2.1 ROBERT K. MERTON**, from "Discrimination and the American Creed," in Robert M. Maclver, ed., *Discrimination and National Welfare* 33

"Once we substitute these three variables of cultural ideal, belief and actual practice for the customary distinction between the two variables of cultural ideals and actual practices, the entire formulation of the problem becomes changed. We escape from the virtuous but ineffectual impasse of deploring the alleged hypocrisy of many Americans into the more difficult but potentially effectual realm of analyzing the problem in hand."

- 2.2 WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON**, from "The Declining Significance of Race," *Society* 45

"Race relations in the United States have undergone fundamental changes in recent years, so much so that now the life chances of individual blacks have more to do with their economic class position than with their day-to-day encounters with whites."

- 2.3 JOE R. FEAGIN**, from "The Continuing Significance of Race: Antiracial Discrimination in Public Places," *American Sociological Review* 56

"The sites of racial discrimination range from relatively protected home sites, to less protected workplace and educational sites, to the even less protected public places."

CHAPTER 3 Racism 69

- 3.1 LOUIS L. KNOWLES AND KENNETH PREWITT**, from "Institutional and Ideological Roots of Racism," in Louis L. Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, eds., *Institutional Racism in America* 69

"The [racist] policy can be understood only when we are willing to take a hard look at the continuing and irrefutable racist consequences of the major institutions in American life."

- 3.2 ELIZABETH MARTÍNEZ**, from "Beyond Black/White: The Racisms of Our Time," *Social Justice* 79

"All this suggests that we urgently need some fresh and fearless thinking about racism at this moment in history."

PART TWO *Theoretical Orientations to the Study of Race and Ethnicity in the United States* 89

v

*Notable
Selections in
Race and
Ethnicity*

CHAPTER 4 Adaptation 91

- 4.1 MILTON M. GORDON**, from "Assimilation in America: Theory and Reality," *Daedalus* 91

"Three ideologies or conceptual models have competed for attention on the American scene as explanations of the way in which a nation . . . has absorbed over 41 million immigrants and their descendants from variegated sources and welded them into the contemporary American people. These ideologies are Anglo-conformity, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism."

- 4.2 H. GUILLERMO BARTELT**, from "Boarding-School Language Policy and the Spread of English Among Indians of the American Southwest," in Fremont J. Lyden and Lyman H. Lesters, eds., *Native Americans and Public Policy* 103

"[T]he policy forbidding students the use of their native language was strictly enforced; in fact, students were punished for speaking it."

- 4.3 LEWIS M. KILLIAN**, from "Race Relations and the Nineties: Where Are the Dreams of the Sixties?" *Social Forces* 110

"[I]n 1972, King urged again, 'Let us be dissatisfied until men and women, however black they may be, will be judged on the basis of the content of their character and not on the basis of the color of their skin.' How sorely pained he would be were he to witness the state of ethnic relations today!"

CHAPTER 5 Conflict 123

- 5.1 WILLIAM RYAN**, from *Blaming the Victim* 123

"The generic process of Blaming the Victim is applied to almost every American problem."

- 5.2 EDNA BONACICH**, from "Inequality in America: The Failure of the American System for People of Color," *Sociological Spectrum* 134

"The United States is an immensely unequal society in terms of the distribution of material wealth, and consequently, in the distribution of all the benefits and privileges that accrue to wealth—including political power and influence."

PART THREE *Race and Ethnicity in American Institutions* 145

CHAPTER 6 The Educational Institution 147

- 6.1 ADALBERTO AGUIRRE, JR.**, from "Intelligence Testing and Chicanos: A Quality of Life Issue," *Social Problems* 147

"[T]he ideological role of intelligence testing in equal opportunity thinking is designed to justify and maintain current patterns of inequality by suggesting that Chicanos and others who do not have an equal share of the American pie are simply not intelligent enough to acquire such a share."

- 6.2 BOBBY WRIGHT AND WILLIAM G. TIERNEY**, from "American Indians in Higher Education: A History of Cultural Conflict," *Change* 157

"The earliest colonial efforts to provide Indians with higher education were designed to Christianize and 'civilize' the Indians, saving them from the folly of their 'heathenish' and 'savage' ways."

- 6.3 MARÍA DE LA LUZ REYES AND JOHN J. HALCÓN**, from "Racism in Academia: The Old Wolf Revisited," *Harvard Educational Review* 166

"The very idea that racism could exist among the *educated* elite is disconcerting to new academicians of color, and might come as a surprise to aspiring novices looking in from the outside."

CHAPTER 7 The Political Institution 177

- 7.1 LEOBARDO F. ESTRADA ET AL.**, from "Chicanos in the United States: A History of Exploitation and Resistance," *Daedalus* 177

"The military conquest of the Southwest by the United States was a watershed that brought about the large-scale dispossession of the real holdings of Mexicans and their displacement and relegation to the lower reaches of the class structure."

- 7.2 SU SUN BAI**, from "Affirmative Pursuit of Political Equality for Asian Pacific Americans: Reclaiming the Voting Rights Act," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 188

"Dismantling the subtle and effective discriminatory barriers against Asian Pacific Americans' voting rights demands an affirmative commitment to the political equality of Asian Pacific Americans."

- 7.3 FRANK HAROLD WILSON**, from "Housing and Black Americans: The Persistent Significance of Race," in William Velez, ed., *Race and Ethnicity in the United States* 198

"In the absence of increased federally articulated housing programs to proactively and affirmatively address inequities of access and costs, the emergent patterns of contemporary housing deprivation experienced by the poor across races will increase in significance."

CHAPTER 8 The Economic Institution 209

- 8.1 REYNOLDS FARLEY**, from "Blacks, Hispanics, and White Ethnic Groups: Are Blacks Uniquely Disadvantaged?" *American Economic Review* 209

"After examining the characteristics of fifty racial-ethnic groups, I found that the Vietnamese and Puerto Ricans were more impoverished than blacks and, in terms of per capita income, Mexicans and American Natives were similar to blacks."

- 8.2 GEORGE E. TINKER AND LORING BUSH**, from "Native American Unemployment: Statistical Games and Coverups," in George W. Shepherd, Jr., and David Penna, eds., *Racism and the Underclass: State Policy and Discrimination Against Minorities* 218

"American social structures must recognize their culpability in the codependent relationship in which subtle racist institutional structures use statistical devices in order to conceal massive social deficiencies in Indian communities."

- 8.3 HAVIDÁN RODRÍGUEZ**, from "Population, Economic Mobility and Income Inequality: A Portrait of Latinos in the United States, 1970–1991," *Latino Studies Journal* 229

"[A]n economic hierarchy exists within the Latino population with Cubans occupying the most advantaged position and Puerto Ricans experiencing severe economic difficulties. Mexican Americans have not experienced the economic mobility of Cubans but their economic status falls above that of Puerto Ricans."

CHAPTER 9 The Legal Institution 241

- 9.1 ROBERT STAPLES**, "White Racism, Black Crime, and American Justice: An Application of the Colonial Model to Explain Crime and Race," *Phylon* 241

"In America the right to justice is an inalienable right; but for Blacks it is still a privilege to be granted at the caprice and goodwill of whites, who control the machinery of the legal system and the agents of social control."

- 9.2 ADALBERTO AGUIRRE, JR., AND DAVID V. BAKER**, from "A Descriptive Profile of the Hispanic Penal Population: Conceptual and Reliability Limitations in Public Use Data," *The Justice Professional* 252

"The fundamental problem that has plagued public data sources in the construction of a descriptive profile for not only the Hispanic penal population, but for the Hispanic population in general, is rooted in the question: 'How does one identify the Hispanic person?'"

- 9.3 ANTHONY G. AMSTERDAM**, from "Race and the Death Penalty," *Criminal Justice Ethics* 259

"Let us affirm that racism exists, and is against the fundamental law of this Nation, whenever people of different races are treated differently by any public agency or institution as a consequence of their race with no legitimate non-racial reason for the different treatment."

CHAPTER 10 The Institution of Health and Medicine 266

- 10.1 WORNIE L. REED**, from "Racism and Health: The Case of Black Infant Mortality," in Peter Conrad and Rochelle Kern, eds., *The Sociology of Health and Illness: Critical Perspectives*, 3rd ed. 266

"Some 6,000 black infants die each year who would be living if the infant mortality rate observed for black infants in a geographic region was as low as that for white infants in the same area."

- 10.2 JAMES JONES**, from *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment* 278

"The specter of Nazi Germany prompted some Americans to equate the Tuskegee Study with genocide."

- 10.3 ROBERT L. HAMPTON**, from "Race, Ethnicity, and Child Maltreatment: An Analysis of Cases Recognized and Reported by Hospitals," in Robert Staples, ed., *The Black Family: Essays and Studies*, 4th ed. 287

"[W]hen the physicians made a report of child abuse, they considered not only the child's physical condition but also the caretaker's occupation, education, race, and ethnicity."

CHAPTER 11 The Institution of Marriage and Family 297

- 11.1 MAXINE BACA ZINN**, from "Family, Race, and Poverty in the Eighties," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 297

"The new structural analyses of the underclass reveal that the conditions in which Black and Hispanic women and men live are extremely vulnerable to economic change."

- 11.2 UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**, from
Disadvantaged Women and Their Children 307

"Employment is generally considered the key to economic independence in our society, but it does not unlock the door for many women."

- 11.3 CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL POLICY**, from "The
'Flip-Side' of Black Families Headed by Women: The Economic
Status of Black Men," in Robert Staples, ed., *The Black Family: Essays
and Studies*, 4th ed. 316

"The plight of black men is the other, virtually unnoticed, side of the troubling increase in single-parent black families. Simply put, the economic status of many black men is deteriorating."

PART FOUR *Race and Ethnicity in Popular Culture* 323

CHAPTER 12 Culture 325

- 12.1 ROBERT STAPLES AND TERRY JONES**, from "Culture, Ideology and
Black Television Images," *The Black Scholar* 325

"Television, controlled by American advertisers, regulated by the Federal Communications Commission, and influenced by the American public, has chosen to adopt a white American cultural ideology based on the glorification of white norms, mores, and values."

- 12.2 RALPH C. GOMES AND LINDA FAYE WILLIAMS**, from "Race and
Crime: The Role of the Media in Perpetuating Racism and Classism in
America," *The Urban League Review* 337

"Today, the dawn of the 1990s, African Americans continue to protest the images portrayed of them in the press."

- 12.3 RICHARD E. LAPCHICK AND DAVID STUCKEY**, from "Professional
Sports: The Racial Report Card," *Center for the Study of Sports in
Society Digest* 347

"Whether sport can lead the way to improved race relations remains a question that is unanswered in the early 1990s."

CHAPTER 13 Science, Technology, and Racial/Ethnic Communities 357

- 13.1 ROBERT C. JOHNSON**, from "Science, Technology, and Black
Community Development," *The Black Scholar* 357

"Black Americans risk being subjugated to the vicissitudes of scientific and technological forces which are as oppressive, demeaning and domineering as are the socioeconomic and political forces of racism and exploitation."