

**Sociology 1301 – Introductory Sociology Text – 2023 – 2024** rev. 2023  
**Dr. Alyce Bunting**

Instead of a textbook, I have written the text that we will use for the class. I believe there are several advantages to this option:

1. The students will save money
2. I won't be bound to whatever an author decides is important to cover in an Introductory Sociology class.
3. There is flexibility in class activities.

I have arrived at this decision over a number of years. Most of those years I have used an excellent textbook, James Henslin's Sociology, a down-to-earth approach: The core concepts. And from the many years I have spent teaching this course (well over 25 years), I have determined that all introductory sociology texts cover the basics, and then add whatever the authors deem important, that is, important to them. In addition, with the internet, most of the information and data provided in textbooks is available online, and is much more current.

So, as a result, I have determined what I believe an introductory sociology student needs to learn in this course. This is based not only my experience in teaching introductory sociology for so many years (like I said previously, over 25 years, multiple sections each year, for a total number of classes approaching 200 by now), but also the upper level sociology courses I have taught (Social Problems, Marriage and Family, Deviance, Criminology, Corrections, Social Stratification, Race and Ethnicity, Social Theory, Sociology of Aging). In other words, I think I have a pretty good handle on what needs to be taught in an introductory sociology class, based on my experience teaching such classes, and also because I have taught an array of upper level sociology classes, and know what students entering them need to know, things that they should be taught in their intro class.

Having said all of this, here is our text for the semester. Included are links that will enhance the material. Enjoy saving money on a textbook – don't spend it all in one place.

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That was the opening page that I used in the Fall of 2015, the first semester I used my own text. I wanted to explain why I felt it necessary to write my own “book” and validate my credentials for doing so. Now, I am into my eighth year of using this text, and I wanted to say a few more things.

First of all, to say the least, students have loved this book. They felt that it was easy to read and very succinct – only told them what they needed to know. They felt the links provided both in the text and at our class homepage added additional material, and were more up to date than what would be found in a traditional textbook.

I found this encouraging. I didn’t know how a self-written text would be received. But, being easy to understand and very cheap made it a best-seller! So, we’ll use it again this semester.

Any textbook must be revised from time to time, and this one is no exception. I have updated links, found new charts, and added some more readings. One problem that I did not anticipate when I first used this text was the differences in how the traditional (classroom) students are taught, compared to the online students. In other words, I tell the classroom students when to look at one of the readings, or when we are going to watch one of the videos. But, the online students must get that information some other way. So, in the text, there will be instructions for the online students about when to look at a reading, or when to watch a video. For the classroom students, we should also get to those in the classroom. If we don’t, well, you can check them out yourself!

Happy reading!

Dr. Bunting

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## **PART 1, SECTION 1**

### **The History of Sociology**

#### **What is Sociology?**

**Sociology is the scientific study of human behavior, at the group level.** Notice those three parts of the definition: it is a science, it is the study of human behavior, and the level of analysis is the group. Sociologists do not ignore individual contributions that influence behavior, the genetic characteristics, hereditary factors. However, sociologists stress the influence of group over heredity in their study of behavior. Sociologists would say “**More important than what you are born with is where you are born.**”

These groups that influence behavior include family, peers, schools, media, workplace. Also included are groups that are not chosen, such as age, race, and sex. Another way to think about group influences on behavior is to think in terms of **social location**. This refers to **a person’s group memberships –where they find themselves, both geographically and historically**. One’s **social location** refers to “the corners of life a person occupies because of his/her place in society,” which would include all those groups mentioned above, and more. In other words, you are the person you are because of where you were born, and when you were born. In a different time and a different place, the you you are would be a different you! We could say it like this: **You are who you are because of where and when you are.**

To study the group nature of human behavior, you must be able to employ the “**Sociological Imagination**” or “**Sociological Perspective**”. This is a unique way of looking at the world of human behavior, focusing on the group. According to sociologist C. Wright Mills:

**The Sociological Imagination allows us to see the connection between wider social forces (history), and our own private realities (biographies).**

The **sociological imagination** requires that we take a step back, examine our world as an outsider, objectively analyzing our social world. Another way to put this would be “whatever is going on is never all that is going on.” Using this perspective means that we don’t take for granted our thoughts and behaviors, but, instead, look beyond the obvious for the reasons why. This is because there are reasons why we think and act the ways we do. It’s not enough to say “that’s just how things are.” That may be true “that’s how things are,” but there is indeed a reason for why things are this way, and not another.

### **When did Sociology begin?**

The early philosophers, like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, were really sociologists. It was Socrates who said “**The unexamined life is the life not worth living.**” These Greeks understood that the more we knew ourselves, the greater our understanding of others, and society in general, would be.

But more recently, sociology grew out of turmoil and unrest, beginning first on the continent of Europe, spreading across the channel to England, and then across the Atlantic to America. As long as things are going smoothly, people don’t tend to question the status quo. It is when they feel threatened by change, when life becomes uncertain, that they begin to seek answers to solve the problems they find themselves confronting. Revolutions, both social and economic, were the underpinnings of the emergence of the science of sociology, starting back in the 1700s.

In the United States, the first course titled “sociology” was taught in 1876 at Yale. In 1892, the University of Chicago established the first graduate department of sociology, and by the early 1900s most colleges and universities offered sociology courses. The [American Sociological Association](#) was formed in 1905, and continues to support sociological research and the growth of departments of sociology in the U.S.

They are many individuals credited with helping establish sociology as both a discipline and a science. The following five are mentioned for their particular contributions. Here is a link,

[Famous Sociologists](#), that talks more about these five and several other of the most important individuals in this science. Also, go to this site, [List of Famous Sociologists](#), where you can learn more about these and other founders of this field of study.

**Auguste Comte** (1798 – 1857) Comte was a Frenchman, and he had experienced the social upheavals of the French revolution. Writing at a time when the natural sciences, coming out of the Age of Enlightenment, were using the scientific method to make sense of the natural world, Comte posited that it would be possible for philosophers to make sense of the world of human behavior. This knowledge could then be used to guide social reform with the idea of improving society. Comte never actually conducted any scientific research, but he got things started, and he also named the science. Because of this, he is referred to as the “Father of Sociology.”

**Herbert Spencer** (1820 – 1903) Spencer was an Englishman. Unlike Comte, he did not favor social engineering. Instead, he advocated a policy of hands-off, non-governmental interference. The reason he felt this way was because he employed an “**organic analogy**.”

Spencer likened society to a living organism, an “**organic analogy**.” Just like a living breathing organism, so, too, was society. If part of an organism fails to function properly, the entire organism is affected. That is how he felt society operated. From a social (people) perspective, if part of society was not doing what they should, it would affect us all. In other words, a few could disrupt the smooth functioning of the whole.

This organic analogy was the essence of his “**survival of the fittest**” philosophy, where he saw societies growing progressively more advanced as the fittest members survived, and those less capable died off. To put it in Spencer’s words:

“Fostering the good for nothing at the expense of the good is an extreme cruelty. It is deliberate storing up of miseries for future generations. There is no greater curse to posterity than that of bequeathing to them an increasing population of imbeciles, idlers, and criminals. The whole effort of nature is to get rid of such, to clear the world of them and make room for better. If they are not sufficiently complete to live, they die, and it is best they should die” (from “Aphorisms from the writings of Herbert Spencer,” Julia Raymond Gingell, 1894, pg. 50).

Spencer’s dislike of engineered social change is evident in the early stages of the development of sociology, and, today, his influence continues. His ideas have influenced many others in this field, and have provided the basis for one of the major sociological theories, **Functional Theory**.

**Karl Marx** (1818 – 1883) Marx, a German, wasn’t a sociologist; he was a philosopher, economist, historian, writer, in other words, a man of many talents. But his ideas have led to one of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology, **Conflict Theory**. Marx advocated societal change through personal behavior, but his ideas were considered radical, both then and now. His theory of social change involved revolution.

For Marx, the history of humankind was a history of class conflict. He was an “**economic determinist**” – he felt every social relationship in a society related directly to the type of economy in the society. Marx was born after the Industrial Revolution had begun on the continent of Europe, and was witness to what he considered the atrocities visited upon the workers by the owners of factories. The owners (**bourgeoisie**) were the capitalists, the ones who owned the means of production. They employed the workers (**proletariat**). In his view, the owners exploited the workers for their own advantage. He felt the workers suffered “**false consciousness**” and did not realize their exploited status.



However, according to his theory, the workers would develop a sense of “**class consciousness**” and rise and revolt against the owners. This would lead to a classless society, one in which there would be no private ownership of property, but complete satisfaction of needs. The guiding philosophy of his theory (which has been labeled “Communism”, “Marxism”, “Socialism”) is: **From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.**

**Emile Durkheim** (1858 – 1917) Durkheim was a professor of education in the French university system, but was interested in the writings of these earlier mentioned, as well as many not mentioned, philosophers, and their ideas of a science called “sociology.” Psychology was already an established discipline in the French university system, but sociology was not being taught. Durkheim felt strongly that sociology would be an important science in explaining human behavior. This interest led him to take a year’s sabbatical, and go to Germany to study under Wilhelm Wundt, the father of experimental psychology. There he learned to use the scientific method to study human behavior. He then decided to study a behavior which typically is attributed to individual causes and motivations, **suicide**, reasoning that such a study would show the value of analyzing the group nature of human behavior, and the effect of what he called “**social forces.**”

His scientific study of the behavior “**suicide**” was the first time human behavior was studied scientifically at the group level, and marked the beginnings of sociology as a science, not just a philosophy. And his research results hold true today. Take a look at these data from the Center for Disease Control, “[Death rates for suicide](#)” to see how his theories apply to our own country.

**Max Weber** (1864 – 1920) Weber, a German, was influential in the early years of sociology in many ways, but one way in particular is important for our purposes. At the time of his research, and as is still true today, the debate raged about studying human behavior scientifically. In other words, science is objective, rational; human behavior is not. Can sociology really be a science?

Weber answered “yes” to that question. In fact, he said, we not only can be a science, and employ the scientific method just like the natural sciences, we had an advantage they did not.

We study ourselves, and, as such, can see the world from our subjects' perspectives. This is important when it comes to explaining our research results. We could, he said, put ourselves in our respondents' shoes, employ what he called "**verstehen**," (**empathy**) to develop theories to explain human behavior. His idea of **verstehen** was integral to the formation of the third major theoretical perspective in sociology, **Symbolic Interaction**.

### **Part 1, Section 1 Review – The History of Sociology**

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with them.

Sociology

Social Location

Sociological Imagination (Perspective)

Auguste Comte

Herbert Spencer

Organic Analogy

Karl Marx

Bourgeoisie

Proletariat

Emile Durkheim

Max Weber

Verstehen

## **PART 1, SECTION 2**

### **The Science of Sociology**

“Like natural science, sociology depends upon the assumption that all events have causes. Social life is not a random array of occurrences, happening without rhyme or reason. One of the main tasks of sociological research – in combination with theoretical thinking – is to identify these correlations.”

As Sherlock Holmes (in the book The Sign of the Four) said to his friend Dr. Watson:

“While the individual man is an insoluble puzzle, in the aggregate he becomes a mathematical certainty. You can never foretell what any one man will be doing, but you can say with precision what an average number will be up to. Individuals vary but percentages remain constant.”

In the science of sociology, we conduct research to find regular patterns of behavior that are not unique to the individual but that are, instead, group characteristics. Once we find these **correlations**, these **relationships between variables**, we then develop theories to explain our findings.

### **Ways of Knowing**

There are many ways of “knowing” about reality. Traditional knowledge, faith knowledge, and folklore, are all ways of explaining reality and understanding the world around us. Science is a particular way of knowing, a particular way of explaining and understanding our world. Science relies on “**empirical evidence**,” or “**empiricism**” to explain what it studies. **Empirical evidence** means “**anything you can detect with your senses**.” In order to study something scientifically, you have to be able to see it, hear it, taste it, touch it, or smell it. Otherwise, you cannot study it scientifically. You have to “prove,” be “positive” about what you find. “**Positivism**” is another word for science, because science relies on this proof that you can know, because it is detectable with your senses. If something cannot be detected by the senses, you can “know” it by faith, or

because traditionally that is the way it has always been, or because it has been told to you by people who should know that that is how it is, but you cannot study it scientifically.

**Empirical evidence** is the essence of science.

Anyone who has taken a science class of any kind has probably heard their instructor say, “In science, we observe, measure, and report.” In other words, we observe what we are studying, measure changes that occur, and then report those changes. That “**measure**” is the **empirical evidence**. You cannot measure anything if you cannot detect it with your senses!

All sciences have **four goals**, four purposes. They are **describe, explain, predict, and control**. For some research, little is known about the topic and the researcher may be among the first to begin a study in that area. In that case, the researcher would simply attempt to “**describe**” the subject under study. But as more knowledge is gained, the researcher begins to see patterns in the topic and can begin to “**explain**” what is found. This then leads to more information about the subject, such that the researcher begins to understand how the variables being studied interact, and thus becomes able to “**predict**” what will happen with the variables being studied. But the ultimate goal of any science, whether it is a social science like sociology, or a natural science like physics, is “**control**,” to use the knowledge gained to make things better, make improvements, reforms, and use science for mankind’s benefit. One sociologist defined sociology as “**why things don’t have to be the way they are.**” No, they don’t, because we can find correlations between variables, and use that information to change things we don’t like.

As Weber pointed out over a century ago, studying human behavior scientifically can be difficult, but is possible. It is important that we acknowledge up front the special issues we face using science to study human behavior. One problem is people change, from time to time and place to place. People are not static – they are dynamic. In other words, research findings that may be true today may not be true in five, ten, twenty years. Or simply going to another area and conducting the same research with different people may lead to different results.

Another issue we face that the natural scientists do not is “**reactivity.**” This simply refers to **the tendency for people to act differently when they are being studied than when they are not.** Thus, when studying people, we must be aware that they may not be entirely honest with us. There are many reasons why this may be. Perhaps they are trying to answer in such a way as to please the researcher, or maybe they are trying to make themselves sound better. Or it could be the topic is sensitive, and they do not desire to give an honest answer. But, as the researcher, it is important that you be aware that the data you receive may not be completely accurate. But we soldier on anyway!

## **The Scientific Research Method**

“**Methodology**” simply means “**method of research.**” Like all sciences, sociology uses the scientific research method as its methodology. There are several steps to the scientific research method, and different texts list different numbers of steps. But the number of steps is not what’s important. What is important is the systematic, rational nature of this method. The researcher follows the process step by step, and others can then replicate the research, following the same method. This is how a body of knowledge is accumulated. Over time, well-designed scientific research is conducted, replicated, and the findings upheld or refuted. But as more research arrives at the same findings, then correlations become clearer and it becomes possible to make theories to explain behavior.

But it all starts with well-designed research.

As a science, sociology is young, dating itself from the research of Emile Durkheim a little over one hundred years ago. His research on suicide was meticulously planned and carried out. Let’s look at how research is designed.

These are the steps of the scientific research method. Keep in mind it’s not the number of steps, but the systematic process of conducting research, that is important.

1. **Select a topic** – Deciding what to study is the first step. Many sociologists go into the science because they already have an interest in a particular topic. For others, their interests evolve as they do research, and their topics may change.
  
2. **Define the problem** – The topic selected will be too broad to study, so it will be necessary to narrow it down to a specific part. For example, maybe the researcher is interested in studying juvenile delinquency. That is a big topic, and would be too difficult to study as a whole. A particular area, perhaps “causes of juvenile delinquency,” could be selected for study. It could be theorized that “self-esteem affects juvenile delinquency.” This is a topic that would lend itself to scientific research.
  
3. **Review of the literature** - It is essential that the researcher educate him/herself about the topic to be studied. A review of existing literature will help guide research. When a research article is published, the first section will include an extensive review of the existing literature conducted by the author of the article.

To conduct the literature review, the researcher will read any available material on the topic. This includes books as well as scholarly articles published in professional journals.

To find the articles, a **database** search will be conducted. A “**database**” is **a listing of articles and chapters in books, journals, newspapers, and magazines.**

4. **Formulating a hypothesis** – The review of literature will probably indicate what can be expected in terms of the relationship between the **variables** being studied. A “**variable**” is **any concept that can take on more than one value**, such as age, race, income level, and self-esteem. The next step is to formulate a **hypothesis**, which, as everyone who’s ever taken a science class knows, is an “**educated guess.**” The researcher doesn’t know what will be found in the research, but will state a relationship between the **variables** that is expected, just a guess based on reviewing the literature.

One variable in the hypothesis is the **independent variable**, the other, the **dependent**.

Sometimes the **independent variable** is called the “cause,” and the **dependent variable** is called

the “effect.” Take, for example, our proposed research, “self-esteem affects delinquency.” In this example, the variable “self-esteem” is the **independent variable**, and “delinquency” is the **dependent variable**. We are hypothesizing that something about a person’s level of self-esteem causes them to choose whether or not to engage in delinquent behavior.

This is where the “**empirical evidence**” comes in to our science. Keep in mind the phrase, “**observe, measure, and report.**” The **hypothesis** will state the expected relationship between the **variables** under study, say, for instance, our earlier example of “self-esteem” and “juvenile delinquency.” In order to observe and measure these, so we can report our findings, we have to be able to detect them with our senses – **empirical evidence**. So, we will need to define so we can measure our **variables**. This definition we use to measure a **variable** is called the “**operational definition.**” The **operational definition** is **the way the researcher will empirically detect the variable so it can be measured**. When I think about the **operational definition**, how the **variable** is to be **empirically** detected and measured, I ask the question, “**what do you mean?**” What do you mean “self-esteem”? What do you mean “juvenile delinquency”?

If it seems I am belaboring this point concerning “**empirical evidence**” and “**measure**” and “**operational definitions,**” it’s because I am. This is essential to science, the basis for science. Remember what you read earlier – if you cannot detect it with your senses, you cannot study it scientifically.

Think about terms you have heard, things like “wind chill factor,” “unemployment rate,” “hurricane.” All of these concepts (**variables**) have very specific definitions and ways of being measured.

Here is one way we paint ourselves into a corner as social scientists. Science depends on **empiricism**, but not everything we study lends itself to empirical testing. Take our example and our two **variables**, “self-esteem” and “juvenile delinquency.” “Juvenile delinquency” is fairly easy to **operationally define** and measure, as each state has a list of offenses designated as such.



But how about “self-esteem”? Can you see, hear, taste, touch, or smell how much self-esteem a person has? What is self-esteem to begin with? It does not readily lend itself to **empirical** testing. In a case like this, and there are many cases like this in sociology, we have to devise a way to indirectly measure our **variables**.

These **operational definitions** that we devise are called “**constructs**.” In other words, **when we construct (develop) a definition to measure a variable, it is, quite simply, called a “construct.”**

Many of these **constructs** are tests, questionnaires, or scales to which a score is assigned, indicating an individual’s “measure” of the **variable**. A good example of this would be an IQ test. IQ tests are **constructs** – psychologists have devised a way to indirectly detect and measure the **variable**, intelligence. If you are a criminal justice major, you may be familiar with the state Penal Code. The Penal Code is a book of **constructs**. The Penal Code lists all of the crimes recognized by the state, and the state’s definitions of those crimes. In other words, the Penal Code of a state tells a district attorney what elements of a crime must be proven in order to find someone guilty of an offense. For you psychology majors, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (5<sup>th</sup> ed), or the DSM-5, is also a book of **constructs**. The DSM-5 lists almost 300 psychological disorders, and the means for diagnosing (detecting with the senses) those disorders, including which symptoms must occur, how often, and over what time period.

A thermometer and the Fahrenheit scale are also **constructs**, human inventions used to define and measure the **variable** temperature. This link, the [Fahrenheit Scale](#), explains how this **construct** was devised. Also, look at these to find the operational definitions for “[Unemployment Rate](#)”, “[Wind Chill Factor](#),” [hurricanes](#), [Eagle Scout](#), and [serial killers and mass murderers](#).

Of course, when we are “constructing,” or “devising” ways to measure **variables**, we need to make sure that we are as accurate as we can be. Take a look at this article, “[Self-esteem and delinquency](#).” Look at the **constructs** used to measure the **variables** in that research. As a

researcher, you must make sure your **variables** are **valid**, that is “**measure what you say you measure**,” and **reliable**, that is, “**consistently yield the same results**.” “**Validity**” refers to **accurately measuring a variable**, “**reliability**” refers to **consistency of measurement**.

But, we’re not done yet. Being able to accurately measure the **variables** is one thing, making sure there are no other **variables** affecting the ones being studied is another. Once again, think about our suggested research, the link between self-esteem and juvenile delinquency. What other factors besides self-esteem could lead to a juvenile choosing to commit a delinquent act? Could family background, peer influence, media, nutrition, and many other **variables**, affect the decision? Of course they could. So, what the researcher must do, just like a scientist in a laboratory, is think of any other **variables** that could be affecting the ones under study, and **control** for them.

Even if the researcher manages to think of a whole raft of **variables** that could be affecting the ones under study and **controls** for them, there is a chance, and a pretty good one at that, that even if a **correlation** is found, it could just be a coincidence. These types of **correlations** are called **spurious correlations**, and, unfortunately, are very common. That is the reason for replication of research. If, time after time when the research is replicated, the same results are found, then there can be some degree of confidence that the **correlation** does exist. Some sciences have theories that have been tested and upheld to the point that they have attained the status of law (law of gravity, for example). In our science, we will never have laws. But what we do have are **correlations**, and some, like age at marriage as a predictor of divorce, are consistently found by the research. Not 100% of the time, but often enough that we can state with a degree of certainty that this is not a **spurious correlation**, that age at marriage is indeed a predictor of marital success (or failure!).

5. **Choose a research design** – Having finally selected a topic, defined the problem, reviewed the literature, developed a **hypothesis**, and found **valid** and **reliable** ways to measure the **variables**, now the researcher must decide who to study and how to study them. This is the **research design**. The “who to study” is the **population**. For example, if a researcher wanted to

study the effect of self-esteem on delinquent behavior, “delinquents” would be his population. Since it would be impossible for a researcher to study all delinquents, a group for study would be selected, and this group is called the **sample**. The **sample** might be delinquents in a certain service area, say, Bowie County, Texas.

In sociology, there are a variety of ways to design research. It really depends on what type of information is being sought. Remember those **four goals of science**? If a researcher just wanted to **describe** what is being studied, he/she will choose a different type of design than someone who wanted to find **correlations**, and be able to make **predictions** about the **variables**.

Here is a brief listing and description of some of the more common **research designs** in sociology:

- (a) **Survey** – **Surveys** can be either questionnaires, interviews, or both. **Surveys** are the most common way of gathering data in the social sciences, mainly because they are quick and cheap.
  
- (b) **Participant Observation** – In **participation observation**, the researcher participates in the behavior being studied while observing the event. **Participant observation** is a good way to reduce **reactivity**, because, since the researcher is passing him/herself off as one of the individuals engaged in the activity, the behavior of the participants should not change.
  
- (c) **Secondary Analysis** – **Secondary Analysis** involves using data someone has already collected. It is perfectly all right to use someone else’s data, just make sure they are given credit!
  
- (d) **Analysis of Documents** – **Analysis of documents** involves the study of documents and other sources of data. This is different from **secondary analysis**, where research previously conducted is the source of information. **Analysis of documents** is looking at any written or recorded source of data, such as newspapers, telephone books, or diaries,

(e) **Experiments - Experiments** are used when the researcher is looking for correlations, the “predict” goal of science. In an **experiment**, the researcher manipulates the **independent variable** (the cause) to check its effect on the **dependent variable** (the effect).

(f) **Unobtrusive Measures – Unobtrusive measures** involve observing people when they do not know they are being watched.

(g) **Case studies –Case studies** involve intensive studies of a single event, situation, or individual, with the goal of understanding the dynamics of the relationship, event or individual.

This is just a short list of the **research designs** in sociology, and there are always “variations on theme.” These designs can be combined, and even more information gathered.

6. **Collect the data** – Now that a group has been selected for study, and the way the data are to be collected determined, it’s time to **collect the data**. Although this sounds like the most exciting part of research (“Let’s study people!”), it is the part that typically takes the least amount of time.

7. **Analyze the results** – Once the data are gathered, it is time to see what the data show. Fortunately, there is a computer program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) that can be used if there are a lot of numbers to be analyzed and compared.

8. **Share the results** – To help build up the body of knowledge of the science, research results are shared by being published. These are published in the professional journals that the **databases** search. Research might also be published in magazines, newspapers, or books, but, first, it will be published in a recognized scientific source, a professional journal, where it has been reviewed by peers in the field, and accepted as **valid** and **reliable** research.

### **Part 1, Section 2 Review – The Science of Sociology**

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with them.

Correlation

Empiricism (Empirical Evidence)

Positivism

Four Goals of Science

Reactivity

Methodology

The Scientific Research Method

Database

Variable

Hypothesis

Operational Definition

Constructs

Validity and Reliability

Controls

Spurious Correlation

Research Designs

Independent and Dependent Variables

## PART 1, SECTION 3

### The Theories of Sociology

#### Theories

Most students are a bit intimidated by the notion of studying **theories**. Granted, **theories** are complex frameworks of assumptions, propositions, hypotheses, variables, etc., and it can be difficult to comprehend all of the ins and outs of a given **theory**. However, a **theory** is just **an attempt to answer the question “why?”** A **theory** is just an explanation. Yes, there is complexity underlying the attempt to explain, but just think of a **theory** this way, as a “**why**.”

All sciences have multiple **theories**, because not everyone explains the world the same way. Speaking of the world, is there just one theory for mankind’s existence on planet earth? Hardly, and a couple of those **theories** are diametrically opposed to one another! Sociology, too, has more than one **theory**, three, to be exact. Well, maybe that is a little too simple. Let me say there are three major theoretical perspectives in sociology, and each of the three has dozens, even hundreds, of variations and extensions. In this section, we’ll look at the three major **theories**, and, in following chapters, look at some of those offshoots of the three big ones.

#### The Three Theoretical Perspectives

1. **Symbolic Interaction** – Look at the title, “**Symbolic interaction**,” **symbols** we use when we **interact**. A **symbol** is something that stands for or represents something other than itself, like a stop sign. In our culture, **symbols** are ubiquitous (look it up!). We are saturated with **symbols**, everywhere we look. But, because this is just our “world,” we don’t realize that everything we use in our daily interactions is symbolic, and we, in our culture, have a shared agreement about the meaning of that **symbol**. Whether it’s body language, facial expressions, hand gestures, words, or objects, like that stop sign, those things only have meanings because we, as a culture, agree on their meanings.

That is what **symbolic interactionists** study, how people define reality in their daily interactions with one another. We make sense out of life by using **symbols** to define ourselves and others. The defining statement of **symbolic interaction** is the **Thomas theorem** (W.I. and Dorothy S. Thomas):

**“If people define a situation as real, it is real in its consequences.”**

Also known as the “**Definition of the situation**,” the **Thomas theorem** simply says that we make our own reality. If we define a set of symbols in a certain way, we act on that definition as our own reality. This is somewhat the cup half full/cup half empty conundrum. We may all be experiencing the same set of symbols, but we are placing different meanings on those symbols, and responding to them in those ways, and, thus, making our own **definition of the situation**. For a humorous look at how we all make our own reality, read “Why did the chicken cross the road?” on page 132 , or at the “[Resources](#)” link at our class homepage. To further expound on this theory, think about the Holy Bible, used by Protestants and Catholics alike. However, do they all interpret the holy scriptures in the same way? Okay, now do you see what is meant by “**definition of the situation**”?

As a **symbolic interactionist**, the goal of research is to see the world from the respondent’s point of view. Sounds like “**verstehen**,” doesn’t it? Like I said earlier, **Max Weber** was an early **symbolic interactionist**. **Symbolic interactionists** want to employ **verstehen**, put themselves in their respondent’s place, and get their **definition of the situation**.

2. **Functional Theory** – The second major theoretical perspective in sociology is **Functional**, or **Structural Functional, Theory**. Once again, look at the name of the theory, “structure” and “function.” According to these theorists, every structure in society has a function. A **functionalist theorist** sees society being made up of interrelated parts, a harmonious whole, with the parts working together. Now, this theory sounds like **Herbert Spencer’s organic analogy**, doesn’t it? Every part of the organism is there for a purpose, and, as long as each part is doing what it is supposed to, the organism can function. The same, **functionalists** say, is true for society. The interrelated parts perform their functions and the

society hums right along. This is a very conservative theory. It does not espouse social change, much like **Spencer** did not. The goal of a **functional theorist** is to simply find out what the **function** of the **structure** is. That's it. **Functional theorists** assume that, if it's here, it must be here for a reason, and they just want to find out what that reason is.

**Functionalists** would look at all parts of society - education, politics, the economy, and so forth - and examine what they do for society. **Functionalists** would even say that things like poverty and deviance serve functions for society, because they exist. If they didn't serve any function, we wouldn't have poverty or deviance. And all they would want to do is find out what those functions are.

**Functionalists** say there are two types of functions: **manifest** and **latent functions**. **Manifest functions** are the **intended functions, or consequences, of the structure**; **latent functions** are the **unintended functions or consequences**. For example, our public school system was established to pass information from one generation to the next. That would be a **manifest function** of education. A **latent function** would be the babysitting function our public schools perform. How many parents can't wait until their youngest child starts school? Schools weren't set up to perform that function, but they certainly do it now.

3. **Conflict Theory** – Unlike **functionalists**, **conflict theorists** say society is in a constant state of change, not a harmonious whole puttering along. **Conflict theorists**, instead, stress that conflict is the state of humankind, with people competing with one another for scarce resources. And at the heart of this conflict is **power**. **Power** is the essence of **conflict theory**. **Conflict theorists** examine who has **power** in a society and how that **power** is used. They would say that those who have the **power** use the **power** to their own advantage, even at the expense of the powerless. **Conflict theorists** would indeed agree with **functionalist theorists**, at least to a point. Like **functionalists**, **conflict theorists** would agree that every structure has a function, but they would add an additional question: **Who benefits?**

Because, in this constant competition and struggle for **power**, society just functions better for some than others. Take, for example, the criminal justice system. An examination of our prison



population data indicates a demographic profile of the young, uneducated, poor, minority male. But are these the only ones breaking the law? Or, as **conflict theorists** would say, do the powerful make laws, and enforce laws, to their own benefit?

### Figure 1 – Prison Demographics

**Imprisonment rates of sentenced state and federal prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents of corresponding sex, race, Hispanic origin, and age groups, December 31, 2017**

Age group	Total	Male					Female				
		All male	White <sup>a</sup>	Black <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	Other <sup>a,b</sup>	All female	White <sup>a</sup>	Black <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	Other <sup>a,b</sup>
Total <sup>c</sup>	440	829	397	2,336	1,054	1,257	63	49	92	66	114
18–19	126	235	69	808	248	294	11	6	26	14	16
20–24	614	1,120	410	3,153	1,326	1,572	80	57	129	85	144
25–29	969	1,746	774	4,444	2,129	2,388	162	135	200	163	250
30–34	1,051	1,899	943	5,007	2,330	2,820	185	156	224	187	300
35–39	1,040	1,912	958	5,212	2,312	2,769	167	143	208	161	276
40–44	866	1,615	808	4,552	1,929	2,436	126	107	171	108	197
45–49	704	1,320	695	3,688	1,572	1,962	100	82	148	91	158
50–54	574	1,091	575	3,101	1,314	1,727	74	56	121	68	126
55–59	386	751	394	2,182	1,005	1,221	41	29	70	41	84
60–64	229	458	236	1,336	731	715	20	13	35	26	37
65 or older	78	168	100	449	316	318	5	4	9	7	9
Number of sentenced prisoners <sup>d</sup>	1,439,800	1,334,800	387,400	456,300	317,100	173,900	105,000	49,100	19,600	19,400	17,000

Note: Counts based on prisoners with a sentence of more than one year under the jurisdiction of state or federal correctional officials. Imprisonment rate is the number of prisoners under state or federal jurisdiction with a sentence of more than one year per 100,000 U.S. residents of corresponding sex, race/Hispanic origin, and age. Resident population estimates are from the U.S. Census Bureau for January 1, 2018. Totals include imputed counts for New Mexico and North Dakota, which did not submit 2017 National Prisoner Statistics data. See *Methodology*.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic/Latino origin (e.g., white refers to non-Hispanic white; black refers to non-Hispanic black). See *Methodology*.

<sup>b</sup>Includes Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Other Pacific Islanders; American Indians and Alaska Natives; and persons of two or more races.

<sup>c</sup>Includes persons of all ages.

<sup>d</sup>Race/Hispanic origin totals are rounded to the nearest 100 to reflect estimation of sentenced prisoners.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics, 2017; Federal Justice Statistics Program, 2017 (preliminary); National Corrections Reporting Program, 2016; Survey of Prison Inmates, 2016; and U.S. Census Bureau, post-censal resident population estimates for January 1, 2018.

For more current prison demographics information, go to page 26, Table 23, [Prisoners in 2021](#).

And that is what a **conflict theorist** would do – try to find out who benefits, and who suffers, and how the **power** is used, or misused. **Conflict theorists** are the ones who would use that earlier definition of sociology, “**why things don’t have to be the way they are.**” Unlike **functionalists**, who want to maintain the status quo, and just understand what the parts of society do, **conflict theorists** would seek change to benefit the powerless, and bring equity to the structures of society.

## Levels of Analysis

Those are the three big theories in sociology. Of course, if we study groups, we have to acknowledge that groups come in all sizes, from small to large. The size of the group a researcher studies is up to the researcher. To state it simply, the researcher can study small groups, which would be a “**micro-level analysis**,” or study a larger group, or even the whole society, a “**macro-level analysis**.” For our three theories, **symbolic interaction** is **micro-level**, studying individuals or small groups. The other two, **functional** and **conflict theories**, are **macro-level**, studying large groups, or even the whole society.

At the **micro-level**, a **symbolic interactionist** might be interested in studying such things as personal space, eye contact, or stereotypes and the self-fulfilling prophecy. Among the **research designs**, **symbolic interactionists** would be more likely to use **participant observations**, **experiments**, **unobtrusive measures**, or **case studies**, as these would involve a single person or just a few people, and could yield understanding the subjects’ points of view (**verstehen**).

On the other hand, **functionalists** and **conflict theorists** would look at the bigger picture, employing a **macro-level analysis**. Moving from the **micro** to the **macro level** of analysis means that the options for what groups to study increase, as the groups could be just a few people, or the entire country. To better explain the **macro-level** of analysis, let’s take a look at the entire **social structure**, and its component parts, as these are the things **functionalists** and **conflict theorists** examine.

## The Social Structure

The **social structure** refers to the “**typical patterns of a group or society**,” the **framework of society**. The **social structure** was here before us and, as such, has a great influence on us, both our thoughts and behavior. The **sociological significance of the social structure is that it guides our behavior**. The **social structure** is what makes for predictability of behavior. Think back to the concept “**social location**.” Your **social location** refers to your positions in the **social structure**, and those positions guide your behavior, limiting your choices and giving you options unique to the time and place you find yourself occupying. **Sociologists believe that the**

**differences in our behaviors and beliefs are not due to biology, but to our location in the social structure.**

Let's examine the parts of the **social structure**. Think in terms of an organizational chart, maybe where you work, or take a look at this link for the [organizational chart for Texarkana College](#), which is also located at our class homepage:

- (a) **Status** – A **position you occupy in the social structure** is called a **status**. Being a student, friend, son, or daughter are all **statuses**. Some **statuses** are involuntary, like your sex. These are called **ascribed statuses**. Some are voluntary, like friend, and are **achieved statuses**. Some of our **statuses** seems to affect our other **statuses**, and may be how others identify us. These would be our **master statuses**. In our society, sex is a **master status** (this is, after all, a patriarchy!). For some, their occupation might be a **master status**. A handicapped person would probably be identified as a handicapped person before any other **status** he/she might occupy. For some, maybe a deviant label, such as criminal or ex-convict, is their **master status**. As you can see, a **master status** can affect our interactions with others, and even limit our options in terms of behavior.
- (b) **Role** – The **behavior expectations** associated with a **status** are called **roles**. You occupy a **status**, you play a **role**. Most **statuses** have multiple **roles**, and here is where the predictability of behavior comes in. In a given position (**status**) the person plays out the given behaviors (**roles**). Yes, there is room for variations and individual choice, but those choices are within a small range of choices available at any given time or place. We really aren't as free to act as we think we are.
- (c) **Group** – **Statuses** and **roles** are at the individual, **micro-level of analysis**. In a mid-range area before we get to the largest group, the society, is the social **group**. **Groups**, of course, are of many sizes, from your family to this college. In sociological terms, and as a part of the **social structure**, a **group** is a **set of people who occupy statuses and play out roles in relation to each other**. Once again, see that predictability of behavior. We can come together

in a **group**, like this classroom, with me occupying the **status** “teacher” and you the **status** “student.” You know what to expect from me because you know the **roles** associated with the **status** “teacher,” and I know what to expect from you, because I know the **roles** associated with the **status** “student.”

Of course, there are other gatherings of individuals that don't constitute a social **group**. For example, an “**aggregate**” refers to a group of people who just happen to be in the same place at the same time, like people waiting at a bus stop. A “**category**” is a group of people with a similar characteristic or common status, like all college students. In these cases, with both **aggregates** and **categories**, people are not occupying **statuses** and playing out **roles** in relation to each other.

Additionally, these social groups can be **primary groups** or **secondary groups**. These two concepts are rather broad, and there is gray area in identifying whether or not a group is a **primary** or **secondary group**, but, for our purposes, think of your family or friends when thinking about **primary groups**, and your workplace or this college when thinking about **secondary groups**.

According to Charles Horton Cooley, **primary groups** give the individual his/her main sense of self. They are “**primary**” in that they are essential to the development of the self, where we learn to be the people we become. **Primary groups** are characterized by intimate, face-to-face interactions, and tend to be small and permanent. Sound like families, don't they?

On the other hand, the opposite of everything we say about **primary groups** is true about **secondary groups**. **Secondary groups** tend to be larger, anonymous, formal, impersonal, and goal-oriented. In a **secondary group**, you probably won't have face-to-face interaction with all members. **Primary groups** can, of course develop out of **secondary groups**, and tend to since **secondary groups** do not satisfy our needs for intimate human connections.

Sociologists also study **in-groups** and **out-groups**. A rather simple sounding dichotomy, this distinction has implications for behaviors at both the **micro** and **macro-levels**. An “**in-group**” is, quite simply, **a group to which you belong and feel a sense of loyalty toward**. Conversely, an “**out-group**” is **one to which you feel no sense of belonging, and usually feel hostility toward its members**. At the **micro-level**, this **in-group/outgroup** analysis can help us understand such unthinkable behaviors as hate crimes; at the **macro-level**, we can use these group distinctions to study attitudes towards immigration, race relations, or even the battle between the sexes. This is a “we-they” type of analysis: “we” the good guys, and “they” the bad guys. What we consider to be virtuous for us (“We’re close-knit!”) is a vice for the other (“They’re clannish.”).

At times there may be a group that we wish to join, or perhaps that we simply wish to emulate or whose approval we seek. These groups are called **reference groups**. You can consider them “role models.” These are the **people or groups we use to evaluate our own performance**. For you, it may be your parents and other family members. For a juvenile delinquent, it may be a gang or criminal group. The influence of these **reference groups** is undeniable, as they are used to help us shape our own behaviors and beliefs.

(d) **Institution** – At the larger societal level is the final part of the **social structure**, the **institution**. An **institution** in sociological terms refers to **the established ways we have to meet our basic needs**. **Institutions** are “how we get the jobs done.” Just think for a moment about what “jobs” we must do to insure we survive from one generation to the next – production and distribution of food, protection, reproduction, educating the young, etc. We have standard, usual, established ways of meeting those needs, our **institutions**. In other words, we don’t have reinvent the wheel each generation; we have these means for doing things.

Since the means for acquiring the needs we have as members of society are established and passed from one generation to the next, **social institutions** set the context for your behavior and beliefs. Imagine if you had been born a hundred years earlier. What would be different about you? The **social structure** was certainly different one hundred years ago – our economy, our education system, the family, the medical institution, and so forth, weren’t like they are today.

The whole daily cycle of life was different. You almost certainly wouldn't be sitting in a college classroom, and probably wouldn't even be a high school graduate. Once again, we see the predictability of human behavior, all based on our **social location**.

These are the parts of the **social structure** – the **status, roles, groups, and institutions**.

It is the **social structure** that holds society, and the individuals in the society, together. We are not islands unto ourselves, we interact with each other and influence each other and depend on each other acting in a certain way that we then know how to react to. The **social structure** connects us to others in the society, starting with the **statuses** we occupy that make us members of **groups**, and as members of those **groups**, parts of the **social institutions**. All of these associations link us to other people, and we refer to this **series of associations we have because of the social structure** as our **social network**. All of these relationships radiating out from the individual, reaching all the way to the largest societal level, make social life possible and predictable.

No discussion of the social structure would be complete without a discussion of social change. Of course, we all know from studying history that societies differ in terms of their **social structures**. But what causes these changes and leads to different types of societies? When I asked earlier that you imagine that you had lived one hundred years ago, you knew that society was different today from then, and so many changes had happened since then, such that someone from the early 1900s would be a little surprised if they were to arrive in our current society. Why does social change occur?

There are many theories of social change. Max Weber said it was the religion of the people, and explained his theory very well in his book, [The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism](#). Change could occur due to the climate, or the terrain. Certainly arable farmland and access to waterways are benefits to any society in terms of development, as, too is an abundance of natural resources like oil, gold, minerals. But the theory of social change I want to discuss is called the **Sociocultural Evolution** theory, from the work of sociologist [Gerhard Lenski](#). This theory of social change posits a very simple **hypothesis**:

**As societies become better able at exploiting the environment to feed their people, they will grow in complexity.**

In other words, until you've got your belly full, you aren't going to care about doing anything else but scavenging for food. This theory is kind of Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" at the **macro-level**. But, according to **Sociocultural Evolution** theory of social change, the better able, more efficient the society is at feeding its people, the more complex it will grow. And so, too, will its **social structure**.

So this hypothesis has two **variables**, "**exploiting the environment**," and "**complexity**." By "**exploiting the environment**," it means (remember, ask that question, "what do you mean?" to find how the **variable** is measured) "**efficiency of food production**." By "**complexity**," it means two things – **division of labor and stratification**. The society will have a greater **division of labor** (different people doing different things), and **stratification** (some people will have more than others). And as we look at the types of societies examined by this theory, you will see that, as they are better able to feed their people, they will experience a growth in **division of labor and stratification**.

According to this theory, based on the **variables** stated above, there are six types of societies, and one more that is emerging. What brought about the social change, and movement from one type of society to the next, was some type of "**social revolution**," that is, **a major change that led to increased food production**, and, as theorized, **complexity**. Here are the types of societies, and the **social revolutions** that led to each one.

1. **Hunting and gathering society** – Early mankind, and some few isolated bands of people in existence today, lived in small groups of hunters and gatherers. As you might suspect, these people hunted and gathered for food. Everyone in the society participated, except babies, and everyone shared what they picked or trapped, as there was no way to preserve food. These tended to be very small, nomadic tribes. There was no division of labor, and no stratification.

And they were very nomadic, as they would pick all the berries off the berry bush, or kill all the small animals in an area, and have to move on.

2 and 3. **Pastoral and Horticultural societies** – About ten thousand years ago, our ancestors got a clue that if they could raise a food supply, their lives wouldn't be quite so tenuous. This was the **first social revolution, domestication of animals and plants**. Whether a society began raising animals (**pastoral society**) or using hand tools to cultivate the soil (**horticultural society**) probably depended upon the terrain. But now a more steady food supply could be counted on. We begin to see some **division of labor** (artisans, clergy), and **stratification** (some would accumulate more than others). But the revolution that would change everything about the way mankind lived was waiting just around the corner.

4. **Agricultural society** – About six thousand years ago, the **second revolution** occurred and it changed forever the way we live. That revolution involved the invention of the **plow**. Now, the plow may not seem so revolutionary to you, but it changed everything. For the first time in mankind's history, large food surpluses existed. With the plow, it was possible to plant more crop than a family could possibly eat, and this surplus meant not everyone had to work at food production. We see the formation of large cities and civilizations, and an emerging system of **stratification**, as some produced more than others and could amass more possessions, and power, than others. Yes, this was indeed a revolution, and society hasn't been the same since.

5. **Industrial society** – This is one revolution that most students are aware of, the **third social revolution, the industrial revolution**, where machines, initially water and steam powered, were used to do what mankind and animals had traditionally done. This started in the second half of the 1700s in England, and spread across the channel to the continent of Europe, and then to our country in the mid to late 1800s. This led to greater productivity, greater division of labor, and growing inequality.



Notice what is going on. Societies are getting more **efficient at feeding their people** and therefore growing in **complexity**. But you ain't seen nothing yet, as the next revolution will change everything again.

6. **Postindustrial society** – Most of you, when you finish college and begin your careers, won't work in a field where, at the end of the day, you will have produced a product you can hold in your hands. Most of you will be engaged in producing information or providing a service. These are the hallmarks of a **postindustrial society** – production of information and provision of services. We are no longer a “smoke-stack” society, with factories dotting the landscape. Those jobs are gone – overseas or to mechanization. Now, we wear white collars and work in offices. These changes have been brought about by the **fourth social revolution, the invention of the microchip**.

7. **Biotech society** – The **Sociocultural Evolution theory** posits that there is an emerging society, the **biotech society**. This society is being ushered in because of the **fifth social revolution, the decoding of the human genome**. This type of society is one where the economy will be based on modifying genetics to produce food, medicine, and other necessities. Just think about this emerging society – we now have genetically modified foods, there are medical procedures performed every day that were unthinkable a generation ago, and we are all into better living through manipulating our environment.

From cloning to stem cells to face transplants, it is indeed a brave new world. For example, at the turn of the last century, life expectancy was 47; today it is 75. What will life expectancy be at the turn of the next century?

As stated earlier, each of these changes results in changes in the **social structure**, and the **statuses** and **roles** we occupy and play, and the **groups** to which we belong. The result of all of this change is that we change, too, depending on the society we live in. As was stated earlier, **you are who you are because of when and where you are**.

### Part 1, Section 3 Review – The Theories of Sociology

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with them.

Theories

Symbols

Symbolic Interaction

Thomas Theorem

Functional Theory

Manifest and Latent Functions

Conflict Theory

Macro-level Analysis

Micro-level Analysis

Social Structure

Status

Ascribed Status

Achieved Status

Master Status

Roles

Group

Social Institution

Aggregate

Category

Primary Group

Secondary Group

In-group

Out-group

Reference Group

Social Network

Sociocultural Evolution Theory (seven types of societies and five social revolutions)

## PART 2, SECTION 1

### Culture

#### Culture – what we study

**Culture** refers to the “**shared products of a human society.**” “**Society**” refers to the people. We often use the words “**culture**” and “**society**” interchangeably, but they aren’t synonyms. “**Society**” refers to **people who occupy a given territory, and share a culture.** “**Society**” is people, “**culture**” what they create. Of course, it’s really no big deal if we use these words interchangeably – but, just to be clear, there are the definitions.

There are two parts to the **culture** – the **material culture** and the **nonmaterial culture**. The **material culture** refers to the tangible, concrete creations of a society, such as buildings, clothing, or furniture. The **nonmaterial culture** means the intangibles of a society, the abstract, those things you can’t see or touch. Sociologists study the **nonmaterial culture**.

Of course, if you remember from an earlier section our discussion of “**empirical evidence,**” you can see a corner we are painting ourselves into. “**Empirical evidence**” is anything you can detect with your senses, and we are choosing to study the abstract, intangible, unseen parts of society, the things you cannot directly detect with your senses. Wow, are we geniuses! But somebody needs to do it, so why not sociologists?

So, let’s forget “**material culture**”; the anthropologists and archeologists can study that. We will turn our attention to the “**nonmaterial culture,**” and here we find that the abstract components of society are of two parts: (1) a group’s ways of thinking and, (2) a group’s ways of doing. We can refer to these components as the **cognitive** (thinking) culture and **normative** (doing) cultures. In other words, we study how people think concerning the nature of reality, and how their behaviors follow from those thoughts.

Because the **nonmaterial culture** cannot be directly detected with the senses, we must assign meaning to the thoughts and behaviors by the use of symbols. Thus, the **nonmaterial culture** is often referred to as the “**symbolic culture**.” Remember, a “**symbol**” is something that stands for or represents something other than itself. If we say someone is feeling blue, we know the person is feeling sad. The word “blue” in our culture, when used in this way, is symbolic of being sad. Yes, blue is an actual color (which we symbolize by calling it “blue”), but we attach another meaning to it and it now symbolizes an emotion. Take a look at the reading “WC” on page 134 or at the “[Resources](#)” link at our class homepage, to see how cultures have different ways of defining symbols.

Those of you who have traveled outside the United States can relate very well to this discussion of “**culture**,” but you can also experience differences in **cultures** when you travel within the United States. Unfortunately, when we encounter people who think and act differently than we do, we are apt to label them “weird,” or “strange.” This is referred to as **ethnocentrism**, which is **the tendency to judge others by the standards of our own culture**. It is so important to remember that we are not to judge, but to try to understand, the differences in **cultures**. This is called **cultural relativism**, which is **trying to determine, relative to the overall culture, why the belief or practice exists**. In other words, how another group thinks or acts may not work for us, but it must work for that group, or they wouldn’t do it.

As an example, let’s look at the practices of monogamy and polygamy. Monogamy means you can only have one spouse at a time; polygamy allows for more than one spouse at a time. In the United States, we are monogamous, but there are more cultures around the world that allow polygamy than require monogamy. This seems strange to us, but it works for those polygamous societies, given their overall **culture**. Most polygamous **cultures** are based on a system of religious beliefs, such as Islam, that supports polygamy. In the United States, we are Judeo-Christian in terms of major religious preference, and these religions support monogamy. This is **cultural relativism** – seeing how the practice or belief fits into the overall culture.

That’s not to say that experiencing **cultures** that are different from your own can’t be a shocking, even disorienting experience. This phenomenon is referred to as **culture shock**. It can take a

while to get your “sea legs” when you find yourself around people who define reality differently from you. But, don’t be **ethnocentric**! Use **cultural relativity** to understand their differences, and hope they will do the same for you.

## The Cognitive Culture

Psychologists refer to our thoughts as “cognitions,” so the **cognitive culture** refers to how we think concerning the nature of reality, how we define and make our own reality (sounds like “**definition of the situation**,” I’m sure you are saying). The basic components of **cognitive culture** are **gestures** (including facial expressions and body language), **language** (written and spoken), and **values**.

Maybe you have traveled to a **culture** where **gestures** had different meanings from the ones you and your **culture** used. The meanings assigned to hand gestures, facial expressions, body language, personal space, eye contact, etc., vary among **cultures**. Remember when President Obama was slammed in the press because he bowed lower than the emperor of Japan? In Japanese **culture**, bowing is a way of extending a greeting, and the person who bows lower is showing a submissive status. In other words, the leader of the free world showed submission to the Japanese emperor. Horrors! Or how about when Michelle Obama was introduced to Queen Elizabeth, and gave her a hug. More horrors! You don’t touch the queen. But, based on the definition of these **symbols (gestures)** in our **culture** (bowing and hugging), the Obamas, I’m sure, felt they were acting appropriately. Check out this link, [Gestures](#), to see how gestures have different meanings in different cultures.

**Language** is also a part of the **cognitive culture**. **Language** is just a set of **symbols** used for communication, both oral and written. As a society, we have a shared agreement concerning what those **symbols** mean. We agree what the twenty-six letters of our alphabet mean, and how to combine them into words that have meaning, and thus form sentences so that those **symbols** have meaning to us and we can communicate.

Think of other sets of **symbols** used for communicating: braille, Morse code, shorthand, sign language, to name a few. If you don't understand the meanings of the **symbols** in those types of communication systems, you can't communicate with someone using those **symbols**. But those **symbols** only have meaning because we agree what those meanings are. Maybe when you were a kid, you had a club with a secret handshake, and maybe even a secret code to communicate? Only the people you chose could know the meaning of those symbols, and for everyone else, keep out!

**Values** are a part of the **cognitive culture**. **Values** refer to a **society's standards**, society's definition of what is good or bad, right or wrong. **Values** are broad, abstract concepts, such as "liberty," "freedom," "family." Not all cultures have the same **values**, but, once again, these are just symbolic of how a group of people feel concerning the nature of reality. Take, for example, the **value** "freedom." After watching the video, the "Lost boys of Sudan," do you believe their definition of "freedom" is the same as ours?

Advertisers often use basic American values to sell their products. In ads you'll see the happy family whose mom cleaned their house with a certain floor-care product or the beautiful woman on the arm of the man drinking just the right kind of beer. What's really being "sold" in those advertisements – a product or a way of life? We aren't so shallow as to believe that our lives will magically change and be better if we buy a certain floor care product or drink a certain beer, but the subtle message is still hard to ignore! Maybe without really thinking, we buy the kinds of people we want to be more than we buy a product.

### **The Normative Culture**

The second part of the **symbolic (nonmaterial) culture** is the **normative culture**, a society's ways of doing, the **behavior expectations**. These **behavior expectations** are called **norms**. A **norm** is society's, or the group's, desired behavior. Society uses **sanctions** to enforce the **norms**. A **sanction** is a **social control**. It can be a **positive sanction**, such a smile for doing what you are supposed to do, or a **negative sanction**, such as a frown, for not following a **norm**.

Society does not leave it up to the individual to choose his/her behavior, but uses **sanctions** to reward or punish the behavior of its members.

The severity of **sanctions** varies, depending on how important the behavior is for society.

**Norms** that are not strongly sanctioned are called **folkways**. These are customs, habits, what I consider to be social niceties. You eat your soup with a spoon, for example, not a fork. You could eat your soup with a fork, if you chose to do so. It's just more pleasant for the rest of us if you don't! **Norms** that are considered more essential for society's survival, and, thus, more strictly **sanctioned**, are called **mores**. These are behaviors like stealing, murder, or rape. When our society was younger, up until the mid to late 1800s, **primary groups sanctioned** its members for violating **mores**, but, as society grew in size and complexity, we saw the beginnings of our criminal justice system. Police departments were formed, jails and prisons built, and the criminal justice system took over the role of **sanctioning** the violation of these behaviors. These **mores**, since they were considered so essential for society's survival, were written down into **laws**, and a penalty (**sanction**) attached for their violation. Now, the formal agents of social control, the police, courts, and prisons, **sanction** violations of the **norms** called **laws**; informal agents of social control, such as family and friends, **sanction** the violation of **folkways** and **mores**.

The **cognitive** and **normative cultures** are, of course, related. How we think concerning the nature of reality (**cognitive culture**) affects our behaviors (**normative culture**). Ideally, our **values** (what we say is good, right, desirable) should be upheld by our **norms**. Our behaviors should support our beliefs. In reality, that isn't always the case.

Just like some people can't be trusted to do what they say they will do (those hypocrites!), as a society we can be hypocritical. Our **values** are not always supported by our **norms**. This shows the gap between the **ideal and the real culture**. Ideally, we hold one belief (**value**), but, in reality, our behavior (**norm**) belies that belief. We say one thing and do another. As an example, we **value** "equality," but do we treat everyone equally?

Within each **culture** there are groups that are part of the dominant **culture**, but set apart by their lifestyles, lingo, dress, etc. We call these groups **subcultures**, **cultures within the culture**. They are active participants in the dominant **culture**, but distinguishable from the dominant **culture** in some way. **Subcultures** include age **subcultures**, racial and ethnic **subcultures**, geographic **subcultures**, religious **subcultures**, occupational **subcultures**, hobbyists, and so forth. There are hundreds, probably thousands, of **subcultures** in the American **culture**. They can allow the individual to stand apart from the larger group while embracing the larger **culture**, but having a slightly different set of **norms** and **values**.

There are also groups called **countercultures**. Look at the prefix of that word – counter. The **norms** and **values** of these groups run counter to, in opposition to, those of the dominant **culture**. These groups don't just want to be slightly set apart from the dominant group, they openly challenge the dominant **culture**. The decade of the 1960s was a time period of many **countercultures**: the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Weatherman, the Black Panthers, to name a few. But other **countercultures** are still around, like the skinhead groups that periodically make the news, and cults like Heaven's Gate. These groups aren't just going along to get along, they want to force society to be radically different.

## **Changing Values and Norms**

Parts of the **culture** are not static, but dynamic, changing over time for a variety of reasons. Technology is a source of social change, as we saw from our earlier discussion of social change. Can we even begin to list all of the changes brought about by the automobile, computers, or, as we mentioned, the plow?

At times, one part of society may change more rapidly than another part, causing a condition called **cultural lag**. For example, our nine month school year is a relic of our agrarian roots, when children were needed at home during planting and harvesting seasons. The rest of the year, they could go to school.



Our thoughts and behaviors can change because we come in contact with others from a different **culture**, and adopt their ways of doing things, or we can read about, hear about, or visit another **culture**. This **sharing of cultural components** is called **cultural diffusion**. Over time, as **cultural diffusion** takes place, **cultures** tend to **become more similar to one another**. This process is called **cultural leveling**. Just think: how much of what we consider to be “uniquely American” is really just “borrowed” from other cultures? Take a look at the reading, “The one hundred percent American” on page 135, or at the “[Resources](#)” link at our class homepage.

This process has been going on for centuries, as people migrate from one area of the globe to another, taking with them their language, foods, religions, beliefs, and behaviors. But think about how much easier it is today to know what is going on over on the other side of the world. **Culture diffusion** has accelerated, and **cultures** are growing in similarity at a faster rate than ever before.

For the Unit 1 Movie Quiz, you’ll watch three movies that take a more in-depth look at how **cultures** differ. I think you will get a glimpse into what this section is about, how “**culture,**” **the shared products of a human society**, varies around the world.

## Part 2, Section 1 Review - Culture

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with them.

Culture

Society

Nonmaterial Culture (Cognitive and Normative)

Symbolic Culture

Ethnocentrism

Cultural Relativism

Culture Shock

Values

Norms (folkways, mores, and laws)

Sanctions

Ideal and Real Culture

Subcultures

Countercultures

Cultural Lag

Cultural Diffusion

Cultural Leveling

## PART 2, SECTION 2

### Socialization

#### **Socialization – how we learn our culture**

All sciences have assumptions. Assumptions are simply those things which you cannot prove, but assume to be true. In sociology, we make an assumption that all human behavior is learned, as are the ways we think concerning the nature of reality. In other words, humans have no instincts. All members of society must be taught their **culture**, and not just the **material**, but the **nonmaterial culture** as well. It is not possible to empirically detect whether or not humans are genetically programmed to think or act in certain ways in certain situations. Since sociologists study how groups affect behavior, we assume that we are not genetically programmed, hard-wired if you will, like lower animals, and, thus, have no instincts.

**Socialization** is how that learning takes place. Specifically, **socialization** is the **process by which people learn, and internalize, the ways of their group or society, and, in the process, develop a sense of self**. This definition contains a lot of information. In the first place, **socialization** is a process – it is lifelong. When do we start teaching newborn babies the ways of their group or society, and when do we stop teaching a person? Secondly, the learning must involve the individual **internalizing** the information, that is, making it his/her own. You can study other **cultures** without adopting them as your own. For the **socialization** process to be successful, the individual must accept the thought or behavior, **internalize** it, and make it a part of themselves. Otherwise we have a sociopath on our hands.

Finally, during the process of **socialization**, as the individual receives feedback from others about the kind of person they are and how well they are performing their roles, the **self** develops. The **self** is the **ability to see your “self,” separate and distinct from others**. It is the ability to see your **“self”** as others see you. You can describe your **“self,”** using adjectives (“I’m pretty! charming! witty! outgoing! intelligent!”), and nouns (“I’m a female, a daughter, a friend.”). You get these ideas about your **“self”** as you interact with others in this process of **socialization**.

Sociologists use the word “**self**” the same way the psychologists use the word “**personality**.” They are pretty much synonyms; the main difference is how they develop. To the psychologist, the **personality** you exhibit is due mainly to inherited traits, genetics, or **nature**; for sociologists, the **self** derives mainly from group interactions, from the environment, from **nurture**. This **nature/nurture** debate (**heredity v. environment**) will never be resolved. In other words, are you who you are because you were born to be this way? Or are you who you are because of the environment you were born into? Of course, the answer is “yes” to both. Psychologists do not ignore the role of the environment in shaping personality (just look at B. F. Skinner’s behaviorism!), and sociologists certainly do not ignore the role of heredity. Sociologists do not believe in the “**tabula rasa**,” that is, “**blank slate**” theory of human development. We accept that there are at birth (or, better, conception) traits, characteristics, talents, predispositions, tendencies that will shape the development of the **self**. But we give primacy to the environment, **nurture**, in the development of the **self**, just as the psychologists give primacy to **nature**. What we say in our science is this: **You are born with certain potential (nature); how that potential develops depends upon the environment (nurture).**

## **Learning our culture**

There are a number of groups who teach you your culture. These groups, or **agents of socialization**, include the family, school, peers, media, religion, the workplace, day care, etc. The family is considered the primary **agent of socialization**, due its vast influence on the individual. Not only does the family get the child first, but you are always a member of your family, so their influence is lifelong. Family also places the individual in the social class ladder, gives them the neighborhood they will grow up in, and thus the school they will attend and friends they will make. In other words, family “places” us in the social structure in many ways, and the influence of the family is tremendous.

Of course, throughout your life, you will join new groups, and leave old ones. Each time your group membership changes, it will change you, too. If you change neighborhoods, schools, jobs,

get married, have a baby, and so forth, the changes will result in you learning new **norms** and **values**. This is called **resocialization**. **Resocialization** is simply **the process of learning new norms and values**, and most **resocialization** builds on one's existing **norms** and **values**. For some **resocialization**, you will undergo a period of **anticipatory socialization**, where you prepare yourself to adopt the new **status** and **roles**. For example, if you become engaged, you may take premarital counseling classes to help you learn how to be a spouse. Or, if you start a new job, you may have a time of training to learn how to do the job.

There are times, however, when **resocialization** is of a more extreme nature. This type of **resocialization** occurs in what are called **total institutions**. A **total institution** is **a place where the person is confined, cut off from society, and control of his/her life given over to others**. A good example of a **total institution** would be a prison, or the military. In these **total institutions**, the relearning of **norms** and **values** will not build on the person's existing **norms** and **values**; instead, new ways of acting and thinking are required for survival in the **total institution**. **Resocialization** in the **total institution** often begins with the individual experiencing a **degradation ceremony**, a **ritualistic stripping away of the old self**. Getting rid of the old **self** makes it much easier for the **total institution** to build the new **self**.

## Theories of Socialization

**Symbolic interactionists** study the process of **socialization**. As **micro** level theorists they are interested in determining how people define **symbols** and make their own reality.

And they are interested in how people come to define their "**selves**." (That's not bad grammar. I know "theirselves" is not a word, but, in this case, "their" is a possessive pronoun and "selves" the noun.) Probably every psychologist has a theory of personality. But, for our purposes, we are going to limit our discussion of these theories to just two sociologists, those of **Charles Horton Cooley** and **George Herbert Mead**.

**Cooley** and the "**Looking-glass Self**" – Just like we use a mirror to check our physical appearance, so, too, says Cooley, we use people as a "looking-glass" to check our social

appearance. As we interact with others, we watch their reactions to us, such things as facial expressions, body language, the spoken word. As a result, we either maintain our behavior, if we interpret these **symbols** positively, or alter it, if we interpret the feedback we are getting in a negative way.

**Cooley** says it is a three-step process:

- (1) How we imagine we appear to others.
- (2) How we think others judge our appearance.
- (3) How that judgment makes us feel.

If we feel good about that judgment, we will experience a more positive self-concept; if we feel the judgment is negative, we may experience a more negative self-concept. Of course, we don't always interpret the **symbols** used in communication accurately (the whole essence of "**definition of the situation**"), and, thus, we may incorrectly interpret how others are judging us. Have you ever thought a friend had made a catty comment to you and you took offense, only to learn later that the friend had meant no offense by the comment?

**Mead** and "**Taking the role of the other**" – Psychologists tell us that play behavior is essential to the development of the **personality**, and it is childhood play behavior that is the focus of **Mead's** theory. Did you "play pretend" when you were growing up? According to **Mead**, as we play out our pretend games, **take the role of the other**, we begin to see the world from other people's points of view. As the child takes on more of these **roles**, and begins to see how other people see the world, he/she gains an understanding of where he/she fits into the world, what he/she can expect of others and what they, in return, expect of him/her. The **self** begins to emerge, as the child starts to see him/herself as others do.

Like **Cooley's** theory, **Mead's** has three stages. These stages approximate certain ages of the child's development. Perhaps you have studied the "ages and stages" theory of child development: all children will go through certain stages, but will do them at different ages. For example, all (normal) babies will scoot, pull up, sit up, crawl, and walk, but will do them at

different ages. The same is true for the stages of **Mead's** theory. Additionally, the development of these social skills go hand in hand with cognitive and physical development. Here are the stages the child goes through as his/her **self** develops through role taking:

1. **Imitation** – Role taking begins with simple imitation, mimicking of behaviors. Of course, the child will not be able to begin this role playing, and become an active participant in the **socialization** process, until he/she is able to manipulate the environment by sitting up, grasping objects, etc. This will start around five or six months, earlier for some, later for others, but the child will start to imitate simple one role behaviors of what **Mead** calls “**significant others**,” that is, **people the baby is around, who have a major influence on his/her development**. **Significant others** would include parents, siblings, day care providers, and so forth. Imagine a ten-month old baby, sitting on the kitchen floor while mom cooks supper. The baby has a pot and wooden spoon. Mom stirs the pot on the stove, baby stirs his pot. The baby has no idea that mom is cooking a meal the family will eat for supper, he/she is simply imitating a behavior of a significant other.

2. **Play** - Somewhere around age two and a half to three, earlier for some, later for others, until about age six, the child will move from imitating simple one role behaviors to playing out the roles of **significant others**. Now the child isn't simply mimicking, he/she is acting like the person for a reason. For example, dad packs his briefcase, kisses mom good-bye, and heads to work. The toddler gets a little suitcase, puts some papers in it, and plays “daddy going to work.” This is not just imitating, but taking on an active role of the **significant other**. At this age, a lot of the toys we give our children help them in this role playing behavior – fireman hats, play kitchens, doctor kits. But, remember, the cognitive development is still at the point that a child of this age really doesn't understand all the elements of a fireman's job, or what cooking involves, or what all doctors do. They can simply play out a **role** of that **status**.

3. **Games** – The third stage **Mead** called the “**games**” stage. At this stage, which begins around ages six or seven, the child starts to get an idea that there are reasons why people do the things they do. And, not only that, but there are expectations of what he/she is supposed to do.

This notion of what **Mead** calls the “**generalized other**” requires that the child be able to see how these multiple roles played by him/herself and others work together. This “**generalized other**” is the **child’s idea about what people in general expect of him/her**. I think of it as the child begins to understand the “rules of the game.” And it is at this stage that games involving more complex rules can be played by the child. Of course, a lot of this is due to increased cognitive development, but a lot has to do with the level of social skills the child now possesses. Have you ever watched young children playing on the floor? Those under ages four or five tend to play side by side; as they get older, they turn toward each other, develop rules, and begin to play together. This is a good example of the change from the **play** to the **game** stage of the development of the **self**.

Another example of **Mead’s** theory is board games. I just looked in the closet where I keep all the board games my children have ever (and I mean ever!) had. All three of my sons are now grown, but, hey, we still have family game night every now and then. I looked at the recommended ages on the boxes. For the games for young children, the age ranges were “4 – 7”, or “5 – 8”. One even said “3 – 7”. Notice those ages – those are pretty much children leaving the **imitation stage** (3, 4, and 5) and going into the **play stage**, and just before they get to the **game stage** (ages 7 and 8). For older kids, the age ranges were “7 to adult” or “8 to adult”, ages where the child is moving firmly into the **game stage**. Of course, the rules get more complex in these games, but the level of cognitive development has increased and the more complex rules can be understood.

We still “play pretend” as adults; that’s what **anticipatory socialization** is all about. **Taking the role of the other** can continue into adulthood, as, too, does the **looking-glass self**. In every interaction, we are aware of others in our environment, and the ways they interpret our behaviors, and our feelings about their judgments continue to affect our sense of **self**.

I find it amazing that you can take a newborn, helpless infant, and, a few years down the road, with proper **socialization**, have a fully functioning member of society. **Cooley’s** and **Mead’s** theories are attempts to explain how this process occurs. As we interact with others, watching



other's reactions to us and gauging how well we are performing socially, and as we put ourselves in the places of others so we can begin to get the "big picture" of how the world in general works and where we fit in, we begin to get a feeling about the kind of person we are, our **self**, and how to play out our roles.

### **Socialized to be robots? I think not!**

The question arises: do we have freedom of choice in behavior and thoughts, or, because of our **social location**, the **statuses** we occupy and **roles** we play, and the experience of the **socialization** process, are we programmed like robots to act a certain way in a given situation? The answer, of course, is no. We are not robots, we are not programmed. We have freedom to choose our behavior and thoughts. The only problem is, we probably aren't as free as we like to think we are. Freedom of choice does indeed exist; but it is freedom of choice among the small range of the options available to you at the particular time and place where you are located.

## Part 2, Section 2 Review - Socialization

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with them.

Socialization

Self

Nature

Nurture

Tabula Rasa

Agents of Socialization

Resocialization

Anticipatory Socialization

Total Institution

Degradation Ceremony

Cooley's "Looking Glass Self"

Mead's "Taking the Role of the Other"

Significant Others

Generalized Others

## PART 3, SECTION 1

### Deviance

#### What is deviance?

Up to this point, we have talked about how predictable human behavior is. However, sometimes behavior does not follow the **norms**, and people act in unpredictable ways. So, it is appropriate, I think, at this point to include in the text the chapter on “**deviance**,” and take a look at behavior that is, to say the least, non-normative.

Conformity and **deviance** are flip-sides of the same coin. Conformity involves following **norms**; **deviance** is **violation of norms**. Remember, “**norms**” are behavior expectations, and range in severity from those least likely to be sanctioned, **folkways**, to **mores**, and then **laws**. Of course, with so many **subcultures** and **countercultures**, it is easy to conform to the **norms** of one group while violating the **norms** of another. In other words, **deviance** is a relative definition. No behavior is always **deviant** or always **normative**. Who and what are defined as **deviant** depends on such factors as what is the behavior? where is it being done? who is it being done to? who has the power to define the behavior? What was once considered **deviant** may no longer be defined as such, and behaviors once considered **normative** may now be defined as **deviant**.

Howard Becker, a **symbolic interactionist**, said it best: **It is not the act itself, but the reactions to the act, that make something deviant.** **Deviance**, in other words, is a definition placed on behavior by those who have the power to define it. Some people can (literally) get away with murder, while others have their behaviors carefully monitored and find themselves being punished for the slightest infractions. A look at prisoner demographics shows an over-representation of African Americans in our prisons, yet we know they are not the only ones breaking the law. In fact, **street crimes**, such as robbery, burglary, and theft, are the crimes most minorities are jailed for, but **white collar crimes**, such as embezzlement and fraud, are the most costly crimes, both in terms of economic losses and injuries and deaths, and those are mostly

committed by whites. However, we define street crimes as the crime problem, and let white collar criminals get away with pretty much anything they want. Go to this link, "[Trends in U.S. Corrections](#)", and look at page five to see evidence of this disparity.

Another example of the **relativity of deviance** is our complex drug laws, laws that weren't even on the books one hundred years ago. At the turn of the last century, our country was a drug user's paradise. The first law applied to drugs was the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, which required manufacturers to label habit-forming drugs. In 1914, the Harrison Drug Act restricted importation, manufacture, sale, and dispensing of narcotic drugs, and in 1937, the Marijuana Tax Act was passed. Over next few decades, more laws further restricting the use of these "illicit" drugs were passed, until today almost 15% of prisoners in state prisons, and almost 50% in federal prison, are locked up for violating a drug law, laws that weren't even on the books forty, fifty, or even sixty years ago.

And what is really the most deadly, dangerous drug in our society? Alcohol. But it is legal. Why are some drugs criminalized, and others, even dangerous ones, legal? Because, as **Becker** said, **deviance is a relative definition. It's not what you do, it's how society defines what you do.**

### **Deviance by "doing" vs. deviance by "being"**

**Deviance** is typically considered to be an act, a behavior a person engages in that violates a **norm** (for example, not buckling up when you drive, which, by the way, is another example of the **relativity of deviance**. I can remember when cars didn't even have seat belts.). However, it is possible that a person can be labeled **deviant**, or **stigmatized**, just because of who they are. **Erving Goffman** says a **stigma**, which is **any characteristic that discredits a person**, can be a violation of a **norm** of appearance (a deformity or disproportionate feature, such as a large nose), violation of a **norm** of ability (mental handicap or blindness), or an involuntary membership (being the relative of a notorious criminal). Did you go to school after an older sibling? And was that sibling either an extra-good student or a trouble maker? And were you similarly labeled

before you had a chance to make any kind of impression on your own? Yes, that's what **Goffman** meant, you can be **stigmatized** just because of who you're related to, **deviant** by being.

## Theories of Deviance

There are many explanations for why **deviance** occurs. No one theory can account for all **deviance**, which is not just due to the fact that people are so different, but, really, can we have just one explanation to account for behaviors ranging from violating a folkway to committing a murder? Probably not.

Biological theories of **deviance** look inside the individual to explain **deviance**. The earliest theories of **deviant** behavior were biological theories. Cesare Lombroso, an early criminologist, suggested criminals were "atavists," throwback to an earlier time period in human evolution. These atavists exhibited a higher percentage of mental and physical anomalies than normal human beings, making them more likely to commit criminal acts.

Psychological theories of **deviance** also look within the individual, but focus on personality disorders that lead to **deviant** behavior. According to these theories, the subconscious plays a role in the decision to engage in **deviance**. Psychological theories look at early childhood experiences that cause inappropriate social development.

Sociological theories of **deviance**, on the other hand, look outside the individual, at group influences that lead to the choice to commit a **deviant** act. And let me make this perfectly clear: these theories are not "victim of society" theories. Instead, remember the goals of science – **describe, explain, predict, and control**. If we can understand why people choose **deviance**, and then **describe, explain, and predict** when these behaviors might occur, might we not be able to reach the fourth goal, **control**, and do something to help prevent the **deviant** behavior?

What follows is a discussion of several sociological theories of **deviance**, in summary form. We will examine explanations for **deviance** coming out of the three big theories discussed in Unit 1,

Section 3 (**Symbolic Interaction, Functional, and Conflict Theories**), developed by sociologists following those particular theoretical traditions. This is an abbreviated discussion, as there are many theoretical varieties and variations on theme when it comes to explaining **deviance**.

## **Symbolic Interaction Theories of Deviance**

**Symbolic Interaction theories of deviance** look at two things: how people learn to define **deviance** as a behavioral choice, and what happens when the label of **deviant** is applied to the individual. So, we will look two theories that fit in this perspective.

(1) **Differential Association Theory** – Developed by **Edwin Sutherland, Differential Association Theory** is a bad companions theory. Look at the title, “different types of associations.” What the theory says is that **deviance** occurs when the person “**learns an excess of definitions favorable to the violation of law over definitions unfavorable to the violation of law.**” In other words, if a person is around people who say it’s okay to break the law more than they are around people who say it’s not okay to break the law, guess what, they will decide it’s okay to break the law.

(2) **Labeling Theory** – Howard Becker, mentioned at the beginning of this section, was a **Labeling** theorist. Those who follow this perspective examine how being labeled “**deviant,**” or being **stigmatized** in some way, can affect a person’s behavior. They examine the power of **labels** (ex-convict, trouble-maker, problem student), and how those **labels** can become **master statuses**, leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy. They also examine how some behaviors get **labeled** deviant, and how those definitions of **deviance** change from time to time, depending on who is doing the behavior and when it’s being done.

## Functional Theories of Deviance

**Functional theorists**, of course, examine a given structure of society, in this case **deviance**, to see what functions it performs for society. **Functional theorists** would also look at how **deviance** is a function of the way society operates, in other words, how **deviance** is a natural part of the social structure. Finally, these types of theories look at how the types of **deviance** people choose depend on their own **social locations**.

(1) **Deviance is Functional – Emile Durkheim**, mentioned back at the very beginning of this text, said **deviance** must be functional for society, or else we wouldn't label certain behaviors, and people, as **deviant**. He pointed out several functions of **deviance**: clarifying norms, encouraging social unity, and promoting social change. Additionally, think of how many people have jobs because we label some behaviors as **deviant**.

(2) **Structural Strain Theory – Robert Merton**, in developing this **functional theory of deviance**, argued that the very **norms** and **values** of society insure that some people will choose **deviance** over conformity. There are strains built into the **social structure**, he said, that prevent, or at least make it difficult, for some people to follow **norms** to achieve the positions they seek. Thus, they may choose not to follow the norms to achieve what others do.

This theory examines what **Merton** called the “**goals**” of society (what we are supposed to want as members of this **culture**), and the “**means**” for attaining those **goals** (how you go about reaching the **goals**). In our society, our **culture** teaches us to be successful, usually defined as financial success and “living the good life.” At the very least, even if someone doesn't desire a great fortune, it takes money to survive, so achieving some level of financial security is a **goal** sought by most every member of society. For some, the legitimate **means** to attaining the **goals** are in some way blocked. This can lead to the choice to engage in **deviance**, or, as Merton calls it, **innovation**.

Looking at this **goals-means** dichotomy, **Merton** said there were five “**modes of adaptation**,” or choices, people could make. They are:

- (a) **Conformity** – Most people are **conformists**. Most people accept the **goals** of society, and follow the **means** for attaining them. Even if someone cannot achieve great wealth, they simply reduce their expectations, and continue to follow the legitimate **means** given to them.
- (b) **Innovators** – For some who desire the **goals** of society like financial success, but who for some reason find the legitimate **means** for attaining that **goal** blocked, **innovation** may be the response. Accepting the **goal** while rejecting the legitimate **means**, some will turn to **deviance** (robbing a bank, for example). However, Merton did not use the word “**deviant**,” or “criminal” for this **mode of adaptation**. He used “**innovator**,” because **deviance** may not be the result of this choice. What about someone who wins the lottery? or marries a rich person? They attain the **goal** of society – financial success, but they did it in an **innovative** way (and the rest of are jealous!).
- (c) **Ritualists** - Some people get so caught up in following the means to attain the **goals**, they lose sight of what the **goal** was to start with. The husband/father, who wants to be a good provider for his family, working long hours and weekends to bring home a bigger paycheck, then comes home one day to find a note on the kitchen table: “Honey, I’ve taken the kids and I’m leaving you; you won’t miss us since you’re never home anyway,” would be a good example. He might have made a good living for his family, but he forgot about the family!
- (d) **Retreatism** – Some people reject both the **means** and **goals** of society. They drop out, become street people, drug users. Or maybe they decide to enter a convent, or join a cult where someone can tell them what to do and choices will be taken away from them. These people are in some ways “drop outs” from society, seeing no need to work for any of society’s **goals**.
- (e) **Rebellion** – Those who reject both the goals and means of society, and seek to replace those **goals** and **means** with new ones, would fit in this **mode of adaptation**. Here we would find some of those **countercultures** we discussed earlier. They would set new **goals** and new ways of attaining them, challenging conventional society and seeking to replace conventional ways of doing things with their ways.



<b>Mode of Adaptation</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Means</b>
Conformity	Accept	Accept
Innovator	Accept	Reject
Ritualist	Reject	Accept
Retreatist	Reject	Reject
Rebellion	Reject and replace with new goals	Reject and replace with new means

(3) **Illegitimate Opportunity Structures - Functional** theorists would also look at how one's position in the **social structure** would give an individual opportunities to commit certain types of **deviance**. Most people will never become embezzlers because they are not in a position to steal money from their employer. **Illegitimate opportunity structures** theory examines how opportunities for **deviance** are part of the social structure, and a function of a person's **social location**.

At this point, it would be appropriate to talk about **white collar crimes**, even though we still haven't discussed **conflict theory** of **deviance**. But, **illegitimate opportunity theory** explains why some people commit **street crimes** (theft, robbery) and others will commit **white collar crimes** (embezzlement, price fixing). It all has to do with what their opportunities are for **deviance**, which depends on where they are located in the **social structure**.

**Edwin Sutherland** defined **white collar crime** as “**crimes committed by high status people during the course of their occupation.**” Writing his theory in the 1930s, the economic system was pretty much divided into two parts – office work (white collar jobs) and labor (blue collar jobs). The white collar workers had opportunities based on their positions in a business to engage in these types of offenses. In the years since, Sutherland's definition has been expanded to include not just people in high status positions (bankers, politicians, doctors, lawyers, etc.) breaking the law, but also businesses that engage in unlawful practices (price fixing, knowingly selling an unsafe product). A mechanic is a blue collar worker, but if he/she charges someone

for work that doesn't need to be done, he/she is a **white collar criminal**. The name may not fit the description of the types of behaviors included anymore, but if the **deviance** involves someone committing a **crime** because of the position they hold in society, like their occupation, it's white collar crime.

Society defines these types of **crimes** and the criminals who commit them differently.

We have labeled the **street crimes** as the "crime problem," and punish these offenders with prison sentences and fines. Yet we pay little attention when a businessman bilks a company of millions of dollars. In **white collar crime**, we don't necessarily see the victim like we do with **street crimes**, so the harm done is not as evident. But, in reality, **white collar crimes** are much more costly, both in economic terms and injuries and deaths, than all of the **street crimes** combined. And **white collar crime** tends to be much more lucrative, and much less visible, than **street crimes**.

Additionally, **white collar criminals**, who tend to be well-educated, wealthy, and, well, white, look a whole lot like the people they encounter in the criminal justice system, the lawyers and judges. Due to their appearance, the label "**deviant**" is much less likely to be applied to them, and the punishments they receive, if any, tend to be much less serious than those given to street criminals.

## **Conflict Theory of Deviance**

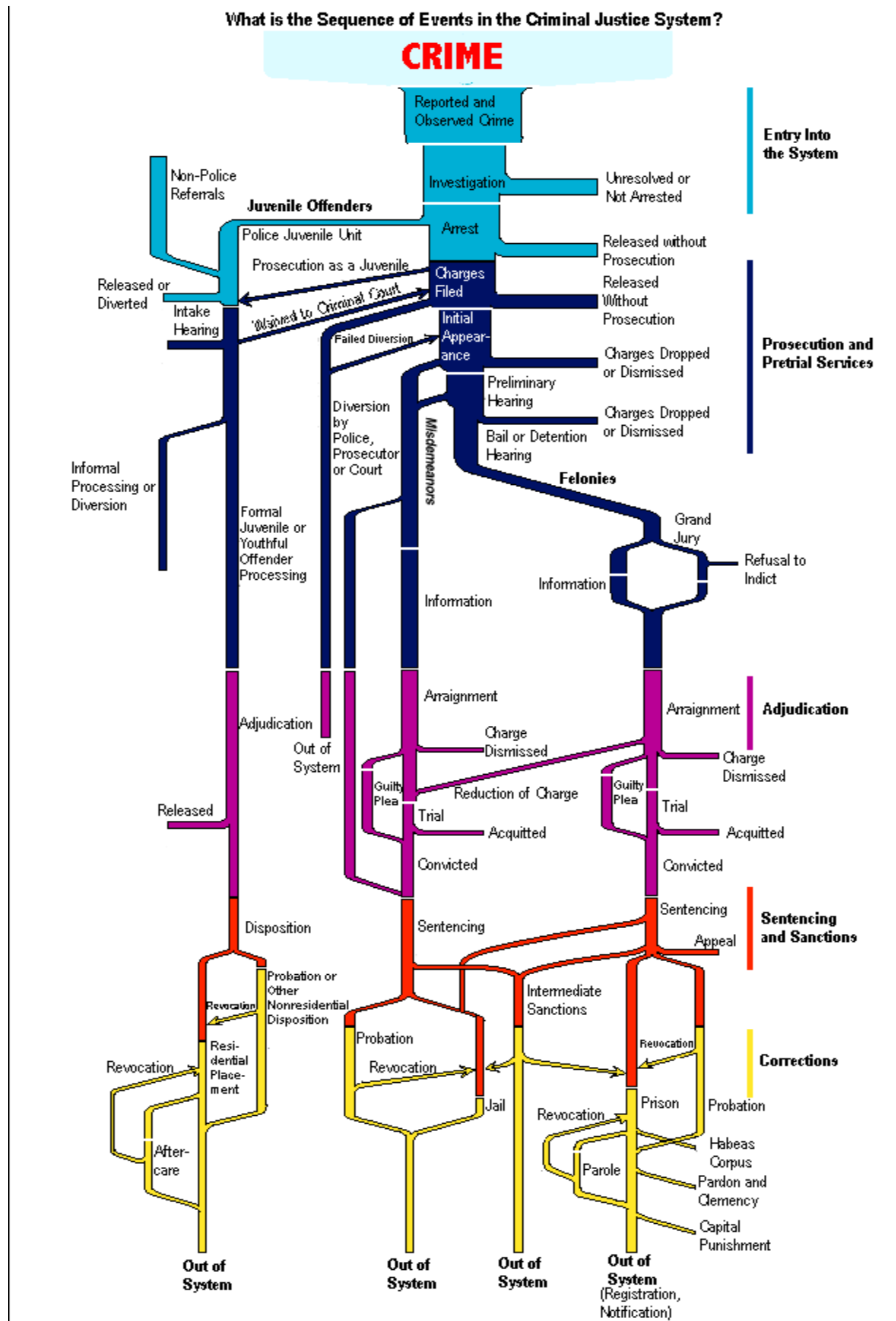
**Conflict theory** of **deviance** focuses on **power**, who has it and how it is used. In their explanation of **deviance**, a **conflict theorist** would say people who have the **power** use it to make laws, and enforce laws, to their own advantage. The law itself, they would say, is a tool used by the powerful to oppress the powerless. From this description of the theory, you can see what we were just saying about **white collar crime (crime in the suites)** vs. **street crime (crime in the streets)**. In our society, **power** to make and enforce laws is found in the political system, and the political system tends to be a very elitist institution. This, according to **conflict theory**,

is why the misdeeds of the poor minorities, who tend to be labeled the crime problem, are treated more harshly than those of their **white collar** counterparts.

But, even when it comes to **street crimes**, especially those involving drugs, minorities are more likely to be prosecuted than are whites. That this bias exists has been well documented in research as well as government documents. The book, [The Rich Get Richer and Poor Get Prison](#), written by Jeffrey Reiman, cites examples of the inequities in our criminal justice system related to race and income. See [Paul's Justice Page](#) which examines Reiman's work and his book. Look particularly at Chapter 3. Also take another look at the link, "[Trends in U.S. Corrections](#)."

You may recall from our earlier discussion of "**Culture**" the mention of how **sanctions (social controls)** are used to reward us when we conform to **norms**, and or punish us when we don't conform, or when we **deviate**. **Folkways** and **mores** are **sanctioned** by the informal agents of **social control**, like family and friends. Violations of **laws** are **sanctioned** by our very complex **criminal justice system**, the police, courts, and corrections. The following chart illustrates the parts of the criminal justice system and what happens when a crime is observed or reported (from the Bureau of Justice Statistics).

What is the Sequence of Events in the Criminal Justice System?



Unfortunately, the system doesn't always work that well. Many crimes are not detected, many not reported, and often there isn't enough evidence for an arrest, or, even if an arrest is made, charges are later dropped. Additionally, differences in prosecution, based on a variety of factors, can lead to even more inequities in a system that promotes "justice for all." And our corrections system may do a good job of keeping the convicted off the streets, but, unfortunately, not much correcting of behavior goes on.

We have a very high **recidivism rate**. The "**recidivism rate**" refers to **how many of those released after serving their sentence are rearrested**. Estimates are that two-thirds of those who are released from prison will be going back.

### Part 3, Section 1 Review - Deviance

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with the concepts.

#### Video – “Lessons from Death Row”

Deviance

Relativity of Deviance

Stigma

Sanctions

Differential Association Theory (Sutherland)

Labeling Theory

Functional Theories of Deviance:

Durkheim

Merton's Structural Strain Theory

Illegitimate Opportunities Structures

White Collar Crimes

Conflict Theory of Deviance

Recidivism

## PART 3, SECTION 2

### Race and Ethnicity

#### Different Strokes for Different Folks

The United States is unique among countries around the world. It is a good bet that there are people from every country in the world living in the United States, making us a very diverse, heterogeneous society. Other countries have a variety of groups in their populations, but not to the extent the U.S. does. We are a nation of immigrants. Unless you are 100% Native American, or a Latino whose family was in this part of the country prior Texas becoming an independent nation and ultimately joining the union, you came from somewhere else.

This diversity is at times a reason to celebrate (everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's day), but it can also be a source of tension and discord. We have used these differences to subjugate groups, we have blamed societal problems on these groups, and we continue to treat groups who are different from us as "other," as **out-groups** not as worthy as our **in-group**. Of course, in order to treat these groups as "other" we have to be able to tell them apart from our group. That is what this chapter is about, those physical and cultural differences, **race** and **ethnicity**.

**Race** is **nature**, referring to **a group whose inherited physical characteristics distinguish it from other groups**. These physical characteristics include skin color, hair texture, shape of the eyes and nose. Anthropologists have historically categorized **races** based on these physical differences. The three major **races** have been referred to as the white race (**Caucasoid**), the black race (**Negroid**), and the yellow race (**Mongoloid**).

But, with so much interbreeding in mankind's history, the idea of distinct **races** is, biologically, probably moot. No one is pure anything anymore. But, sociologically, **race** is certainly not a moot topic. We still pay attention to the physical differences, and, because of this, and the unequal treatment it leads to, some **races** are much better off than others.

**Ethnicity** (or **ethnic group**) refers to **a group of people that has distinctive cultural characteristics, setting it apart from others**. This is **nurture**, because these characteristics are learned, and include things like language, foods, religious beliefs, and clothing. Think about the last time you were somewhere in the U.S. and heard someone speaking a foreign language. You probably thought they were talking about you! But you also probably didn't appreciate someone speaking another language besides English. Yes, we are a little **ethnocentric** when it comes to our culture.

**Racial groups** can have distinct cultural characteristics, and so some **racial groups** could be classified as **ethnic groups**. But, instead of being concerned whether or not a group is a **race** or an **ethnic group**, we are just going to call them both "**minority groups**." A **minority group** is **a group of people who are singled out for unequal treatment at the hands of the dominant group**. This unequal treatment could be at the **micro-level**, with things like hate crimes (go to this link at the FBI's UCR for a look at [hate crimes](#), and you will see that almost two-thirds of the victims of hate crimes were targeted because of their race/ethnicity/ancestry), or at the **macro-level**, where we see these **minority groups** not doing as well as the **dominant group** in terms of income and education, and doing much worse when it comes to things like poverty and unemployment.

Notice the use of the word "**dominant**." The opposite of "minority" is "majority," but we don't use the word "majority," we use "**dominant**." The reason for that is **minority status** isn't based on numbers. A group can be larger than the **dominant group**, but still be a **minority**. **Minority group/dominant group** status is based on **power**. The **dominant group** has the **power** in a society, and uses that **power** to its own advantage.

**Minority groups** are established in one of two ways: the **expansion of political boundaries** and **migration, voluntary or forced**. When a country's territorial boundaries are changed, as what happened with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, people who went to bed living in one country wake up to find themselves living in another, making them a **minority group**. The other way, **migration**, involves the group leaving or being forced to leave one country and going to



another. By the way, let's define the words we use to label these migrating groups: **emigrant** and **immigrant**. The words sound alike, but have different meanings. **Someone leaving their home country to go to another is an emigrant; someone entering a new country is an immigrant.** Ideally, they will be both.

### **“Timing is everything,” or “Hope your family jumped on an early boat”: A brief history of immigration patterns**

White Americans are the **dominant group**. Specifically, the **Northern and Western Europeans**, known as the **white Anglo Saxon Protestants (WASPs)** are the **dominant group**. Their culture is the one that dominates this country. How did this happen? Were they the first to come to this country? No, of course not. Archeological evidence indicates that Native American Indians have been in North America for 10,000 to 15,000 years. The Vikings were probably in this part of the world around 1,000 A.D., and, of course, the fur traders from southern Europe, countries such as France, were over here in the 1500 and 1600s. So how is it that these **WASPs** are the **dominant group**? Well, it was all a matter of who got over here, quickest in the greatest numbers, and, you got it, it was the Northern and Western Europeans. You have studied “royal charters” in history class, right? These charters were privileges granted by monarchs of European countries to individuals and companies if they were to go to the “New World” and settle in the name of the king of that country. It just so happened that countries like England granted a lot of these royal charters, and sent a lot of their people to this country. And, of course, a lot of these **WASPs** came to the New World, seeking religious freedom.

How ever you look at it, the **WASPs** weren't the first to come over here by any means, but they got here in large enough numbers early on so that they established the **dominant** culture. In fact, the first U.S. census was taken in 1790, and it shows that almost three-fourths of the people in this country at that time claimed descent from England, Scotland, or Wales. So, by definition, groups coming later would be classified, and treated, as **minority groups**.

And lots of people began coming later. After that initial influx mainly from northern and western Europe, by the late 1700 – early 1800s, the face of the immigrant shifted to southern and eastern Europe. Now, these people had the same skin color as their northern and western counterparts, but there were two big differences: language and religion. And, boy, what differences those were! Even though these immigrants could blend in terms of their physical appearance, they were definitely set apart in these two ways. And, even today, these immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, labeled “**white ethnics**,” or “**euro-ethnics**,” (think Archie Bunker!) haven’t done as well as the **WASPs**.

Upon reaching these shores, the **white ethnics** faced backlash due to their religion. Most **white ethnics** are Catholic or Greek Orthodox, and one of the political third parties of the mid-1800s, the Know Nothings, had a platform that was very anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic. The Know Nothings espoused a philosophy of “**nativism**,” that is, **favoritism toward those already here** (not the Native American Indian, but those early **WASP** immigrants). This was one of their party planks, and was very popular. It was the beginning of the anti-immigrant sentiment all other immigrants would face as they came to this country.

The face of the immigrant shifted yet again in the mid-1800s, and this time it was a big shift, to Asia, primarily China at first. Chinese immigrants began coming over in the 1850s to help build the transcontinental railroad from the west to the east. Talk about different! Language, religion, food, beliefs, you name it, they were different and they were not well received. In fact, when the railroad was completed in 1863, there was fear that the Chinese would take jobs from the whites on the west coast. This fear was so real that the residents of the west coast prevailed upon Congress to pass a law to protect their jobs. This first piece of federal immigration legislation, the **1882 Chinese Exclusion Act**, cut off immigration from China (that act would not be repealed until 1943, when, as an ally in the war, China was given a quota for immigration).

The late 1800 – early 1900s saw another shift in country of origin of immigrants, to countries in the Western hemisphere. The civil war in Mexico during the early part of the last century sent many Mexicans north. We were truly becoming a country with representatives from all around

the world. But World War I brought an end to much of the immigration, and the decade from 1900 – 1910 remains the peak decade of immigration, with 1907 being the peak year.

### **Immigration Laws: It's our country and we'll ban you if we want to**

Up until this time, other than banning the entire country of China, there had been no real attempt to limit immigration. Our country was large and we needed immigrants to come and settle here. But not immigrants that looked “other.” The **Chinese Exclusion Act** was the first, but certainly not the last, piece of immigration legislation that favored the **WASPs** over other immigrant groups, and set the stage for years of discriminatory legislation.

In the 1920s, the federal government instituted its first comprehensive immigration plan, the **quota system**. In an attempt to limit and control who and how many came to this country, a quota (first set at three percent, then reduced to two percent) was established, and the number allowed from any country was based on how many people from that country were already in the U.S. In other words, say a country already had 1,000 people **immigrate** to the U.S. Two percent, or twenty, would be the quota and that's how many people could **immigrate** from that country that year. By the way, this **quota system** only applied to countries in the Eastern hemisphere. Countries in the Western hemisphere had unrestricted immigration.

Of course, the **quota system** favored the northern and western European countries, because they had a lot more people already over here. And the **quota system** remained in place until 1965, when it was replaced with the **preference categories**. Now, to immigrate, a person had to fit into one of six **preference categories**. The three main categories were “family member,” “skilled-technical worker,” and “refugee.” And, for the first time, restrictions on the Western hemisphere were instituted. Now, we are going to see a problem start with illegal immigration. Immigration from Mexico, Central and South America had not been restricted up to this time. But, with the passage of hemispheric limits in the 1965 immigration act, the problem with illegal immigrants began.

Under the **preference system**, “family member” was, and still is, the main way immigrants gained entry to our country, so, once again, those northern and western European countries were favored, since those **WASPs** had been here for generations, and, therefore, had more families with members wanting to head across the ocean.

The next major piece of immigration legislation was in 1986, and one thing it did was, for the first time, make it illegal to knowingly hire an illegal. Up until then, there was no penalty for an employer hiring illegals, and, of course, much as we love to hate them, illegals have served as a source of cheap labor for employers to exploit. Another thing the 1986 act did was provide a way for illegals who had been in the country for five years and had no record of arrest to become legal residents.

Every year, there are almost one million legal immigrants, and estimates of three-quarters of a million illegal immigrants to the U.S. For more information about immigration, see the link “[History of Immigration Laws](#).” Currently, about 13% of our population is foreign-born. See the link “[Current Immigration Population](#)” for more information about our immigrants. You might also be interested in the link “[Immigration Questions](#)” and “[Immigration Information](#)” that look a little more closely at what it takes to get into our country.

## **Do I know you? Patterns of Intergroup Relations**

When groups come in contact with one another, new patterns of behavior must be established. Territory must be protected, power maintained. Sociologists have noted seven basic patterns of **minority/dominant group** relations.

(1) **Genocide** - Perhaps the best way to maintain one’s dominant position is to simply kill off the interlopers. **Genocide** means **mass murder**. Probably the first example of **genocide** that comes to mind is the Holocaust. It must be admitted that, in the U.S., there has never been a planned attempt to kill off an undesirable group, as in Nazi Germany, but the near extermination of the Native Americans would certainly count as an example of **genocide** in our own country.

About 10 million Native Americans were here when Europeans first started coming to this part of the world in the 1500s. By the turn of the last century (1800s to the 1900s), there were only about 250,000 Indians left. And we know this number because the tribes were required by the federal government to take a count of their members, the tribal rolls (which, by the way, is an excellent way to establish tribal membership, if you can find your ancestor's name on one of the rolls). The population of Native Americans was reduced to a mere fraction of what it had once been. Some of this was due to warfare; most due to diseases brought by the Europeans for which the Native Americans had no immunities. However, it is interesting to note that when the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was formed in 1824, it was placed in the War Department, which pretty much summed up the federal government's attitude toward Native Americans.

(2) **Population Transfer - Groups can be forced to live wherever the dominant groups decides.** That's the idea behind **population transfer**. This relocation of groups in our country is evident with both the Native Americans and the reservation system, and the Japanese Americans, and their internment experience during World War II.

(3) **Internal Colonialism** – Just like the European powers in the 1800s settled countries around the world and exploited the labor and resources of the colonized country, within a country something similar can happen. **Internal colonialism** means the **exploitation of minority groups to the benefit of the dominant group**. We see examples of this in the economy, where **minorities** are often used as a source of cheap labor, and as a reserve labor force to take the place of disgruntled workers.

(4) **Segregation – Segregation means separation.** At one time **segregation** was by law; today it's more by choice. We live in separate neighborhoods, attend separate schools, socialize at separate venues, and frequent businesses in our own areas. This pattern of **segregation** has decreased significantly in the last few decades, but still is very evident across the country.

(5) **Amalgamation** – Everyone has heard about the “**melting pot.**” This idea says that all these diverse groups come from all over the world, bringing their unique cultures, which then are

mixed together to create a new culture that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. And the culture here in the U.S. is unique, a blend of beliefs and practices brought by our ancestors.

**Amalgamation** was probably expected and accepted until the face of the immigrant changed dramatically, sometime in the mid-to-late 1800s. Then, we decided we didn't want anything to do with those "others," and they could just be like us, which is the next pattern.

(6) **Assimilation** – For the most part, we expect immigrants to give up their cultures and adopt ours. That is **assimilation, when the immigrant group adopts the culture of the dominant group**. Marc Hansen's "**Third generation principle**," which says "What the grandfather wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember," addresses this idea. Most immigrants have traditionally been eager to blend, and take on the dominant culture, to Americanize. They desire to raise their American-born children as citizens of their adopted country, some even refusing to teach their children anything about their home country. However, when the third generation comes along, the grandchildren, they want to know about their roots, and learn their family's history. **Assimilation** sounds great, but they don't want to forget where their family came from.

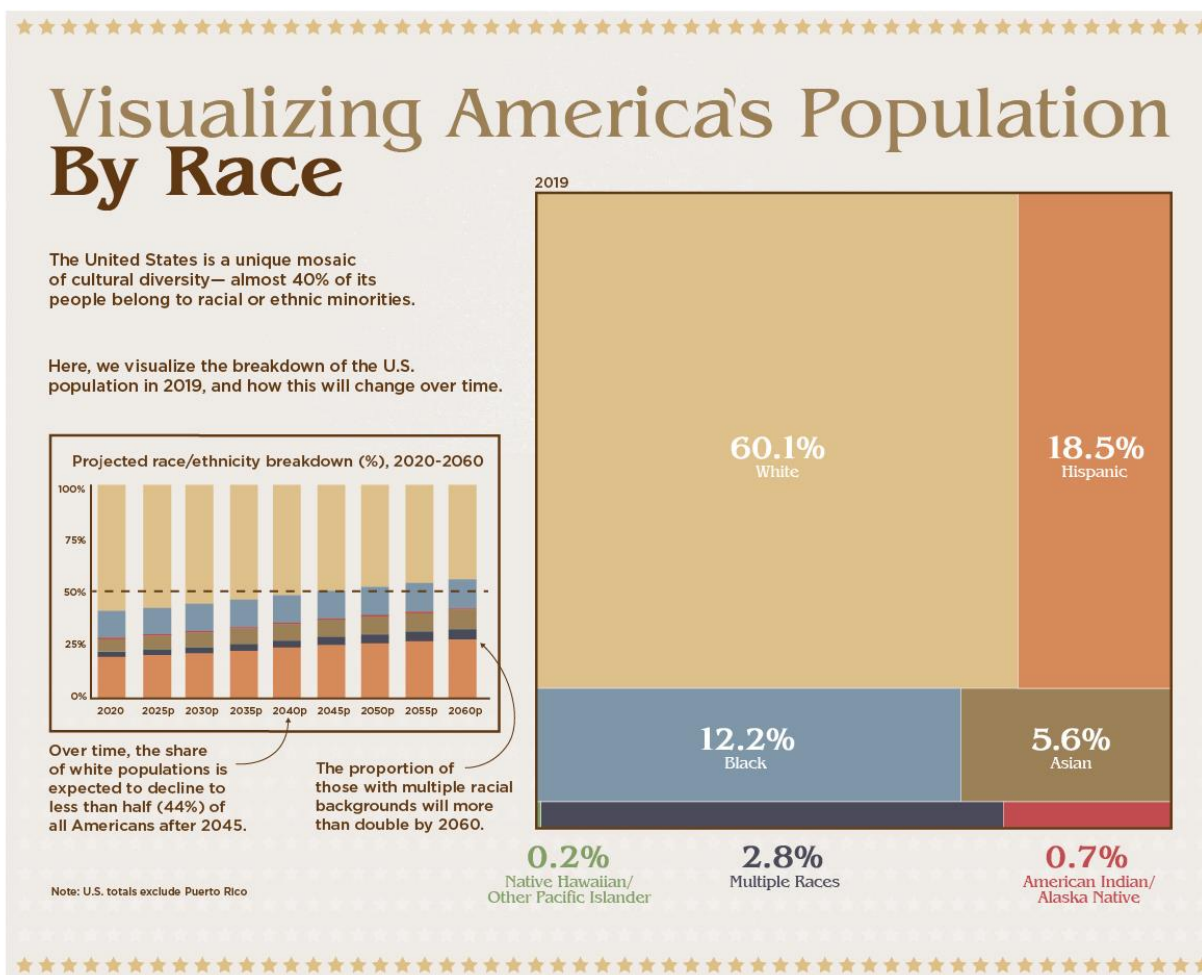
(7) **Pluralism (or Multiculturalism)** - When **racial and ethnic diversity is encouraged**, we have a case of **pluralism, or multiculturalism**. It is a practice of embracing "other," of celebrating differences. This has probably never been a very common pattern of interaction in our country. Even today, there is a social movement, called [U.S. English](#), that is trying to make English the official language of our country. If that were to happen, all business and government work would be carried out only in English. Election ballots would only be printed in English, for example. They haven't been successful yet, but continue their pursuit of this goal.

### **Just who are we talking about?**

We've already established just who the **dominant group** is. But how do we define the **minority groups**? In a very **ethnocentric way**, we are going to lump people together, mainly based on the region of the world they came from, and call them the **minority groups**. When we do this, we

have four **minority groups**: **Latinos (Hispanics)**, **African Americans**, **Asian Americans**, and **Native American Indians**. We could include a fifth group, the **white ethnics**, but, since they blend so well with their **WASP** counterparts, they are usually not parsed out for individual study. A look at Census Bureau data reveals the percent of population represented by each group. Take a look at the link [“OMB and "Race"”](#) and the [“2020 U.S. Census Form”](#) to see how the Census Bureau categorizes race and ethnicity.

**Figure 1**



Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation, U.S. Census Bureau



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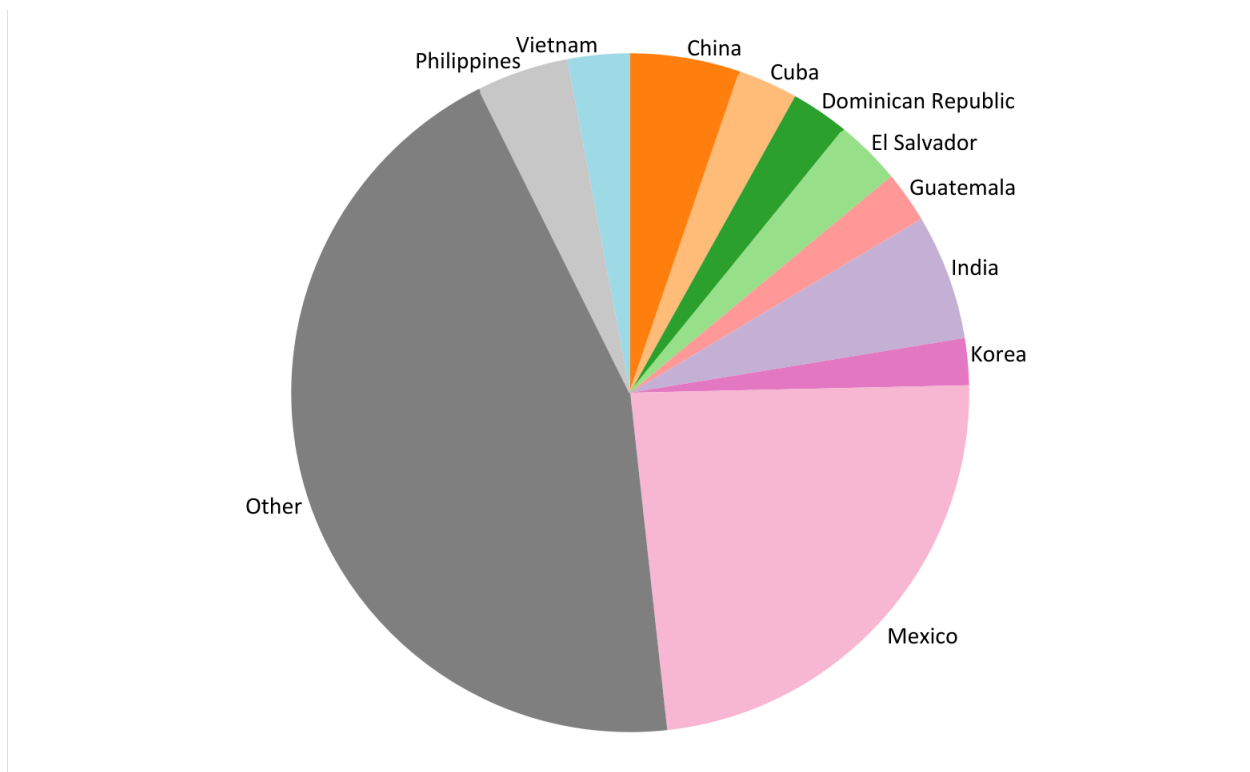


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**Figure 2 – Top ten largest U.S. immigrant groups, 2021**



### **Latinos: Our largest minority**

With the 2000 U.S. census, Latinos overtook African Americans and became our nation’s largest **minority group**. The Latinos (or Hispanics) are a very diverse group from the Western Hemisphere, including the countries of Mexico, countries of Central and South America, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other islands in the Caribbean. As mentioned earlier, immigration from the Western Hemisphere wasn’t restricted until the 1965 immigration act instituted hemispheric quotas. With that act, “illegal” became associated with Latinos, primarily Mexicans (our largest group of illegals). **Figure 3** looks at the countries of origin of our Latino population.



## Hispanic origin groups in the U.S., 2021

Origin group	Population	% among all U.S. Hispanics	% change 2010-2021
<b>U.S. total</b>	<b>62,530,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Mexican	37,235,000	59.5	13
Puerto Rican	5,800,000	9.3	24
Salvadoran	2,475,000	4.0	35
Cuban	2,400,000	3.8	28
Dominican	2,395,000	3.8	59
Guatemalan	1,770,000	2.8	53
Colombian	1,400,000	2.2	46
Honduran	1,150,000	1.8	57
Spaniard	995,000	1.6	43
Ecuadorian	815,000	1.3	25
Peruvian	720,000	1.2	20
Venezuelan	660,000	1.1	172
Nicaraguan	455,000	0.7	19
Argentinean	295,000	0.5	26
Panamanian	240,000	0.4	37
Costa Rican	190,000	0.3	44
Chilean	190,000	0.3	35
Bolivian	130,000	0.2	15
Uruguayan	65,000	0.1	9
Paraguayan	30,000	0.0	42
Other South American	40,000	0.1	62
Other Central American	30,000	0.0	1
<b>All other Latinos</b>	<b>3,050,000</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>96</b>

Notes: Hispanic origin is based on self-described ancestry, lineage, heritage, nationality group or country of birth. Population rounded to nearest 5,000. Listed in descending order of population size; differences between ranks may not be statistically significant. Rankings and percentages based on unrounded populations.

Source: Pew Research Center calculations based on the 2010 and 2021 American Community Surveys (U.S. Census Bureau)

## Figure 4 - Where U.S. Latinos Live

### 10 cities with the most Hispanics in the United States

Based on information from the 2020 Census, the chart below lists the 10 cities in the United States with the largest Hispanic populations, and the percentage of Hispanics in each city compared to the total population.

City	State	% of Hispanics	Population	Hispanic Population
Los Angeles	California	46.9%	3,898,747	1,829,991
Houston	Texas	43.9%	2,304,580	1,013,423
San Antonio	Texas	63.8%	1,434,625	916,010
Phoenix	Arizona	41.1%	1,608,139	661,574
El Paso	Texas	81.2%	678,815	551,513
Dallas	Texas	42.2%	1,304,379	551,174
Fort Worth	Texas	34.8%	918,915	319,836
San Jose	California	31.2%	1,013,240	316,266
Austin	Texas	32.4%	961,855	312,448
Miami	Florida	70.2%	442,241	310,472

*List of the 10 cities with the most Hispanics in the United States. Data: 2020 Census*

## African Americans

Most African American's ancestors came to this country in the slave trade (between 1525 and 1866, although the U.S. abolished the slave trade in 1807). Some, maybe as many as 15% of those coming from the continent of Africa, came as indentured servants, as did many white Europeans. As slaves, these Africans were property, and had no rights relative to their white counterparts. They were even counted as 2/3 of a person for purposes of taxation and representation (the Dred Scott case). They couldn't own land, couldn't be educated, couldn't marry. When slavery was abolished, according to data from the 1860 census, almost four million slaves were freed.

Many people think the end of the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation were what freed the slaves, but it was the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1865, that did that. Further, the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment made the freed slaves U.S. citizens, and the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment gave them the right to vote (at least, the men). But this right would be challenged for the next 100 years. Through the use of "**Jim Crow**" laws, the south would continue to find ways to keep

blacks from voting. “**Jim Crow**” refers to **laws passed after the freeing of slaves that continued to keep the blacks in their inferior position**. For voting, these included the use of poll taxes, literacy tests, and the “grandfather clause.” The “grandfather clause” was a particularly clever way to keep the freed blacks from the polls. A statute enacted by several of the Southern states after the Civil War’s end, it said that anyone who had voted or who had ancestors who had voted prior to 1866 would not need to pass a literacy test or pay a poll tax to vote. Of course, prior to 1866 the blacks were slaves and couldn’t vote. But poor, illiterate whites, who had voted or whose parents or grandparents had voted in elections before 1866, were not subject to the same restrictive voting requirements of the blacks.

When you consider such a large group of people, unpropertied and uneducated, being freed just 160 years ago, you could say that great progress has been made in terms of their status in society. But, compared with other groups, African Americans lag behind. Sometimes called “internal migrants,” due to their obvious physical differences, the African American finds it difficult to blend, much more so than the other minorities.

## **Asian Americans**

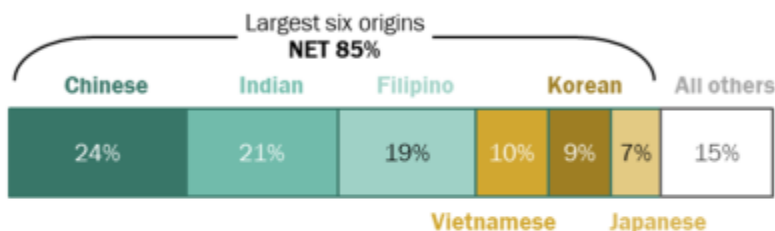
Asian Americans comprise a group of vast diversity, coming from over 30 countries in Asia and the Pacific Rim. The Chinese are the largest of the Asian groups in America. They came early in the 1850s to help build the transcontinental railroad. Of course, as noted earlier, they faced discrimination on the west coast, and were eventually prevented from immigrating.

The Asian Americans have been labeled the “**model minority**” because of their success relative to the rest of society. Of course, not all groups from Asia have done as well as others. Many of the Asians came as refugees after wars (Korea and Vietnam), and certainly did not bring skills that would help them succeed in America. Others, like the Japanese, seemed to do well from the beginning, with a work ethic and values that fit into the America way of life.

Figure 5

### Six origin groups make up 85% of all Asian Americans

% of the U.S. Asian population that is...



Note: "All others" includes the 3% of U.S. Asians in the category "Other Asian, not specified." "Chinese" includes those identifying as Taiwanese. For more about measuring the Taiwanese population in the U.S., read "How many Taiwanese live in the U.S.? It's not an easy question to answer." Figures do not add to 100% because individuals identifying with more than one Asian group are included in all groups. Figure for all origin groups includes mixed-race and mixed-group populations, regardless of Hispanic origin.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (Census data).

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The Japanese have a unique history of immigration to the U.S., unlike any other group. The Japanese emperor had not allowed his people to **emigrate** to the U.S. until the late 1800s, so the Japanese migration happened later than that of some other Asian countries. Then, in 1924, the immigration act establishing country quotas also banned immigration from Japan. This ban was not lifted until 1952, when Japan was given a quota.

Thus, unlike any other group in the U.S., the Japanese can speak of themselves in fairly clear-cut generational lines. The first generation of Japanese, the immigrants coming in the late 1800 – early 1900s, are called the "Issei". Their American-born children are the "Nisei," their grandchildren the "Sansei," and great-grandchildren the "Yonsei," and the great-great-grandchildren the "Gosei." These words contain the prefix for Japanese numbers (ichi, ni, san, yon, go), and the second syllable, "sei," meaning "family name," or "surname."

This is important in light of what we are going to discuss next, the internment of the Japanese during World War II. Within ten weeks of the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Japanese on the west coast were rounded up and sent to one of ten internment centers

(two were in Arkansas). Fearing sabotage and espionage on the part of the Issei, who were, after all, Japanese citizens (since we did not allow them to naturalize until 1952), the Federal government sent over 110,000 Japanese Americans to these internment centers, where most of them would live out the duration of the war. And this executive order, issued by FDR, applied to anyone of one-eighth Japanese ancestry. There were no trials, they were not given time to dispose of their property. The economic costs were enormous, not to mention the psychological toll it took on the people.

Many of the Nisei served in the U.S. military. In fact, an all-Nisei unit, the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, serving in the European theater, became the most decorated military unit in U.S. history, serving with distinction while the government they fought for had their families incarcerated.

In December, 1944, the U.S. Supreme Court case Endo v. the United States, ordered the release of the internees. After three years of incarceration, having been forced to leave their possessions, selling what they could for whatever they could get, the Japanese Americans went right back and became one of the most successful groups in our country. You can visit this link, "[Japanese-American Internment](#)," to read more about this experience.

## **Native American Indians**

The poorest of our minority groups is the Native American Indians. Almost half of all Native Americans live on or near reservations, and there isn't much in the way of jobs there, except the Bureau of Indian Affairs and tourism. Not to be a revisionist historian or anything, because if hadn't been the northern and western Europeans, eventually someone was going to come to this part of the world and rain on the Native American's parade, I can understand why Native Americans don't celebrate Columbus Day.

As you know from your history classes, early on the Native Americans and European settlers got along peaceably, for the most part. But, as more and more settlers came to the New World, tensions were inevitable. It is admirable to note that King George III, in the Proclamation of 1763, instructed his settlers to "not molest or disturb" the Nations or Tribes of Indians, and

instructed his settlers to stay east of the Appalachians and reserve the land west of the Appalachians for the Indians. However, as was noted by one tribal chief, “It is our belief that the white man will soon want the land west of the Appalachians.”

**Figure 6**



Source: Annenberg Foundation, 2016

And he was right. The initial plan to “reserve” the land west of the Appalachians for the Native Americans was the start of the “reservation” system. It is just that, as more and more settlers came over, the land given to the Indians got smaller and smaller, and the reservations were in the least desirable, most desolate areas – that is, where the settlers didn’t want to settle. The large influx of settlers in the late 1700 and early 1800s led the government to negotiate treaties with the Indian tribes. In return for giving up land, the government promised to provide, in perpetuity, such things as schools, health care, and roads for the tribes. The problem was, the government took the land, but didn’t always live up to its end of the bargain. Of course, everyone has heard of the “Trail of Tears,” when, in the 1830s, the five civilized tribes (Cherokee, Seminole, Chickasaw, Creek, and Choctaw ) were forced to leave the southeastern part of the U.S., where they had been living peaceably with the white settlers, and make the

thousand mile walk to Indian Territory (now the state of Oklahoma). Many of these Native Americans died on the way.

The failure of the federal government to live up to its end of the treaty obligations was just one of many ways the Native Americans suffered at the hands of the white Europeans. In the 1880s, the government dissolved the tribes and divided the tribal lands, giving each family 200 acres. It was an attempt to **assimilate** the Indians. It failed miserably. Most lost their land, mainly to unscrupulous whites who managed to cheat them out of the land. In 1934, the tribes were reorganized and each tribe was allowed to elect a tribal chief. With this reorganization and recognition of tribal sovereignty, the tribes became like foreign countries when it came to dealing with the federal government.

Today, there are over 500 federally recognized tribes. In the 2020 census, slightly more than one percent of Americans claimed “Native American” as their race. Since the 1960s, with the Red Power movement, the stigma of “Indian” and “half-breed” has been reduced, and what was once a devalued status is now a point of pride for many. Who isn’t proud to acknowledge their Indian heritage?

**Figure 7 - Ten Largest American Indian Tribes**

Name	Population
Navajo	308,013
Cherokee	285,476
Sioux	131,048
Chippewa	115,859
Choctaw	88,913
Apache	64,869
Pueblo	59,337
Iroquois	48,365
Creek	44,085
Blackfeet	23,583

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010

## **I can treat you different because you are different (right?)**

### **Prejudice and discrimination**

As immigrants from all over the world came to the United States, they experienced an attitude of negativity and unequal treatment. Yes, and even those already here, the Native American Indians, experienced these things, too. An **attitude or prejudgment, usually negative**, is called **prejudice**. Often, **prejudice** is based on a **stereotype, a rigid mental idea we hold to be true about a person or a group of people**. When we are **prejudiced**, we apply the same belief we have about one member of a group to all members of that group. For example, all old people are slow, we decide, just because we got behind an elderly person driving 25 mph in a 55 mph zone. Of course, we can be **prejudiced** positively toward something (I think TC is the best college in the world!), but, when it comes to **minority groups**, the attitude will be a negative one.

**Discrimination means unequal treatment.** Once again it can be positive (such as when you got that summer job over better-qualified applicants just because the boss was your dad's best friend), but, when it comes to **minority groups**, it's usually negative. Some **discrimination** is based on law, that is, the law says it is all right to treat people unequally. The 1896 U.S. Supreme Court case Plessy v. Ferguson established the **separate but equal doctrine**, saying separate facilities for the races was all right. This **legal discrimination, or de jure discrimination**, was not overturned until the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education case. Civil Rights legislation of the 1960s has further removed **legal discrimination** based on **race** or **ethnicity**, but that certainly doesn't mean that **discrimination** no longer exists. Now, instead of **legal discrimination**, we experience what is known as **institutional discrimination**, which simply means **that the way society operates insures that some groups will be treated differently from others**. For example, in our society we have neighborhood school districts. Our neighborhoods also tend to be fairly racially homogeneous. As a result, our schools tend to be racially segregated. No one planned it that way, that's just how it is. Martin Luther King, Jr. called 11:00 am Sunday morning the most segregated hour in our country's week. This



**institutional discrimination**, also called **de facto discrimination**, is more insidious and harder to fight than **legal discrimination**.

Typically, **prejudice** and **discrimination** go hand in hand, but you can have one without the other. In fact, probably a lot of people have negative feelings toward a group, but don't act on those feelings. Or, perhaps someone might **discriminate** against someone, even though they personally are not **prejudiced**, just to fit in with a group.

### **Theories of prejudice and discrimination**

There are many theories that attempt to explain **prejudiced** and **discrimination**.

Psychological theories examine the Freudian concept “**scapegoating**” and see it as one explanation. Whenever we feel things aren't going well for us, and we feel frustrated, **instead of taking responsibility, we find someone else to blame**, to be our **scapegoat**

(“I could get a good job if all of these immigrants weren't coming over and taking them all!”).

Theodor Adorno, a psychologist and survivor of the Nazi Holocaust, postulated that **prejudiced** people exhibited certain personality characteristics. He found those who held negative beliefs about groups of people tended to be very rigid and dogmatic in their thinking. They had a deep respect for authority. He labeled this personality type the **Authoritarian Personality**. When you consider these types of people, skinheads for example, they do seem to see everything as black-white, and have a need for a leader that they can follow.

Sociological theories of **prejudice** and **discrimination** believe we need to look outside the individual, to the environment, to explain these behaviors. **Functional theorists** would say **prejudice** increases **in-group** solidarity, and helps us unite against a common enemy. **Symbolic interactionists** would particularly look at how prejudicial attitudes are learned.

**Conflict theory** would focus on the **power** variable and how it is used. The **dominant group**, with their **power** in a capitalistic economic system, uses the less powerful **minorities** as a source of cheap labor. The **split labor market** (or dual labor market) **theory** says that the labor force is split along **racial** and **ethnic** lines. The year-round, full-time jobs with good pay and benefits

tend to be populated with members of the **dominant group**. The seasonal, part-time, temporary work with low-pay and no benefits is where most **minorities** find themselves. **Conflict theorists** would also look at our unemployment rate, or what they refer to as the **reserve labor force**. According to **conflict theorists**, there will always be a group of unemployed (and many more of them **minorities** than the **dominant group**) because this **reserve labor force** gives the capitalists a pool of labor to call upon during times of economic prosperity. The unemployed also help to keep those with jobs in line, and keep them from making too many demands on their employer, because, if you don't like how you're being treated, there is always someone willing to take your job. Yep, you're replaceable.

## Life Chances

As a result of these negative attitudes and treatment, **minorities**, compared with the **dominant group**, aren't doing as well in many ways. These areas of inequality include education, income and wealth, poverty, unemployment, life expectancy, infant mortality, and even chance of imprisonment. Take a look at the following charts. They each give U.S. Census Bureau and other data concerning these major indicators of **life chances**, which is something else the **symbolic interactionists** would want to study, and show all too vividly how our minorities are lagging behind the dominant group. **Figure 8** compares median household income by race.

### In 2021, median household income varied considerably by race and ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity of Household Head	2020 Median Household Income (2021 dollars)	2021 Median Household Income
All races/ethnicities	\$71,186	\$70,784
Asian	\$99,622	\$101,418
White, not Hispanic	\$78,912	\$77,999
Hispanic (any race)	\$58,015	\$57,981
Black	\$48,175	\$48,297

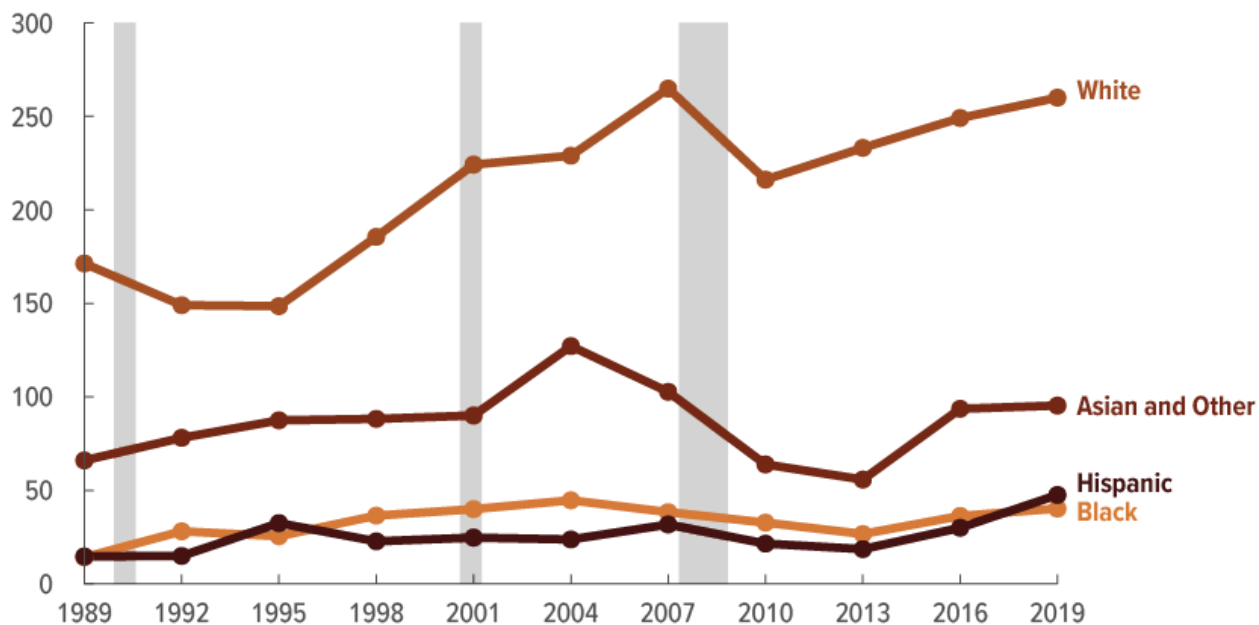
SOURCE: United States Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey, 2021 and 2022 Annual Social and Economic Supplements*.

NOTE: The differences between the values above are not all statistically significant at the confidence level used by the Census Bureau.

**Figure 9**

**Median Family Wealth, by Race and Ethnicity**

Thousands of 2019 Dollars



The median wealth of White families was significantly greater than that of the three other racial and ethnic groups over the entire 30-year period. In 2019, White families’ median wealth was 6.5 times that of Black families, 5.5 times that of Hispanic families, and 2.7 times that of Asian and other families.

**Figure 10**

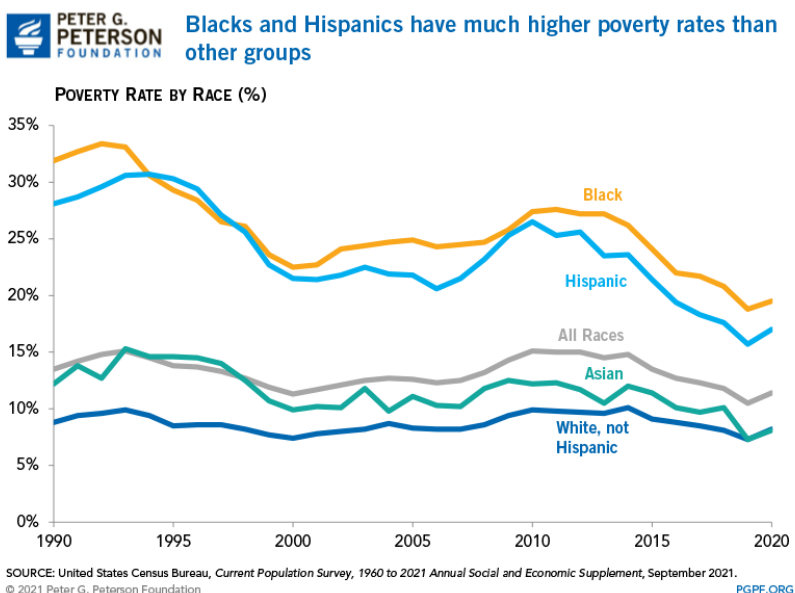
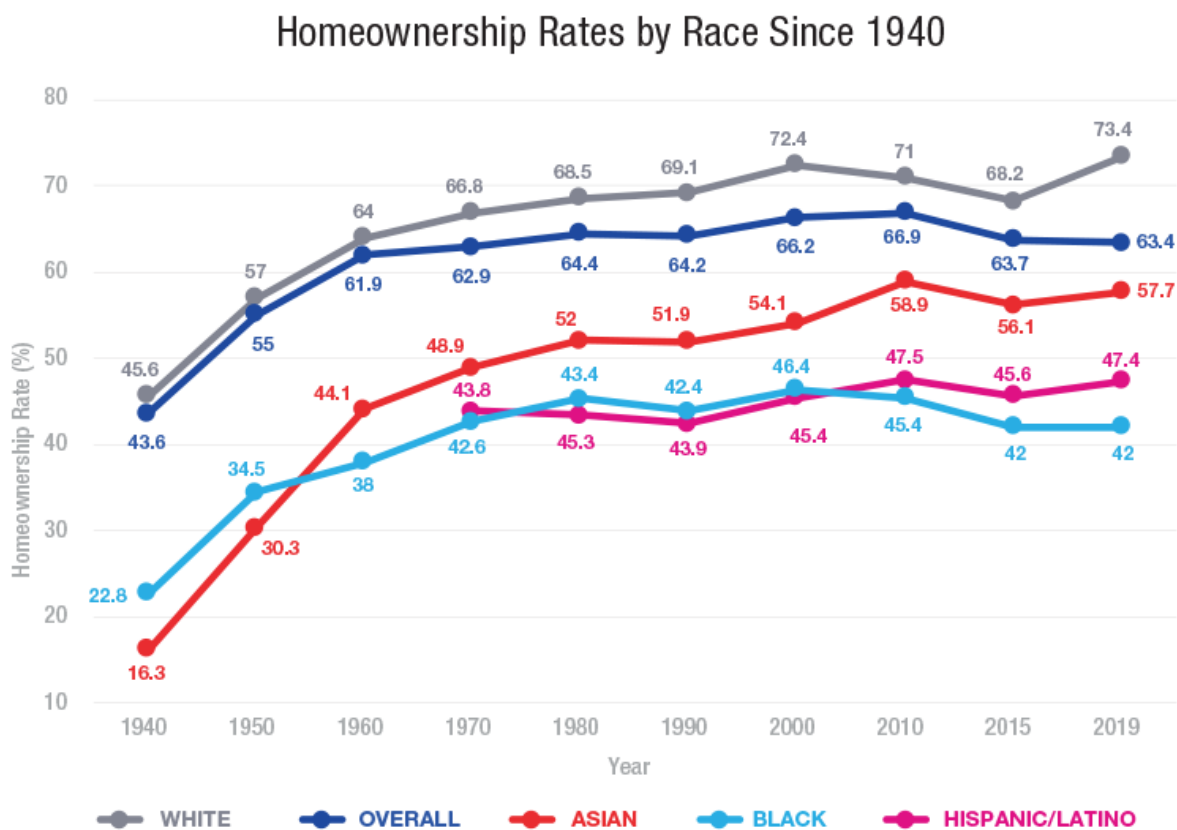


Figure 11



\*\*Footnote = Collection of Hispanic/Latino data began in 1970. \*\* Source = 2010 and 2015 estimates are from Census Housing Vacancies and Ownership Survey (retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/index.html>). 2019 data is from federal reserve analysis of Census House Vacancies and Ownership: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=zsOf>. Data from 1940 - 1990 is from Decennial Census, as cited by: <https://www.huduser.gov/publications/pdf/homeownershipgapsamonglow-incomeandminority.pdf> p. 85

**Figure 12****Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity**

The unemployment rate by race time series goes back to 1954. With the exception of the Asian time series, all of the rates shown here are seasonally adjusted. Hispanics may be of any race.

Race/Ethnicity	May 2023	Month/Month (Points)	Year/Year (Points)
White	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>+0.2</b>	<b>+0.1</b>
Black or African American	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>+0.9</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
Hispanic or Latino	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-0.4</b>
Asian	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>+0.1</b>	<b>+0.6</b>

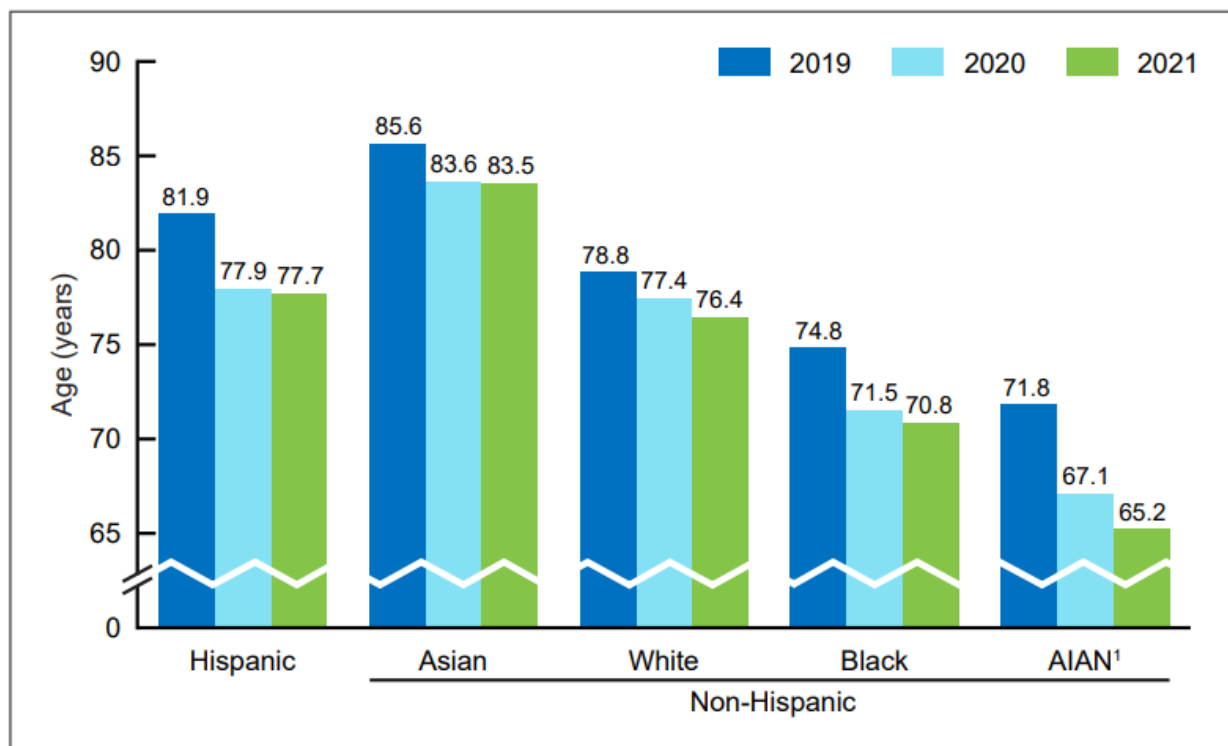
**Figure 13 – Life expectancy by race**

Figure 14 – 2021 Health of Women and Children Report

**Infant mortality was 2.9 times higher among infants of Black than Asian mothers.**

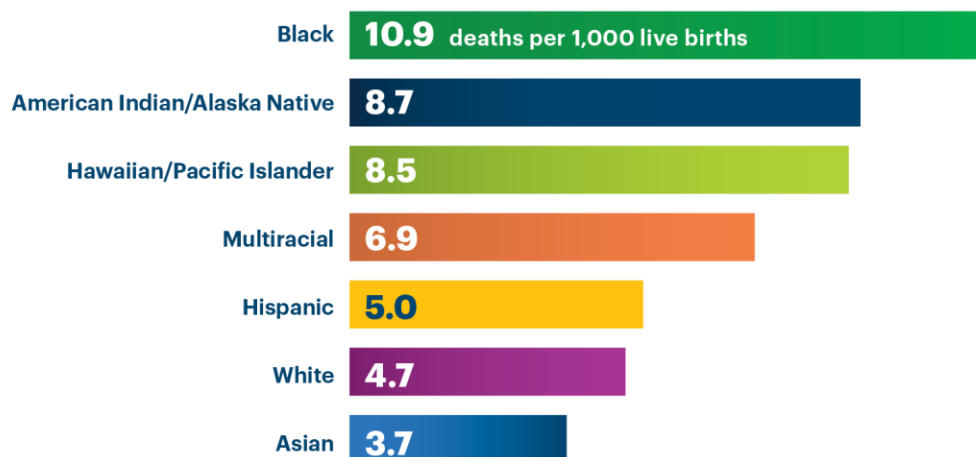
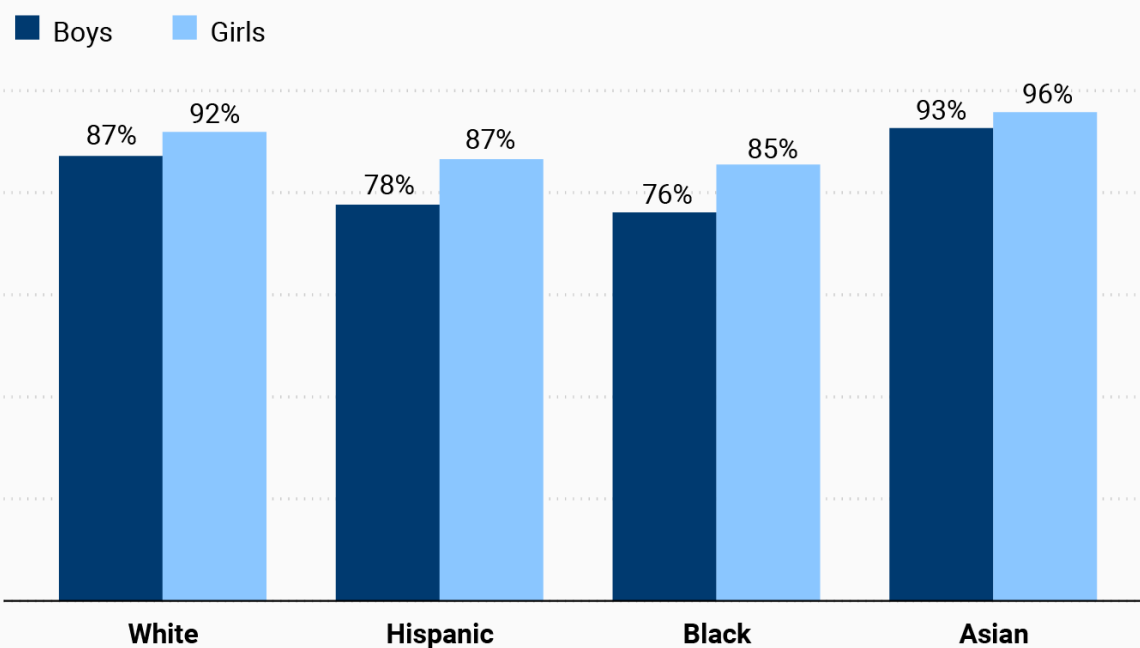


Figure 15

FIGURE 2

### Big race and gender gaps in HS graduation rate



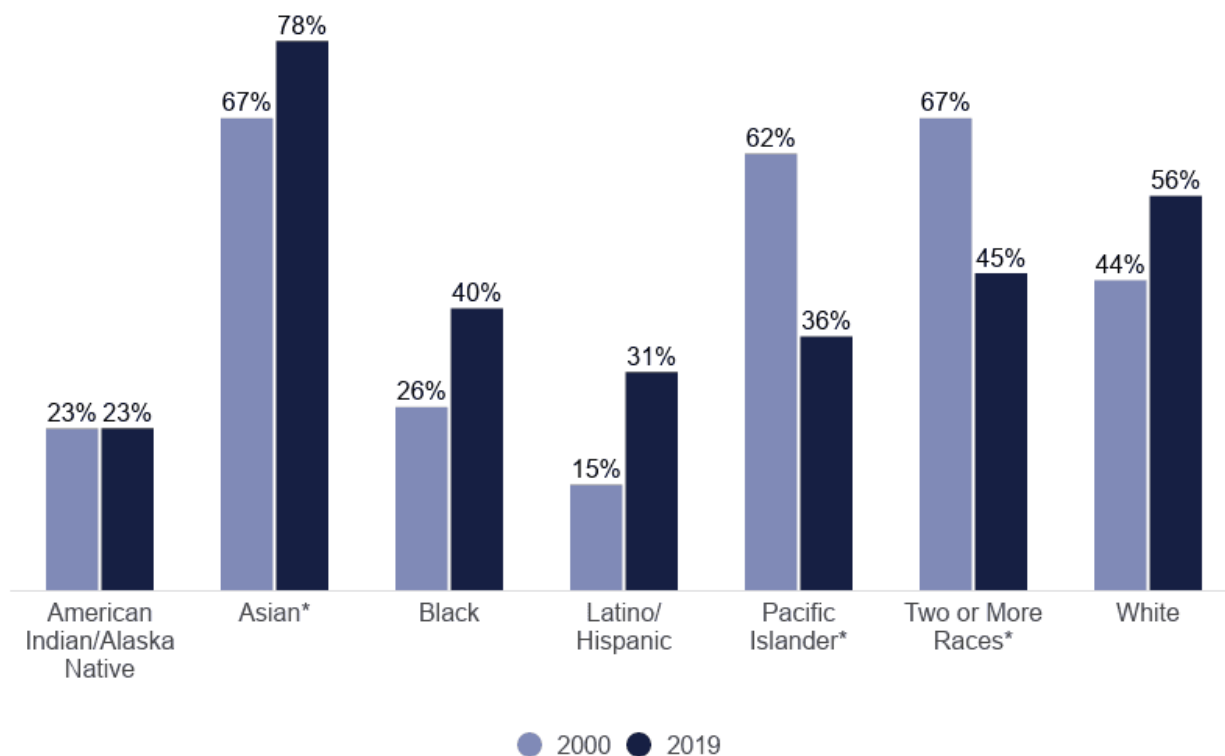
**Note:** Figure shows the 2021 adjusted cohort graduation rate in California, Florida, New York, Michigan and Virginia. California, Virginia and Michigan have separate categories for Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, whereas New York and Florida include them as one category.

**Source:** Data collected from individual state Departments of Education.

BROOKINGS

Figure 16

### U.S. Adults Over 25 with an Associate's Degree or Higher

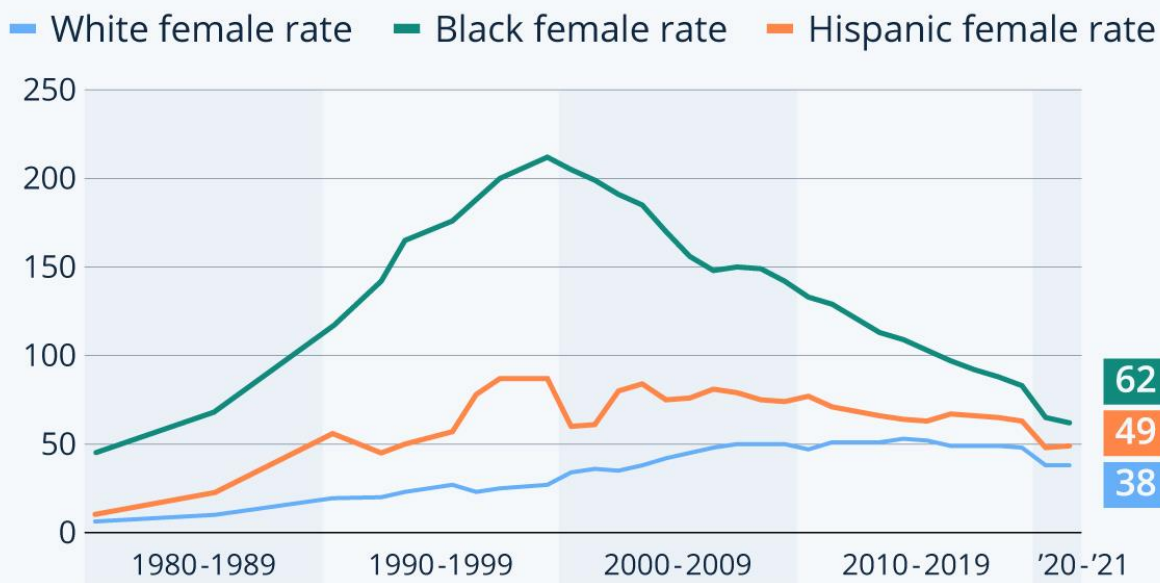
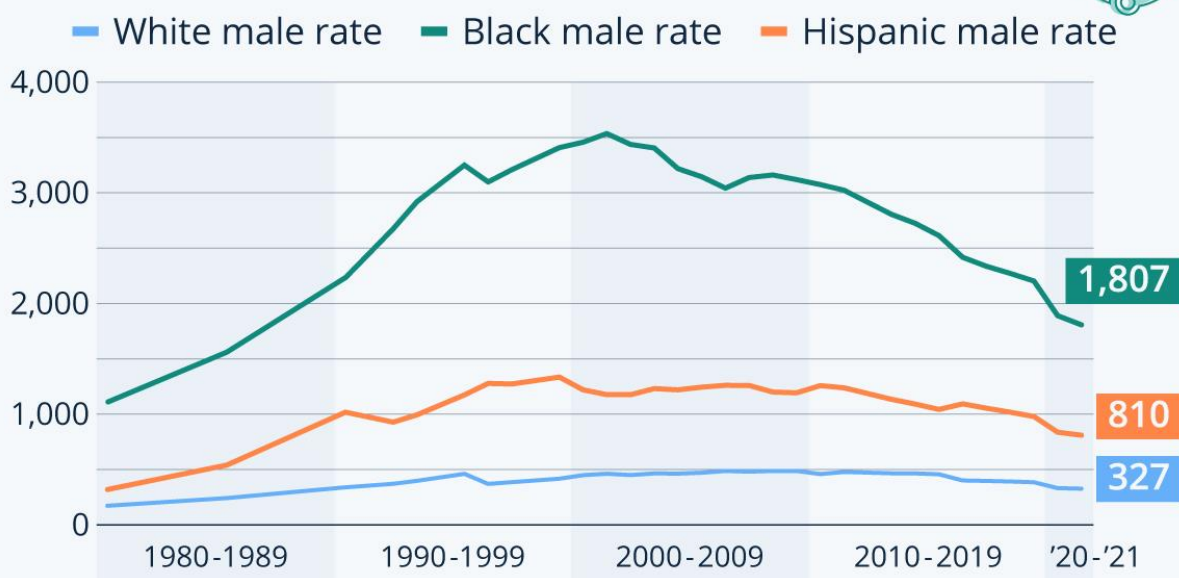


\*2003 was the first year Asian, Pacific Islander, and Two or More Races were recorded as individual statistical categories.

And, finally, **Figure 17**, which shows some good news in that imprisonment rates for blacks are dropping, but are still very high compared to the other races, and based on their total representation in U.S. society.

# Black Incarceration Rates Are Dropping in the U.S.

Sentenced prisoners in the U.S.  
per 100,000 residents, by race/ethnic origin



\* State and federal prison, 18 years and older

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics





### Part 3, Section 2 Review – Race and Ethnicity

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with the concepts.

Race and Ethnicity

Minority and Dominant Groups

How minority groups are formed

“Immigrants” and “Emigrants”

Immigration Patterns

WASPS and White Ethnics

Nativism

1882 Chinese Exclusion Act

Prejudice and Discrimination (Legal, Individual, Institutional)

Immigration Laws

Patterns of Intergroup Relations

Minority Groups in the U.S.

Jim Crow Laws

“Model Minority”

Japanese Internment

Plessy v. Ferguson

Institutional (de facto) and Legal (de jure) Discrimination

Authoritarian Personality and Scapegoating

Split Labor Market Theory

Minority Group Status and Life Chances

## PART 4, SECTION 1

### Social Stratification

#### Social Stratification

This chapter will discuss the most important **status** you occupy. More than any other position you occupy in the social structure, your social class **status** will determine how your life will turn out. More than being male or female, black, white, brown, red, or yellow, social class is the defining **status** that determines **life chances**. “**Life chances**” means **whether you will benefit or suffer from the opportunities and disadvantages of life**. As we will see later in this section, in so many ways, those at the top of the stratification ladder fare much better than those at the bottom.

**Social stratification** refers to the **division of large numbers of people into classes based on their relative property, power, and prestige**. Stratification is present in all societies (except hunting and gathering societies), although there may be different resources that are unequally divided. **Property, power, and prestige** just happen to be the things most people seek in the modern world, and the fact is, some people have more of those things and some people have less. This “layering” results in what we call “social classes,” categories such as “lower, middle, and upper” classes. And this is indeed a relative ranking. In other words, who you are comparing yourself to will determine if you have more or less of these things – it is all relative. In the United States, we have a large group of poor people, who, compared to the rest of the society, have less. But move our poor south of the border to Mexico, and they will suddenly be ranked much higher, because, relative to the poor in Mexico, our poor will have more.

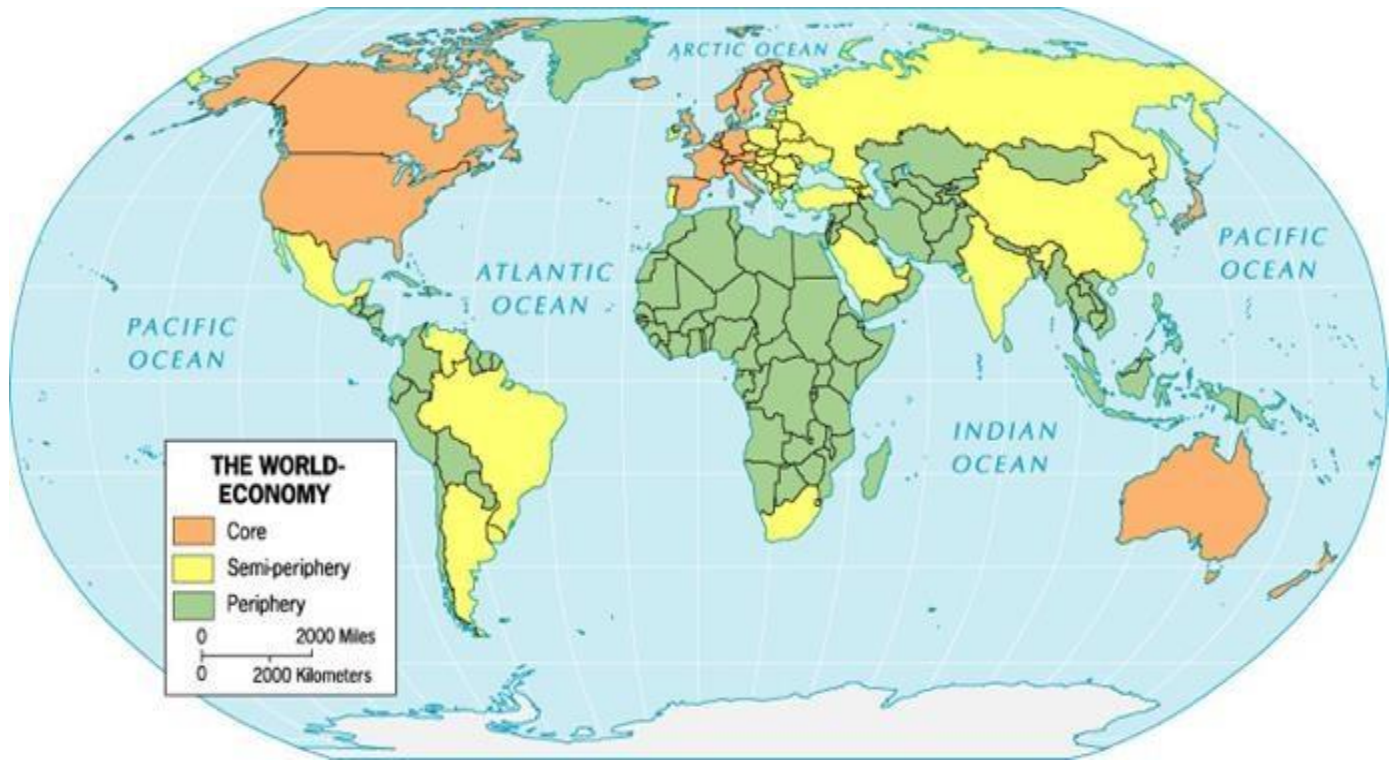
This points out the difference between “**relative poverty**” (or relative deprivation) and “**absolute poverty**” (or absolute deprivation). **Relative poverty** means **being poor, or deprived, compared to those around you**. You may have plenty to meet your needs, but others have more, so you rank lower in the stratification chain. On the other hand, **absolute poverty** means **lacking basic necessities of life**. Very few people in our society suffer **absolute poverty**;

however, when we enlarge our view and look at the issue globally, **absolute poverty** becomes much more apparent. You might want to revisit the video, “The Cost of Cloth.”

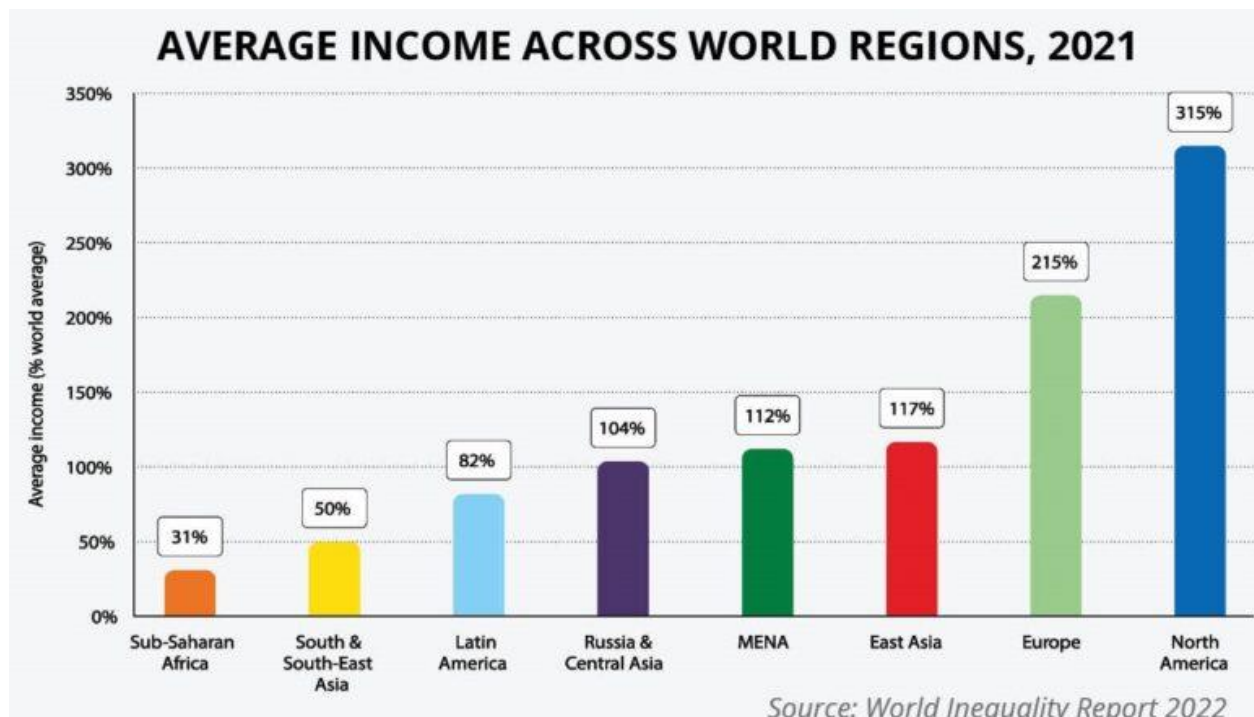
In fact, if we really want to see the vast differences in the distribution of these scarce, but valued resources, **property, power, and prestige**, we need to take a global look. Because, just like we find this inequality within countries, the countries of the world are also stratified, and the inequality is even greater. **Global stratification** refers to the ranking of countries of the world, based on these same three variables: **property, power, and prestige**. Most Americans are unaware that most people in the world do not enjoy the conveniences, like running water, electricity, roads, schools, etc., that we do. Most Americans, if they travel, go to countries fairly similar to us in terms of quality of life. However, you have probably heard countries around the world divided into categories like “third world” or “core countries,” or maybe “undeveloped” or “underdeveloped.” These terms refer to the relative **property, power, and prestige** of those countries when compared to others around the world.

The following map shows how countries of the world would be divided, based on the categories “core, semi-peripheral, and peripheral,” and the next figures shows how income and wealth are distributed among these various parts of the world. The core countries, like the United States, are technologically advanced societies whose citizens enjoy a high standard of living. The peripheral countries are the third world countries, where most people are poor, and technology almost non-existent, with most people subsisting on farms. The semi-peripheral countries are better off than the peripheral, but still lack the advantages and technology of the core countries. You can see that most countries are semi-peripheral or peripheral, and these countries have the vast majority of the world’s population.

**Figure 1 – World Population Distribution**

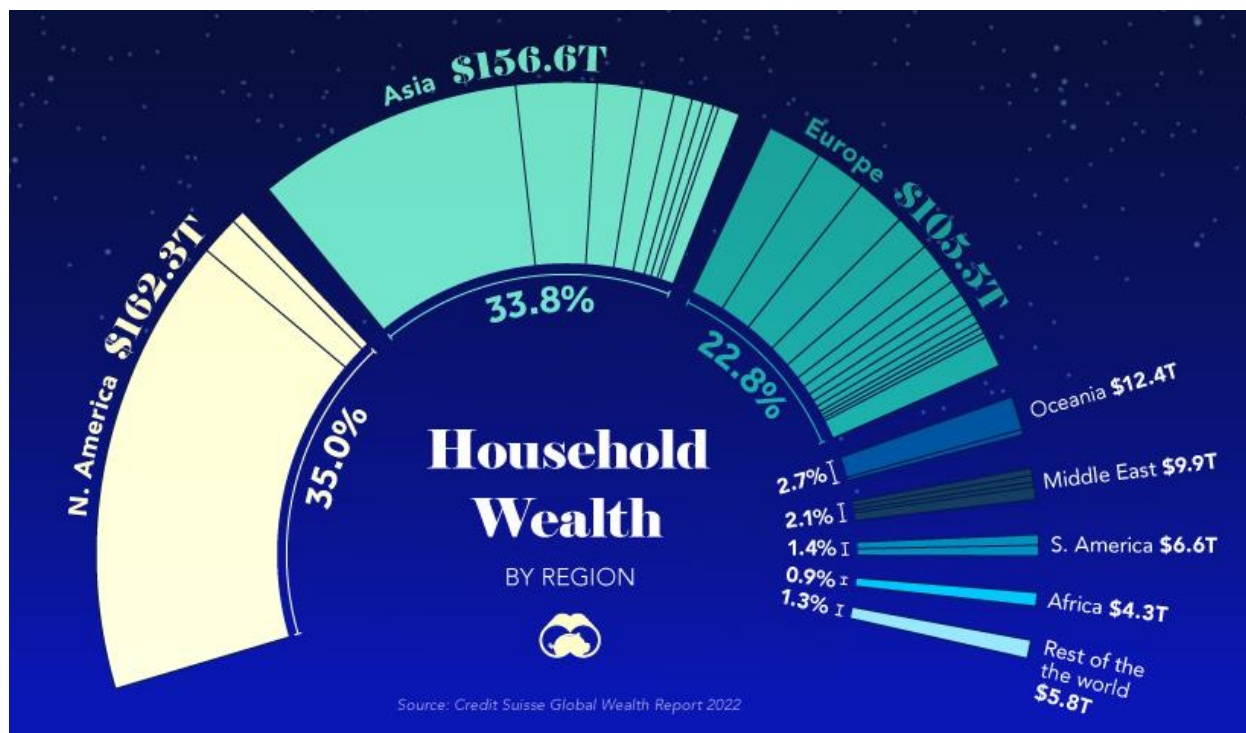


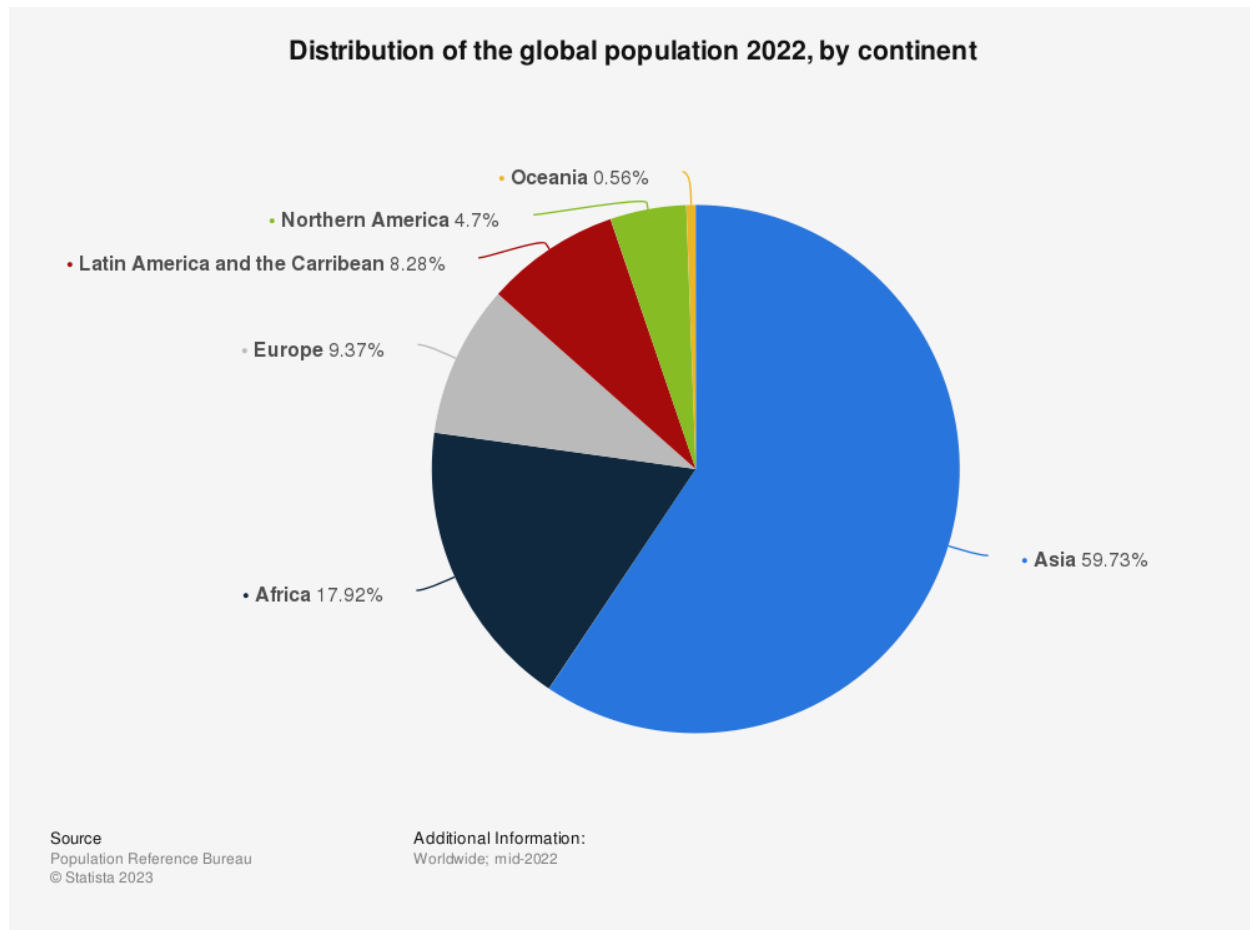
**Figure 2 – Average world per capita income is \$23,380 and this chart shows the percent of that income on average that workers in that region earn.**



A further look at how the world's **wealth** is distributed will illustrate even better just what is meant by global stratification. Take a look at **Figure 3**. You will see that the core countries, those of North America and Europe, command large percentages of the world's **wealth** compared to their populations. **Figure 4** looks at just how the world population is distributed by region. North America has less than 5% of the world population, but has 35% of the world's wealth. This vast **wealth** allows people in these countries to enjoy much better life chances (life expectancy, infant mortality, availability of drinkable water, etc.) than those in the other countries of the world.

**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**

## Theories of Stratification

Why does **stratification** exist? Both **functional** and **conflict** theories present reasons why people are differently situated in terms of resources. **Functional** theory of **stratification** says that, in order to fill the hard to fill positions in society, that is, those that require more training and investment of time in order to perform (like doctor), people have to be encouraged to defer gratification with the promise of greater reward. It's somewhat like dangling a carrot in front of a donkey's face to get the donkey to move. People must be enticed to work hard so society will have someone fill those positions. In other words, **stratification** is **functional** because it makes sure the hard to fill positions are filled. This unequal distribution encourages individual effort and rewards those who work harder. (I mean, seriously, would you be going to college if you didn't think it was going to pay off some day?)

**Conflict** theory, on the other hand, would argue that those who work the hardest aren't necessarily rewarded more, and that all jobs in a society are equally important. Instead, **power** is at the root of **stratification**. Those at the top of the social class ladder use the **power** their position in society gives them to insure they stay at the top, and do what they can to keep the rest of society in a subordinate status. Indeed, if we look at the "top" families in the United States, we see the same last names from generation to generation. It's true, some new names appear occasionally, and sometimes a family loses status, but, generation after generation, the same ones seem to be at the top of the food chain. And, since most wealth in the United States is inherited, the situation is likely to stay this way.

## **Property, Power, and Prestige**

**Max Weber**, researching during the time period of industrialization in the United States, saw firsthand the change of this country's economy from the agrarian to industrial state, and saw the rise in **stratification**, and the true beginnings of our class system. He posited that these social classes were based on three components: **property** (he used the word 'class'), **power**, and **prestige**. Sociologists continue to use his typology to analyze social class in this country.

**Property** – Property can be divided into two parts: **income** (what you earn) and **wealth** (what you own.) Most people are aware that there is a large degree of inequality when it comes to both **income** and **wealth**, but probably not aware that **wealth** is much more unequally distributed.

**Power** – **Power** is the ability to make people do what you want them to do, whether they want to or not. Most people feel relatively powerless, even though, in a democracy, the **power** does rest with the people. However, most people have **power** they exercise every day, either as parents, or on the job as managers or foremen, or as leaders in groups or on committees. But, in reality, most people are powerless when it comes to effecting major changes in society. This is because **power** is inextricably bound with **wealth**, and, as the **conflict** theorists point out, the wealthy aren't going to give up their **power** willingly.

**Prestige** – **Prestige** refers to the respect or regard a person garners. In a heterogeneous society, such as ours, where many of us don't even know our next door neighbor, it is hard to get to know people well enough to know how much others respect or admire them, so, instead of personal knowledge of the individual's character, we rely on the "**trappings of prestige.**" These "trappings" include such things as your address, the car you drive, where you vacation, who you hang out with, and, tied up with all of these, your occupation. And, as you can see, just like **power**, **prestige** is tied up with **wealth**. I think it is safe to say that if you have **wealth (property)**, the **power** and **prestige** will follow.

## **Distribution of Income and Wealth**

### **Income**

The median yearly household income in the U.S. is right at \$68,000. For family households (the Census Bureau defines a "household" as "people, related or unrelated, living under the same roof"; "families" are people related by birth, marriage or adoption, and living under the same roof, and families often have two wage earners), the median yearly income is almost \$87,000 . You can see the information for individual and household income in the following charts, and look at page three of the publication, "[Income and Poverty in the U.S.](#)," for more information on income.



Figure 5

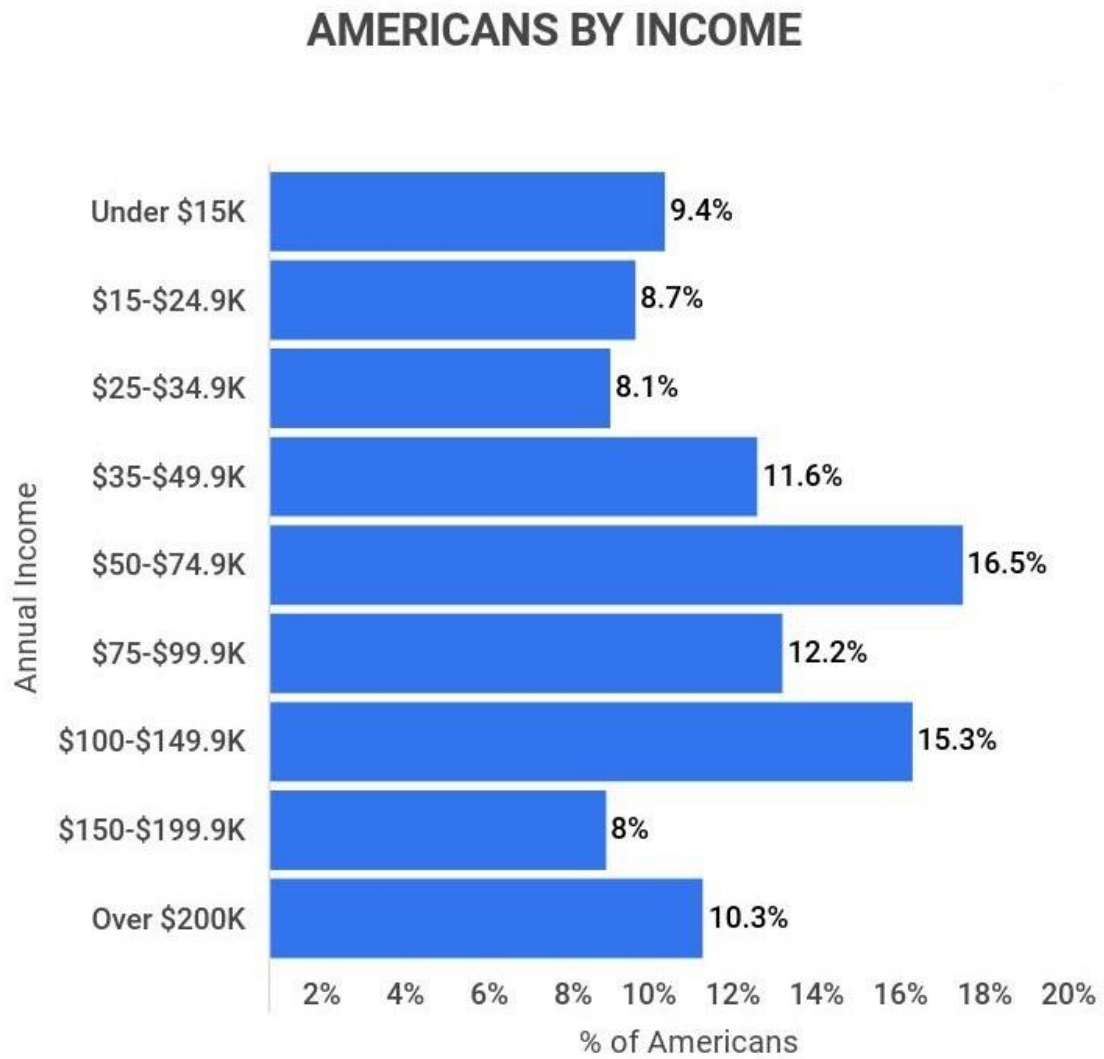
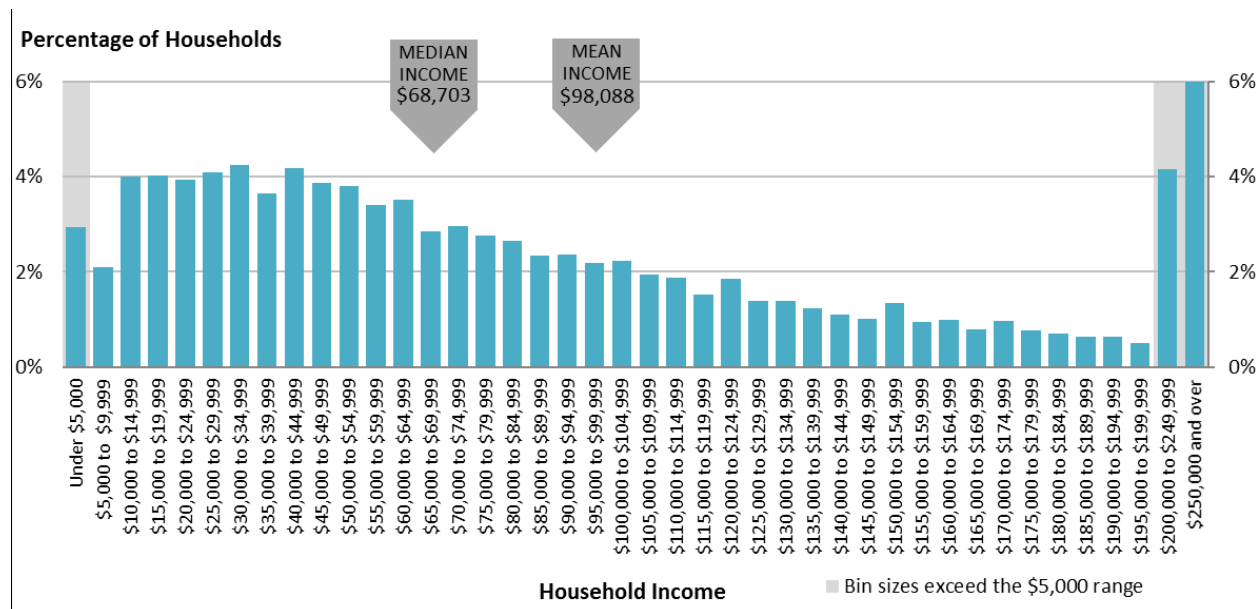


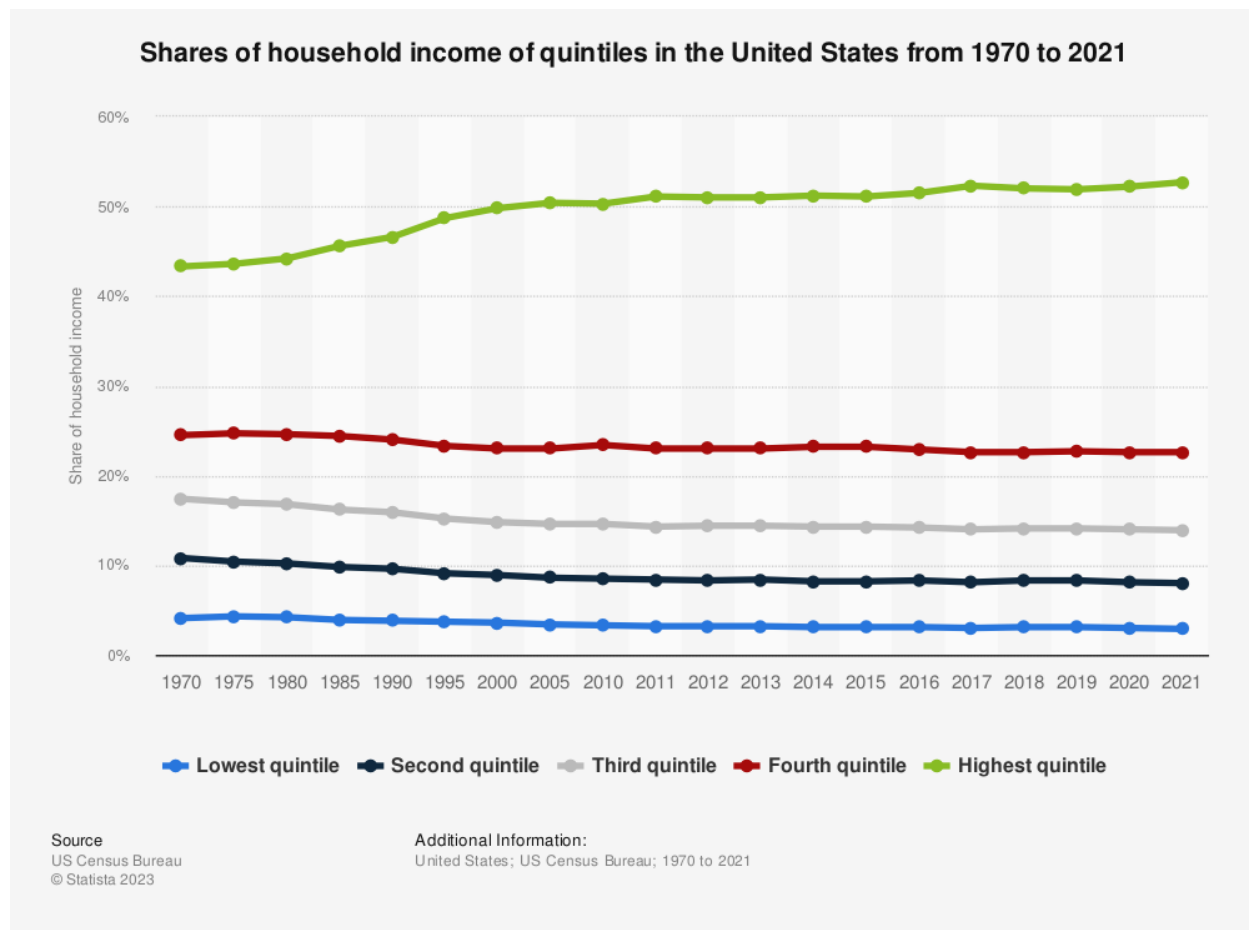
Figure 6



Another way to demonstrate income distribution is to take an historical look. The following chart divides U.S. society into five quintiles (groups each containing 20% of the population), and shows each quintile's percent of income earned. As you can see, in 2021 the top quintile earned more than half of all the money earned in the U.S. that year, and the bottom quintile earned barely three percent.

The middle group, the middle class, didn't even get 15% of the income earned. Of course, if income were evenly distributed, each quintile would earn 20%. But the top group gets two and half times its share, and the rest make do with what is left.

Figure 7

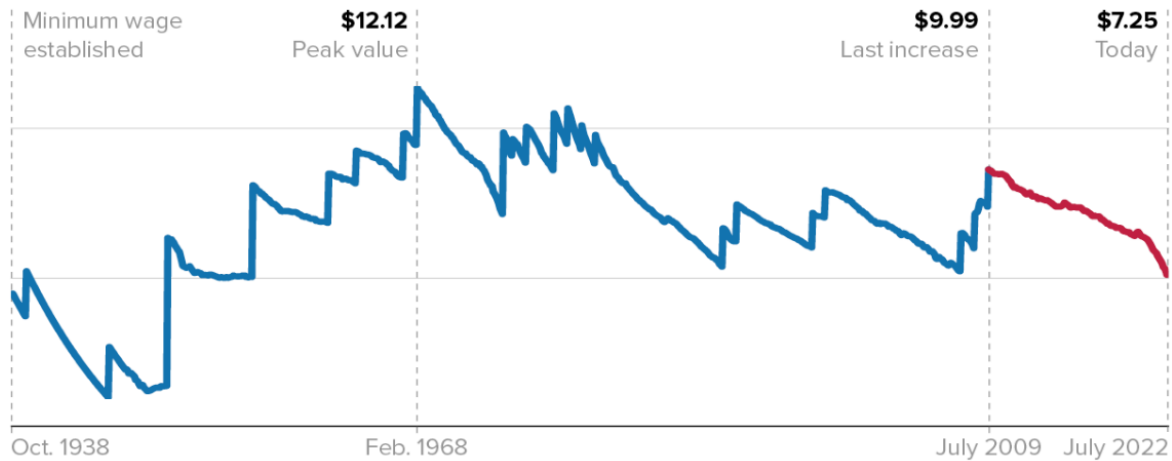


On the face of it, those numbers don't sound all that bad. Families don't seem to be doing that badly, and even households have a fairly solid median income. But, when inflation is taken into account, we see that what once was a very good income becomes something we can barely get by on. Take a look at the next figure, which shows how inflation has eroded the buying power of the dollar. In 1968, minimum wage was \$1.60, but that \$1.60 would be worth \$12.12 today. In other words, that \$1.60 an hour is only about one fifth of the current \$7.25 minimum wage, but worth about \$5.00 more. Figure 8 shows the reality of what we earn versus what it buys.

**Figure 8 –Minimum wage adjusted for inflation**

**After the longest period in history without an increase, the federal minimum wage today is worth 27% less than 13 years ago—and 40% less than in 1968**

Real value of the minimum wage (adjusted for inflation)



**1968** Peak value of minimum wage

**\$12.12/hr** (\$25,210/yr)

**2009** Last minimum wage increase

**\$9.99** (\$20,779)

**2022** Today

**\$7.25** (\$15,080)

**Note:** All values in June 2022 dollars, adjusted using the CPI-U in 2022 chained to the CPI-U-RS (1978–2021) and CPI-U-X1 (1967–1977) and CPI-U (1966 and before).

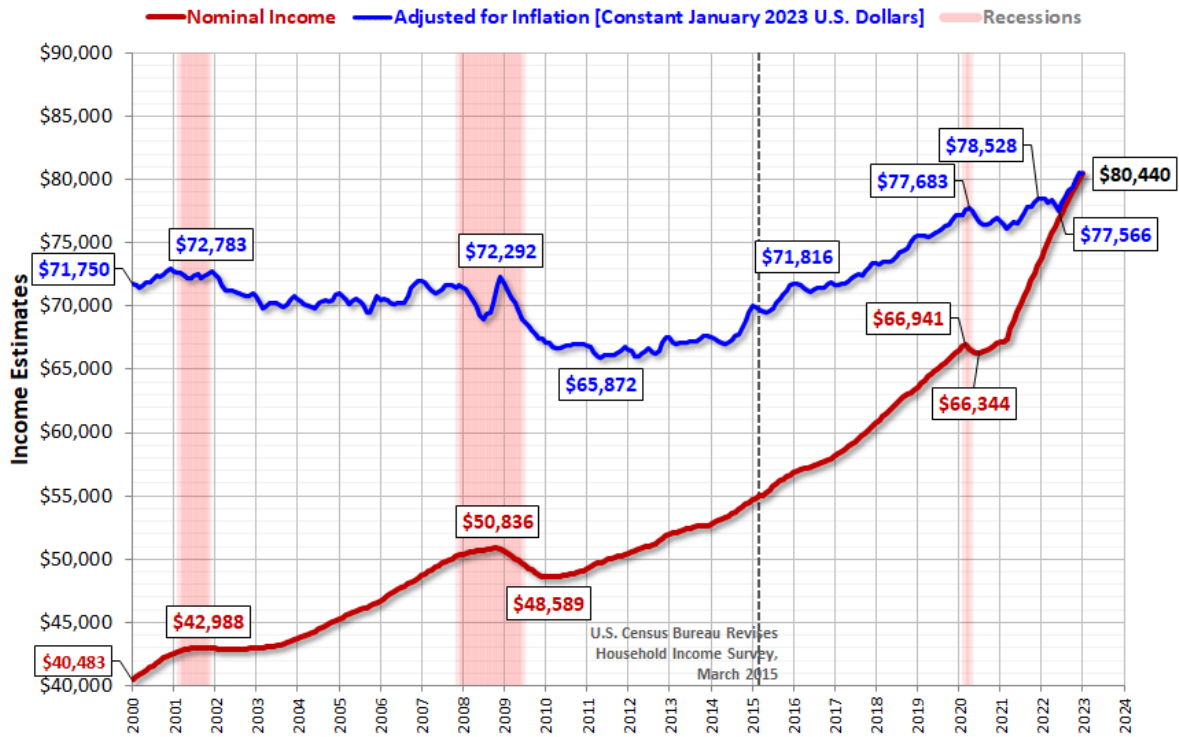
**Source:** Fair Labor Standards Act and amendments.

**Economic Policy Institute**

Figure 9

## Median Household Income in the 21st Century

Nominal and Real Modeled Estimates, January 2000 to January 2023



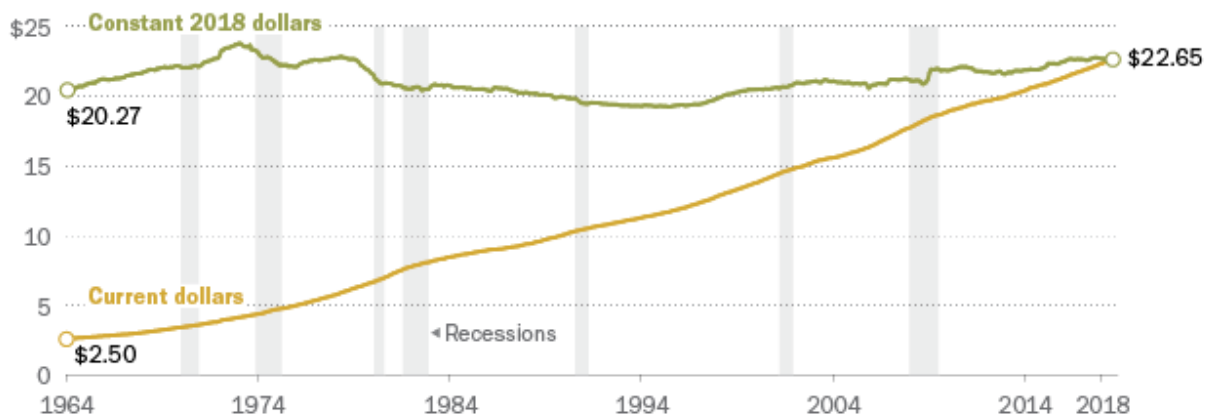
Sources: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis Monthly Annualized Wage and Salary Income per Capita, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Consumer Price Index), and Author's Calculations

© Political Calculations 2023

Figure 10

## Americans' paychecks are bigger than 40 years ago, but their purchasing power has hardly budged

*Average hourly wages in the U.S., seasonally adjusted*



Note: Data for wages of production and non-supervisory employees on private non-farm payrolls. "Constant 2018 dollars" describes wages adjusted for inflation. "Current dollars" describes wages reported in the value of the currency when received. "Purchasing power" refers to the amount of goods or services that can be bought per unit of currency.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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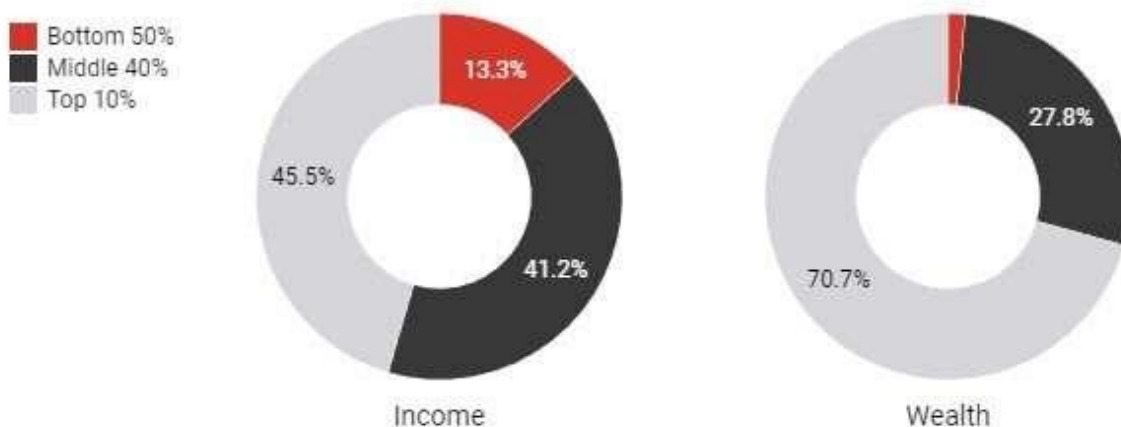
## Wealth

**Wealth** (what you own), as stated previously, is even more unevenly distributed than income. In fact, most Americans have very little **wealth**, as illustrated below.

**Figure 11-** These charts show just how much wealth and income have accumulated at top, with the top 10%, and especially the top 1%, of society.

### US income and wealth inequality

In the United States, the 10% earning the highest incomes take home nearly half of all income and the richest 10% of all households own more than 70% of all the wealth.

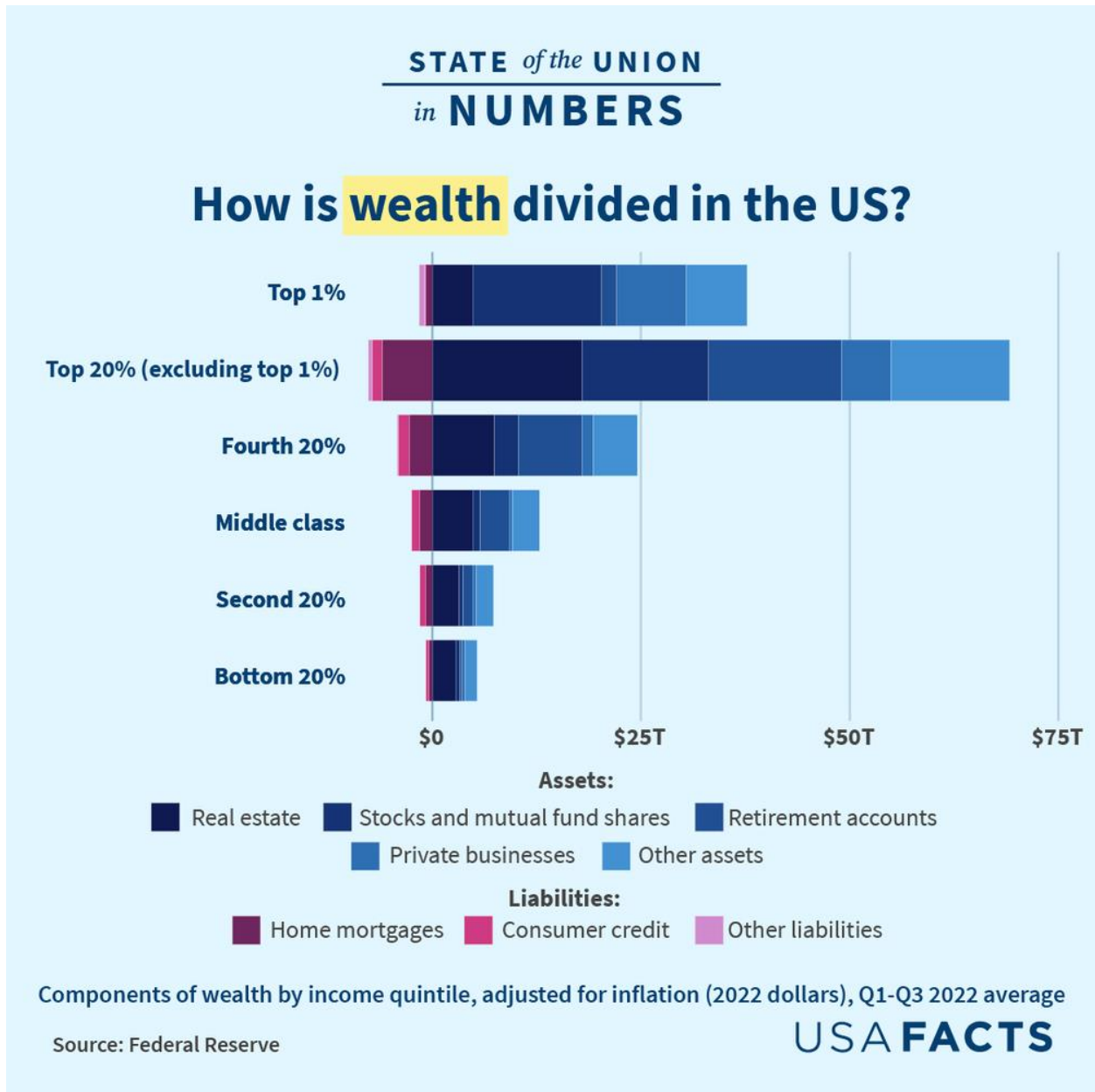


*Wealth inequality is measured using the distribution of net household wealth among adults. Income inequality is measured using the distribution of pre-tax national income among adults.*

Chart: The Conversation, CC-BY-ND • Source: [World Inequality Database](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Download image](#)

Yes, that's right. The bottom 90% of the population own barely a quarter of the nation's wealth. As stated before, much of this wealth is inherited. In fact, children of the rich often go to college to get degrees in business and law in order to manage the family money. For a more in-depth look at wealth distribution, go to this link, [Federal Reserve System: Distribution of Household Wealth since 1989](#).

Figure 12 - Distribution of Family Wealth





## Poverty

In a nation of such plenty, it is amazing there is so much need. A look at the **poverty rate** indicates just how many people in this country live on an income that is barely subsistence level. No, it may not be **absolute poverty**, but, compared to those around them, it is close to it.

The federal government has established an official dollar amount to define **poverty**. Established in the 1960s, it was assumed that the average family spent about one-third of their income on food (although Census Bureau data indicates that most families spend closer to one-sixth of their income on food). Calculating what it could cost to feed a family of four for a year, that amount was multiplied by three, and that dollar amount became the official **poverty line**. The rate has been adjusted for inflation yearly, but the formula for calculating the rate hasn't changed. Go to [U.S. Poverty Statistics](#) for more information about poverty.

The following charts looks at the **poverty line** by size of household. This is the same across the 48 contiguous states, but slightly higher for Alaska and Hawaii.

**Figure 13 - 2023 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia**

Family Size	Annual	Monthly	
1	\$14,580	\$1,215	
2	\$19,720	\$1,643	
3	\$24,860	\$2,072	
4	\$30,000	\$2,500	
5	\$35,140	\$2,928	
6	\$40,280	\$3,357	
7	\$45,420	\$3,785	
8	\$50,560	\$4,213	
Each Add'l	\$5,140	\$428	

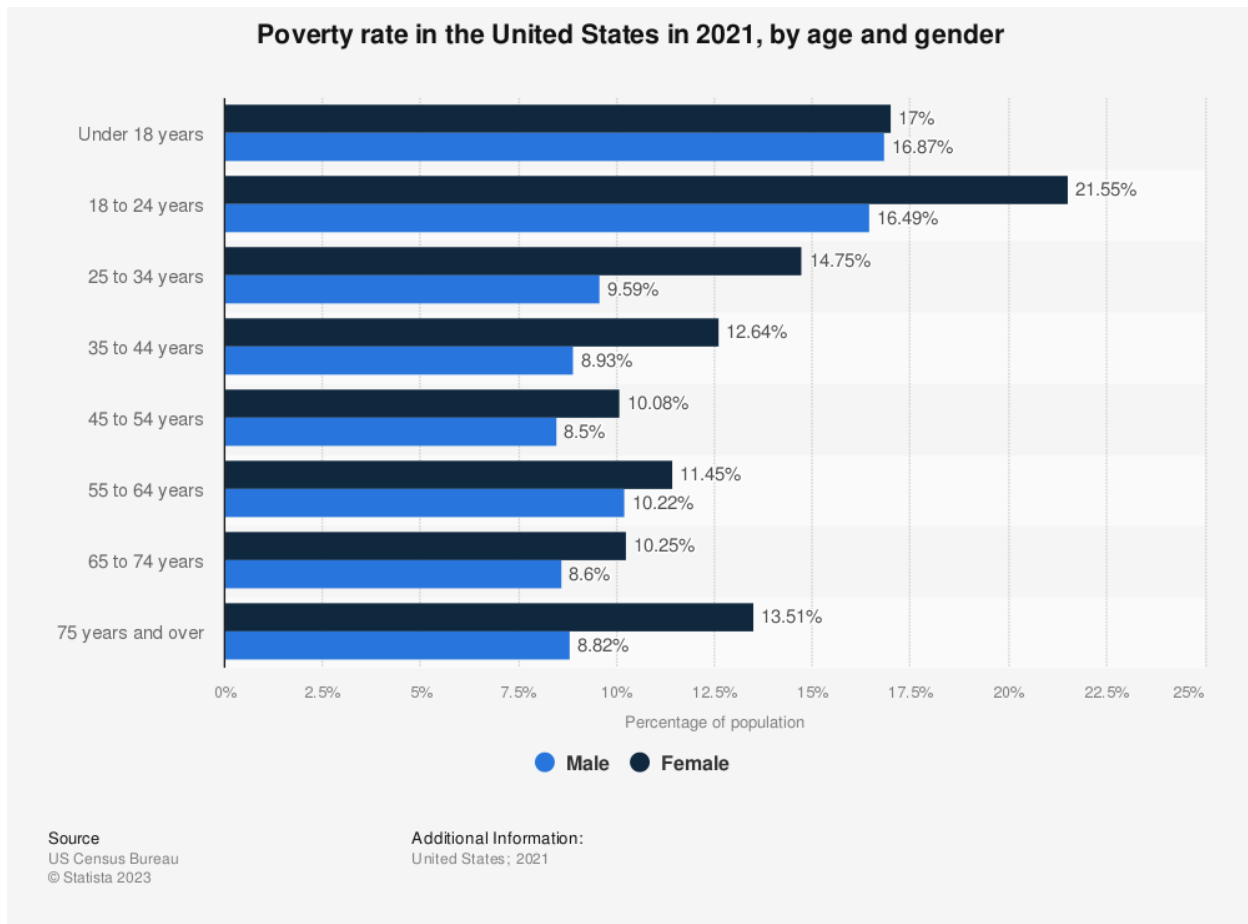
As you might suspect, **poverty** does not affect all groups equally. Some are much more likely to live below the **poverty line**.

## Who are the poor?

Three groups in our society find themselves disproportionately below the **poverty line**: **females and female-headed households, minorities, and children**.

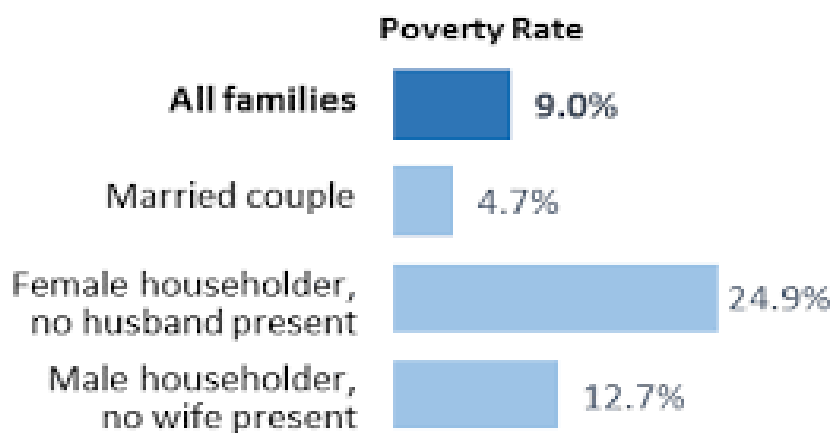
**Females and female-headed households** - It's called the "**feminization of poverty**": **poverty** is a female problem. Women in general, and **female-headed** families in particular, are more likely than their male and male-headed counterparts to live below the **poverty line**. In 2020, the overall poverty rate for women was 12.6%, for men it was 10.2%. But, as you can see in **Figure 14**, the differential in the poverty rate for men and women varies by age, but, for every age category, women are more likely to live in poverty.

**Figure 14**



Overall 9.0% of the families in America are in **poverty**. Families headed by a single female have a **poverty rate** of 24.9% - about five times higher than married couple families.

**Figure 15 - Poverty Rates of Families by Family Structure: 2021 (poverty rates in percentages)**

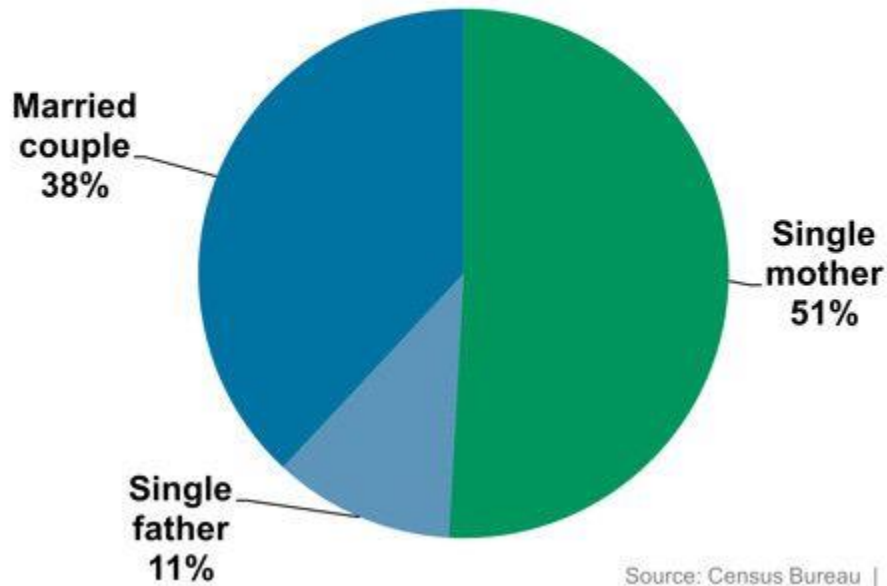


Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS), based on poverty data from Table A-1 of John Creamer, Emily A. Shrider, Kalee Burns, and Frances Chen, Poverty in the United States: 2021, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports number P60-277, September 13, 2022, at <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2022/demo/p60-277.html>

Figure 16

## Families in Poverty

Characteristics of families with children living in poverty



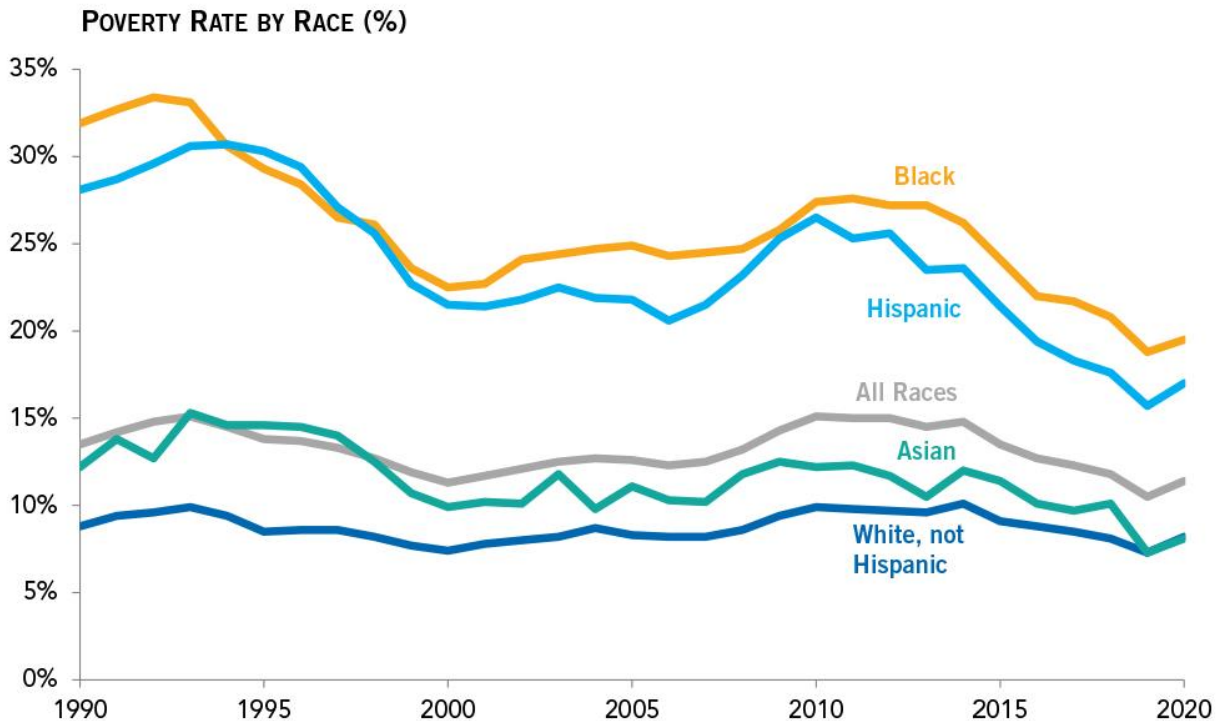
There are 84 million families in the U.S., and 11 million of those are single parent, with 80% (almost 9 million) female-headed. But single mom families account for an astounding 51% of all the families in **poverty**.

**Minorities** – **Minorities** are more likely to live below the **poverty line** than are whites. The white European settlers early on established economic dominance in the New World, and they continue to control the income and wealth in this country. While the **poverty rate** for the population as a whole is 11.4% (2020), the rate varies greatly by race. Blacks have the highest **poverty rate** at 19.5% and Non-Hispanic whites the lowest at 8.2%. The **poverty rate** for Blacks and Hispanics is more than double that of Asians and Non-Hispanic Whites.

Figure 17



## Blacks and Hispanics have much higher poverty rates than other groups



SOURCE: United States Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2021 Annual Social and Economic Supplement*, September 2021.

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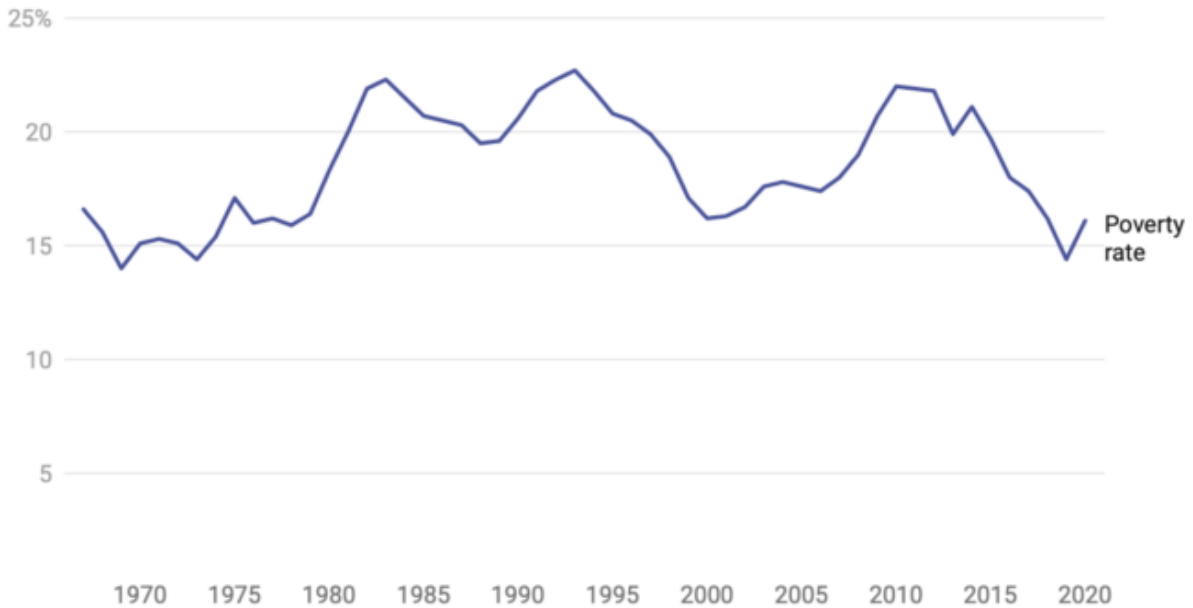
PGPF.ORG

**Children** – Children under age 18 are more likely than any other age category to live below the **poverty line**. Almost one in five children under age 18 (17.0%) live below the **poverty line**, accounting for one third of all poor people. Of course, children don’t have incomes, so these are children who live in households or families with **poverty line** incomes. Many of these are in single-parent, **female-headed** households. When you consider the negative effects for a child, growing up in poverty, you can see the real tragedy of these statistics. Many of these children live in food-insecure (what we now say instead of “hunger”) households, and suffer devastating consequences, both physical and psychological, because of hunger. See the link, “[Hunger Data](#),” for more information on this topic.

Figure 18

## Persistence of US child poverty since 1967

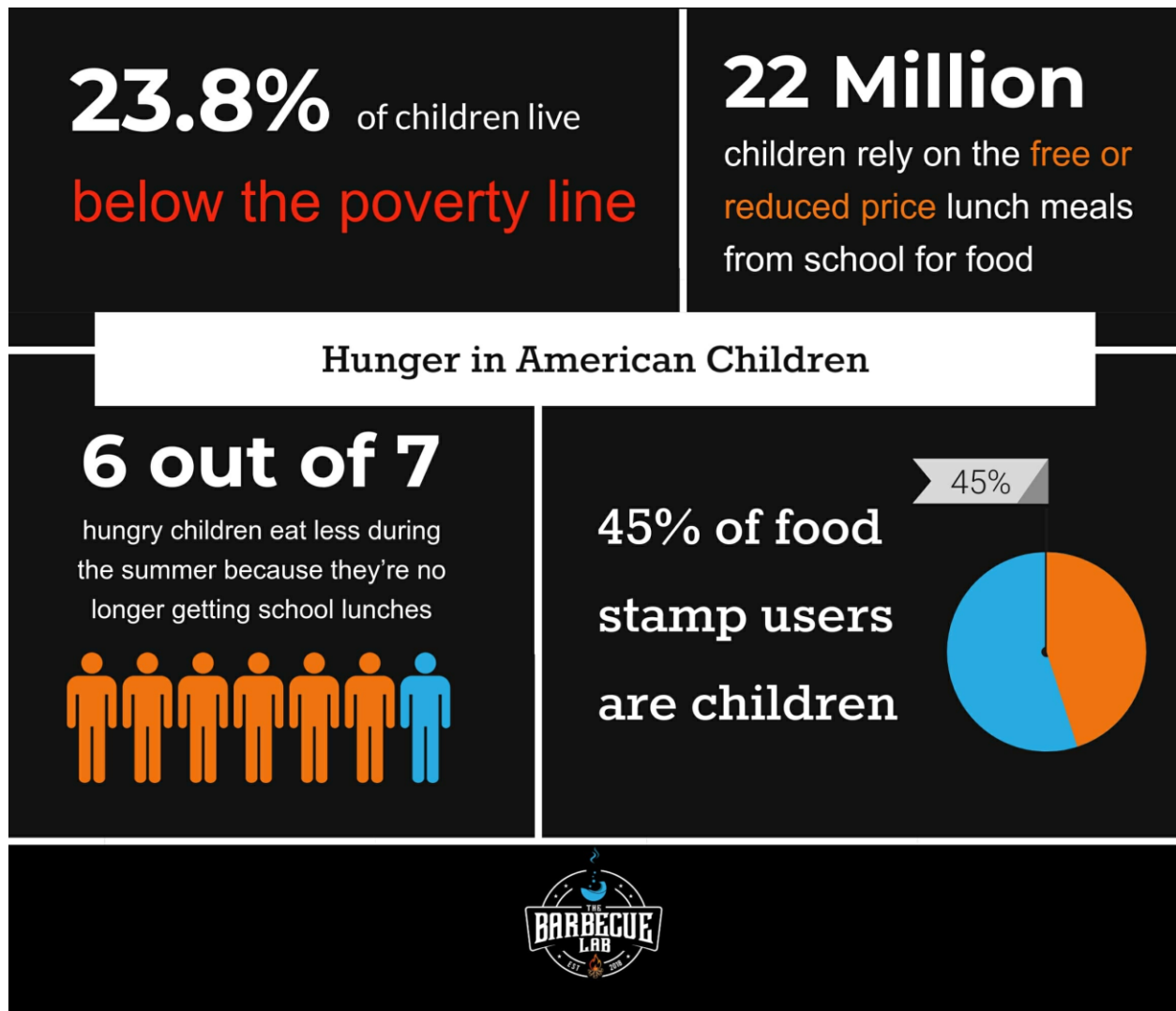
The official child poverty rate stood at 16% in 2020, roughly equal to levels seen in the late 1960s.



*This metric excludes government benefits, tax credits and other official sources of monetary assistance.*

Chart: The Conversation, CC-BY-ND • Source: [Census Bureau](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Download image](#)

Figure 19



## Welfare v. Wealthfare

Everyone has heard of “**welfare**,” but maybe not everyone has heard of “**wealthfare**.”

**Wealthfare** refers to **government subsidies to the wealthy**, that is, money transfers to people with money, your tax dollars at work. And these subsidies to the wealthy cost us a lot more than **welfare** payments to the poor.

**Wealthfare** would include such money transfers as farm subsidies. Farm subsidies were originally intended to help the family farmer by the government assuring farmers that they would receive a certain amount for their crops each year. The idea was to regulate the commodities market, and, when prices were low, cover the additional costs for farmers so they could stay in business and continue to feed us. However, today, there are very few family farmers. Most farms are corporate concerns, and money through the farm subsidy program now goes to wealthy businessmen and farmers. In fact, it is very common for wealthy people to buy land that they “farm,” for the sole purpose of receiving a subsidy.

Tax laws written to benefit corporations and wealthy people, untaxed stock options given to corporate CEOs, and tax incentives for businesses to build new factories in their towns are other examples of how the wealthy benefit from these government programs.

### **Consequences of social class**

As stated at the first of this section, your social class status will play a large role in determining how your life turns out. This probably doesn't surprise anyone. It is fairly evident to most people that, even if money can't buy happiness, it can ease a lot of the burdens the rest of society suffers.

Some of the ways we see social class status affecting **life chances (whether you will benefit or suffer from the opportunities and disadvantages of life)** include education, health, politics, and marriage. The wealthier you are, the more likely you are to go to college, even graduate and professional school. This, of course, is directly related to the cost of higher education, but this advantage sets up people of the upper class to obtain the higher paying jobs in society. But, even before getting to college, the children of the wealthy have educational advantages: tutors, access to reference materials and the internet, prep schools, and private schools, among other advantages, to help prepare the children of the wealthy for their future college careers.

As unfair as it may seem, the wealthier are healthier. Throughout the life span, the death rates are lower for the upper class, and they have a longer life expectancy. Reasons for this include



better nutrition, access to health care, cleaner and safer living and working conditions, and less stress. Not only are the wealthier physically healthier, they are mentally healthier, too. Rates of mental illness are higher for the poor than the middle and upper classes.

Social class also affects one's political activity. Not surprisingly, wealthy people tend to vote Republican, while lower and middle class voters tend to be Democrats. When it comes to political participation, the wealthier are more likely to vote as well as run for office. Wealthier people are better educated and more likely to understand and participate in all different aspects of the political process.

Marital stability is greater in the middle and upper classes. Those living below the poverty line have a divorce rate twice that of those living above it. Consequently, children of the poor are more likely to grow up in broken homes, and live in single parent female-headed families.

Of course, people can change their social class statuses. **Social mobility**, which is **movement up and down the social class ladder**, is possible, since this is an open class system of **stratification** in the U.S. But it is a lot easier to stay at the top of the heap if you are born there than to try to get there from the bottom.

### **Part 4, Section 1 Review – Social Stratification**

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with the concepts.

Life Chances

Social Stratification

Property (Wealth and Income)

Power

Prestige

Relative Poverty (Deprivation)

Absolute Poverty (Deprivation)

Global Stratification

The World Economy (Core, Semi-Peripheral, and Peripheral Countries)

Functional and Conflict Theories of Stratification

Distribution of Wealth and Income in the U.S.

Poverty

Who are the poor?

Feminization of Poverty

“Wealthfare”

Consequences of Social Class

Social Mobility

## PART 4, SECTION 2

### Sex and Gender

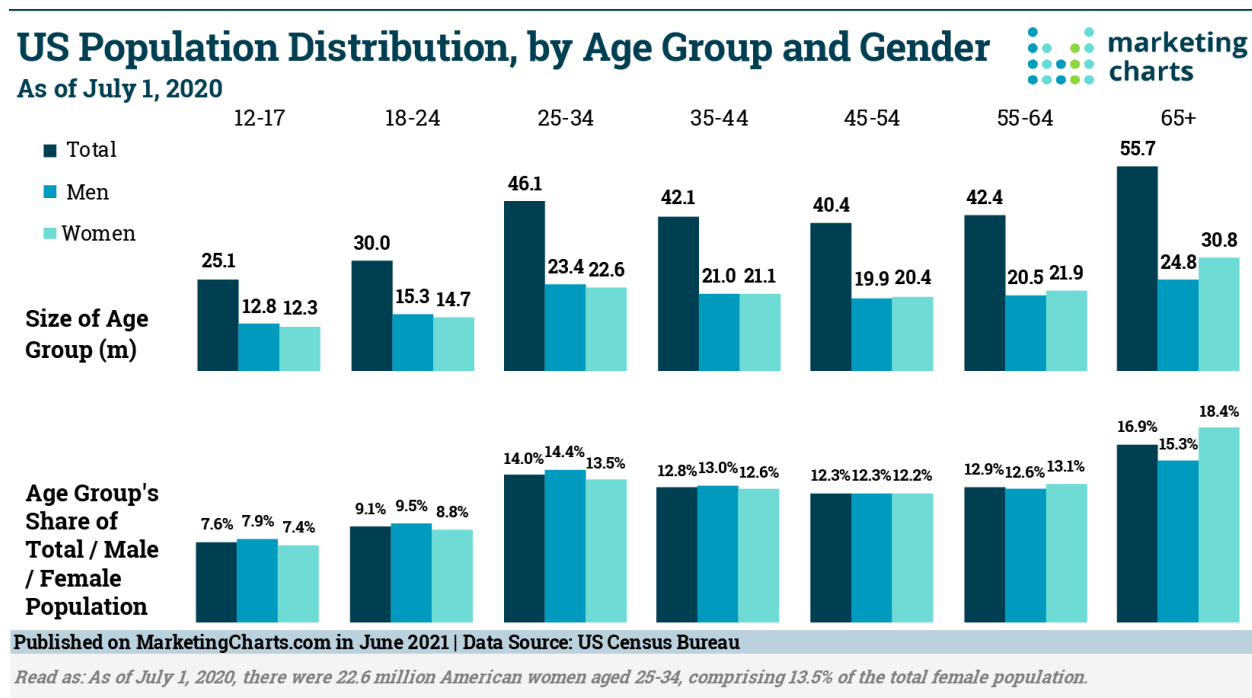
#### The Weaker Sex vs. the Stronger Sex

Do you have a sibling of the opposite **sex**? If so, when you were growing up, if, as a female, you had a brother, did he have more freedom, a later curfew, say? In our society, women are considered the weaker, the gentler, **sex**. The stronger male can take care of himself, but girls need protection. And, don't forget, the girls get pregnant, so we better control them and their behaviors. Besides, we've got to raise our males to be independent. After all, someday they will be the heads of the household, bearing the burden of supporting the family, and making repairs around the house. We need to toughen them up, and teach our girls, that group of shrinking violets, that they need a man to take care of them.

Well, maybe that is a tad bit of an exaggeration, but there is an element of truth there. In this society, males do have more freedoms and opportunities. Some of this is based on biology – those indisputable differences between the sexes; the rest on culture. But are women really the weaker sex? More males babies are conceived and born alive, but as the life span progresses, males are more likely to die than females. In 2021, there were almost fifty-six million people over age sixty-five. Of those, thirty-one million were female, twenty-five million male (see **Figure 1**). There are also a number of genetic illnesses that pass almost exclusively to the male, things like male-pattern baldness, color-blindness, and hemophilia, to name a few.

It is true men are stronger and faster than women (on average – some women are stronger and faster than some men, and there are some men that almost all women are stronger and faster than!). There is no sport where women compete with men at the world-class level. In the Olympics, the men's best times are always better than the women's best times.

Figure 1



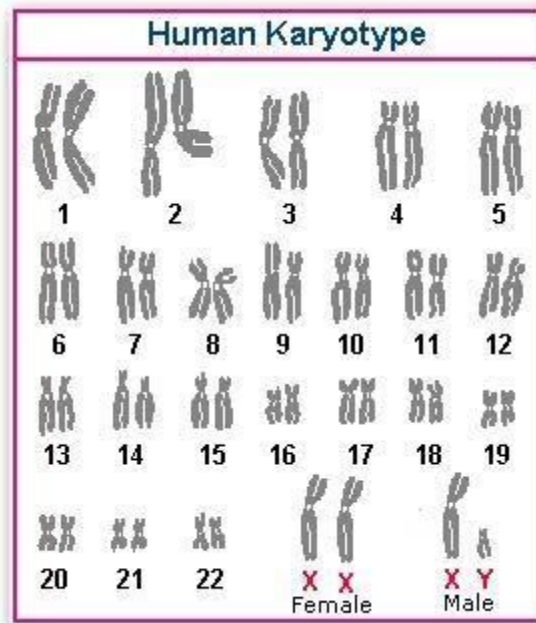
## The Biology of it All

**Sex** refers to biology, to **nature**, the **statuses** of **male** and **female**. **Gender** is **nurture**, and refers to **learned behaviors appropriate for males and females**. These **behavior expectations for the sexes** (called **gender roles**) are labeled **masculine** and **feminine**. Many of the **gender roles** are based on the biology of being male and female, such as women as mothers and nurturers, but others are based on a society's notions of what men and women should do. **Masculine** behavior expectations would say males are supposed to be independent, unemotional, aggressive, and be the breadwinner. **Feminine** behavior expectations include the ideas of passivity, dependence, emotionality, and nurturing as mothers and wives.

No one would deny that men and women are different biologically. These differences begin at conception, when the mother's egg, which contains an "**X**" **sex chromosome**, is united with a sperm that has either an "**X**" or "**y**" **sex chromosome** from the father. The "**XX**" **sex chromosomal configuration** results in a girl; an "**Xy**", a boy. By the way, the lower case "**y**"

for the male is not a typo – the “y” **sex chromosome** is smaller, containing less genetic information than the “X”, which is the reason why so many of those genetic anomalies pass almost solely to the male. In other words, if the “X” **sex chromosome** from the mother contains a recessive gene for a genetic defect, like male pattern baldness or hemophilia, if the father’s sperm has the large “X” there is a good possibility it will contain a dominant gene that will override the defective recessive gene. On the other hand, should that “X” **sex chromosome** with that defective recessive gene unite with a sperm with a “y” **sex chromosome**, the smaller “y” likely won’t have enough genetic information to contain a dominant gene that will prevent the defect from appearing.

**Figure 2 – Human Karotype**



The sexes are also different in terms of their **hormones**. For females, **progesterone** and **estrogen** are the primary hormones, and, for men, the **androgens**, primarily **testosterone**. Of course, the sexes have **hormones** of the opposite sex, just not in as large a quantity. These **hormones** direct the development of another difference in males and females, the **primary** and **secondary sex characteristics**. The **primary sex characteristics** are the genitals and gonads; the **secondary sex characteristics** are those wonderful things that happen at puberty. For females, the breasts grow, menstruation begins, fatty deposits to nourish future babies are added

as the hips widen. For males, the voice deepens, facial hair begins to appear, and the musculature becomes better defined.

Of course, there are “glitches” in nature. At conception, there could be a genetic error, and only one “**X**” **sex chromosome** present in the child. This “**XO**” sex chromosomal configuration results in a female, and is called “Turner’s Syndrome.” There are also situations when there is more than one “**X**” **sex chromosome** or “**y**” **sex chromosome** present. The “**XXy**” configuration results in a male, and is called “Klinefelter Syndrome.” One theory of deviance and crime involved the “**Xyy**” man, a chromosomal configuration found in Richard Speck, the Boston strangler. It was theorized that men with the extra “**y**” **sex chromosome** have more **testosterone**, making them more aggressive and, thus, more likely to be a violent criminal. This biological theory of deviance and crime was disproved, as it has been discovered that just as many noncriminal males have the extra “**y**” as do criminals. In some cases, cells in the body may present what is called a “mosaic” of **sex chromosomes**; that is, some cells show an “**Xy**,” others “**XX**,” or some other combination.

There can be issues with the **hormones**, in that there is too much or too little of the **hormone**, or an oversupply of **hormones** of the opposite sex. In one instance of hormonal imbalance, called “Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia” (CAH), the female baby in utero is subjected to an extra “bath” of male **androgen hormones**, and, although a biological female with an “**XX**” chromosomal set, she will exhibit more masculine physical characteristics.

And, of course, there can be physical anomalies. The “pseudo-hermaphrodite” is one who presents ambiguous genitals and gonads, possessing, for example, the genitals of the male (penis) and the gonads of the female (ovaries). These individuals, sometimes referred to as “intersex,” are not at all rare; in fact, it is estimated that one in every one thousand babies has some degree of hermaphroditism.

As stated, no one denies that men and women are different. But the question for sociologists is are the differences in behavior expectations (**gender**) due solely to biological factors (**sex**), or are

they mainly due to cultural notions of what is appropriate for males and females? In other words, are we, based on our **sex**, confined to behave in ways that fit society's notions of "correct" **gender roles**, and possibly deny our desires in terms of beliefs and behaviors? Are all men independent, unemotional, and aggressive? And are all females passive, dependent, and emotional? If, however, we are **sanctioned** for behaving in ways that are considered inappropriate for our **sex**, are people forced to deny their **selves** or risk society's disapproval?

Of course, no one, male or female, acts in purely gender-stereotyped ways all of the time. And it is also apparent, taking an historical perspective, that these behavior expectations have become less rigid. Two generations ago women weren't expected to work outside the home, certainly not if they were married and had children. But, today, we find more women acting in ways that had once been labeled "**masculine**," and men acting in ways that might be labeled "**feminine**." The **idea that we can be free to choose from the wide range of behaviors we label masculine and feminine the ones that work for us is called androgyny**. **Androgyny** doesn't mean unisex, but, instead, means we can think and act in ways that suit our own senses of **self**, and not in ways prescribed by society based on our **sex**. Certainly, society today is much more **androgynous** than it ever has been, but there is still a long way to go.

## **DISCLAIMER!**

But, before I continue, I do want to state that I in no way want this to become a feminist rant (don't worry, we'll define "feminist" in a bit). Unfortunately, when the subject of the sexes comes up, it is often assumed that women are going to complain about how little they make, or how little help their husbands are around the house, or how unequal society still is in its treatment of women compared to men. And these women would be right to complain. All of these things are true. Women really are left out of full participation in society, at least in the part of society we reward (the outside world, not housework and childcare). Women didn't even get the vote until 1920 (that would be the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment). So a rant would not be out of place, because inequality is mainly a female issue. You don't see many men clamoring to adopt the roles females occupy, crying about how they aren't able to take on traditional female roles, or

make as little as women, or be patronized like women are. Men, who hold the power in society, are probably content to let the subject of inequality between the sexes rest. But what men also don't realize is that they, too, suffer, from these rigidly defined behavior expectations for the sexes. You might recall what Tony Porter had to say in the video "A Call to Men." We really can't have women's liberation without male liberation, and that liberation from rigid sex role expectations would benefit everyone.

In the U.S., men's life expectancy is seven years less than that of women. Men are much more likely to use drugs and alcohol, are more likely to be the criminal as well as the crime victim, and have a suicide rate four times that of women. Living up to the **masculine gender roles** is hazardous to men's health, but they don't see it. They see how society rewards them just for being male, and wonder why women get upset and feel left out. In reality, both sexes suffer when we expect all of one sex to act one way and the other sex to act another. Both sexes would benefit from a little more **androgyny**.

## **Functional and Conflict Theories of Sex and Gender**

**Functional Theory** of **sex** and **gender** is based on biology – she has the babies. And since newborn babies are dependent for long periods of time (years!), someone has to take care of them. Traditionally, babies nursed, which required the mom of course and, without safe, effective birth control, which we didn't have until the introduction of the oral contraceptive in the 1960s, she would probably get pregnant again (and again and again and again....You get the idea. How many kids did your grandma or great-grandma have?). This cycle of pregnancy and nursing kept the mother tied to the child, so it was functional that she be the one to stay at home and be the care-giver. The man, unencumbered by these same duties, could leave the home and go out into the world and provide for the family.

**Conflict Theory**, of course, sees things just a little differently. Yes, **conflict theory** would agree that dividing up the **gender roles** such that she is the caregiver and he is the breadwinner is functional, but, of course, they would add that additional question: who really benefits? And



they would answer – the man. Why? Because **power** is in the outside world, not at home. Stay at home parents don't get paid, they don't even earn Social Security benefits. There is no status in cleaning toilets. If you want to gain **power**, you've got to be out in the workplace. Now, of course, most men use what **power** they gain in the outside world to benefit the family, but the fact is that men have traditionally had this **power**, and women haven't. How many stay at home moms could go out into the world and replace their husband's income should they have to?

**Conflict theorists** would also look at the physical part of **power**. Most men are physically stronger than most women. Fortunately, most men don't use their physical strength to subdue women, but the threat is there. And, unfortunately, while that threat is certainly not used by all men it is used all too often by a few.

### **Consequences of the differences**

A **male-dominated society is called a patriarchy**. The United States is a **patriarchy**. If we take a look at who head our major social institutions (religious, economic, political), we find males. Women have traditionally been excluded from full participation at the **macro-level** of society. The patriarchy is fueled by an ideology, **sexism**, a **system of beliefs that favors one sex over the other**. This favoritism, this **sexism**, may not be apparent to this younger generation, but it still exists. Males are the "preferred" and privileged sex in so many ways. Most parents expecting their first child don't care if the child is a boy or girl, just so it's healthy. But, when asked which they prefer, the research shows these first time parents overwhelmingly prefer a son. There are probably a number of reasons for this preference, but it is clear that, as **androgynous** as we might be, the **patriarchy** still rules.

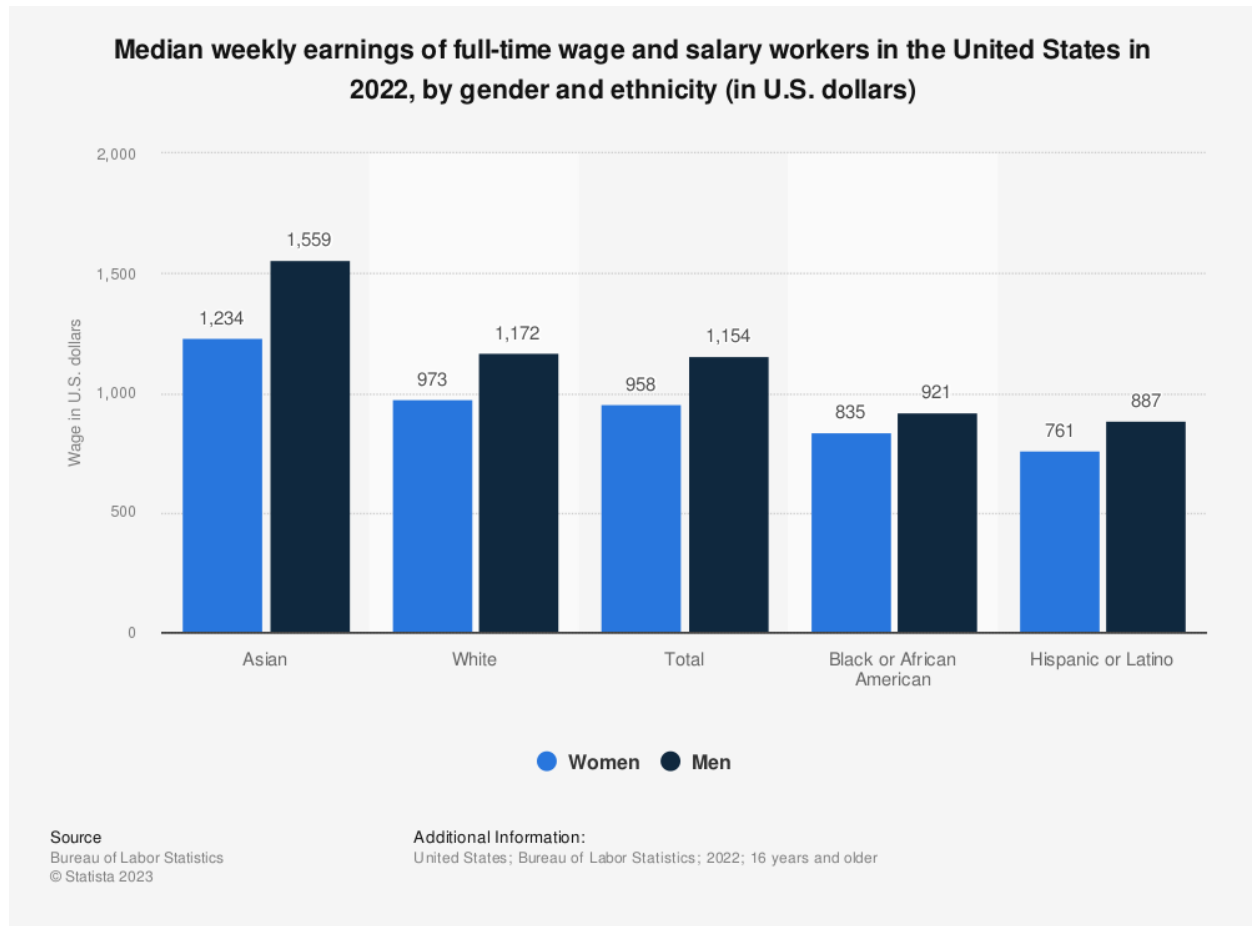
This brings up an interesting paradox. As constrained as women are when it comes to attaining leadership positions in society, women do have more freedom than men in playing out the roles of the opposite **sex**. It is all right to be a tomboy; no man wants to be labeled 'sissy.' But, even with more freedom in acting less "**feminine**" and more "**masculine**," women still lag behind men in two very important areas: occupational status and pay. Of course, these two are related.

The higher pay, higher status jobs in society are held almost exclusively by men. Currently, five percent of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women, even though women are fifty-one percent of the population. See the link "[Female CEOs of Fortune 500 Companies.](#)"

Instead, women find themselves for the most part employed in low-pay, low-status jobs in society. These jobs, occupied almost predominantly by women, have been labeled "**pink-collar jobs.**" But let's be honest. Most men don't hold high pay, high status jobs either. It's just that they are much more likely to do so while the vast majority of employed women work at **pink-collar jobs.** However, it is interesting to note that when men do work in jobs typically considered "female occupations," they earn more than women. Take a look at this link, "[Men/Women's Wages,](#)" and Table 2 on page four to view these data.

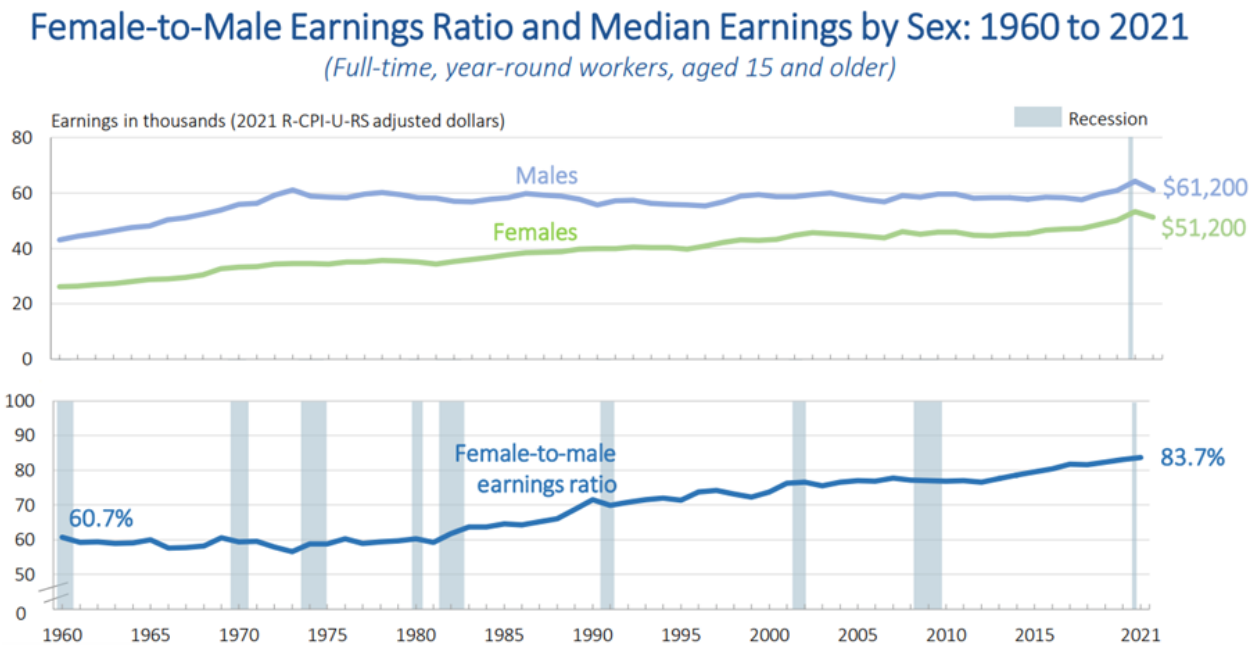
Perhaps even more surprising than the fact that men make more than women even when employed in traditional "women's work" is that the difference in pay in the same occupational category is even greater for the higher earning jobs. Go to [TED: The Economics Daily](#) and look at the chart data, which shows the median weekly earnings for men and women in various occupations as compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Look at some of the highest paying occupations, like chief executive, lawyer, and physicians and surgeons. Those high paying jobs have larger pay gaps than the lower paying ones.

Take a look at this chart. It compares women's earnings to those of men, by race. Across the board, women make less than men.

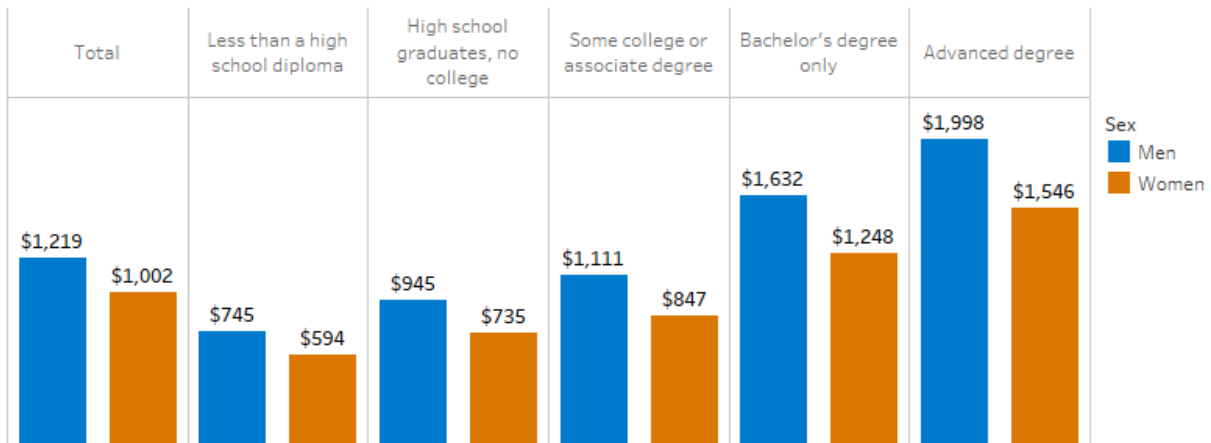
**Figure 3**

We are beginning to see, however, that women's pay may be catching up with men's. This chart shows the male/female pay differential from 1960 until 2021, and indicates that women now earn about 84% of what men earn.

**Figure 4 – Women’s Earnings as a Percent of Men’s**



Even when we control for education level, we find women lag behind men, as seen in the following chart. And this difference by education starts with our first summer jobs. But even obtaining a college degree doesn’t guarantee equality in pay. In fact the largest difference between pay based on education occurs at the bachelor’s level, and higher, where women earn about 70% of what male college graduates do. Now, of course, some of this is choice. Women choose to go into lower paid professions, like public school teacher, while men become engineers. But it is also cultural, in that society expects women to be teachers, and not engineers. And, in the professions, there is sometimes a preference for a male doctor or lawyer over a female one. Choice and **sexism** combine to perpetuate this inequality.

**Figure 5****Median weekly earnings by sex and educational attainment**

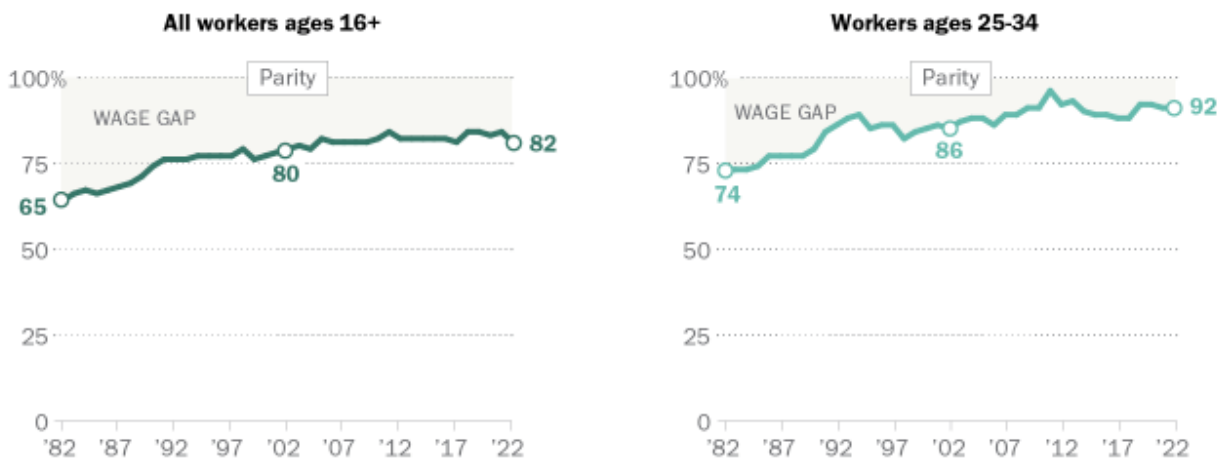
Notes: Based on median weekly earnings of full-time, wage and salary workers, 25 years and older. Advanced degree includes people with master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.  
 Data: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2022 annual averages.

But if we look at just one age cohort, those 25 – 34 years of age, the earnings gap has narrowed considerably. Young women coming out of college today will earn almost 90% of what their male counterparts make. Progress, yes, but still not equality.

Figure 6

## Gender pay gap in U.S. has not closed in recent years, but is narrower among young workers

Median hourly earnings of U.S. women as percentage of men's median earnings among ...



Note: Estimates are for civilian, non-institutionalized, full- or part-time employed workers with positive earnings. Samples include employed workers with positive earnings, working full time or part time, excluding the self-employed.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey outgoing rotation group files (IPUMS).

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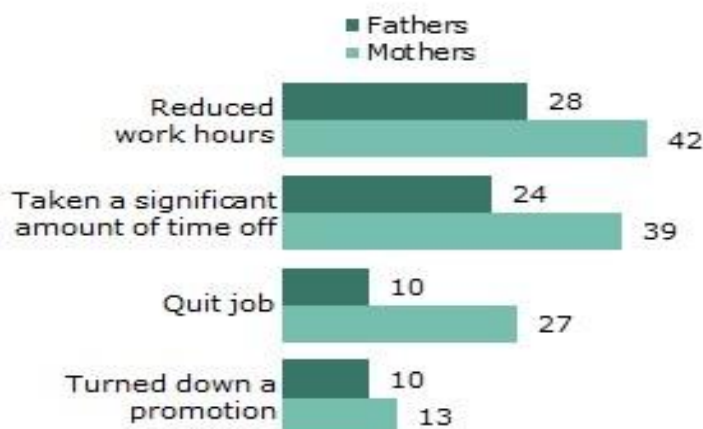
Much of the constraints on a woman's success at the **macro-level** is due to what is called the **“glass ceiling.”** The **glass ceiling is an invisible barrier that keeps women from advancing into top positions in corporate America.** Women traditionally have not been considered to be good leaders, to be too weak to command a workforce, and have been shunted sideways, into positions in personnel or human resources, in corporate America. Additionally, women have traditionally not been considered as “serious” about their careers. Women, who, due to **nature** of course, bear the children, leave the workforce to give birth, and then maybe delay returning for several years, or even more. And women may have to move around if husbands get transfers. For these, and many other reasons, women have found themselves less involved in the top echelons of corporate America.

Indeed, child bearing and child rearing are considered traditional female roles, and the majority of the child care burden does tend to fall on the mother. This chart looks at how children affect the careers of mothers and fathers. You can see, women’s careers are much more likely to be impacted than men’s.

**Figure 7**

### Mothers, More than Fathers, Experience Career Interruptions

*% saying they have ... in order to care for a child or family member*



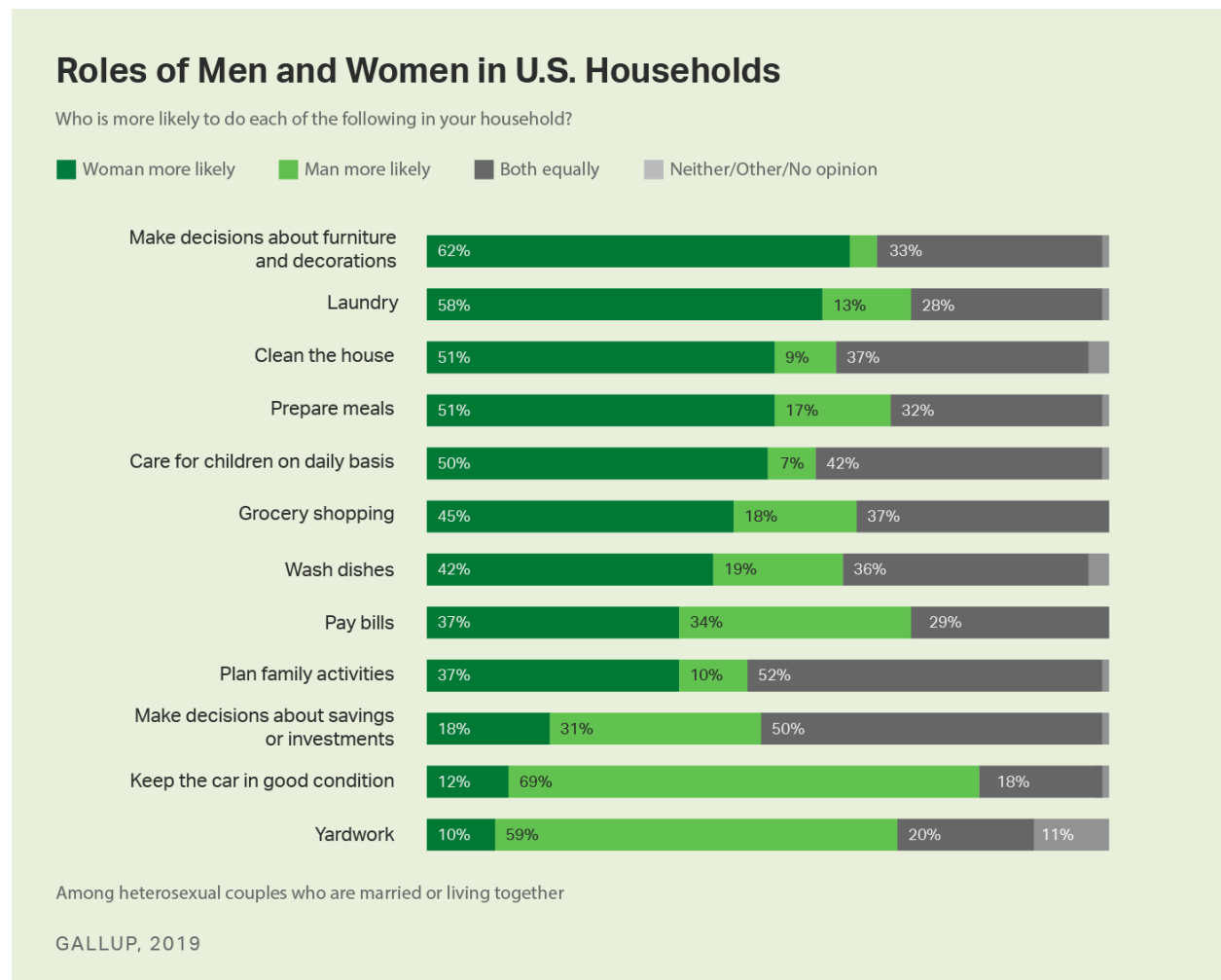
Notes: Based on those who have ever worked, "Fathers" and "mothers" include those with children of any age, including adult children (n=1,254).

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Yes, it’s true, I have been known to say “I wish I had a wife.” My husband has a wife (me). He can concentrate on his career, knowing the laundry will be washed, the food prepared, the children tended, because he has a wife (me). I sure could use a wife. Instead, like most working women, I work a “**second shift.**” The **second shift** refers to the **second job of housework and childcare working women have.** Returning home from our paid labor in the outside world, we get to work another job at home – all the unpaid housework and childcare that we do. Yes, men are helping out more, but, in most families, the burden of the home and children still falls on the mom. Look at the following chart.

Figure 8



For men, the situation they face entering a female-dominated occupation is quite different. Instead of finding access to top positions blocked, **men often find themselves on a fast-track to the top**, what has been called the “**glass escalator.**” Think of the most famous chefs, clothing designers, dancers. All of these are traditional female occupations or pursuits, but, at the highest levels, they are dominated by men. Yes, there are women in those high places, too, but men far outnumber them. Even in public schools, many men start as classroom teachers but end up in administration, far more than the number of women who rise to administrative positions.



## A Gal can Dream

I think things would be better if we raised our sons more like our daughters, and our daughters more like our sons. We are different, yes. That is biology. But so many of the differences are just cultural expectations. What if we got rid of those expectations, and let everyone just be themselves? Let people act in ways that speak to their own strengths, without societal pressure to be or do something based just on their sex. That would be true **androgyny**.

**Feminism** is an ideology that supports this idea. It is a **philosophy that, simply put, supports equality between the sexes**. It isn't about just women's rights, as so many people think. Men can be **feminists**, too, because this belief in equality includes areas where men are treated unequally. Ninety percent of time in a divorce, when children are involved, the mother gets the children. That is unequal treatment directed at men. Men are subject to the draft (although there has been no draft since the Vietnam era). Men have to register with Selective Service, women don't. Women can join the military if they want, but won't be subject to being drafted should a draft be reinstated. That is discrimination against men.

Let us celebrate the differences we have as men and women. But, at the same time, we shouldn't let those differences define us and rigidly categorize us, such that we become something we don't want to be. I'll have the babies, and I'll even cook and clean (I do, after all, eat and make messes). But if I want to have a career, even in a traditional "male" occupation, let me do that, too. And men can do what they feel most comfortable doing, even staying home and being house-husbands. Yes, I think that's exactly what we need in this country – more house-husbands! Maybe then men would see why we've been complaining.

### **Part 4, Section 2 Review – Sex and Gender**

Be sure, when looking at the following list, that you don't just know the definitions of the words on the list, but know other information associated with the concepts.

Sex and Gender

Gender Roles

Biological differences between men and women

Androgyny

Functional Theory of Sex and Gender

Conflict Theory of Sex and Gender

Patriarchy

Pink-Collar Jobs

Glass Ceiling

Second Shift

Glass Escalator

Sexism

Feminism

**The following pages (pages 132 – 135) are readings from the text for both the traditional (classroom) SOCI 1301 classes, as well as the online SOCI 1301.W1 class. These are also included in links at our class homepages. Students in the online SOCI 1301.W1 class are given instructions in the text for when to read each of the following.**

**I hope you find these readings to be humorous. Who said learning can't be fun?**

**Why Did The Chicken Cross The Road? (Part 1, Section 3)**

**DONALD TRUMP:** We will build a big wall to keep illegal chickens from crossing the road.

We will have a door for legal chickens.

**JOHN KERRY:** We will trust the chicken to tell us whether it crossed the road or not.

**CHRIS CHRISTIE:** We need to waterboard that chicken to find out why it crossed the road.

**RAND PAUL:** It's none of our business why the chicken crossed the road.

**NANCY PELOSI:** We will have to wait until the chicken crosses the road to see what it says.

**CARLY FIORINA:** Hilary Clinton lied about why the chicken crossed the road.

**BRIAN WILLIAMS:** I crossed the road with the chicken.

**BEN CARSON:** This isn't brain surgery. So why did the chicken cross the road?

**SARAH PALIN:** The chicken crossed the road because, gosh-darn it, he's a maverick!

**BARACK OBAMA:** Let me be perfectly clear, if the chickens like their eggs they can keep their eggs. No chicken will be required to cross the road to surrender her eggs. Period.

**HILLARY CLINTON:** What difference at this point does it make why the chicken crossed the road?

**GEORGE W. BUSH:** We don't really care why the chicken crossed the road. We just want to know if the chicken is on our side of the road or not. The chicken is either with us or against us. There is no middle ground here.

**BILL CLINTON:** I did not cross the road with that chicken.

**AL GORE:** I invented the chicken.

**AL SHARPTON:** Why are all the chickens white?

**DR. PHIL:** The problem we have here is that this chicken won't realize that he must first deal with the problem on this side of the road before it goes after the problem on the other side of the road. What we need to do is help him realize how stupid he is acting by not taking on his

current problems before adding any new problems.

**OPRAH:** Well, I understand that the chicken is having problems, which is why he wants to cross the road so badly. So instead of having the chicken learn from his mistakes and take falls, which is a part of life, I'm going to give this chicken a NEW CAR so that he can just drive across the road and not live his life like the rest of the chickens.

**ANDERSON COOPER:** We have reason to believe there is a chicken, but we have not yet been allowed to have access to the other side of the road.

**ERNEST HEMINGWAY:** To die in the rain, alone.

**GRANDPA:** In my day we didn't ask why the chicken crossed the road. Somebody told us the chicken crossed the road, and that was good enough for us.

**BILL GATES:** I have just released eChicken2019, which will not only cross roads, but will lay eggs, file your important documents and balance your checkbook.

**ALBERT EINSTEIN:** Did the chicken really cross the road, or did the road move beneath the chicken?

**COLONEL SANDERS:** Did I miss one?

**BERNIE SANDERS:** That little chicken will pay 80% income taxes no matter what side of the road it's on. He's got to help finance free college even for those that just want a four year vacation.

**JOHN LENNON:** Imagine all the chickens in the world crossing roads together – in peace.

**RONALD REAGAN:** What chicken?

**CAPTAIN KIRK:** To boldly go where no chicken has ever gone before.

**SIGMUND FREUD;** The fact that you are at all concerned that the chicken crossed the road reveals your underlying sexual insecurity.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.:** I envision a world where all chickens will be free to cross roads without having their motives called into question.

**ROBERT FROST:** To cross the road less traveled.

**GILLIGAN:** The traffic started getting rough; the chicken had to cross. If not for the plumage of its peerless tail, the chicken would be lost, the chicken would be lost!

### The “W.C.” (Part 2, Section 1) –

An old English lady visiting Switzerland was looking for a room to rent. She asked the schoolmaster if he could recommend any. He took her to several inns and when everything was settled the lady returned to her home in England. When she arrived home, the thought occurred to her that she hadn't seen a “WC” (water closet, toilet) around the place so she promptly sent a note to the schoolmaster, asking if there was a “WC” around. The schoolmaster was a very bad student of English, so he asked the parish priest if he could help in the matter. Together they tried to discover the meaning of the letters “WC” and the only solution they could come up with was that it meant “waterside chapel.”

The schoolmaster wrote the following note back to the English lady:

Dr. Madam,

I take great pleasure in informing you that the “WC” is located just 9 miles from the inn in the center of a beautiful grove of pine trees surrounded by lovely grounds. Many patrons agree that it is a wonderful place to go.

It is capable of holding 229 people at one sitting and it is open on Thursdays and Sundays only. There are a great number of people expected during summer months. I would suggest you come early, although there is usually plenty of standing room. This is an unfortunate situation particularly if you are in the habit of going regularly. Again, you must arrive early so you will be assured of a seat. You will no doubt be glad to hear that a great number of people bring their lunch and make a day of it, while others, who can afford to go by car, arrive just in time. I would especially recommend your ladyship to go on Thursday when there is an organ accompaniment. The acoustics are excellent and even the most delicate sounds can be heard everywhere. It may interest you to know that my daughter was married in the “WC” and it was there she had met her husband. The place was packed and I can remember the rush for seats. It was really wonderful to see the expressions on everyone's faces.

The newest attraction is a large bell donated by a wealthy resident of the district. It rings every time a person enters. A bazaar is being held to provide plush fur-lined seats for all, since the people feel that they are long needed and will provide extra warmth during the winter season.

My wife is rather delicate so she cannot attend regularly. It is almost a year since she last went; naturally, it pains her very much not to go more often.

I shall be delighted to reserve a seat for you if you wish, where you will be seen by all.

### **The One Hundred Percent American (Ralph Linton) (Part 2, Section 1)**

*(This classic essay pointedly demonstrates that many cultural traits we consider distinctively American have in fact diffused from other cultures and often have histories of thousands of years.)*

There can be no question about the average American's Americanism or his desire to preserve this precious heritage at all costs. Nevertheless, some insidious foreign ideas have already wormed their way into his civilization without his realizing what was going on. Thus dawn finds the unsuspecting patriot garbed in pajamas, a garment of East Indian origin, and lying on a bed built on a pattern which originated in either Persia or Asia Minor. He is muffled to the ears in un-American materials: cotton, first domesticated in India; linen, domesticated in the Near East; wool from an animal native to Asia Minor; or silk, whose uses were first discovered by the Chinese. All these substances have been transformed into cloth by a method invented in Southwestern Asia. If the weather is cold enough he may even be sleeping under an eiderdown quilt invented in Scandinavia.

On awakening, he glances at the clock, a medieval European invention, uses one potent Latin word in abbreviated form, rises in haste, and goes to the bathroom. Here, if he stops to think about it, he must feel himself in the presence of a great American institution; he will have heard stories of both the quality and frequency of foreign plumbing and will know that in no other country does the average man perform his ablutions in the midst of such splendor. But the invidious foreign influence pursues him even here. Glass was invented by the ancient Egyptians, the use of glazed tiles for floors and walls in the Near East, porcelain in China, and the art of enameling on metal by Mediterranean artisans of the Bronze Age. Even his bathtub and toilet are but slightly modified copies of Roman originals. The only purely American contribution to the ensemble is the steam radiator.

In this bathroom the American washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls. Next he cleans his teeth, a subversive European practice which did not invade America until the latter part of the eighteenth century. He then shaves, a masochistic rite first developed by the heathen priests of ancient Egypt and Sumner. The process is made less of a penance by the fact that his razor is of steel, an iron-carbon alloy discovered in either India or Turkestan. Lastly, he dries himself on a Turkish towel.

Returning to the bedroom, the unconscious victim of un-American practices removes his clothes from a chair, invented in the Near East, and proceeds to dress. He puts on close-fitting tailored garments whose form derives from the skin clothing of the ancient nomads of the Asiatic steppes and fastens them with buttons whose prototypes appeared in Europe at the close of the Stone Age. This costume is appropriate enough for outdoor exercise in a cold climate, but is quite unsuited to American summers, steam-heated houses, and Pullmans. Nevertheless, foreign ideas and habits hold the unfortunate man in thrall even when common sense tells him that the authentically American costume of gee string and moccasins would be far more comfortable. He puts on his feet stiff coverings made from hide prepared by a process invented in ancient Egypt and cut to a pattern which can be traced back to ancient Greece, and makes sure they are properly polished, also a Greek idea. Lastly, he ties about his neck a strip of bright-colored cloth which is a vestigial survival of the shoulder shawls worn by seventeenth-century Croats. He gives himself a final appraisal in the mirror, an old Mediterranean invention, and goes down stairs to breakfast.

Here a whole new series of foreign things confronts him. His food and drink are placed before him in pottery vessels, the popular name of which – china – is sufficient evidence of their origin. His fork is a medieval Italian invention and his spoon a copy of a Roman original. He will usually begin the meal with coffee, an Abyssinian plant first discovered by the Arabs. He will follow this with a bowl of cereal made from grain domesticated in the Near East and prepared by methods also invented there. From this he will go on to waffles, a Scandinavian invention, with plenty of butter, originally a Near-Eastern cosmetic.

Breakfast over, he places upon his head a molded piece of felt, invented by the nomads of Eastern Asia, and if it looks like rain, puts on outer shoes of rubber, discovered by the ancient Mexicans, and takes an umbrella, invented in India. He then sprints for his train – the train, not the sprinting, being an English invention. At the station he pauses for a moment to buy a newspaper, paying for it with coins invented in ancient Lydia. Once on board he settles back to inhale the fumes of a cigarette invented in Mexico, or a cigar invented in Brazil. Meanwhile, he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites by a process invented in Germany upon a material invented in China. As he scans the latest editorial pointing out the dire results to our institutions of accepting foreign ideas, he will not fail to thank a Hebrew God in an Indo-European language that he is a one hundred percent (decimal system invented by the Greeks) American (from Americus Vespucci, Italian geographer).

**Practice assignment (not for credit)**  
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**  
**THE POWER OF TOUCH**

A man gently brushes his hand across the cheek of his lover. A mother cradles her infant. A football player hugs a teammate after a touchdown. Only now is science beginning to catch up with humanity when it comes to appreciating the importance – and the power – of touch. The University of Miami School of Medicine’s Touch Research Institute (TRI) brings together researchers from Duke, Princeton, and other universities to study the sense of touch and how it might be used to promote health and treat disease. So far, TRI has uncovered surprising evidence that touch doesn’t simply feel good – it can actually heal.

**The research:**

Premature infants, subjected to a gentle 15-minute massage three times a week showed remarkable improvement over preemies left untouched in their incubators. Massaged infants gained weight 47% faster, had better motion response, and were released from the hospital six days sooner, saving thousands of dollars per infant.

“Hospitals usually handle premature infants as little as possible,” says Maria Hernandez-Reif, director of TRI’s massage therapy research project. “But we’ve found that the right sort of touch can be very beneficial.”

**ASSIGNMENT:** Read “The Power of Touch.” Based on this research project, answer the following questions:

1. What is the hypothesis of this research?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are the variables in this research?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the operational definitions of the two variables?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What is the research method (design) of this study?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What are the conclusions of the researchers?



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**ASSIGNMENT #1: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:  
GETTING BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS**

People who live in families are healthier, according to research. Scientists who study longevity and disease find that people who live with other people live longer, healthier lives. When we take care of others, we seem to take better care of ourselves. With this idea in mind, gerontologists have suggested that having someone (or thing!) to take care of may help increase longevity and improve the health of the most isolated members of our society – the elderly.

**The research:**

Residents of a nursing home were given the option of having a pet to keep in their rooms. The pet could be either a parakeet or a gerbil, since these are caged animals that could be kept inside and confined to a given area. Residents who chose to have a pet reported a decrease in the amount of medications taken, fewer doctor visits, and an increase in number of days they were able to go outside the nursing home for visits to friends and family.

Does knowing we are needed give us a reason to live? Do we take better care of ourselves because we know others are depending on us? This would seem to be the case, and even a small animal can give a person a new lease on life.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Read “Getting by with a little help from our friends.” Based on this research project, answer the following questions:

1. What is the hypothesis in this research?
2. What are the variables in this research?
3. What are the operational definitions of the two variables?
4. What is the research method (design) of this study?
5. What are the conclusions of the researchers?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Resocialization**

**After viewing the film about the handicapped man, Francesco Clark, apply the following concepts from Part 2, Section 2 in a discussion of his transformation from an able-bodied to a handicapped person.**

What was Francesco's degradation ceremony?

What is his "total institution"?

Talk about Francesco's resocialization experiences after his accident.

Who were some of the agents of socialization that helped Francesco as he was resocialized to take on the roles of a handicapped person?

Talk about Francesco's sense of "self," both before the accident and after the accident.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Lessons from Death Row**

**After watching "Lessons from Death Row," answer the following questions based on information in the movie.**

**(1) What were two life changing events that occurred in the young life of the lawyer's client, Will?**

**(2) What two lessons did the attorney say he had learned after his years serving as a death row attorney?**

**(3) What percent of individuals on death row in the U.S. were first involved in the juvenile justice system?**

**(4) What did the attorney mean when he said his client Will "was not the exception to the rule, he was the rule?"**

**(5) What did the attorney mean by “make the problem bigger”? How does this illustrate the sociological imagination?**

**(6) What are several ways society could intervene to prevent a tragic murder like the one committed by Will?**

**(7) From a Functional perspective, what is the function of the death penalty?**

**(8) From a Conflict perspective, what is the function of the death penalty?**

**(9) Using Symbolic Interaction Theory, why might a person coming out of an environment like Will choose to commit a violent crime?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**The House I Live In**

**After watching "The House I Live In," answer the following questions based on information in the movie.**

**(1) What is the relationship between the producer of this movie, Eugene Jarecki, and Nanny Jetter?**

**(2) Since 1971, the War on Drugs has cost our country over \$\_\_\_\_\_ and resulted in more than \_\_\_\_\_ million arrests.**

**(3) Which president is credited with coining the phrase "war on drugs"?**

**(4) Which groups' behaviors were first negatively associated with the use of opiates, cocaine, and marijuana in the U.S.?**

**(5) Who was president when the mandatory minimum laws for drug violations were passed?**

**(6) Discuss the disparity in sentencing for crack cocaine versus powder cocaine.**

**(7) List the historian's five stages of what he calls the "chain of destruction."**

**(8) In the movie, when the doctor said that drugs are not the problem, they are a "manifestation of the problem," what was he referring to?**

**(9) From a Functional perspective, discuss some of the benefits of our country's drug laws.**

**(10) Using Conflict Theory, discuss "power" as it relates to who makes laws, which groups are made the target of laws, and how those laws benefit the powerful in society.**

**11) Using symbolic interaction theory, analyze our country's attitudes towards drugs and drug users. What drugs are considered to be the "bad" drugs? Who are considered the drug users?**

**(12) Focusing on drug laws, discuss the "relativity of deviance."**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Inequality for All**

**After watching "Inequality for all," answer the following questions based on information in the movie.**

- (1) Consumer spending comprises what percent to the U.S. economy?**
  
- (2) How important is the middle class to the health of the U.S. economy? Explain.**
  
- (3) What dollar amount defines the top 1% in terms of income earnings?**
  
- (4) Using Symbolic Interaction theory, discuss the opinion of Nick Hanauer, the owner of Pacific Coast Feather Company, concerning the notion of the rich as "job creators". Remember, Symbolic Interaction theory looks at how we all use symbols, like the phrase "job creators," to make our own reality. In Hanauer's opinion, who are the "job creators"?**
  
- (5) Why is there no such thing as a "free market economy"?**
  
- (6) According to information presented in the movie, our current economic crisis that brought about stagnant wages for the middle class worker started in what decade?**
  
- (7) How did globalization and technology contribute to the decline in the status of the middle class?**

**(8) Discuss Reich's theory of "the Virtuous vs. the Vicious" Cycle.**

**(9) In the 1980s, with flattening or declining incomes, what three ways did the middle class manage to keep on spending even when their wages were flat?**

**(10) What did Reich mean when he said that, when he was secretary of labor under Bill Clinton, even with a government surplus, there wasn't the "political will" to pass education and job training bills that could improve the economic status of the American people?**

**(11) Discuss the correlation between political polarization and economic inequality.**

**(12) What did the U.S. Supreme Court decide in the case "Citizens United"?**

**(13) Apply the Sociological Imagination to the information discussed in the movie. How does this movie illustrate how "wider social forces affect your own private reality"? In other words, what did you see in this movie that shows you how your own behavior is dependent upon decisions made by others?**

**(14) Who has power and how is that power used in the economic institution?**