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America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences, Volume 1

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Introduction

Neil J. Smelser, William Julius Wilson, and Faith Mitchell

The United States is, perhaps more than any other industrialized country, distinguished by the size and diversity of its racial and ethnic populations; and current trends promise that these features will endure. In fact, demographers project that by the year 2050 the United States will likely have no single majority group. Considerable behavioral and social science research has chronicled the remarkable evolution of our multiracial society, its patterns of discrimination, and its progress in reducing racial bias.

To pull together this large body of research, the National Research Council (NRC) convened the Research Conference on Racial Trends in the United States on October 15-16, 1998. The conference was convened in response to a request from the President's Initiative on Race (PIR) and the President's Council of Economic Advisers, and gained support from 15 federal sponsors. It was co-chaired by Neil J. Smelser, Director of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, and William Julius Wilson, Lewis P. and Linda L. Geyser University Professor at Harvard University.

The conference was an historic gathering of the nation's leading scholars on racial and ethnic relations, assembled to assess past and current trends for America's Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and American Indians—and all their multiple and varied national groupings—in regard to several key institutional arenas. Topics of discussion included demographics, education, employment, income and wealth, housing and neighborhood characteristics, health access and status, and the criminal justice system.

These are all essential aspects of American life, and all have been shown to have a racialized component.

It is unfortunate that other equally important topics were not discussed. For example, there is no paper on race and politics because the author who agreed to address that topic had to withdraw from the conference. Other important topics not discussed, that nevertheless evince relevant racial and ethnic nuances, include transportation, rural communities, and disability. None of these yet has a strong enough research base to warrant the commissioning of papers.

Nonetheless, the scholarly papers produced for discussion covered a wide range of issues. They summarized key trends, described gaps in research and data, and suggested research directions for the next decade. These volumes contain updated versions of selected conference papers and, in the case of criminal justice, two discussants' comments.

At the end of this introduction, the key findings are briefly summarized. Preceding that summarization, however, there is a discussion of two issues that are important to bear in mind in any overall assessment of racial trends in America: (1) the methodological considerations affecting the study of race and ethnicity, and (2) the complexity of the different social and cultural foundations of inequalities and other racial and ethnic group outcomes.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Definition of "Race" and "Ethnicity"

Some incipient idea of race goes back as far in history as ethnocentrism itself. For our times, the most relevant heritage is found in the concept of "race" produced by nineteenth-century colonialism and anthropology. Human classifications varied, but were largely associated with the world's regional distribution of populations; in some cases races were named for skin color—white, black, yellow, brown, and red. The widely accepted definitional basis was biological—skin color, distinctive facial characteristics, height, build, hair texture, and other physical features, as well as temperamental and psychological traits. Above all, this concept of race connoted that groups could be arrayed on a scale from biologically superior to biologically inferior; consequently, the biological basis for race has an ugly and tragic past, invoked as it has been to justify racial discrimination, colonial domination, slavery, genocide, and holocaust.

One of the great accomplishments of the behavioral and social sciences in the twentieth century has been to logically discredit the nineteenth-century conception of race by amassing evidence on millennia of

human migration, contact, and genetic diversification through cross-reproduction. As a result, a more realistic, sociocultural conceptualization of race has developed. Although continuing to acknowledge the genetic, demographic, and geographic dimensions of human diversity, most social scientists now give prominence to the principle that both race and ethnicity derive from *sociocultural* categories that are produced, sustained, and reproduced. Moreover, these categories are, from the standpoint of any given group, to some degree imposed by others and to some degree self-selected. Instead of representing race as a simple biological-physical crosshatch, social scientists now define race as a multidimensional mixture, hence, "*race" is a social category based on the identification of (1) a physical marker transmitted through reproduction and (2) individual, group, and cultural attributes associated with that marker.* Defined as such, race is, then, a form of ethnicity, but distinguished from other forms of ethnicity by the identification of distinguishing *physical* characteristics, which, among other things, make it more difficult for members of the group to change their identity.

Care should be taken, however, not to push this insight to its constructionist extreme and claim that race is merely a social contrivance and therefore not "real." In this connection, we take our lead from the classic insight of W.I. Thomas that if things are defined as real, they are real in their consequences. The concepts of race and ethnicity are social realities because they are deeply rooted in the consciousness of individuals and groups, and because they are firmly fixed in our society's institutional life. Further, these concepts are sustained by several mechanisms that frame the categories of race and ethnicity in terms of kinship and descent, group intermarriage and reproduction, distinctive geographical location and residence, specification in law and policies, discrimination and prejudice, and self-identification. These facts steer us toward a conclusion that is at once true and paradoxical—i.e., "while biological notions of race have little meaning, the society itself is extremely racialized" (Smith, 1998:3).

Because race and ethnicity contain such a complex array of sustaining mechanisms and overlapping connotations, consistent definitions are hard to come by. Even the great sociology master, Max Weber, was frustrated in his efforts to deal with them. In attempting to identify the essence of ethnicity, he invoked a very inclusive definition (Weber, 1968:I, 389):

> [T]hose human groups that entertain a subject belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of a group; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists.

In the end, however, he concluded that the term "ethnic" is too inclusive to be helpful sociologically; for if it were disaggregated into all its component parts and influences, it would be "abandoned" as "unsuitable for a really rigorous analysis" (Weber, 1968:I, 395). The modern student of race might well come to the same conclusion.

Without necessarily fully embracing Weber's pessimistic conclusion, we must nevertheless acknowledge that the terms "race" and "ethnicity" comprise such complex social phenomena that they pose enormous problems of both description and measurement. With respect to description, what is the principal identifying characteristic: physical marker? attributed physical marker? common descent? legal definition? others' attribution? self-identification? With respect to measurement, a similarly confusing array of choices exists—how do we measure race and ethnicity: on the basis of assignment by administrators (e.g., staff at the Office of Management and Budget, officials at the Census Bureau)? social investigators (census officials, survey conductors)? by some legal definition (perhaps, from the Congress)? by a group's "culture"? by their self-reported identification? And how do we deal with those of mixed racial and ethnic parentage?

To appreciate the anomalous consequences of different measures, consider the fact that most "Hispanics," often identified, both popularly and by some social scientists, as a separate racial category, identify themselves as "White" (see Raynard Kington and Herbert Nickens, Volume II, Chapter 11). Or consider the fact that, by self-report, the population of American Indians *tripled* between the 1960 and 1990 censuses, a rate far exceeding any increase based on migration or due to births (see Gary Sandefur et al., Volume I, Chapter 3).

The methodological lessons to be derived from these observations are that, for race and ethnicity (1) there is no single master descriptor or measurement; (2) different descriptors and measures should be used according to the analytic purpose at hand; (3) whatever descriptor or measure (or whatever combination) is used, it should be regarded as a contingent analytic strategy rather than a reflection of some fixed social reality; and (4) because of the essential fluidity of racial categories and measures, we must regard with caution all future projections about racial composition that are based on current measures, because the categories and measures themselves will no doubt change over time.

Classification and Aggregation

The major racial categories used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, by other government agencies, and by survey researchers—and to a significant degree lodged in the public mind—are White (or Caucasian or

Anglo), Black (or African American), Hispanic (or Latino), Asian, and Native American (or American Indian). Because these categories are now acknowledged, to varying degrees, by group members themselves and in the eyes of outsiders, a legitimate case can be made for representing them in such aggregated form. In that form, it is easier to see the enormous differences among these major groups with respect to income, health, education, welfare, crime, and legal disadvantage, and, thereby, reveal the pervasive and systematic inequalities among them.

At the same time, to represent these racial and ethnic categories in aggregated terms exacts several costs:

• *Aggregated categories are imprecise.* They conceal the great heterogeneity found within every general grouping. There are approximately 500 identifiable tribal groups in the American Indian population. "White" as a category includes Scandinavians; Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern Europeans; North Africans; most Hispanics; and others. "Asian" includes not only the major groups of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino, but also groups from Southeast and South Asia and the Pacific Islands, and others. "Black" includes U.S.-born African Americans as well as those born in the many countries of the African continent, West Indians, Haitians, some Hispanics, and others. As for Hispanics, the minimal internal divisions are Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Central and South American, with further divisions possible. Noting these Hispanic subgroup differences, Albert Camarillo and Frank Bonilla conclude simply that "Hispanics in the United States at the dawn of the twenty-first century defy generalizations as a single group" (see Camarillo and Bonilla, Volume I, Chapter 4). As reflected in the pages of this report, all racial and ethnic subcategories manifest enormous differences in income, wealth, education, health, and almost all other social measures. To persist in aggregating the subgroups hides that variation and makes for a reification of social reality that does not correspond to the life situations of the subgroups.

• *Analyzing aggregates obscures data.* Analyzing the circumstances of racial groupings in gross, aggregated terms often obscures the causal significance of race as a variable. Consider these statements from the paper by Renée Jenkins (Volume II, Chapter 13): "Whites were more likely than Blacks and Hispanics to live in families with no minor children"; and "Black and Hispanic youth were more likely to carry a weapon, be involved in fights, and be victimized by others." Taken by themselves, unless disaggregated by subgroups and adjusted, at a minimum, for socioeconomic class, such statements are misleading because they imply that the operative independent variable is racial or ethnic membership.

Other Methodological Issues

Multiple Causation

In most cases, the causes of apparent racial differences also have to be disaggregated. In other words, racial correlations are almost inevitably found to conceal the presence of operative variables other than race. Eugene Oddone et al. (Volume II, Chapter 15), for example, note that differences in health care outcomes usually attributed to race can arise from differences in clinical factors affecting underlying disease patterns, patients' ability to pay, and patient preferences, as well as racial bias. Similarly, Harry Holzer's analysis (Volume II, Chapter 5) of Black-White wage differentials since 1975 breaks down into a mix of both nonracial and racial influences, including rising economic returns on skills, declining industrialization and unionism, social/spatial factors, persistent discrimination, and expectations, alternative income, and illegal activity. The dramatic increase, since the 1980s, in the percentage of Blacks in prisons is traceable in large part to the criminal justice system's intensive crackdown on drug activity—which may or may not (see Randall Kennedy, Alfred Blumstein, and Darnell Hawkins, Volume II, Chapters 1, 2, and 3) have been motivated, in part, by racial considerations. In a word, almost all causal statements involving race, when thoroughly analyzed and broken down, reveal a complex interaction of many causes, only some of which are explicitly racial in nature.

Racial Data as Obscured Data

One of America's great advances in the past two centuries is that it has moved away from the historical situation in which prejudice, discrimination, and subjugation—manifested by extermination of American Indian populations, slavery, Jim Crow laws, restrictive laws and policies against immigrant Chinese, and signs such as "No Irish Need Apply"— were not only legal, but largely regarded as "normal." Relative to past social arrangements, this nation has moved toward a collective realization of the social and economic values of equality and justice. Despite these advances, however, a great deal of prejudice and discrimination persists, even though in many cases discriminatory practices are against the law.

This combination of circumstances has produced situations in which some people who retain racist proclivities are motivated to conceal or distort their prejudices and discriminatory behavior. Audit surveys, especially with respect to housing discrimination, have proved to be an effective mechanism in uncovering those landlords and employers who, while

proclaiming fair rental and employment practices, continue to discriminate (see Douglas Massey, Volume I, Chapter 13). The methodological consequence of covert racist practices is that they tend to conceal and distort the very data that we, as social-science investigators, wish to discover, analyze, and explain. The arena of racism—like crime, corruption, scandal, and marital infidelity—is one in which the subject matter, in the nature of the case, remains partially obscured.

In other cases racial data are obscured by the research techniques themselves. Surveys tapping racial and ethnic attitudes often rely on dichotomous (yes or no) or scaled (one-to-five as to strength of attitude) responses. Such responses fail to represent situational variabilities of reported attitudes, to say nothing of their complexity and ambivalence. In some cases, surveys ask for single, forced-choice responses to questions regarding racial or ethnic status, distorting the fact that vast numbers of respondents are "mixed" or do not regard their race or ethnic status as particularly important in their lives. Recent changes introduced by the Census Bureau permit people to chose multiple categories in response to the question of racial identity; but even this change in measurement will not capture the full complexity of group membership.

The Omnipotence of Relative Deprivation in Race and Ethnic Relations

Committed as we are to tracking the progress of racial and ethnic groups toward conditions of equity and justice, as well as tracking the persisting advantages of others, we often make judgments and assertions about the absolute progress of groups. A simple example is a statement such as: "Over the course of the century, the life expectancy for Blacks more than doubled, and for Whites it increased by 60 percent; yet in spite of improvements, a gap between Blacks and Whites remained and even increased in the 1980s." Such a statement, being tied to a specific measure, is relatively nonproblematical, yet care must be taken to assure that the measures for the categories of "Blacks," "Whites," and "life expectancy" have remained the same over time and are thus comparable with one another at different times.

When it comes to questions of group expectations and attitudes about progress, such statements are difficult to assess because of the phenomenon of relative deprivation. This concept refers to the fact that individuals and groups are continuously shifting their self-assessments because, over time, both their frames of reference—to other groups and to benchmarks in their own history—are also continuously changing. History is replete with examples of groups that experience extreme deprivation measured by absolute standards, but manifest little discontent, and

groups that have experienced advances, yet express extreme dissatisfaction because they have not improved more or faster. Understanding the logic of relative deprivation demystifies findings of groups simultaneously experiencing both progress and increased resentment.

In this section, a formidable array of methodological issues and obstacles concerning the study of race and ethnic relations has been outlined. It should be clearly understood, however, that we in no way mean to strike a posture of hopelessness or pessimism. As social scientists, we believe it is important to lay out explicitly all relevant issues and obstacles and to cope with them openly as challenges. This seems the only viable strategy for making our knowledge more reliable and valid.

Effects of Social Structure and Culture on Racial Group Outcomes

Social and cultural outcomes will differ for racial groups as a result of three kinds of causal mechanisms:

1. those that arise from individual attributes and individual choices;
2. those that originate in direct social actions based on racial considerations, notably discrimination; and
3. those that result from social and cultural changes transpiring elsewhere in society—i.e., changes that are not driven by racial considerations, but nonetheless have an impact on the fortunes of racial groups.

These causal mechanisms do not operate in isolation; they interact and act in concert. Consequently, each has to be included in any effort to understand fully racial trends in the United States.

Individual Attributes and Choices

Differences in individual skills, motivation, attitudes, and self-selecting "out"—i.e., not taking advantage of opportunities—are some of the individual attributes and choices that can cause stratified racial outcomes. However, these individual factors, although they are definitely operative causal factors, are themselves shaped by larger structural and cultural forces.

Direct Social Actions

Forces that operate directly to advantage or disadvantage individuals and groups on the basis of race, and thus contribute to racial inequality, include two types—social acts and structural processes. Among the social acts are discrimination in hiring and promotion, housing, and admission

to educational institutions, as well as exclusion from unions, employers' associations, and clubs. Systematic structural factors in this category of direct causes are laws, policies, and institutional practices that exclude people on the basis of race or ethnicity. These range from explicit arrangements, such as Jim Crow segregation laws, voting restrictions, and targeted policies, to more subtle institutional processes—e.g., school tracking along racial lines, racial profiling, etc.—whereby ideologies about group differences are embedded in organizational arrangements.

Indirect Structural and Cultural Factors

Structural Factors

The third causal mechanism—indirect structural and cultural factors—is not adequately represented either in the literature on race relations or in any of the following chapters. Social science researchers, themselves being sensitive to (and often outraged by) direct causal factors such as discrimination, have paid more attention to them than to indirect causal factors. In reality the indirect causal factors are often so massive in their impact on the social position and experiences of minorities that they deserve full consideration in understanding the forces leading to differential outcomes along racial lines. We would like to take this opportunity to discuss briefly those causes of stratified racial outcomes that advantage or disadvantage people even though there is no deliberate aim or intended effort to do so.

We assert that these causal mechanisms are "indirect" because they are mediated by the racial group's position in the social stratification system (the extent to which the members of the group occupy positions of power, influence, prestige, and privilege). Take, for example, the effects of changes in the economy or the situation of low-skilled Black workers.

The demand for different kinds of labor skills in recent years has been created by the computer revolution, the spread of new technologies that reward more highly trained workers, and the growing internationalization of economic activity (Katz, 1996). In general, highly skilled or highly educated workers have benefited from these trends, while lower skilled workers face the growing threat of eroding wages and job displacement. The number of skilled Black managers, professionals, and technicians has increased significantly since the 1950s; however, the percentage of unskilled Black workers is still disproportionately large. Accordingly, the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor has had a greater impact on Black communities. Low-skilled workers in all racial and ethnic groups are likely to be adversely affected by the changes in the relative demand

for labor, but the severest dislocations will be felt in the racial minority communities.

The decreased demand for low-skilled labor is also among the factors contributing to the growth of wage inequality in the United States. Also, slow wage growth over the past several years has resulted in annual decreased inflation-adjusted earnings for most workers; and the steepest decreases occurred among the least skilled. The slow growth in real wages is related most fundamentally to the overall decrease in productivity growth between the early 1970s and the mid-1990s. But it is also related to factors that include the accelerated growth of the part-time and temporary work industries, the decrease in national income caused by "raw labor" and the increase caused by human capital (Krueger, 1997),[1] the drop in the real value of the minimum wage, and the dramatic decline of union membership in the private sector.

Given the relatively large percentage of low-skilled Black workers, the effect of the economy's slow real wage growth, like the impact of the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor, is strongly felt in the Black community and in other relatively disadvantaged racial minority communities (Wilson, 1999). Absent the existing system of economic stratification, these changes in the economy would have no differential impact by race.

Another instance of an indirect structural effect causing a racialized outcome is welfare provisions that specify family factors—e.g., marital status—as conditions for receiving welfare payments. These policies are not explicitly racial in character but they may have had different effects on those racial minorities with high percentages of fragile family structures.

Another example of an indirect structural effect is the college education entitlement of the 1944 G.I. Bill, which, although available to all veterans, imparted an unintended advantage along racial lines. At the time of enactment many minority veterans had not achieved a high school education, a requirement for college eligibility.

Likewise, hospital policies requiring patients to pay before they receive medical services are not specifically directed at minorities, but they have the effect of differentially disadvantaging them because minorities, being most predominant in the low-income bracket, are less able to pay for these services. Related to this problem, private insurance companies' "race-neutral" determinations of uninsurable or risky categories indirectly

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[1]In a recent paper, Alan Krueger (1999) decomposes labor's compensation into a component due to "raw labor" and a component due to human capital. He finds that only 5 percent of national income is due to raw labor, down from 15 percent in the 1960s.

affect racial outcomes because high-risk categories frequently include disproportionate numbers of racial minorities. An example is the rejection of an applicant because of health history. Racial minorities are more likely to have experienced health problems because of greater exposure to high-risk environments that are not as conducive to physical well-being.

Furthermore, government policies that pertain to taxation, interest rates, the labor market, international trade, criminal justice, and investment and redistribution, as well as corporate decisions involving the mobility and location of industries, affect economic-class groups in different ways. Because minorities are more concentrated in low-income positions, some of these policies have distinctly racial implications.

Finally, the system of racial segregation or social isolation in poor neighborhoods creates mechanisms that affect race-neutral processes that ultimately influence minority group outcomes. Consider the problem of differential flows of information to urban neighborhoods. In order to make wise decisions, one must have good information. However, the more segregated or isolated a neighborhood, the less likely it is that the residents will have easy access to information concerning schools, apprenticeship programs, the labor market, financial markets, and so on.

Cultural Factors

Indirect *cultural* factors that affect racial group outcomes are in the domain of social interaction and collective experiences within a community—shared outlooks, shared modes of behavior, traditions, belief systems, world views, values, skills, preferences, styles, and linguistic patterns. Several factors determine the extent to which communities differ in outlook and behavior. These factors include the degree to which the community is socially isolated from the broader society; the material assets or resources controlled by members of the community; the benefits and privileges they derive from these resources; their accumulated cultural experiences from current as well as historical, political, and economic arrangements; and the influence members of the community wield because of these arrangements (Wilson, 1996).

Culture is closely intertwined with social relations in the sense of providing tools and creating constraints in patterns of social interaction (Tilly, 1998), including social interaction that results in different racial outcomes. Culture's effects on stratified racial outcomes are therefore indirect, filtered through social relational and collective processes. Voluntary or imposed restrictions on the actions of members of the community enhance differences in outlook and behavior and may result in limited opportunities for social and economic advancement. This creates situations in which social factors, such as the level of economic well-being,

interact with cultural factors in the formation of observable group characteristics and traits over time. As pointed out previously, these group characteristics and traits often shape the attributes of individual members of the community, including their skills, motivations, and attitudes, which in turn affect their patterns of social mobility. One of the effects of living in racially segregated neighborhoods is exposure to group-specific cultural traits (particular skills, styles of behavior, habits, orientations, and world views) that emerged from patterns of racial exclusion and that may not be conducive to scoring well on the standard or conventional measures of performance, such as the Scholastic Aptitude test (SAT).

Thus, exposure to different cultural influences—including culturally shaped habits, styles, skills, values, and preferences—has to be taken into account and related to different forms of social relations to explain fully the divergent social trends and outcomes of racial groups (Wilson, 1996).

The most comprehensive analysis of racial trends will include measures and research strategies that capture the unintended racial effects of organizational, relational, and collective processes embodied in the social structure of racial inequality. An important aspect of this analysis is a study of the impact of culture as it is integrated into a broader discussion of social relations. We note the absence of a discussion of indirect or unintended causes of stratified racial outcomes among the excellent papers in this volume.

RACIAL TRENDS IN AMERICA:
AN OVERVIEW OF THIS VOLUME

Attitudes and Institutions

As Lawrence Bobo points out, "If one compares the racial attitudes prevalent in the 1940s with those commonly observed today, it is easy to be optimistic" (Volume I, Chapter 9). Indeed, Bobo's data indicate that the United States now enjoys a fairly high degree of consensus about the ideals of integration and racial equality. Similarly, contrary to the assumption that Blacks and Whites are hopelessly divided over affirmative action, Carol Swain (Volume I, Chapter 11) finds that ambiguity about the meaning of "affirmative action" and confusion about affirmative-action policies mask considerable cross-race agreement on the need to level the playing field to enhance opportunities for minorities and women. Nonetheless, Bobo concludes that consensus on the ideals of racial equality and integration founders on different groups' beliefs about the prevalence of discrimination and on the persistence of negative racial stereotypes.

Ronald Ferguson's research on the impact of racial perceptions on school performance confirms the role of stereotypes (Volume I, Chapter

12). His work suggests that teachers do not expect Black and Hispanic children to achieve at levels comparable to non-Hispanic Whites, that they subconsciously—and sometimes consciously—convey this belief in their instruction of children, and that this expectation lowers Black and Hispanic children's cognitive test scores. He further points out that lower performance may also be a function of popular minority-group culture, which sets achievement levels for Blacks and Hispanics below those set in White and Asian communities.

The different social and cultural perceptions of racial group achievement, as well as the persistence of racial stereotyping described by Bobo, are clear indications that race continues to be an important social construct in America. However, as Michael Omi argues (Volume I, Chapter 8), merely asserting that race is socially constructed does not uncover the ways in which specific concepts of race emerge, reveal the fundamental determinants of racialization, or show how race articulates with class, gender, and other major axes of stratification. Omi underlines the importance of examining how specific concepts of race are conceived and deployed in public-policy initiatives, political discourse, social-science research, and cultural representations. He maintains that the massive, recent influx of new immigrants has "destabilized specific concepts of race, led to a proliferation of identity positions, and challenged prevailing modes of political and cultural organization" (p. 243).

Omi's article demonstrates the importance of an historical perspective in trying to understand the meaning of race and the impact of changing social, political, and economic situations on racial identity, attitude formation, and racial discourse. On the other hand, Anthony Marx's paper (Volume I, Chapter 10) clearly shows the value of a cross-cultural perspective. Comparing the United States with South Africa and Brazil, he finds that, historically, relations between African and European descendants fell along a continuum of legal racial domination. At one extreme, twentieth-century South Africa encoded pervasive discrimination and imposed severe nationwide political and economic restrictions on its Black majority population. At the other extreme, Brazil legally encoded neither apartheid nor Jim Crow segregation; nevertheless, Afro-Brazilians did experience pervasive informal discrimination and prejudice. Between these two extremes, the United States featured uneven and locally encoded policies of racial domination over its Black minority population, amid what Marx calls "social discrimination." In all three countries, race relations have been significantly contested, "with the enactment of rules of relations (or debates thereof) focusing on the treatment of Blacks." Any analysis of racial trend data in the three countries has to take into account the long-term effects of these differently codified systems of racial domination.

Economics: Labor, Employment, Wealth, and Welfare

If any institutional force were to be singled out as differentially affecting the fortunes of ethnic and racial groups in the United States, it would be the labor market. We are fortunate to be able to include several chapters bearing on different facets of labor markets, employment, and race. James Smith's paper (Volume II, Chapter 4) provides a general overview of long-term and short-term trends. It shows that significant wage differentials along racial lines are a permanent feature in the American economy. However, several groups have experienced very different fortunes. Quite remarkable progress has been made in narrowing the wage gap for Black workers since 1950, but that trend has slowed since the 1970s. Hispanics, as an aggregate, have not fared so well, and some actual deterioration in their market position is shown in the 1980s and 1990s. It is difficult to give a literal reading of such a statement, however, because the composition of the Hispanic population has changed so much. A significant part of the Hispanic story is the special labor-market disadvantages experienced by recent immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries. Unscrambling the factors responsible for the stagnation is a formidable, uncertain task, but Smith makes an effort to assess the relative impacts of changing schooling, quality of students, affirmative action, and rising wage inequality.

The articles by Harry Holzer (Volume II, Chapter 5) and Cecilia Conrad (Volume II, Chapter 6) focus on the differential labor-market fortunes of minority men and women, respectively. The findings presented by Holzer confirm the general picture drawn by Smith: a period of labor-market progress for minorities, with dramatic results in the 1960s, then a slowing in relative earnings since the 1970s. Among the causal factors he cites are education, language proficiency and differences (affecting Hispanic and Asian immigrants), declining industrialization and unionism, and discrimination. Conrad's portrait for women is similar. Relative earnings of White and Black women workers reveal a dramatic convergence between 1960 and 1975—likely traceable to schooling, declining discrimination, and shifts in occupational distribution—and an apparent reversal since then. The causal picture is less clear for the latter period, but some scholars suspect that increased labor-market discrimination and characteristics such as differential schooling seem to have been significant. In addition, the changing composition of the White female labor force—now including larger numbers of the very highly skilled—may also have contributed to the trends. The decline of relative wages for Asian and Hispanic women workers since 1990 is traceable to productivity-related characteristics such as education, and the immigrant status of many Hispanic women workers plays a role. Looking ahead, Conrad foresees the possi-

bility of even greater wage inequality for younger Hispanic and Black women in the labor force.

Minority-owned businesses, as analyzed by Thomas Boston (Volume II, Chapter 9), have shown a decided shift from small-scale personal service and retail—i.e., "mom and pop"—establishments, to firms involved in finance, insurance, real estate, business services, and wholesale industries. This shift mirrored the broader economic transitions in this direction; and minority involvement in small business was facilitated by advances in their educational attainment and by affirmative-action efforts in the areas of contracting and business procurement.

John Butler and Charles Moskos (Volume II, Chapter 8) trace the history of minorities—especially Blacks—in the military, an institution that involves more minority participation than any other. They attempt to tease out some of the factors that may have contributed to the "success story" of this institution. Among the lessons to be learned from the military experience, they suggest, is that organizations should focus on opportunity channels rather than on changing racial attitudes, and that affirmative-action policies should be linked to consistent performance standards and the pool of qualified potential participants.

The chapter by Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro (Volume II, Chapter 10) shifts the level of analysis from participation and income to wealth as a source of inequality. Inequality, as measured by wealth—disposable assets—is always more extreme than income inequality, and that generalization holds when applied to racial differences in wealth. The picture is most extreme for Blacks, and can be traced to factors such as exclusion from wealth-generating opportunities made available through government policies, disadvantages in real-estate ownership, lesser participation in wealth-creating business activities, and cumulative disadvantages at the lower end of the income scale.

Robert Moffitt and Peter Gottschalk (Volume II, Chapter 7) turn to the welfare system. They find very great differences in receipt of welfare benefits, with American Indians and Aleutian Eskimos having the highest probability of receiving receipts, and Black and Hispanic households having very high rates as well. Most of these differences trace to "risk factors" such as differences in income, family structure, employment, and education of head of household—all of which are race-associated. Moffitt and Gottschalk conclude by recommending policy attacks on these risk factors, which presumably will reduce racial disparities, rather than race-specific welfare policies.

Demography and Geography

Gary Sandefur et al. (Volume I, Chapter 3) provide a valuable survey of racial and ethnic differences and trends in population composition,

including growth, fertility, family formation, mortality, and migration since the 1950s. The differences among the major groups in the country are striking. Extrapolating from these trends, the authors confirm the now-familiar estimate that the percentage of Whites will decrease dramatically by 2050 and thereafter. Further analysis of the trends and differences also suggests the possibility that Whites and Asians may converge toward one racial/ethnic cluster and that American Indians, Blacks, and Hispanics may converge toward another.

Three additional articles focus on demographic and related characteristics of Hispanics, American Indians, and Asians, respectively. The case of Hispanics is perhaps most dramatic, inasmuch as some projections suggest that by 2050 nearly one-quarter of the U.S. population will be of Hispanic origin. Albert Camarillo and Frank Bonilla (Volume I, Chapter 4) qualify this claim by insisting on the heterogeneity of the Hispanic subpopulations. They outline the distinctive economic, occupational, and educational aspects of the Hispanic experience, and focus closely on the prospects for an increase in Hispanic political power. They locate a double tendency, one suggesting a pattern of conventional assimilation to mainstream U.S. life, another suggesting a pattern of continued poverty, insulation, and possible cultural alienation.

For the American Indian population, a group holding special interest because of its traumatic past relationship to the U.S. government, Russell Thornton (Volume I, Chapter 5) traces the group's demographic (including strikingly high rates of intermarriage), geographic, and related fortunes. Thornton also addresses problems associated with the legal status of tribes, tribal identity, and recent trends in economic development, as well as the anomalous situation of American Indian studies and the politically thorny issue of the repatriation of American Indian human remains and other cultural objects to their tribal sources.

In his essay on the Asian Pacific American population, Don Nakanishi (Volume I, Chapter 6) takes special note of the "demographic revolution" occurring among these historically small minorities—a revolution sending their numbers from 1.5 million in 1970 to nearly 12 million in 1998, with predictions of nearly 20 million by 2020. This group has increased greatly in internal heterogeneity as a result of the diversification of sources of immigration since the 1970s. Nakanishi gives special attention to the issue of political participation and electoral power of this group, now only partially crystallized on account of its cultural diversity, but promising to become a significant force in the American polity.

Immigration, and the dramatically increased levels since the 1960s, are the focus of Min Zhou's chapter (Volume I, Chapter 7). Interestingly, although immigration continues to bring enormous numbers of people to American shores, the current rate of immigration is slightly lower than

previous inflows because of America's much larger current population base. The "new immigration" is notable for its heterogeneity, with Latin and Asian countries being the primary contributors; for large numbers of undocumented immigrants; and for the large streams of refugees and asylees among them. The impact of the recent wave has been greatest in urban centers, effecting permanent changes in the ethnic demography of cities like Los Angeles, Miami, and San Francisco. Zhou also turns her attention to special issues such as economic mobility of the new immigrants, prospects for their second generation, and the impact of new immigrants on the Black minority.

Two papers look at the spatial distribution of racial and ethnic groups and how location affects access to social and economic opportunity. First, Douglas Massey (Volume I, Chapter 13) examines long-term trends in the segregation of Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. He finds that extreme geographical segregation is unique to Blacks, and is largely unrelated to economic status; and he argues further that it is not explained by residential preferences. Housing is probably one of those areas in which the persistence of White prejudice and discrimination is still most alive. Massey concludes that residential segregation of Blacks contributes directly and indirectly to high concentrations of poverty, educational failure, joblessness, unwed parenthood, crime, and mortality. In a related treatment (Volume I, Chapter 14), Manuel Pastor, Jr., argues that suburbanization has taken resources and economic dynamism from central cities and led to a diminished community life and buildups of hazardous waste. He suggests further that the increasing importance of suburbs in national voting has contributed to a declining political will to deal with poverty, race, and urban decline. Pastor notes the possibility that the emergent "new regionalism" and changes in how inner-ring suburbs and inner cities operate regionally may reduce the city-suburb divide.

Health

One unhappy aspect of racial and ethnic life in the United States is that many differences in health by race and ethnicity persist, with the members of many, but not all, racial and ethnic minorities experiencing worse health than the majority population. Raynard Kington and Herbert Nickens (Volume II, Chapter 11) document this persistence. They develop an overview of causal factors that contribute to the differences, including socioeconomic position, health-risk behaviors, access to health care, culture and acculturation, genetic factors, and environmental and occupational exposures. David Williams (Volume II, Chapter 14) looks at the health of adults, and documents racial differences and trends in chronic diseases, infectious diseases, and homicide and suicide, and offers a num-

ber of methodological cautions in reading and interpreting these data. He examines a variety of institutional factors, such as economic discrimination, residential segregation, differential education, and differential access to the health system, that work to produce the differences.

The case of racial differences in veterans' health and health care is taken up by Eugene Oddone et al. (Volume II, Chapter 15). This category is special because of the federal government's unique commitment to attend to the health of war veterans. Oddone et al. explore a number of factors that may contribute to racial and ethnic differences in health (including veterans' health): economic variables, patient perceptions of their own health, patient preferences, differential trust in the health system, and differential behavior of the providers of medical care.

Two articles focus on children's and adolescents' health. Vonnie McLoyd and Betsy Lozoff (Volume II, Chapter 12) note racial differences in such diverse health disorders as iron deficiency, elevated lead levels, low birth weight, prenatal alcohol exposure, adolescent homicide and assaultive violence, suicide, and drug use. Throughout the article, the authors track the mixed record of public policies and programs in dealing with these problems. In a closely related treatment (Volume II, Chapter 13), Renée Jenkins addresses the changes in health indicators from the federal government's Healthy People 2000 project, concentrating on racial differences in infant mortality, immunizations, teen births, and violent deaths, and assessing a variety of national and local policies designed to reduce the disparities.

Crime and Justice

As Randall Kennedy points out in introducing his chapter (Volume II, Chapter 1), racial aspects of the administration of criminal law constitute one of the most sensitive and volatile features of American life. This fact is symbolized by the extremely high incarceration rates for minorities, especially Black and Hispanic males. Kennedy reviews three flash points of tension in the justice system—the use of race as a criterion in the surveillance, questioning, searching, and arresting of suspects; jury selection; and differential punishment of minorities. The record of accomplishment in all three areas is decidedly mixed and in need of reform. In his commentary on Kennedy's paper (Volume II, Chapter 3), Darnell Hawkins confirms the importance of these problem areas, and suggests three historical and demographic trends that have contributed to the rising racial imbalance of levels of imprisonment. These are the mainstreaming and integration of White ethnics and southerners into American economic, political, and social structures, thus reducing arrest rates among them; Black migration from the South, which increased their risk of involve-

ment with the criminal justice system; and the increasing geographic marginalization of very poor Whites, which may insulate them from some forms of crime detection and social control found in large cities. Finally, Alfred Blumstein's remarks (Volume II, Chapter 2) provide even more stunning evidence of the differential incarceration rates among Blacks and Hispanics. In his search for contributing factors, he examines acts of discrimination on the part of law enforcement agents, and policies that have intended or unintended racial effects. He also addresses differential involvement (by race) in certain types of crimes.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the outset of this project to provide a comprehensive review of racial trends in the United States, the organizers and editors, and all our colleagues at the National Research Council, have been keenly aware of the great importance of this scientific survey and assessment—both for the nation and for its abiding problems of racial and ethnic inequality. Recognizing this importance, we have been correspondingly enthusiastic through all of the project's phases: conceiving, planning, organizing, executing, compiling, and, now, making public the results of the project. We conclude this introduction with the hope that readers in all quarters will share this sense of importance and enthusiasm, and that the scientific base we have constructed will be one of the many ingredients that contribute to enlightened and effective policies affecting race in America.

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Abstract An increasingly globalized business environment and a strongly held corporate belief that the world can be rationally managed have brought forth a growing demand for normative models dealing with cross-cultural management issues. Cross-cultural management has thus established itself as a significant research field, with much of the initial inspiration coming from Hofstede and his influential cultural model from 19 Although American society will not become race-blind anytime soon, the meaning of race is changing, and processes of racial formation now are quite different than those prevailing just two generations ago. Massey puts the present moment in historical perspective by reviewing progress toward racial equality through successive historical epochs, from the colonial era to the age of Obama. Racial Attitudes and Relations at the Close of the 20th Century in America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences, Volume I. Jan 2001. Lawrence D Bobo. Lawrence D. Bobo, " Racial Attitudes and Relations at the Close of the 20th Century, " in America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences, Volume I, ed.

America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences, Volume 1. Article. Jan 2001. Â This volume is essential reading for researchers who study the assessment process; mental health professionals and graduate students who wish to reduce bias and improve clinical judgment; and forensic psychologists who must defend the nature of their expertise.