

# SOCI 101

## INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

PROFESSOR  
KURT REYMERS, PH.D.

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### Minority Status

#### 1. Ascribed Status and Rank

##### a. "Minority" Groups

(or "Out Groups" vs. the "In Group" majority)

General characteristics:

##### i. Share a "distinct identity"

- Race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, the poor, etc

##### ii. Subordination

- Often faced with lower social status, and thus *stereotypes*, *stigma*, and *labeling*

##### iii. Group size not important

- Women in America outnumber men
- Blacks in South Africa outnumber whites

### Minority Status

#### 2. What is Race? What is Ethnicity?

##### a. Race

Shared biological traits deemed "socially significant" – they are *genetically inherited*

##### i. Primary racial traits (apparent):

skin color, hair texture, eye shape

##### ii. Secondary racial traits (unapparent):

DNA (leads to sickle-cells, lactase enzyme)

##### b. Ethnicity

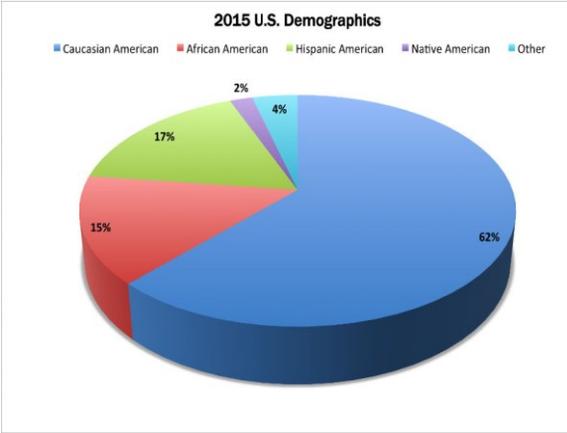
Shared cultural traits deemed "socially significant" – they are *socially inherited*

##### i. Material ethnic traits:

food, clothing, speech; behaviors

##### ii. Non-material ethnic traits:

common ancestry (stories), religion, beliefs and attitudes




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### Minority Status

#### 3. What is Sex? What is Gender?

- a. Sex:** The biological distinctions between *females and males*
  - i. Primary sex traits (reproductive):** genitals, organs used for reproduction (internal and external)
  - ii. Secondary Sex Traits (non-reproductive):** muscle mass, skeletal structure (pelvis, feet), amount of body hair (facial); hormone levels, tonality of voice (vocal cords), mammary glands, etc.
  
- b. Gender:** The cultural distinctions between women and men; meaningful *feminine and masculine* traits and behaviors.
  - i. Material gender traits (tangible, objective aspects of gender);**  
*For example:* fashion – dress, hair, and jewelry
  - ii. Non-material gender traits (learned or subjective characteristics & ideas)**  
like "feminine" behaviors (such as nurturance and focus on body image) and "masculine" or "macho" behaviors (such as **toughness** and a focus on the external world).

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### Minority Status

#### 4. Social Conflict Analysis: *The Power of Race and Gender* What effects does subordination have?

- They can be measured:
- a. Economically,** by social class standing and income;
  
  - b. Politically,** by **representation** within local, state and **national government**;
  
  - c. Culturally,** by the expressions of prejudice and **discrimination** within a society.

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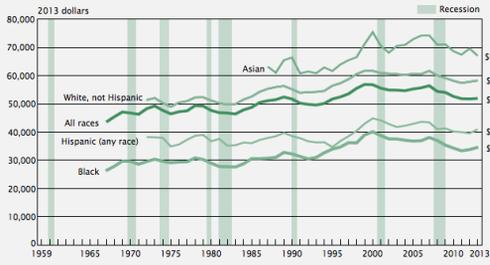
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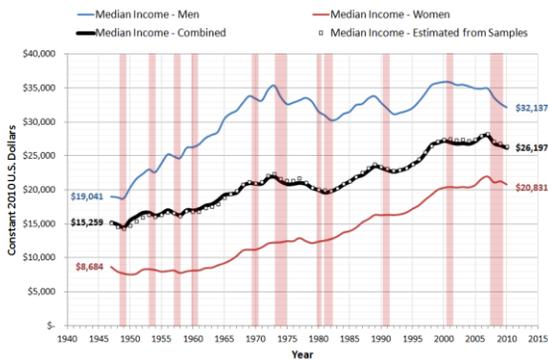
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Figure 1.  
Real Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1967 to 2013



Note: Median household income data are not available prior to 1967. For more information on recessions, see Appendix A. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <http://ftp2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmat14.pdf>.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2014 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

Median Real Income in the U.S. by Sex, with Recessions, 1947 - 2010



Source: U.S. Census, Historic Income Tables P-3 and P-4

© Political Calculations 2012

## BLACK U.S. SENATORS, 1787-2014

1,950 SENATORS



# Minority Status

## 6. Discrimination

*It's a matter of action, not attitude (prejudice)*

Wide range of discriminatory acts:

Verbalizations, **Exclusion**, Avoidance, Abuse, Eugenics, Genocide

### a. Levels of Discrimination

1. **Individual discrimination** – rooted in feelings of personal superiority (*ethnocentricity*)
2. **Institutional discrimination** – rooted in feelings of cultural superiority – seen as “normal”  
Ex: slavery, “**separate but equal**”  
“**redlining**,” real estate “**steering**.”

### b. Cycles of Discrimination

Prejudice reinforces discrimination which in turn reinforces prejudice, *ad infinitum*.

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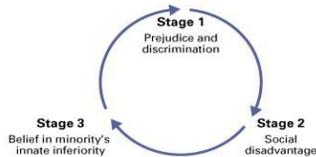
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# Minority Status

THE CYCLE of PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION



Stage 1: Prejudice and discrimination begin, often as an expression of ethnocentrism or an attempt to justify economic exploitation.

Stage 2: As a result of prejudice and discrimination, a minority is socially disadvantaged, occupying a low position in the system of social stratification.

Stage 3: This social disadvantage is then interpreted not as the result of earlier prejudice and discrimination, but as evidence that the minority is innately inferior, unleashing renewed prejudice and discrimination by which the cycle repeats itself.

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# Minority Status

## 7. Improving Race/Gender Relations

Two key areas:

### a. Enhance the educational process

- Multicultural, multigendered education
- Learn to appreciate diversity
- [Blue Eyes / Brown Eyes 1968 schoolyard experiment \(full video\)](#)
- [Kilbourne's critique of women in advertising](#)
- [Katz on male violence](#)

### b. Increase meaningful social contact

- Demonstrative diversity
- Honest, self-critique of lifestyle
- Expand social networks

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